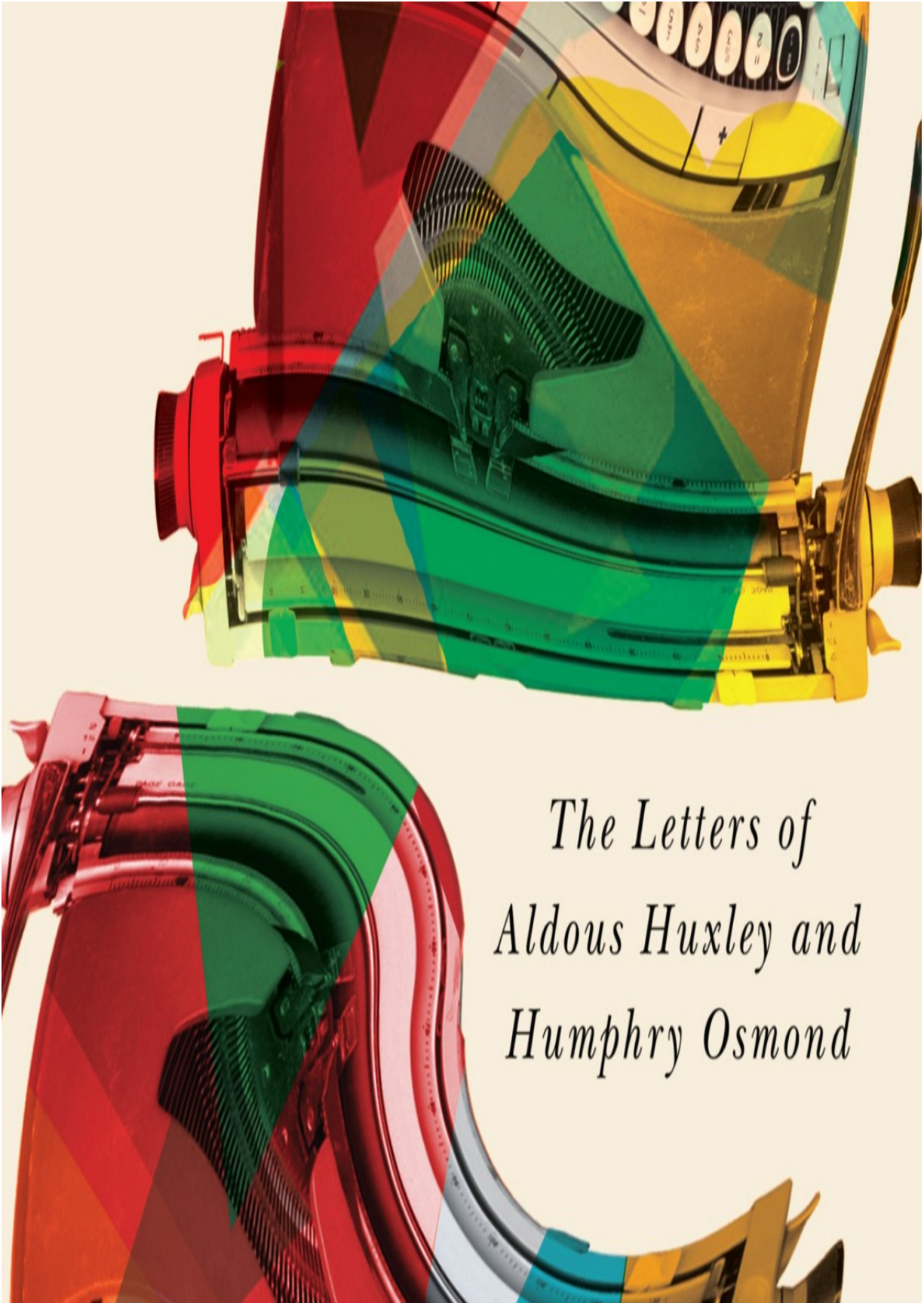


*The Letters of  
Aldous Huxley and  
Humphry Osmond*

# PSYCHEDELIC PROPHETS

*Edited by* Cynthia Carson Bisbee, Paul Bisbee, Erika Dyck,  
Patrick Farrell, James Sexton, and James W. Spisak



*The Letters of  
Aldous Huxley and  
Humphry Osmond*



# PSYCHEDELIC PROPHETS

*Edited by* Cynthia Carson Bisbee, Paul Bisbee, Erika Dyck,  
Patrick Farrell, James Sexton, and James W. Spisak

## PSYCHEDELIC PROPHETS

MCGILL-QUEEN'S/ASSOCIATED MEDICAL SERVICES STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF  
MEDICINE, HEALTH, AND SOCIETY SERIES EDITORS: J.T.H. CONNOR AND ERIKA  
DYCK

Volumes in this series have received financial support from Associated Medical Services, Inc. Associated Medical Services (AMS) is a Canadian charitable organization with an impressive history as a catalyst for change in Canadian healthcare. For eighty years, AMS has had a profound impact through its support of the history of medicine, the education of healthcare professionals, and by making strategic investments to address critical issues in our healthcare system. AMS has funded eight chairs in the history of medicine across Canada, is a primary sponsor of many of the country's history of medicine and nursing organizations, and offers fellowships and grants through the AMS History of Medicine and Healthcare Program ([www.amshealthcare.ca](http://www.amshealthcare.ca)).

- 1 Home Medicine  
*The Newfoundland Experience*  
John K. Crellin
- 2 A Long Way from Home  
*The Tuberculosis Epidemic among the Inuit*  
Pat Sandiford Grygier
- 3 Labrador Odyssey  
*The Journal and Photographs of Eliot Curwen on the Second Voyage of Wilfred Grenfell, 1893*  
Ronald Rompkey
- 4 Architecture in the Family Way  
*Doctors, Houses, and Women, 1870–1900*  
Annmarie Adams
- 5 Local Hospitals in Ancien Régime France  
*Rationalization, Resistance, Renewal, 1530–1789*  
Daniel Hickey
- 6 Foisted upon the Government?  
*State Responsibilities, Family Obligations, and the Care of the Dependent Aged in Nineteenth Century Ontario*  
Edgar-André Montigny
- 7 A Young Man's Benefit  
*The Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Sickness Insurance in the United States and Canada, 1860–1929*  
George Emery and J.C. Herbert Emery
- 8 The Weariness, the Fever, and the Fret  
*The Campaign against Tuberculosis in Canada, 1900–1950*  
Katherine McCuaig
- 9 The War Diary of Clare Gass, 1915–1918  
Edited by Susan Mann
- 10 Committed to the State Asylum  
*Insanity and Society in Nineteenth-Century Quebec and Ontario*  
James E. Moran
- 11 Jessie Luther at the Grenfell Mission  
Edited by Ronald Rompkey

- 12 Negotiating Disease  
*Power and Cancer Care, 1900–1950*  
Barbara Clow
- 13 For Patients of Moderate Means  
*A Social History of the Voluntary Public General Hospital in Canada, 1890–1950*  
David Gagan and Rosemary Gagan
- 14 Into the House of Old  
*A History of Residential Care in British Columbia*  
Megan J. Davies
- 15 St Mary's  
*The History of a London Teaching Hospital*  
E.A. Heaman
- 16 Women, Health, and Nation  
*Canada and the United States since 1945*  
Edited by Georgina Feldberg, Molly Ladd-Taylor, Alison Li, and Kathryn McPherson
- 17 The Labrador Memoir of Dr Henry Paddon, 1912–1938 Edited by Ronald Rompkey
- 18 J.B. Collip and the Development of Medical Research in Canada  
*Extracts and Enterprise*  
Alison Li
- 19 The Ontario Cancer Institute  
*Successes and Reverses at Sherbourne Street*  
E.A. McCulloch
- 20 Island Doctor  
*John Mackieson and Medicine in Nineteenth-Century Prince Edward Island*  
David A.E. Shephard
- 21 The Struggle to Serve  
*A History of the Moncton Hospital, 1895 to 1953*  
W.G. Godfrey
- 22 An Element of Hope  
*Radium and the Response to Cancer in Canada, 1900–1940*  
Charles Hayter
- 23 Labour in the Laboratory  
*Medical Laboratory Workers in the Maritimes, 1900–1950*  
Peter L. Twohig
- 24 Rockefeller Foundation Funding and Medical Education in Toronto, Montreal, and Halifax  
Marianne P. Fedunkiwi
- 25 Push!  
*The Struggle for Midwifery in Ontario*  
Ivy Lynn Bourgeault
- 26 Mental Health and Canadian Society  
*Historical Perspectives*  
Edited by James Moran and David Wright
- 27 SARS in Context  
*Memory, History, and Policy*  
Edited by Jacalyn Duffin and Arthur Sweetman

- 28 Lyndhurst  
*Canada's First Rehabilitation Centre for People with Spinal Cord Injuries, 1945–1998*  
Geoffrey Reaume
- 29 J. Wendell Macleod  
*Saskatchewan's "Red Dean"*  
Louis Horlick
- 30 Who Killed the Queen?  
*The Story of a Community Hospital and How to Fix Public Health Care*  
Holly Dressel
- 31 Healing the World's Children  
*Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Health in the Twentieth Century*  
Edited by Cynthia Comacchio, Janet Golden, and George Weisz
- 32 A Canadian Surgeon in the Army of the Potomac  
*Francis M. Wafer*  
Edited by Cheryl A. Wells
- 33 A Sadly Troubled History  
*The Meanings of Suicide in the Modern Age*  
John Weaver
- 34 SARS Unmasked  
*Risk Communication of Pandemics and Influenza in Canada*  
Michael G. Tyshenko with assistance from Cathy Patterson
- 35 Tuberculosis Then and Now  
*Perspectives on the History of an Infectious Disease*  
Edited by Flurin Condrau and Michael Worboys
- 36 Caregiving on the Periphery  
*Historical Perspectives on Nursing and Midwifery in Canada*  
Edited by Myra Rutherford
- 37 Infection of the Innocents  
*Wet Nurses, Infants, and Syphilis in France, 1780–1900*  
Joan Sherwood
- 38 The Fluorspar Mines of Newfoundland  
*Their History and the Epidemic of Radiation Lung Cancer*  
John Martin
- 39 Small Matters  
*Canadian Children in Sickness and Health, 1900–1940*  
Mona Gleason
- 40 Sorrows of a Century  
*Interpreting Suicide in New Zealand, 1900–2000*  
John C. Weaver
- 41 The Black Doctors of Colonial Lima  
*Science, Race, and Writing in Colonial and Early Republican Peru*  
José R. Jouve Martín
- 42 Bodily Subjects  
*Essays on Gender and Health, 1800–2000*  
Edited by Tracy Penny Light, Barbara Brookes, and Wendy Mitchinson

- 43 Expelling the Plague  
*The Health Office and the Implementation of Quarantine in Dubrovnik, 1377–1533*  
Zlata Blažina Tomić and Vesna Blažina
- 44 Telling the Flesh  
*Life Writing, Citizenship and the Body in the Letters to Samuel Auguste Tissot*  
Sonja Boon
- 45 Mobilizing Mercy  
*A History of the Canadian Red Cross*  
Sarah Glassford
- 46 The Invisible Injured  
*Psychological Trauma in the Canadian Military from the First World War to Afghanistan*  
Adam Montgomery
- 47 Carving a Niche  
*The Medical Profession in Mexico, 1800–1870*  
Luz María Hernández Sáenz
- 48 Psychedelic Prophets  
*The Letters of Aldous Huxley and Humphry Osmond*  
Edited by Cynthia Carson Bisbee, Paul Bisbee, Erika Dyck, Patrick Farrell, James Sexton, and James W. Spisak



# Psychedelic Prophets

The Letters of Aldous Huxley and Humphry Osmond

---

EDITED BY CYNTHIA CARSON BISBEE, PAUL BISBEE, ERIKA DYCK, PATRICK  
FARRELL, JAMES SEXTON, AND JAMES W. SPISAK

McGill-Queen's University Press  
Montreal & Kingston • London • Chicago

© McGill-Queen's University Press 2018

ISBN 978-0-7735-5506-8 (cloth)  
ISBN 978-0-7735-5602-7 (ePDF)  
ISBN 978-0-7735-5603-4 (ePUB)

Legal deposit fourth quarter 2018  
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec

Printed in Canada on acid-free paper that is 100% ancient forest free (100% post-consumer recycled), processed chlorine free

This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, through the Awards to Scholarly Publications Program, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, which last year invested \$153 million to bring the arts to Canadians throughout the country.

