

Increasing Incidence of Psychedelic Drug Use among Australians: Cause for Concern or Opportunity for Therapeutic Leverage?

Dr Stephen Bright



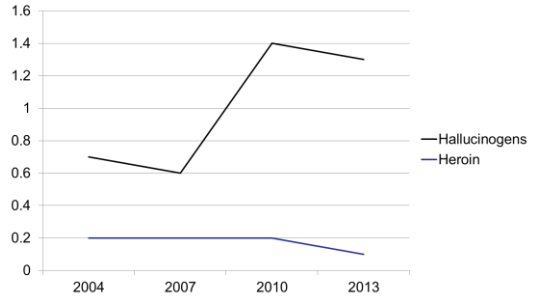
Building a Healthy Community, in Partnership



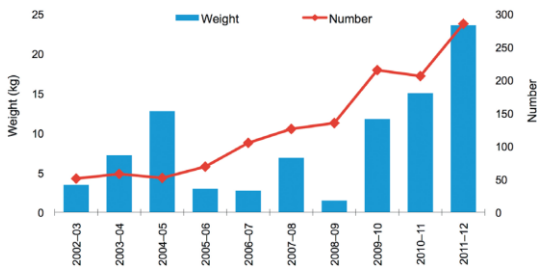
Curtin University



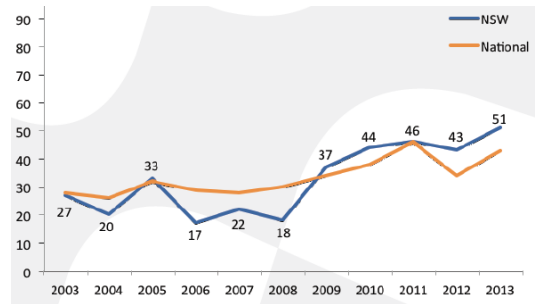
NDSHS Recent Use



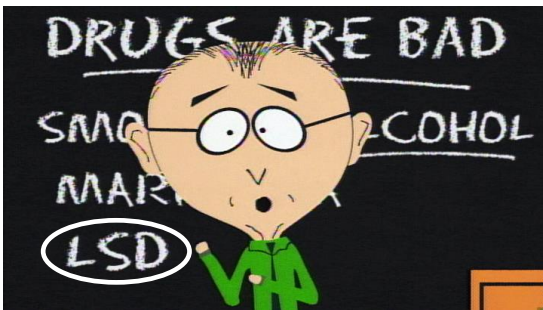
Hallucinogen Seizures by Customs



Recent Use of LSD by EDRS participants



Should we be worried??



Contemporary LSD Research

Reduces end-of-life anxiety (Gasser et al., 2014)

- Active-placebo CT (low dose of LSD)
  - N = 12 (screened for psychotic disorders)
  - Therapy with 20µg or 200µg LSD
- 12 month f/u: 32% decrease in state anxiety
  - 45% increase in quality of life

## Contemporary Psilocybin Research

### John Hopkins Studies

**Induces a Spiritual Experience** (Griffiths et al., 2006, 2008; MacLean et al., 2011)

- RCT using Methylphenidate:  $N = 53$
- 14 month f/u: 58% & 67% (top 5 experiences)
- Personality changes (increased openness)



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**Reduces end of life anxiety** (Grob et al., 2011; Griffiths et al., underway)

- open label,  $N = 12$ ; open label,  $N = 44$

**Smoking cessation** (Johnson et al., in press)

- open label,  $N = 15$
- 80% of participants smoke free at 6/12 (cf. 23% Varenicline)

## Contemporary Psilocybin Research

### Other Studies:

**Cluster Headaches** (Sewell et al., 2006)

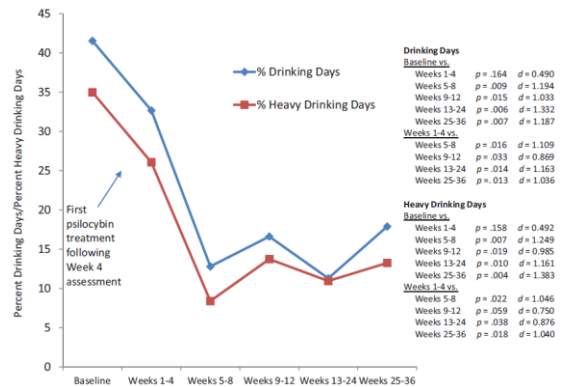
- Naturalistic study:  $N = 56$
- 85% aborted, 90% reduction, 50% remission

**OCD** (Moreno et al., 2006)

- Open Label,  $N = 9$  administered 4 separate doses
- Decreases in symptomology up to 24hrs later

**Alcohol Dependence** (Bogenshutz et al., in press)

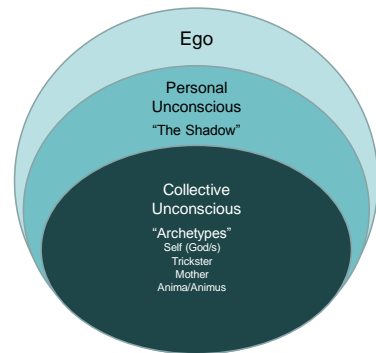
- Open Label,  $N = 10$
- 12 sessions: 7 MET & 2 psilocybin (+ prep & debrief)



## Psychedelic Therapy in AOD?



## Jungian Therapy

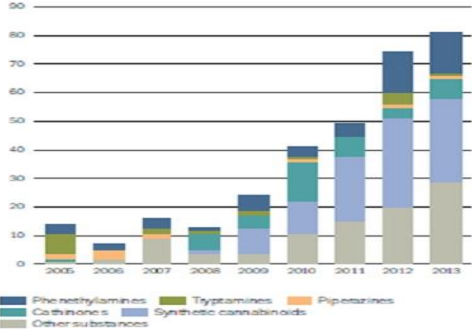


# Transpersonal Therapy

Stage 1: Uterine Bliss – Security & Complacency

- Stage 2: Trapped – despair & depression
- Stage 3: Struggle/Escapade – “light at the end of a tunnel”
  - the final battle (Armageddon)
- Stage 4: Emergence

# A Caveat...



# Harm Reduction for the Modern Psychonaut

- When trying a new tab, pill, or powder:
- Never be the first person in your group to use
  - Always start off small:
    - Your first dose should only be a ¼ dose (or a quarter of a pill)
    - Wait for at least 90-120 minutes before re-dosing
  - Only use one drug at a time
  - Never use alone – always use with someone who can provide support if needed
  - Use in a safe and familiar place
  - Don't drive, swim, play with knives or engage in other risky activities while under the influence of a drug
  - Make sure you're in the right head space
  - Plan ahead so that you have some downtime to recover