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In keeping with our policy of introducing MAPS readers to our advisors, we dedicate this issue of the Hofmann Report to Oscar Janiger, M.D., co-founder of The Albert Hofmann Foundation. The following report has been prepared by our President, Kathy Janiger:

Editor's Note: Since the preparation of this report, Kathy Janiger has passed away, on February 17, 2001. Kathy brought to our Foundation excellent management skills, and drawing from her Harvard Business School degree and corporate experience, contributed much insight to the operations and functioning of our Foundation. Much of her last months were devoted to nurturing and supporting her husband as he was recovering from serious heart surgery. Her sunny disposition, insights, and support will be sorely missed.

He experienced it first as the imagination of a child. As a seemingly automatic and unconscious shift to a new set of facts, emotions and sensations about the experience of his young life from the daily experiences of family and farm life. Then one day, he had a thought that maybe these shifts of his reality were coming from him. He conducted an experiment. A path home from a neighboring farm that crossed the field had, at times, seemed friendly. A place of no concern. And at others, full of threat and danger. A path to be sped along. On this particular day, as he could feel the threatening presences between him and home, he chose to walk slowly and encouraged himself to think of it as the hospitable environment he knew it at times to be. The imagined presences began to dissolve and he began to get perspective on what was to be a lifelong search into the nature of consciousness.

Dr. Oscar Janiger ("Oz") is best known in these pages as a pioneering researcher of LSD. His large scale (900 subjects) naturalistic study of the phenomenological effects of LSD in the 50's and 60's has been followed up with a project funded by MAPS and has been reported here as "An Attempt to Define the Nature of the LSD Experience as a Special State of Consciousness." MAPS' forty-year plus follow-up interview study of forty-five participants in the original study found that all but one of the respondents found taking LSD to be a positive experience. Many benefits were ascribed – openness, creativity, sensory enhancement, emotional richness, insight. One-third of the subjects reported long-term benefits of perceptual/cognitive and behavioral changes (such as a more positive outlook), overcoming shyness, catalyzing career or relationship changes creating permanent openings to spirituality, emotions and insights. In the same article describing the follow-up study, Oz describes his own experience with LSD:

"I've opened the door to some other extension of my mind or my sensory equipment or perceptual apparatus...[t]hat gave me access to a kind of world that was vastly enlarged, vastly expanded. My senses were made most acute. My mental capacity led me to think in terms of breaking away from familiar – what I call obligatory – reality, where I had to be a certain way."

It's easy to see how the study of LSD was undertaken by someone with a life-long interest in the nature of consciousness. But how did Oz find LSD in 1954 and what other paths has he gone down to find insight into the nature of reality and experience?

Before deciding on medical school, Oz pursued degrees in literature and biology, both of which later served him well in his study of human nature as a psychiatrist. But it was his love of plants that led him to an early awareness of the mind-altering plants used around the world for

perceptual and consciousness change and caused him to be lecturing to a class of medical school students about the uses of, and desires to change, consciousness. A student who had recently returned from Europe offered Oz the opportunity to experience for himself such a change with a new medicinal marvel, LSD 25. The experience of the drug gave direction to Oz's work as a medical researcher, possibilities to his work as a psychiatrist, and an outlet to his curiosity about his fundamental perceptions.

While researching LSD, Oz and Perry Bivens, the student who introduced him to LSD, began to look for other substances that might be hallucinogenic. Oz's knowledge of plants had made him aware of Ayahuasca and one of its active ingredients, DMT. In 1955, he and Perry converted an oral form of DMT into an injectible form and Oz became the first known subject to ingest DMT in the United States. He went on to do studies of DMT with people such as Alan Watts and Humphry Osmond.

"...how did Oz find LSD in 1954 and what other paths has he gone down to find insight into the nature of reality and experience?"

He also studied the hallucinogenic effects of tobacco and published a paper on the subject with Dr. Marlene De Rios. Peyote was another area of great interest that led ultimately to a study of the effects of peyote on human chromosomes. This study was funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and was performed among the Huichol Indians of Mexico who use peyote from birth. No evidence of chromosomal or organic disorders were found.

In his ongoing efforts to understand the influences on peoples' states of mind, he undertook a very early study on what later became known as Pre-Menstrual Syndrome (PMS). He conducted a cross-cultural study with Riffenburgh and Kersh that undertook to show that PMS was not a neurosis of the effete middle class as was the prevailing view of psychiatry at the time, but a somatic psychic condition that affected Nigerians, Hopis, Japanese and other cultures as well. Oz's research team even found evidence in the observations of the zookeeper at the Berlin Zoo that primates were similarly affected.

Another area where Oz chose to question the prevailing wisdom of the 1950's was to object to the prescribed therapy for homosexuals and to investigate the origins of the so-called "problem". He looked for a biological basis for homosexuality when the gay community was about to establish an identity, and published a paper with Margolese that ignited much controversy. In this century, biologically-based study of homosexuality is commonplace.

Always being inspired by his early studies of his uses of plants, Oz got involved with the scientific investigation of unconventional healing methods and became chairman of the Research Committee of The Holmes Center. Grants were given to fledgling researchers who have since become icons in their fields, such as Dr. Dean Ornish in cardiac care and Stephen LeBerge, Ph.D., in lucid dreaming.

His love of nature and his curiosity about consciousness also led him to study Cetaceans, primarily Dolphins. He is on the board of directors of the Delphys Foundation and has taken Olympic swimmers and Japanese athletes to the waters of the Bahamas. Here they studied the same pods of wild Dolphins year after year to see if any insights into the behavior of these big-brained mammals can give us a clue to their harmonious and ecologically friendly life. His forty-plus year friendship with Dr. John C. Lilly, the preeminent Dolphin researcher and fellow "Psychonaut," has led to many a fascinating conversation for all present.

Since the 1970's Oz has had thoughts of a repository for all the information amassed during LSD research. By 1989 he had gathered almost every recognized expert in the field onto the Board of Advisors of the Albert Hofmann Foundation. The foundation has a website, www.hofmann.org, and is a regular contributor to the MAPS Bulletin.

Oz is currently at work on a clinical text about Dissociative Disorder, a little understood state of consciousness sometimes compared to the experience of separating from the observer while under the effect of psychedelics. Many have briefly experienced this phenomenon naturally, with varying degrees of fear and wonder. But those stuck in a chronic or extreme state of dissociation seek treatment. Work on this has been set aside for the last year while Oz has been healing from a near-fatal open heart surgery necessitated by damage sustained seventy years ago from rheumatic fever, but controlled by a lifetime of exuberant athleticism and Norman Cousins's bromide, laughter. Recovery has been physically and emotionally challenging, but it has also led him in new directions such as writing short fiction and a screenplay that has been sold to Universal Studios.

Oz is grateful for the help and support of his friends throughout this difficult time.

We welcome you to visit our website, www.hofmann.org, as we continue to search out and provide accurate information regarding psychedelic substances and their potential. We welcome contributions to our section on VOICES, and recommendations of important papers that can contribute to greater understanding. Submit your suggestions to me at myron@qnet.com, or write to me at P.O. Box 742, Lone Pine, CA 93545.