Nous remercions le Conseil des arts du Canada de son soutien. L'an dernier, le Conseil a investi 153 millions de dollars pour mettre de l'art dans la vie des Canadiennes et des Canadiens de tout le pays.

---

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Psychedelic prophets : the letters of Aldous Huxley and Humphry Osmond / edited by Cynthia Carson Bisbee, Paul Bisbee, Erika Dyck, Patrick Farrell, James Sexton, and James W. Spisak.

(McGill-Queen's/Associated Medical Services studies in the history of medicine, health, and society ; 48)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Issued in print and electronic formats.

ISBN 978-0-7735-5506-8 (cloth). – ISBN 978-0-7735-5602-7 (ePDF). – ISBN 978-0-7735-5603-4 (ePUB)

1. Huxley, Aldous, 1894–1963 – Correspondence. 2. Osmond, Humphry – Correspondence. 3. Authors, English – 20th century – Correspondence. 4. Psychiatrists – Saskatchewan – Correspondence. 5. Hallucinogenic drugs – Therapeutic use. 6. LSD (Drug) – Therapeutic use. 7. Schizophrenia – Treatment. 8. Mental illness – Treatment. 9. Personal Correspondence. I. Bisbee, Cynthia Carson, editor II. Sexton, James, editor III. Spisak, James W., editor IV. Dyck, Erika, editor V. Bisbee, Paul, 1945–, editor VI. Farrell, Patrick, 1978–, editor VII. Series: McGill–Queen's/Associated Medical Services studies in the history of medicine, health, and society ; 48

PR6015.U9Z48 2018

823'.912

C2018-903727-X

This book was typeset in 10.5/13 Sabon.

# Contents

Preface

Acknowledgments

Illustrations

Introduction

Editors' Note

1953

1954

1955

1956

1957

1958

1959

1960

1961

1962

1963

Epilogue

Note on the Appendices

Appendix 1: Letters between Humphry Osmond and Maria Huxley, 1953–  
1955

Appendix 2: LSD Experience of 7 November 1956: Letters between  
Humphry Osmond and Matthew, Ellen, and Francis Huxley

Appendix 3: Aldous Huxley's Account of Maria Huxley's Last Days, ca. 15  
February 1955

Appendix 4: Humphry Osmond's Statement on Peyote, 5 November 1955

Bibliography

About the Editors

Index

## Preface

In March 1953, Aldous Huxley sent an “appreciative note” to the psychiatrist Humphry Osmond about an article that Osmond and Dr John Smythies had just published on their experiments with mescaline.<sup>1</sup> He included a copy of his novel *The Devils of Loudon* (1952) with his note. Osmond responded to this note promptly and thus initiated a close friendship that grew quickly and lasted over ten years until Huxley’s death in 1963.

In Osmond’s remarks in *Aldous Huxley, 1894–1963*, the memorial volume compiled by Huxley’s brother Julian, we learn that both he and the Huxleys were slightly apprehensive about his being their house guest since they had not previously met. He recounts the story as it was told to him by Huxley’s first wife, Maria:

One morning at breakfast, Aldous looked up from his mail and said, “Let’s ask this fellow Osmond to stay.” Maria was surprised because Aldous rarely suggested asking anyone to stay and she had never heard of “this fellow.” Aldous enlightened her, “He’s a Canadian psychiatrist who works with mescaline.” Maria replied, “But he may have a beard and we may not like him.” Aldous thought for a bit, and said, “If we don’t like him we can always be out” ... I was also apprehensive, but my wife pointed out, “It will only be for a few days, and you can always be kept late by an APA [American Psychiatric Association] session.”<sup>2</sup>

Maria was quickly put at ease when she realized Humphry, like Aldous, was English. As Osmond recalls, “To Maria, Englishmen were largely incomprehensible except to each other.”<sup>3</sup>

We have a candid account of Osmond’s first live impressions of the Huxleys in the letter he wrote to his wife, Jane, on 6 May 1953, a few days after his arrival:

The days spent in a welter of psychiatrists and the evenings spent with the Huxleys who are as kind and friendly as could be. Tonight we are going on a shopping expedition ... They have chosen a huge multiple store called Ohrbach's which apparently greatly intrigues Aldous who is wondrously interested in everything ... Mrs Huxley tells me that he is not an imaginative person and has the greatest difficulty in finding stories about which he can write – but the finished product doesn't suggest this ... They have a strange collection of friends who are I judge greatly helped by their kindness, for Aldous is extremely tolerant, although he is knowledgeable he always encourages others to have their say.<sup>4</sup>

That unpublished letter also gives us Osmond's description of Huxley's attendance at the APA meeting: "He carries a magnifying glass for close work and a little spy glass for long distance ... Yesterday he came down to the meeting and much enjoyed it. Peering through his spy glass and crossing himself when Freud's name was mentioned and referring to OSA<sup>5</sup> as 'this Marxist society.'" It is easy to see how any early apprehensiveness quickly faded once these warm and generous people met.

Besides being well informed on a wide variety of topics – science, literature, music, art, religion – both men were prolific letter writers. In his classic *Letters of Aldous Huxley*, editor Grover Smith estimates that Huxley wrote "at the very least ten thousand letters."<sup>6</sup> That edition contains over 900 of them, and editor James Sexton's *Selected Letters of Aldous Huxley* gives us an additional 500. Osmond was equally prolific. Although no compilation of his letters exists, collections of them held by his family, by numerous colleagues and friends he wrote to, and by the university libraries in Alabama and Saskatchewan indicate that he wrote many thousands as well. In addition, Osmond's letters are generally longer than Huxley's – in this set, about three times as long.

Osmond knew from the outset that he was corresponding with one of the world's great men of letters, a generation his senior, whose reputation was already firmly established. For this reason, one supposes, he carefully kept everything Huxley sent him. In addition, he meticulously kept a carbon copy of what he wrote to Huxley and his family members; mercifully, the advancement of photocopiers in the late 1950s made this task easier. As a

result, a complete set of the letters between these two great minds has been preserved, and they comprise a landmark chapter in the history of mental health.

After Huxley's death, Osmond and Huxley's widow, Laura, discussed publishing the letters contained herein. Initially, the timing did not seem to be right since Grover Smith's large volume of Huxley's letters was about to be released. Osmond wrote to Laura on 5 March 1968,

Regarding the book of letters between Aldous and myself, I can't help feeling this should really be a separate book from the [Grover Smith] letters ... But I am all in favor of a second book later ... I would very much like the interchange of ideas that was very valuable to me, and for which I shall always be indebted to Aldous, to appear together. I certainly agree that the proposition that the letters of Aldous to me on LSD being omitted would be a gross error of judgment.<sup>7</sup>

Three weeks later, Osmond again wrote to Laura, telling her of interest in the project by Doubleday: "I would prefer that we allow them [the Grover Smith letters] to be published and then produce this volume. I don't want to in any way interfere with the success of the collected letters, although I don't think that this correspondence would do that, even a small risk would seem to be objectionable."<sup>8</sup>

Soon thereafter, it appears that the Huxley-Osmond correspondence gave way to other interests of both Laura and Humphry. Osmond kept his set of the letters, both Aldous's originals and his painstaking carbons. The set became separated at some point, probably when the Osmonds left Alabama and moved to Wisconsin to live with their daughter Euphemia (Fee). Although most of the letters moved to and remain in Wisconsin, those from the last three years (1960–63) ended up in the hands of Osmond's able and caring colleagues in Alabama. Scans of the entire set of letters were made by Allene Symons for her own research on Huxley and Osmond, and Ms Symons graciously gave a copy to Laura. These were discovered in 2014 by Laura's nephew (and Huxley trustee) Piero Ferrucci when he cleaned out Laura's storage bin.

The correspondence we have the good fortune to present here comprises an extended, candid, highly intelligent conversation between two great



minds, something that consideration of individual letters, or even collections, by one or the other could not do. Besides the primary letters, we are also presenting a much smaller set of letters never before published, or even seen by many, which describe an LSD experiment on 7 November 1956. The participants were Humphry, Aldous's son, Matthew, Matthew's wife, Ellen, and Aldous's nephew Francis, son of his brother Julian. These letters (in [appendix 2](#)) provide rare insight to an informal, loosely planned LSD experience and also show how a continued interest in psychedelics, science, and knowledge was shared by Humphry and the next generation of Huxleys.

Although Osmond's relationship with Laura and the younger Huxleys continued, his letter to Laura in January 1967 makes clear how much he missed being able to write to Aldous: "I must say I miss having no occasion to write to him now and greatly miss his delightfully stimulating letters to me. Right down to the very last one they were full of fun, even in the shadow of death. I don't need to tell you how much I long for his company – every so often something happens and I catch myself thinking how much Aldous will enjoy that. Indeed I have a feeling that he does."<sup>9</sup>

#### NOTES

- 1 See J. Smythies, "The Impact of Psychedelic Drugs on Philosophy and Psychological Research," *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 52, no. 795 (1983): 196–7.
- 2 J. Huxley, ed., *Aldous Huxley, 1894–1963*, 114–15
- 3 *Ibid.*, 115.
- 4 Humphry Osmond to Jane Osmond, 6 May 1953, private collection.
- 5 The Overseas Sterling Area, also known as the Sterling bloc, referred to a group of countries that tied their currency to the pound sterling after Britain left the gold standard in 1931. See Huxley, *Ends and Means*, 41.
- 6 Huxley, *Letters*, 3.
- 7 Humphry Osmond to Laura Huxley, 5 March 1968, in *Aldous and Laura Huxley Papers*.
- 8 Humphry Osmond to Laura Huxley, 25 March 1968, in *ibid.*
- 9 Humphry Osmond to Laura Huxley, 20 January 1967, in *ibid.*

## Acknowledgments

The editors are grateful first of all to the people and the institution that allowed us to publish these letters: the Aldous and Laura Huxley Literary Trust for those of Aldous Huxley; Euphemia (Fee) Blackburn, Julian Osmond, and Patricia Scheifler for those of Humphry Osmond; Mark Trevenen Huxley and Theresa Huxley for those of Ellen Hovde Huxley; and Adele Getty for those of Francis Huxley. We are also grateful to Allene Symons for providing her scans of the full set of letters.

We thankfully acknowledge permissions and support provided by the following research and archival institutions: W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; UCLA Library, Special Collections, Los Angeles; Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon and Regina; and Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa.

For permission to reproduce photographs, we thank Fee Blackburn; Allene Symons; the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*; the Soo Line Museum, Weyburn, Saskatchewan; and the Bureau of Research in Neurology and Psychiatry, Princeton, New Jersey.

For funding support, we are grateful to the University of Saskatchewan College of Arts and Science and College of Medicine; the Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Canada; and Associated Medical Services Inc.

Research assistance and support, as well as critical insight, were generously provided by numerous people, including Lindsey Banco, André Bernard, Jean Bidlack, Joan Bisbee, Stephen Bisbee, Jeff Brooke, Michael Corcoran, Lawrence Davidson, Rick Doblin, James Dobson, Piero Ferrucci, Genie Guerard, Miriam Hoffer, Michael Horowitz, Jack Miles, Hugh MacCallum, John Smythies, and Sarah Taggart.

We are most appreciative of Kyla Madden at McGill-Queen's University Press for her continued belief in this project and for graciously shepherding it through the various stages of production.

There are those without whom *Psychedelic Prophets* would never have come to fruition. We are thankful to Piero Ferrucci for providing a copy of

the letters from Laura Huxley's belongings and for pushing this project forward. We are much obliged, again, to Fee Blackburn for providing additional copies of letters that presented editorial challenges. Finally, we are beholden to Patricia Scheifler, who on many occasions graciously and quickly responded to our urgent requests for copies of letters or passages that were missing or needed clarification, enabling us to offer *Psychedelic Prophets* in its present form.



Aldous Huxley during his first mescaline experience, Los Angeles, 1953. Photo by Humphry Osmond.



Aldous surveys Los Angeles  
thru<sup>o</sup> mescalin<sup>2d</sup> eyes. Picture  
by H.O. May 1953

For Humphry,  
the only benefactor  
of this book, in  
friendship,

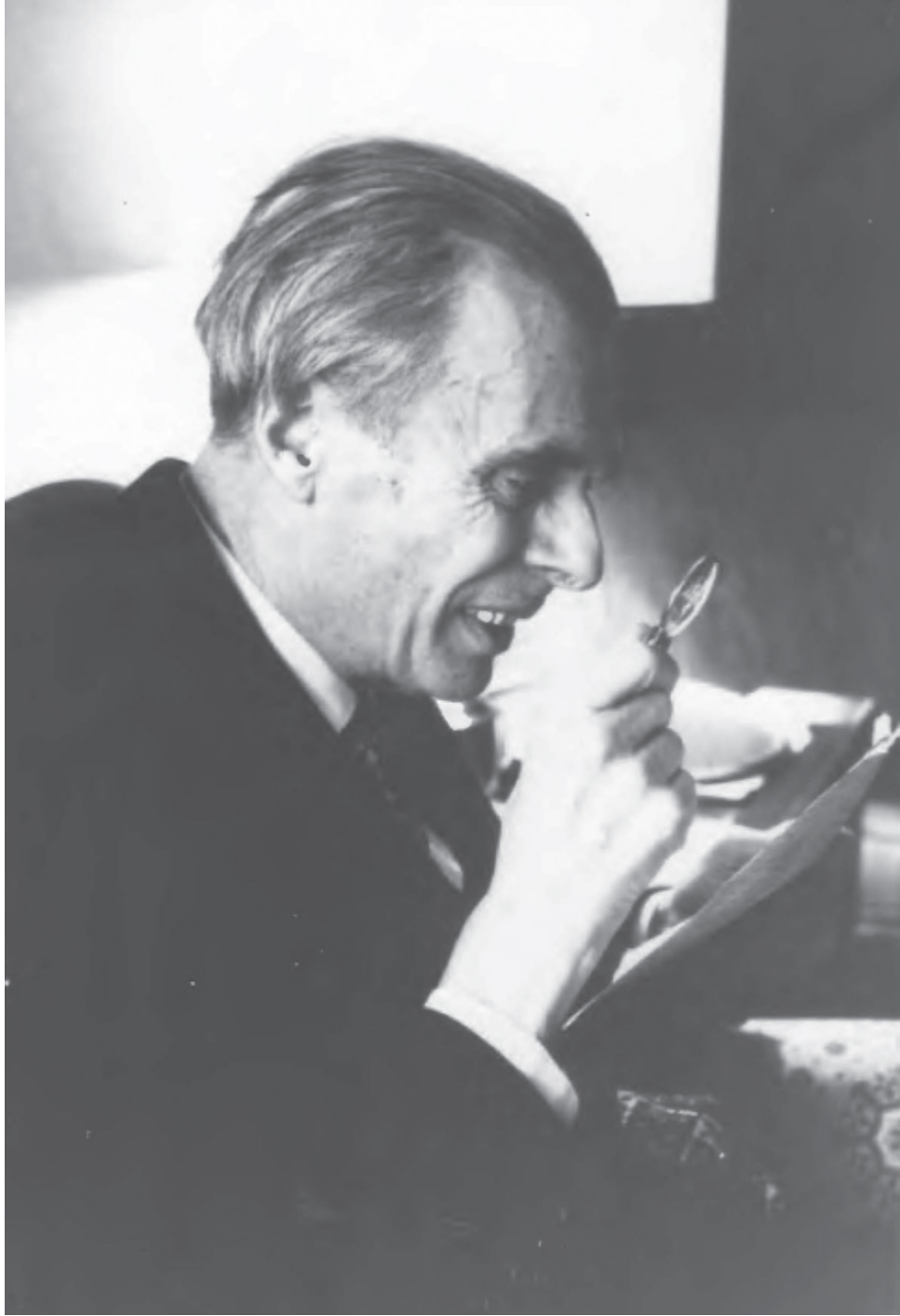
J.W.W.<sup>2</sup>  
1954.

Front flyleaf of Humphry Osmond's copy of *The Doors of Perception* (1954). Photo by Fee Blackburn; embedded photo by Humphry Osmond.



Maera above Los Angeles  
May 1953.

Back flyleaf of Humphry Osmond's copy of *The Doors of Perception* (1954). Photo by Fee Blackburn; embedded photo by Humphry Osmond.



Aldous Huxley and his looking glass, Los Angeles, 1954. Photo by Humphry Osmond.



Humphry Osmond during his night in a tipi, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, 1956. Photo courtesy of the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*.



740 North Kings Road  
Los Angeles 46  
Cal

March 30th 1956

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter, which I shall answer only briefly, since I look forward to talking to you at length in ~~xxxxxxx~~ New York before very long. About ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ a name for these drugs --- what a x problem! I have looked into Liddell and Scott and find that there is a verb phaneroein, "to make visible or manifest," and an adjective phaneros, ~~meaning~~ "manifest, open to sight, evident." The word is used in botany --- phanerogan as opposed to cryptocgan. ~~xxxxxxx~~ Psychodetic is something I don't quite get the hang of. Is it an analogue of geodetic, geodesy? If so, it would mean mind-dividing, as geodesy means earth-dividing --- from gē and daisin. Could you call these drugs psychophans? or phaneropsychic drugs. Or what about phanerothymes? Thumos means soul, in its primary usage, and is the equivalent of Latin animus. The word is euphonic and easy to pronounce; Besides it has relatives in the jargon of psychology --- e.g. cyclothyme. On the whole I think this is better than psychophan or phaneropsychic..

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~  
I expect to be flying east on the tenth, or eleventh, and will let you know before than where we shall be staying --- possibly not in a hotel at all, but in a borrowed apartment.

Yours,

Aldous

Phanerothyme - substantive

Phanerothymic - adjective

To make this trivial word sublime,  
Take half a frame of phanerothyme.  
To plumb the depths or soar angelic,  
Just take a pinch of psychedelic.

Aldous Huxley's letter to Humphry Osmond, with Osmond's note showing his first use of the term "psychedelic," 30 March 1956.

Box 1056, Weyburn.

My dear Aldous,

To fat from Hell or go angelic

Just take a pinch of PSYCHEDELIC.

(Deus te manifeste)

I like phonocrymies, I suggest we discuss which to push  
for before the engagement. I have booked at the  
Buckingham, I trust successfully & should see you on the  
night of Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>. I shall call you provided I  
don't get in too late. We might decide to turn my  
whole address into rhyming couplets. It would be arresting.

I hope to get another cotton & clover suit  
the one we bought together was a great success. Very

Humphry Osmond's reply to Aldous Huxley's letter of 30 March 1956, featuring his revised  
"psychedelic" ditty, April 1956.



Humphry Osmond at his farewell event in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, 1961. Photo courtesy of the Soo Line Museum, Weyburn, Saskatchewan.



Humphry Osmond and Albert Hofmann, Le Piol, France, 1967. Photo courtesy of Fee Blackburn.



Humphry Osmond at his desk in Princeton, ca. 1963. Photo courtesy of the Bureau of Research in Neurology and Psychiatry, Princeton, New Jersey.

# Introduction

Of course I agree that many of our “sick” people would not be “sick” if we valued their experiences, they would be explorers of the other, but as the priest relentlessly doomed the prophet and was in consequence easily himself doomed by the blind scientist, the schizophrenic person had his experiences entirely devalued. I am not sure how much certain experiences can be sustained even in the most accepting society; visions of Hell and Heaven must never be easy to endure even with the prayerful support of one’s fellows. It will be much less easy with their scornful, uncomprehending and brutal antagonism. I think we must do two things simultaneously, i) try to find some way of alleviating their experience biochemically, and ii) gather enough scientific understanding of the door into the many walls that we can appreciate and cherish mentally ill folk.

Humphry Osmond, 8 January 1954

Perhaps you might develop a little further what you say about man’s potentialities – point out that everything is in the universe of mind, heaven and hell, genius and subhuman imbecility, sanctity and diabolism; and that the schizophrenic gets a little of the good and a great deal of the bad.

Aldous Huxley, 25 March 1954

Psychiatrist Humphry Osmond shared his ideas about schizophrenia with his new friend Aldous Huxley, the well-known writer who had invited him to his home in Los Angeles only months earlier to try mescaline for the first time, a meeting that Huxley later memorialized in his book *The Doors of Perception* (1954). Their now famous meeting launched a decade-long friendship, perhaps best known for their coining of the term “psychedelic.” These early exchanges already hint at the language that guides their exploration of perception and empathy. Early in their correspondence, they invoke elements of heaven and hell, as well as the need to open proverbial doors to a more expansive range of human experiences in order to incorporate, and even potentially value, behaviours and perceptions that are more often discarded or pathologized as “sick.” This brief glimpse into their letters offers a tiny snapshot of a prolific and intimate relationship that developed between two twentieth-century thinkers committed to advancing scientific humanism by listening to those seldom listened to. Marshalling insights across disciplines and experiences, these two men entered into a dialogue that centred on altering minds and engendering tolerance in an age

of Cold War anxieties and an atmosphere of unease surrounding the relationship between science and technology and the impact of this relationship on humanity.

This edition offers the complete Huxley-Osmond correspondence, which chronicles an exchange between these two brilliant minds, who explored such subjects as psychedelics, the visionary experience, the nature of mind, human potentialities, schizophrenia, death and dying, Indigenous rituals and consciousness, socialism, power and authority, capitalism, totalitarianism, and human evolution. They represented a rare group of modern thinkers who were incredibly well connected and well versed and who imagined a civilized world guided by a pursuit of science tempered with compassion for humanity.

#### LETTER WRITING IN A MENTAL HOSPITAL

One does not waste the opportunity to write to a brilliant and world-famous intellectual and writer such as Aldous Huxley. Fortunately, Humphry Osmond did not. For ten fruitful and memorable years, Osmond wrote to him and received insightful letters in return. His enthusiasm for their friendship is unflagging to the end. Indeed, the tone of the early letters suggests as much, with a notably deferential Osmond regularly alluding to the quality and depth of Huxley's writings on whatever topic. The initial tone of "Dear Mr Huxley" soon gives way to a warm "My dear Aldous." This intimacy characterizes the entirety of their ten-year correspondence. Their sign-offs reflect a committed emotional intimacy – "love ever," "affectionately," and "yours" – suggestive of a mutually appreciative friendship.

The letters were clearly for Osmond an opportunity, perhaps like no other in his life, to work through his most personal, professional, and philosophical ideas. And work through these ideas he did. A regular concern is the state of the "Augean stables,"<sup>1</sup> the enormous Weyburn Mental Hospital in Saskatchewan, where he is the young director. Routine updates on the vast and seemingly insurmountable challenges faced in its clean-up and reorganization receive regular airing, as well as his related forays into what he referred to as "socio-architecture." He also spills considerable ink describing his now more famous experiments with LSD,

mescaline, and other hallucinogenic substances. His letters are dotted with remarks about contemporary and past figures in the history of science and psychology as Osmond reconciles the current practices with past theories of human behaviour. Huxley offers a steady ear of empathy and unsentimental encouragement.

The intimacy of the letters is perhaps at its deepest and most fascinating on the topic of developing a strategy for exploring psychedelics as both an ameliorative and even prophylactic guard against the ever apparent social and moral chaos they perceive in their midst. Indeed, Huxley's arguably dystopian musings captured so vividly in his novel *Brave New World* (1932) profoundly resonate with the younger Osmond, who regularly identifies coming problems in the social organization of the West, especially the mighty United States. Over the years, many people and ideas fall under Osmond's critical gaze: Sigmund Freud, Rorschach inkblot tests, models or classification systems of madness, and even the funding and organization of big science. All topics receive attention and insightful critiques in Osmond's letters.

But whereas Osmond's day-to-day work in the mental hospital focuses his attention on psychiatry and hospital administration, his connection to Huxley blossoms through their mutual adoration of literature. Huxley's stature was already well established by the time they met in 1953, and Osmond luxuriated in the opportunity to confer with a man of such inimitable and proven literary prowess. Regular, extemporaneous quotes and paraphrases of great literature pepper the letters. This love is perhaps at its most endearing with regard to Osmond's eldest daughter, Helen – "The Duck Poetess." Regular updates on the young girl's activities, literary and otherwise, are documented, to Huxley's evident approval and pleasure. Touchingly, Helen makes an appearance in the very last letter while Huxley is dying of cancer, and one cannot help thinking that Osmond, knowing his friend and mentor is nearing the end, believes he might benefit from an unexpected appearance of the nature- and poetry-loving girl.

The intimacies run deep, as from the start the letters are coloured with the warmth of a familial and domestic tone, which becomes even clearer in the miscellaneous letters between Osmond and extended members of the Huxley family, included in the appendices. Enquiries and declarations of love are sent in both directions, and children's progress is regularly marked



with a note of poems learned and frogs caught. The struggle with cancer and ultimate death of Aldous's first wife, Maria, are a testament to the relationship not just between Huxley and Osmond but also between both couples. Osmond offers his help in terms of knowledge and advice, and his wife, Jane, offers to move in to be Maria's nurse. Osmond's response following Maria's death is earnest and beautiful. Indeed, Maria's presence continues to pervade their relationship, and Osmond does not hesitate to note those instances when she is on his mind. She even appears in Osmond's final letter to Huxley, giving us a glimpse into the deep and lasting impression she made, no doubt inscribed on the fateful day in May 1953 when the young doctor excitedly administered a dose of mescaline to one of the world's most famous thinkers.

It is not just Osmond's burgeoning family that receives discussion; Huxley's much older children are also featured in memorable ways. A particularly touching and insightful exchange in 1959 relates to troubles in Matthew's then marriage to Ellen Hovde. Some time in their company prompts Osmond to write a beautiful and insightful letter to Aldous. Typical forthrightness and clarity ensue: "I had the curious feeling that they were living in very different worlds whose boundaries could only be crossed by an active and concerted effort of love" (28 April 1959). Huxley responds, "Inhabitants of different and largely incommensurable worlds *can* live happily together – but only on condition that each recognizes the fact that the other's world is different and has just as much right to exist and be lived in as his own ... But, alas, what is possible goes all too often unrealized and, instead of federating their two worlds, the temperamental aliens settle down to a cold war" (6 May 1959). It is Huxley's ex-daughter-in-law Ellen who calls Osmond on 22 October 1963 to report that "Aldous [is] very ill." From the vantage of the letters, at least, it is clear that these two luminaries at the forefront of psychedelics were always rooted in their commitments and responsibilities to their own families. Osmond's very last sentence to his cherished friend seems to capture the extent to which these two men, who shared so much yet were so different, found common cause in their mutual love of literature, science, and family: "The Lear which you and Maria sent Helen is now Fee's favorite – Dongs and Jumblies!" (31 October 1963).

The extended familial relationships, as highlighted in the appendices, also underscore a tenderness and intimacy that had grown between the families over a relatively short period of time. Humphry operated in some ways as a hinge between two generations in the Huxley family. Indeed, Maria at one point describes Humphry as like both a grandson and a grandfather to them. Humphry's role, however, was also that of a facilitator or translator, eagerly pursuing discussions that flirted with the edges of mainstream mind science.

#### BRAVE NEW WORLD(S)

At the beginning of the Cold War, two British men found themselves displaced in the unfamiliar environs of North America. Aldous Huxley had been living in Los Angeles with his wife, Maria, since 1937; perched in the Hollywood hills, Huxley referred to his eagle's nest, or eyrie, which was much like the eyrie of the library from which Lewis Carroll (who incidentally took photos of Huxley's mother when she was a child) had looked at the passing of the world. This place was a strange urban enclave far from his home and family in London, England, but surrounded by a fascinating array of curious visitors and guests drawn to his literary genius. Maria commanded her own fascination, being drawn to mystics, psychics, and the occult; like Aldous, she was comfortable with the exotic and sometimes tabooed world of the paranormal. Maria explored the boundaries of empirical reality, and her husband attempted to capture such encounters through his writing. Los Angeles in the 1950s offered its own storied mythology as it came of age as an exciting destination for artists, film stars, musicians, and liberal thinkers. For the Huxleys, the place was both strange and wonderful, and in hindsight we can see that their stories fit right in.

Meanwhile some 2,600 kilometres away in Canada, Humphry Osmond's experience was quite different. He too, along with his wife, Jane, had left the urban streets of London for the windswept and often snow-covered Canadian prairies and the small town of Weyburn, Saskatchewan, in 1951. There, Osmond was poised to take over as clinical director of one of North America's notorious mental hospitals, or as some referred to it, the last asylum in the British Commonwealth. With his characteristic ironic humour, he noted, "Those lunatics who placed this vast hospital far away

from everything should have been shot” (31 January 1958). Osmond’s experience on the sprawling, rural Canadian prairie, just north of Montana and North Dakota, bore virtually no obvious resemblance to Huxley’s circumstances in California. Despite the differences in local environments, these two British travellers shared an insatiable sense of curiosity and an unquenchable desire to question what is what. Their common heritage helped them to minimize their nearly 23-year age difference by drawing on their shared experiences of British education, culture, and society, along with a healthy distrust of professional bureaucracy and established traditions. It also allowed them to question the Cold War context as outsiders, bringing further conviction to their desire to interrogate the role of science – and increasingly, the utility of psychedelics – as it contributes to a so-called civilizing mission.

For Huxley, already established as a writer and liberal thinker, his American home may have allowed him to achieve some distance from his famous family. His grandfather Thomas Huxley was a famed biologist, known as “Darwin’s Bulldog” for his fierce advocacy of evolution and the power of science to organize society justly. Aldous’s father, Leonard, was a writer and proponent of blending literature with science, which he did throughout his own career.<sup>2</sup> His mother, Julia Frances Arnold, was the daughter of Rev. Thomas Arnold and the niece of Victorian poet and cultural critic Matthew Arnold; Julia’s sister was the novelist Mrs Humphry Ward. Aldous’s older brother, Julian, followed in his grandfather’s footsteps, becoming a formidable evolutionary biologist and the first president of the British Humanist Association; Julian was ultimately knighted, and he was also a well-known advocate of eugenics. Aldous hailed from a familial environment that was richly endowed with intellectual capabilities that routinely crossed the humanities and sciences, furnishing him with both opportunities and expectations as a public intellectual. California was sufficiently far from England, his extended family, and perhaps the pressure to participate fully in the contemporary debates there about population control or socialism that brought evolutionary biology and politics together in the twentieth century and had so captivated his relatives for generations. Huxley often stated that he had chosen California for its plentiful sunshine and its positive impact on his faulty eyesight. Moreover, he certainly appreciated his “overpaid film jobs”

– successful screen treatments for Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice* and Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* – the proceeds from which allowed him to help “a few people caught in the nightmare on the other side of the Atlantic.”<sup>3</sup>

Huxley’s move to California also enabled him to pursue his interest in spirituality, which he shared with Maria. He did this largely through his association with the Vedanta Society of Southern California, where he came to know its founder, Swami Prabhavananda. Huxley wrote the introduction to the edition of the *Bhagavad Gita* translated by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood and published by the society in 1944. He contributed dozens of articles to the society’s journal, *Vedanta and the West*, and along with Isherwood and Gerald Heard, served on its editorial board. One of these articles was “The Minimum Working Hypothesis,” first published in 1944, an essay that briefly distills the key tenets presented in *The Perennial Philosophy* (1946), a broad anthology of mystical, spiritual, and religious writers, accompanied by Huxley’s extensive commentary. In these publications, Huxley maintains that all religious and spiritual traditions share a common universal set of truths.

Huxley’s embrace of the perennial philosophy was guided by his belief that the path toward recognizing a “divine Reality” was an active one; transcendence requires more than knowledge, which is a second-hand experience. To experience the One, the divine Reality, we must research a “purely spiritual reality” and practise it in our own lives. In conjunction with the essay and book enunciating his view of the perennial philosophy, he also inserted the minimum working hypothesis and its central axioms verbatim into the notebook of Sebastian Barnack, protagonist of his novel *Time Must Have a Stop* (1944):

For those of us who are not congenitally the members of any organized church, who have found that humanism and blue-domeism are not enough, who are not content to remain in the darkness of spiritual ignorance, the squalor of vice or that other squalor of mere respectability, the minimum working hypothesis would seem to be about as follows:

- That there is a Godhead or Ground, which is the unmanifested principle of all manifestation.
- That the Ground is transcendent and immanent.
- That it is possible for human beings to love, know and, from virtually, to become actually identified with the Ground.
- That to achieve this unitive knowledge, to realize this supreme identity, is the final end and purpose of human existence.
- That there is a Law or Dharma, which must be obeyed, a Tao or Way, which must be followed, if men are to achieve their final end.

That the more there is of I, me, mine, the less there is of the Ground; and that consequently the Tao is a Way of humility and compassion, the Dharma a Law of mortification and self-transcending awareness. Which accounts, of course, for the facts of human history. People love their egos and don't wish to mortify them, don't wish to see why they shouldn't "express their personalities" and "have a good time." They get their good times; but also and inevitably they get wars and syphilis and revolution and alcoholism, tyranny and, in default of an adequate religious hypothesis, the choice between some lunatic idolatry, like nationalism, and a sense of complete futility and despair. Unutterable miseries! But throughout recorded history most men and women have preferred the risks, the positive certainty, of such disasters to the laborious whole-time job of trying to get to know the divine Ground of all being. In the long run we get exactly what we ask for.<sup>4</sup>

Although Huxley's move to California gave him opportunities to develop and articulate his perennial philosophy, the ideas behind it had been germinating for years and appeared in his earlier works. As early as 1925, in his novel *Those Barren Leaves*, Huxley reveals in his partly autobiographical counterpart, Calamy, a sensualist who rejects the world in order to become a contemplative. Helmholtz Watson, the amorist poster boy for the materialist values of the rulers in *Brave New World* (1932), comes to write a poem whose paradoxes help to convey its theme: the rejection of worldliness and promiscuity in favour of mystical contemplation. Huxley's most autobiographical character, Anthony Beavis in his novel *Eyeless in Giza* (1936), also rejects his previous life of sensuality and egotism in his

quest for “unity beyond the turmoil of separations and divisions. Goodness beyond the possibility of evil ... some other light, steady, untroubled, as utterly calm as the darkness out of which it emerges ... from storm to calm and on through yet profounder and intenser peace to the final consummation, the ultimate light that is the source and substance of all things.”<sup>5</sup> Virtually all the protagonists of Huxley’s novels from 1925 to 1962 eventually reject their earlier sensuality and worldliness, and all effectively become adherents of the perennial philosophy.

The spiritual journey made by Will Farnaby, the protagonist of his last novel, *Island* (1962), parallels those of the previous protagonists but with a difference. In *Island*, as in his essay “Drugs that Shape Men’s Minds” (1958), Huxley suggests that the liberating conditions for transcendence, or “moksha,” could be attained through the use of psychedelic drugs such as LSD. Clearly, this claim resulted from his experiences with mescaline and LSD, which began in 1953, when he first met Osmond, and continued to his death. Throughout these letters, both men see psychedelics as a means to various ends. Although Osmond’s formal work focused on the scientific benefits, both he and Huxley repeatedly saw them as one means of accessing the other world and experiencing the One. Huxley raises this idea in his very first letter to Osmond. And in a letter to Aldous and Maria on 22 July 1953, only a couple of months after meeting them, Osmond summarizes this symbiosis nicely:

Knowing you both would, at any time in my life, have been a privilege and a delight. At the moment it is also something of a lifeline, or perhaps more correctly a counterpoise to prevent the kingdom of this world becoming too engrossing. Aldous had done it for me by writing *The Perennial Philosophy*. Read after mescal clicked, I knew and I knew that I knew, and I knew that others had known this before me. Of course I had read some of it before but *The Perennial Philosophy* presents it so well and without the nonsense which so many expositors feel bound to add off their own bat. So you see we are mutually indebted and that is an exchange of the most precious gifts which can bind a friendship.

Until roughly 1935, Huxley wrote mainly satiric critiques of European and American society, but in late 1935 he came under the influence of Canon Dick Sheppard, dean of Canterbury, whose newspaper pronouncements and BBC Radio talks made him a highly influential public figure. Soon, Huxley began to forsake cynical satire in favour of committed social activism. Sheppard persuaded him to join the Peace Pledge Union and to give public lectures and write pacifist tracts for the movement. This sea change is described in the autobiographical novel *Eyeless in Gaza* (1936), whose narrator Anthony Beavis comes under the influence of characters modelled upon Sheppard but also F.M. Alexander, founder of the Alexander Technique of “kinesthetic re-education,” the practice of which Huxley’s first wife, Maria, said “made a new and unrecognizable person of Aldous.”<sup>6</sup> Despite complex time shifts in the narrative, Huxley clearly depicts the narrator’s two sides – Anthony’s earlier career as an aloof, cynical sensualist and his evolution into an emotionally committed ethical advocate of pacifism and social activism, the dialectical structure of which Huxley adapted from Søren Kierkegaard’s chapter “Diary of a Seducer” in his philosophical novel *Either/Or* (1843), whose characters A and B serve as prototypes for Beavis’s opposing sides. Most of Huxley’s remaining works, including the later novels *After Many a Summer* (1939), *Time Must Have a Stop* (1944), and *Island* (1962), feature characters who are models of social activism.

Osmond encountered Huxley after he had developed this social activist outlook, and he too was drawn to discussions that combined science, politics, and humanism rather than parsing them out for the sake of creating neat disciplines. He was born in Surrey, England, on 1 July 1917, almost precisely 23 years after Aldous Huxley was born in the same county. From the beginning, however, this is where the similarities stopped. Osmond’s father had worked in a local hospital as the paymaster captain and eventually moved the family to Devonshire before Humphry later settled with his aunt and uncle back in Surrey, where he completed the rest of his preparatory schooling. Rather than heading straight into the study of medicine at university, he took a more circuitous route, beginning with theatre writing and a brief attempt at banking. He credited Hector Cameron, a physician and historian of medicine, with introducing him to the wide

variety of possibilities within medicine that eventually captured his academic interests.<sup>7</sup>

By the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Osmond had completed his clinical training, but the war interrupted his regular hospital ward practicum and forced him to engage in intermittent fieldwork. In 1940 he returned to Guy's Hospital in London only to experience the horrors of the German bombs that rained down on the city, destroying much of the area but miraculously leaving the hospital more or less intact. For the next several months, he and a few medical school colleagues ran a makeshift morgue. Several years later, he recalled the profound influence this experience had upon him: "as a Socialist ... it wasn't enough to say this is the inevitable process of history."<sup>8</sup> Despite qualifying for medicine in July 1942, his plans were again interrupted by the war when he was called to serve in the army in November that same year.<sup>9</sup>

Instead of serving in the army, he joined the British navy and spent Christmas in 1942 at the barracks in Portsmouth. Later, while serving on a destroyer in the Atlantic Ocean, he became acquainted with another part of the war. Amidst dodging torpedoes from German submarines, with the ship filled with men requiring medical attention, Osmond struggled to provide assistance with limited practical experience and meagre medical supplies. At sea, he also learned that psychiatric emergencies were often quite severe and potentially more damaging than surgical crises.<sup>10</sup> Through his work with the navy, Osmond met Surgeon Captain Desmond Curran, head of psychiatry in the British navy, who nurtured his interests in psychiatry, whereas his medical colleagues chastised him for abandoning what could have been a promising career in surgery.<sup>11</sup>

After the war, in his late 20s, Osmond took a position as a senior registrar in the psychiatric unit at St George's Hospital in London. There he worked closely with colleague John Smythies and cultivated a keen interest in chemically induced reactions in the human body. Smythies and Osmond, with the aid of organic chemist John Harley-Mason, considered the chemical properties of mescaline, the psychoactive agent in the peyote cactus. Nearly two years of research led them to conclude that mescaline produced reactions in volunteers that resembled the symptoms of schizophrenia,<sup>12</sup> a chronic "disease marked by disordered thinking, hallucinations, social withdrawal, and, in severe cases, a deterioration in the



capacity to lead a rewarding life.”<sup>13</sup> Further investigation suggested that mescaline’s chemical structure was remarkably similar to that of adrenaline. Their findings led them to theorize that schizophrenia resulted from a biochemical “imbalance” in the sufferer, or the overproduction of a derivative of adrenaline. Furthermore, they believed that the imbalance might be caused by a dysfunction in the process of metabolizing adrenaline, which in turn created a new substance that chemically resembled mescaline.<sup>14</sup>

Osmond and Smythies’s working hypothesis, that epinephrine when improperly metabolized produced a substance in the body that resembled mescaline, which in turn triggered psychotic symptoms, captivated them. According to psychopharmacologist and historian David Healy, this early research at St George’s Hospital in London later led to studies of dopamine and ultimately to the discovery of dopamine receptors.<sup>15</sup> Before then, however, researchers in London began analyzing the urine of schizophrenic patients to check for evidence of hallucinogenic substances, believing that through the process of transmethylation, organic compounds were causing psychotic symptoms due to a metabolic dysfunction. Healy explains that although this theory had some merit, it was ultimately surpassed by those concentrating on dopamine antagonists, a finding “successfully used by the pharmaceutical industry to sell drugs,” which adds a critical dimension to the saliency of the science behind madness at the time.<sup>16</sup> Osmond’s and Smythies’s colleagues at St George’s Hospital were not particularly interested in this biochemical research, but Osmond was intent on continuing their work. One of his colleagues recalled that Osmond decided to leave Britain, where “he had received no encouragement in a largely psychoanalytic environment.”<sup>17</sup> He later reiterates this sentiment in a letter to Huxley where he complains that “Freud cast too long a shadow” in Western psychiatry, suggesting that the biochemical theories of mental illness had no place in a psychoanalytically oriented profession (16 September 1956). After responding to an advertisement in the *Lancet* for a deputy director of psychiatry at the Weyburn Mental Hospital in Saskatchewan, Osmond and his family made the move.

Osmond’s decision likely came as a surprise to some of his colleagues, but his desire for research freedom matched his self-effacing qualities and his capacity for taking on new risks and challenges. Even so, the small town

of Weyburn was a far cry from London. But, within a few years, medical scientists in that Canadian province began boasting about its optimal conditions for research. One of Osmond's closest colleagues, Abram Hoffer, described it as offering an "unusually fertile climate for research, not in terms of temperature or snow or wind, though Saskatchewan is prodigal with these, but a climate of freedom."<sup>18</sup> He added that its "unique" environment would undoubtedly make the province a world leader in medical research through its capacity to attract top scientists and explore fresh ideas. Indeed, Saskatchewan became significant for introducing bold reforms in health care after electing the first socialist government in North America.

In 1944 Saskatchewan had elected the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a socialist party that fused labour and farmer interests and initially promised to aggressively reform banking, natural resource rights, health care, education, and even population control. Taking its cues largely from British intellectuals, the CCF embarked on a series of reforms that began by attracting middle-class professionals to the region. As the province engaged in a process of reconstruction, health care and mental health care became targets for reforms that represented a culmination of the frustrations experienced during the Great Depression in the 1930s and the optimism born out of the relative prosperity of the postwar period. Erosion of the region's professional class during the Depression had created a professional vacuum. After the Second World War, local residents readily embraced recommendations for new and replenished services in communities that had struggled to retain professionals during the 1930s. The CCF government actively recruited doctors and medical researchers to fill senior positions in the rapid expansion of a provincial civil service. The allure of the province involved a delicate and complicated set of historical and psychological factors that gave rise to a new vision for the region that, above all, created opportunities for experimentation. Humphry Osmond was one such recruit, who ultimately left an indelible mark on the province.

At first, Osmond's relationship with Smythies remained intact, and throughout these letters he refers to Smythies as a brilliant researcher and scientist. But, unlike Osmond, Smythies did not stay long in Saskatchewan, and gradually his enthusiasm for the adrenochrome thesis dampened, which first disappointed and later angered Osmond as he lost faith in his former

collaborator. In the letters to Huxley, no other individual receives such critical scrutiny as Smythies, who on the whole falls short of Osmond's standard of the chutzpah required to overturn the schizophrenic paradigm. Osmond was perhaps doubly annoyed at having lost a talented former collaborator, not the least of which because he had the potential to undermine their work more than any other researcher. In his criticisms of Smythies, we also see elements of envy, particularly in Smythies's relative mobility and freedom.

Hoffer stepped in where Smythies left off and became Osmond's integral ally, as well as a trusted friend and colleague. Soon after meeting, they too engaged in almost daily communication; although they worked in the same province, they were separated by 372 kilometres. Hoffer came to the biochemical hypothesis naturally, and he quickly developed a trusting and familial relationship with Osmond. Hoffer completed his doctorate in agricultural biochemistry before continuing into medical research, making him an invaluable collaborator in the pursuit of an adrenochrome theory of psychosis. In 1967 they published a comprehensive text on hallucinogens, in which they identified four controversies involving adrenochrome. The fourth was opposition to their biochemical model from those committed to psychodynamic and psychosocial approaches to psychiatry, and here they clearly staked out their position, stating that they were attempting to "establish schizophrenia as an adrenochrome disease," thus proving its biochemical basis, and "it also follows that the treatments which normalize the abnormal metabolism of adrenochrome should be curative for schizophrenia."<sup>19</sup> In developing this model, Osmond worked closely with colleagues in Saskatchewan but routinely shared his preliminary findings and evolving theories with Huxley, all the while committed to promoting a model for schizophrenia that was chiefly medical, not social or moral.

In Saskatchewan he continued to explore mescaline but was quickly turned on to LSD, which he considered to be a more powerful molecule and one that also contributed to the adrenochrome hypothesis of schizophrenia. Initial research with LSD also fit neatly into the local vision for mental health reforms. Early trials indicated that the drug had the potential to improve mental health care by advancing a theory of mental illness that promoted a biochemical explanation. This assertion pointed to the possibility that mental illness was in fact a biological entity and, thus, could

be studied (and ultimately treated) by relying on the burgeoning fields of biochemistry and biopharmacology. But, for Osmond, these tools were not enough.

Despite the treasured colleagues he encountered on the Canadian prairies, Osmond struggled to come to terms with his new environment. He routinely complains about the weather and the isolation from urban accoutrements, although he admits, “I suppose that the sovereign virtue of this distant, dismal and often unpleasant place is that one is forced to think. There are many more attractive places, but here one can think and very often act too. I suppose that geographical sacrifices are worthwhile, though I sometimes wish one could eat one’s cake and have it” (29 July 1957). And as the years pass, Osmond’s unhappiness at being stuck in his outpost on the sometimes dismal Canadian prairies is very clear.

#### IDEAS ARE SO DANGEROUS

Osmond began his experiments with mescaline and LSD at a time that historian John Burnham has called the “golden age of medicine,” referring to a period of unprecedented medical authority, largely stemming from the development of new medical technologies.<sup>20</sup> New prescription drugs entered mainstream society at an unprecedented rate, launching a pill-popping phenomenon that dovetailed with emerging conceptualizations of normalcy; gradually, taking pills became part of normal behaviour rather than an indication of abnormal behaviour.<sup>21</sup> Medical scientists and medical practitioners rose in esteem as new technological and pharmacological advancements promised to conquer an expanding list of complaints: pain, infection, menstrual discomfort, anxiety, depression, hypertensive disorder, alcoholism, and schizophrenia.

The field of psychiatry sat at a crossroads in the period after the Second World War. Throughout the West for much of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, patients considered to be mad, insane, deviant, or disabled were segregated in asylums. These facilities became increasingly medicalized, the language shifting from “asylum” to “hospital” and from “insanity” to “mental disease” or “disorder,” but the prognosis, whether they were called “inmates” or “patients,” remained grim. Osmond elaborates in a letter to Huxley: “I must write about Weyburn one day – it

symbolizes our capacity for self-deception better than anything I have come across. Many decent people persuaded themselves that they were benefitting the numerous sick folk here in the teeth of plenty of perfectly good evidence to the contrary” (1 July 1954). In the mid-twentieth century, reformers criticized these institutions for warehousing people who did not seem suited to work or participate as full citizens in a modern marketplace. Meanwhile, there was significant professional and disciplinary tension over who or what should be responsible for the care and management of individuals considered disordered.

Sigmund Freud’s theories circulated widely, introducing a psychotherapeutic model that gained significant cultural currency as a popular and effective way to address neuroses. Neuroses, manifesting as psychological and behavioural responses to stress, anxiety, sadness, and fear, were distinguished from the more severe, and in Osmond’s view, biologically caused, psychoses. Whereas psychosis suggested a serious impairment with respect to perceiving reality, neurosis did not imply any great disengagement and nothing necessarily wrong with perceptions; indeed, the neuroses often arose from *accurate* perceptions of reality, of past abuse, of feelings of inadequacy, of a broken heart, and so on. Neuroses were the bread and butter of Freudian psychoanalysis, helping patients, or rather clients, to carefully and methodically parse the varied strands of their often unwanted habits of thought and behaviour. Freud’s landmark US lectures in 1909 were spectacularly successful, not the least due to Freud’s inimitable and beguiling theoretical skills and his potent images, such as the “slipping” of repressed elements of the unconscious into the conscious at the perfectly wrong moment.

By mid-century, Freudian analysis had become the prevailing theoretical and clinical approach to explaining and treating the entire range of mental illnesses in the United States.<sup>22</sup> Freud had emerged as a powerful theoretician in the field of psychiatry with his landmark *On Dreams* (1900), which outlined the mind’s extreme efforts to hide from itself by repressing ideas, images, and experiences too uncomfortable or unpleasant to the conscious mind. His synthesis of many strains of theoretical and clinical ideas, at the time, was an intellectual revolution by any standard. Patiently, and painstakingly, thinking about and rethinking about one’s dreams, Freud argued, was a way into the depths of one’s subconscious; indeed, dreams

served as a “royal road” to the subconscious. What resided in the subconscious was a complex lattice of highly sexualized repressed tendencies, such as the infant’s desire to possess his or her parent of the opposite sex and “get rid” of the other.

But not everyone agreed with Freud. And, although historians have pointed out that Freudian theories were attractive at a particular moment in human history, there were many people, including Osmond, who remained uncomfortable with Freudian dominance. Osmond is quite skeptical about its usefulness for those suffering from acute psychological illnesses, and at times he is downright dismissive. For example, Osmond has his doubts about the value of dreams and catches the great thinker in the teeth of his own theory: “If Freud is in part right about the censor<sup>23</sup> etc., it is surely naïve to suppose that the censor does not sooner or later become aware that he is being decoded and change his cypher?” (10 February 1956). Osmond consistently expresses bitterness at the dominance of psychoanalysis in the American training institutions and, above all, at the Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kansas, which was at the time the premier training school for psychiatrists in the United States.<sup>24</sup> Despite his concerns about the Menninger Clinic, however, its founder, Karl Menninger, often appears in the letters as an ally, especially in his apparent support for Bill Wilson, a co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, and for Alfred Hubbard, the alleged Johnny Appleseed of LSD, as well as in his tacit approval of Osmond’s intention to apply psychedelics to alcoholism. So although Osmond deplored the professional adherence to psychodynamic theories, he too recognized the power of individual authorities to invest in fresh ideas.

Freud’s “long shadow” had characterized the psychiatric climate as practised in the early years of Osmond’s career, and his letters express his attempts to loosen the grip that Freudian thinking had on modern psychiatry. For Osmond, toiling in a mental hospital, it had become clear that “the psychology of the Freudians is no longer adequate and that new psychologies will have to be developed” (15 December 1955). He amplifies this idea the following year:

If we can change our ideas on schizophrenia we can probably undermine Freudian psychology so seriously that a general overhaul of psychology will be necessary. It is necessary now, but the logic-tight

system of psychoanalysis stands so long as the attacks of its opponents can be repulsed. If we show that Freud has been wholly wrong in his theory of the psychoses, though the elect will not alter, everyone else will. In that change of a scientific climate the new ideas on mind will take root. A new vocabulary will be made – and LSD etc. will become a standard means of enquiry just as the couch is for the analysts. (3 October 1956)

Critics working in asylums questioned the utility of “talking therapies” as insufficient for addressing more debilitating disorders that interrupted the ability to sustain coherent speech or thoughts, or ultimately to gain insight into one’s own actions.

At the same time, biological psychiatrists and somatic or body therapies attracted attention in the first half of the twentieth century, in part because they offered bold responses to decades of suffering, particularly for patients who could not be reached through talk therapies. Psychiatrists embraced a number of radical interventions, such as insulin shock therapy, malaria therapy, electroshock or electroconvulsive therapy, and lobotomies, and by the 1950s some of these more aggressive interventions had been eclipsed by a host of new pharmacological options, aimed at physical treatments for mental relief. Although these therapeutic innovations have been subjected to criticism,<sup>25</sup> malaria therapy and lobotomies still earned their innovators Nobel Prizes for ground-breaking research.<sup>26</sup>

Osmond was often demoralized by the Herculean task of reforming attitudes both inside and outside the walls of the asylum.<sup>27</sup> Above all, he believed that people needed to listen to each other and take seriously the value of tolerating and trying to understand different experiences and perceptions. Experiments with mescaline and LSD appealed to him as opportunities to alter experience and challenge one’s sense of logic and perception, disrupting a more comfortable and habitual sense of right and wrong. These explorations were neither extraordinary nor necessarily radical within the context of psychiatry and psychology in the middle of the twentieth century. But LSD quickly attracted interest from people beyond the medical context. Even some of the earliest medical explorations took place with friends and family at dinner parties or in the comfort of doctors’ living rooms. These informal settings also allowed for a wider mix of people and

experiences to fuel interest in these molecules, creating interdisciplinary networks and intimate friendships.

Osmond and Huxley's relationship is a case in point. Osmond travelled to Huxley's home to deliver mescaline. He later described how anxious he felt bringing this substance to the famous author, worried that it would produce no reaction at all or that he might go down in history as the "man who drove Aldous Huxley mad."<sup>28</sup> Huxley had no medical expertise but had been encouraged to seek out Osmond for such an experience. He believed his writing might benefit from the encounter, and Osmond agreed. Huxley published *The Doors of Perception* (1954) a year after his fateful trip, although he wrote the entire manuscript a mere three months after his first mescaline experience. This project not only cemented his relationship with Osmond but also established his authoritative position in the unfolding world of psychedelics.

#### SCIENTIFIC AND HUMANIST TRADITIONS: THE ORIGIN STORY

Osmond and Huxley were great readers.<sup>29</sup> Their love of literature spanned a huge range of ideas, topics, and genres. Both men demonstrated an open and actively curious disposition to ideas in the humanist tradition, and both were equally curious about science. Their literary and scientific endeavours belie the two-culture thesis made famous by their contemporary C.P. Snow, who argued that science and the humanities tend to represent two distinct intellectual spheres and never (or rarely) meet.<sup>30</sup> The bridging of this divide motivated Huxley, and building such bridges had long been a family affair. In the 1880s his grandfather Thomas Henry Huxley and great-uncle Matthew Arnold undertook a prominent public debate on the relative contributions of science and the humanities to society.<sup>31</sup> Aldous's older brother, Julian, had been a leading evolutionary biologist and popularizer of scientific ideas throughout the first half of the twentieth century. The diversity of references to both science and the arts reflects both men's determination not to fall prey to a single viewpoint or, heaven forbid, an ideology.

Philosophy provides a vehicle to explore ideas of science, psychology, and humanism without resorting to specific models or ways of thinking that might bind them to a particular interpretation. Osmond and Huxley exhibit



their appreciation for philosophical approaches by featuring several figures in both the Western and Eastern canons as they attempt to understand and articulate the value of psychedelics for altering ways of thinking. For example, they engage in a long-running discussion over what exactly the psychedelics are doing to one's perception by invoking the French-Jewish philosopher Henri Bergson. A generation earlier, Bergson had offered a penetrating critique of Western philosophy's (and science's) emphasis on reason, while providing a restructuring and defence of emotion, intuition, and perception as fundamental elements of human experience. His ideas were widely taken up and criticized, and he held many views that were considered then, as now, mystical and quasi-religious.<sup>32</sup> Bergson and other thinkers in his era, including Friedrich Nietzsche and Freud, speculated that the brain actively structured and omitted certain elements of experience, presenting to the consciousness a coherent picture of the world, at the expense of perhaps a greater or truer picture. Influenced by Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, variations of this idea became fairly widely held: it was evident that human beings had evolved to experience the world in certain ways and not in others. Building upon this notion, Huxley and Osmond were keen to theorize about how psychedelics might aid in this process of understanding evolution if they were used to study perception and experience.

Far from being reductionist, their conceptualization of experience embraced environmental influences as fundamental to how we perceive ourselves. They borrowed the concept of *umwelt* ("environment as experienced by an individual") from philosopher Jacob von Uexküll, who posited that both the levels of species and individual organisms have particular ways of experiencing the world. A dog's *umwelt* is different from ours; it does not experience the world the same as a human being. As Osmond writes in 1956, "I did tell you of my experience of the dog world using LSD didn't I? ... The dog world is very different from ours and wholly different from our construction of it" (25 January 1956).

Perception, or the notion of a filtered experience of the world that prevents us from perceiving deeper and fuller truths, becomes a major theme in the letters. The psychedelics seemed to reveal an entirely new domain of experience, which begged the question of why we experience the world as we do and not in some other way. Huxley followed Bergson,

indirectly, in his development of what Osmond calls Huxley's "brain filter" theory of perception, whereby the brain (and body) is seen to actively *filter out* stimuli and phenomena so as to function normally.<sup>33</sup> Huxley later elaborates on this idea in *The Doors of Perception* (1954), but the kernel of interest was already apparent in his 1953 letter to Osmond seeking a mescaline experience, where he postulates that mescaline might permit "the 'other world' to rise into consciousness" (10 April 1953). Nearly a decade after that first meeting, Osmond reiterated Huxley's initial claim: "Psychosocially your idea from Bergson still seems as good as ever. The doors of perception are cleansed, more gets in and the mind-brain attempts more or less successfully to organise the new information" (29 December 1962). Committed to the idea that psychedelics opened up one's capacity for perception, and thus experience, Huxley and Osmond were enthusiastic explorers of the modern mind.

Every era has its share of notable scientific achievements and developments, but the 1950s saw a truly remarkable spate of world-changing scientific and technological activities. Indeed, British astronomer Fred Hoyle introduced the term "big bang" in a radio broadcast at the close of the 1940s.<sup>34</sup> Thermonuclear bombs, the integrated circuit (microchip), the double-helix, colour television, Sputnik, and the polio vaccine soon followed. In the context of the Cold War, these developments enthralled the public as many communities waited for nuclear fallout to reach their towns. The normalizing of anxiety gave rise to a genre of post-apocalyptic literature that both titillated and frightened readers who were fed stories about the awesome power of science and technology to both create and destroy. And, in many instances, writers also toyed with the power of the environment to absorb disaster, whereas in other cases nature becomes complicit in turning against humanity. American author George R. Stewart described the end of civilization from plague in *Earth Abides* (1949). Incidentally, a year earlier, Huxley had published *Ape and Essence* (1948), which also painted a dystopic future of a dying society riddled with disease, greed, and decay. These novels were part of a growing desire to cast the future in a grim light, particularly a world that had blindly accepted the awesome power of technology without regard for human greed or the lust for power. Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* (1957) imagined the end of the world from the Cold War's periphery, in Australia, anxiously awaiting the

atmosphere to choke on radiation fallout. English science fiction writer John Wyndham described evil Soviet-engineered plants that spread to bring about the demise of human life.<sup>35</sup> The dislocating feeling pervasive in these technologically frenetic times also manifested in important films such as *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957), where exposure to radiation results in a man's descent into Zeno's paradox of ever smaller extremes. The timeless horror film *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) similarly tells the hellish tale of people being "replaced" from within, long understood as a metaphor for either complacency in the face of McCarthyism or the nullification of the individual in Soviet totalitarianism. Whatever the lesson, the future is here and no one is safe. Moreover, these post-apocalyptic tropes questioned faith in science as humanity's saviour.

After the Second World War, the gap between human beings and their technologies was growing ever smaller. So rapid and impressive were technological and theoretical developments during this period that cybernetics co-founder and mathematician Norbert Wiener referred to the era as the Second Industrial Revolution.<sup>36</sup> New machines created phenomena, and a range of intellectuals clamoured to explain and theorize the technological whirlwind. Cybernetics pioneered the study of both mechanical and organic "information systems." In 1948 Wiener had defined "cybernetics" as "attempts to find the common elements in the functioning of the automatic machines and of the human nervous system."<sup>37</sup> The cyborgs were coming! Encouraging Huxley to reach out to Wiener in 1955, Osmond writes, "He has seen the point which few others seem to have done, that the cybernetic age forces us to expand the psyche or become slaves of the machine" (2 June 1955).

Both men express concern about the far-reaching negative and disrupting consequences they perceive in the mad rush to automation. Osmond's acute concern may have been fuelled in part by his friendship and collaboration with the polymath inventor and engineering prodigy Stanford Ovshinsky.<sup>38</sup> In the early 1950s, Ovshinsky was in Detroit working on problems in machine automation related to the car industry. The young engineer led Osmond on a memorable tour of the Ford factories and museum in the spring of 1957. Osmond's letter contains a story of how Henry Ford kicked the stool from under a lathe operator, summing up Osmond's feelings about the great man and, perhaps parenthetically, the

march of automation: he was not very nice. Osmond wrote, “It’s not the big things which impress – but little ones” (13 April 1957). Both Huxley and Osmond were more attracted to what they felt to be both deeper and hidden yet very simple and plain as day. They shared a strange balance of enthusiasm and caution, eager to explore the next new thing but to preserve what it is to be human and, above all, in Osmond’s phrase, to “recognize that we are more than cybernetic toys” (13 April 1953).

One rather defiant expression of human value over cybernetic efficiency emerged in their interest in the power of intellect to challenge, refine, and communicate ideas. To this end, both men are loathe to discard ideas or suggestions, no matter how far-fetched on the surface, before engaging in a genuine appraisal with an open mind. A series of letters in October 1955 highlights their hope for the new opportunities offered by psychedelic experience and their appetite for explorations of the margins of acceptability. They write optimistically about experiments using parapsychological ideas such as telepathy, as well as about Carl Jung’s concepts of archetype, anima, and shadow, all of which stretched beyond mainstream psychology. Their letters on these topics reveal a breathless momentum and a sincere delight in attempting to make sense of these unusual and little-known psychological experiences. Both men appear comfortable in the presence of contradiction and tension, relishing the experience of being human. Leaning on one of Eugen Bleuler’s concepts,<sup>39</sup> they revelled in *ambivalence* – the idea that it does not follow that because I like one aspect of a theory, I like the whole.

#### PARAPSYCHOLOGY AND SOMATOTYPING

At the turn of the twentieth century, many scientifically minded researchers were attempting to make sense of phenomena widely experienced in backroom séances and by mediums. Authorities no less prestigious than William James and Carl Jung, among many others,<sup>40</sup> wrote about a range of parapsychological phenomena, including extrasensory perception, clairvoyance, and telepathy (all referring to communicating or gaining knowledge without known senses), precognition (foreknowledge of statements or events), hypnosis, and communication with the dead. The nineteenth-century British classical scholar and pioneering parapsychologist

Frederic Myers was an important influence on both Huxley and Osmond and repeatedly appears in their letters. Myers, who coined the terms “telepathy” and “supernormal,”<sup>41</sup> had been a leading figure in the early parapsychological movement and had co-founded the Society for Psychical Research in 1882. Huxley and Osmond held his posthumous work *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903) in great esteem. Osmond writes, “I have just finished Myers’ *Human Personality and Its Survival*. What an astounding book?” (10 February 1956). Huxley had long been an admirer of Myers. He wrote popular essays that tried to salvage Myers’s writings from obscurity,<sup>42</sup> not the least a foreword to the publication of an abridged version of *Human Personality* in 1961.<sup>43</sup>

Myers offered a rich and compelling theory of mind, which recognized the profound role of the unconscious but not merely in the negative sense described by Freud and his followers – that of blind compulsions, repressed desires, and uncomfortable thoughts. For Myers, the unconscious mind was not just made up of this underbelly of human nature but was also and equally constituted by our higher drives, our intuitive and often uncanny experiences of mystery and coincidence (Jung’s synchronicity), and our desire for spiritual transcendence. Myers referred to the unconscious as the “sublimated self,” which he believed had developed to achieve high levels of paranormal experience and spiritual insight. In his foreword, Huxley offered a striking metaphor to help capture Myers’s meaning: “Is the house of the soul a mere bungalow with a cellar? Or does it have an upstairs above the ground floor of consciousness as well as a garbage-littered basement beneath? ... Myers dives no less deeply [than Freud or Jung] into that impersonal spiritual world which transcends and interpenetrates our bodies, our conscious minds and our personal unconscious – dives no less deeply but comes up with a minimum of mud on him.”<sup>44</sup> Huxley was referring to the scholarly tendency to dive deeply into a subject only to reemerge clouded by obscurity. For Huxley and Osmond, Myers’s ideas offered a viable alternative particularly to Freudian psychodynamic theories and clinical approaches. As Osmond noted, they felt that Myers’s approach to psychological phenomena was more wide-ranging: “Odd how few people realise the huge contribution of Myers” (16 September 1956).

Huxley often writes with news from parapsychological researchers he has visited.<sup>45</sup> His encounters include several well-known and other lesser-

known figures in this arena. Dr Henry “Andrija” Puharich led a parapsychological group known as the Round Table Foundation, which explored a huge variety of parapsychological phenomena and techniques for producing them. In later years, he introduced Americans to the famed Israeli television psychic Uri Geller. Although Puharich’s impression on both men was mixed,<sup>46</sup> that of Irish medium and clairvoyant Eileen Garrett was not. Garrett, a leading figure among parapsychological circles on both sides of the Atlantic, was a widely respected medium and clairvoyant. She was also exceptional in her efforts to understand her abilities from a scientific perspective, actively enlisting scientifically minded researchers for their opinions.<sup>47</sup> She founded the Parapsychological Foundation in New York in 1951 to this end. A close friend of Huxley’s, and later Osmond’s, Garrett was trusted and admired by both. Huxley takes her at her word as having communicated with his first wife, Maria, from beyond the grave (25 July 1955), and Osmond is so impressed by her abilities to, among other things, glean the contents of unopened letters (11 April 1958) that he seriously considers writing her biography. She is also godmother to Osmond’s second daughter, Euphemia. Perhaps owing to her warmth, charm, and forthrightness, as well as their own tenacious curiosities, they took her seriously when many of her contemporaries did not. She allegedly told Osmond that most critical observers “consider her as an instrument or a half wit or a potential crook” (11 April 1958).

The reach from parapsychology to mysticism was effortless for Huxley. He was as acquainted as anyone with the traditions of mysticism, religious asceticism, and visionary artistry, which had early on convinced him of the reality of a world beyond that ordinarily presented by the “filtered mind.” Ghosts, voices from beyond the grave, and other mysterious phenomena were widely accepted as occurring and had been so for generations. Psychedelics, both men agreed, added a further and more promising means for parapsychological exploration, especially telepathy – or the purported transmission of information from one person to another or group without using speech, signs, or any other ordinary means of communication.<sup>48</sup> Although they are not alone in seeking to weave elements of psychology with strands of mysticism, they felt that psychedelics provided a necessary and unequalled instrument for harmonizing these threads.

Parapsychology was only one such foray off the beaten path; both men believed psychedelics ought to help test a range of psychological theories. Huxley's 24 October 1955 letter is a tour-de-force in mid-twentieth-century mystical writing.<sup>49</sup> It also happens to include a charitable assessment of Dianetics, a practice articulated in the 1950s by science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard and harnessed through the Church of Scientology with the intent of dissolving the "reactive mind," or engaging in the erasure of certain beliefs, known as "auditing." Huxley and Maria had met Hubbard in 1950, possibly after encountering his ideas through Captain Al Hubbard (no relation to L. Ron). Aldous's earlier attempt at Dianetic auditing had proven fruitless,<sup>50</sup> but perhaps due to Maria's relative success, he was willing to try again, this time in the psychedelic state. As he begins to feel the effects of mescaline, some Dianetic procedures are attempted but quickly abandoned. What he later confides to Osmond is a powerful reading of the psychedelic experience itself, a glimpse at the ideas that would become famous in *The Doors of Perception*. His unquenched curiosity reflects his abiding interest in combining contemporary thinkers with those of legend, such as Saints Anthony and Francis, medieval German theologian Meister Eckhart, the Mahayana Bodhisattva tradition, and their shared idol William Blake. Their unrelenting energy for bringing new voices into old conversations, and old voices into new ones, is a striking quality of their relationship and their desire to measure human evolution on a more humane and literary scale.

Although parapsychological theories guided some of their explorations, they were also deeply attracted to psychological theory that gave prominence to the place of the body. The ideas of American psychologist William H. Sheldon pervade the correspondence. Sheldon was best known for a form of constitutional psychology, called "somatotyping," which linked mental attributes like intelligence and personality to a person's physical characteristics. Godson of philosopher and psychologist William James and student of both Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud, Sheldon proposed ideas about body types and their correlation with behaviour, intelligence, and social hierarchy that attracted considerable attention during the postwar period. Attributing links between the physical and the psychological extends across time and culture, going back to Hippocrates's theory of the four humours. Early-twentieth-century psychologists and mental hygienists often shared a fascination with predicting human behaviour based on body

types. The most aggressive application of this line of thinking during this period culminated in eugenics and was not exclusive to Sheldon or somatotyping but was symptomatic of a much broader cultural tendency to link bodies with behaviours and thus assign value in a human hierarchy. Osmond and Huxley are less concerned with degeneration and much more with the potential of using somatotyping to understand and even predict differences in personality and behaviour. Sheldon's work was later discredited, in part for the implications related to eugenics, the falling out of fashion of anti-modernist – indeed, reactionary – perspectives prevalent throughout his writings, and his documented racism.<sup>51</sup> Nonetheless, at the time, Sheldon's ideas helped to concretize some of Huxley's and Osmond's explorations into the relationship between bodies and behaviour across the spectrum of mental and physical life, both healthy and pathologized. Huxley used it to understand himself and those he encountered, and it helped Osmond to understand the people confined in a mental hospital.

Sheldon's books, such as *The Varieties of Human Physique* (1940), *Varieties of Delinquent Youth* (1949), and *Atlas of Men* (1954), expounded a method of classifying and associating three basic body types with a wide range of psychological phenomena, including cognitive attributes, temperament, and other aspects of personality. According to Huxley's friend and early biographer Sybille Bedford, Huxley considered Sheldon's ideas to be “the first serious advance of the science of man since Aristotle.”<sup>52</sup> His three body types have entered the English lexicon: ectomorph (tall, thin), mesomorph (muscular, hard), and endomorph (large, soft). To these three types, he ascribed a related “temperamental patterning”: cerebrotonic (introspective, quiet), somatotonic (assertive, energetic), and viscerotonic (relaxed, amiable). Sheldon maintained that although everyone shared aspects of all three categories, we tend toward dominance in a particular way. Deriving all manner of human experience from this typology, Sheldon aimed to explain our affinities and repulsions, preferences and dislikes, why we get along with some people and abhor others. Huxley agreed that the extent to which a person exhibits endomorphic, mesomorphic, and ectomorphic attributes pointed the way forward to better understanding human beings and their social experience: “It would obviously be miraculous if this physical difference were not correlated with a mental difference. And yet these asinine psychiatrists and



sociologists continue to talk of minds and characters as though they existed in a vacuum.”<sup>53</sup>

Accordingly, Huxley had helped to bring attention to them in his book *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals* (1937) as well as in popular articles.<sup>54</sup> Huxley referred to himself as an “ectomorph,” suggesting a tall, thin, and lightweight body. This manifested psychologically in a “cerebrotonic” temperament, which Huxley described as characterizing an “over-alert, over-sensitive introvert, who is more concerned with the inner universe of his own thoughts and feelings and imagination than with the external world.”<sup>55</sup> In his final novel, *Island* (1962), Huxley plays with Sheldonian themes in his notion of the “Peter Pan” and “Muscle Man” types. The utopian island’s enlightened governors use a variation of somatotyping to identify children with sociopathic tendencies, namely the Peter Pans (Hitlers) and the Muscle Men (Stalins).<sup>56</sup> Through progressive education and training, the sociopathic tendencies are corrected, and the boys grow into normal adults.

A core attraction of Sheldon’s ideas, however, went well beyond his theories of somatotyping. He also represented an alternative to prevailing approaches in modern psychology and psychiatry, thus feeding Huxley’s and Osmond’s interests in examining the edges of acceptable science. Sheldon pushed back against the then dominant Freudian psychodynamics, which tended to understand psychological characteristics as largely depending on interpersonal and social factors. In this view, a person’s psychological makeup was more or less wholly a product of his or her, especially early, relationships. Taken to its extreme, each individual constituted an island unto himself or herself, and although the psychological mechanisms might be universal, the particularities of a person’s context made the person profoundly singular. Osmond captures this tendency – and his opposition to it – in a telling interaction with an analyst he meets on one of his travels: “In psychiatry our patients are submerged in the verbiage of three generations of psychiatrists ... It is marvelous how we can bemuse and diddle ourselves with words. I think I told you about the psychiatrist who solemnly called schizophrenia ‘a way of life’ and surmised that this was in some way useful or illuminating” (4 January 1958). Sheldon offered a countervailing perspective that emphasized a person’s particular

physiology as being key in shaping his or her psychology. Words were not enough.

Huxley was a long-time acquaintance of Sheldon, and whatever Osmond's acquaintance with Sheldon's work prior to meeting Huxley, he was quickly and, over the course of their correspondence, wholly persuaded of its validity, even as their contemporaries increasingly moved away from it.<sup>57</sup> "I use a rough and ready Sheldon almost every day," Osmond reassures Huxley when answering whether Sheldon's schemas are being used at the hospital (29 October 1959). He routinely describes colleagues and acquaintances in his letters using a similar "rough and ready" Sheldonian language, and he wonders when someone will write a "popular Sheldon." Later on, Osmond appears to have abandoned a strict adherence to Sheldonian "types" yet maintained a conception of personality types in the Jungian, extrovert-introvert sense over the course of his remaining career.<sup>58</sup>

#### TELESCOPES OF THE MIND

The astounding exchange in March 1956 where Huxley and Osmond work out the term for the experiences they have been describing since taking LSD-25 and mescaline reflects a philosophical concern over how to capture what exactly these drugs were doing.<sup>59</sup> The series of letters where the term "psychedelic" comes into being offers an excellent example of particularly Osmond's conception of scientific development as well as his appreciation for the philosophy of science, which pervades many of the letters. The term then in circulation, "psychotomimetics" "psychotic mimicry" – seemed insufficient, placing an undue emphasis on the pathological element of the experience at the expense of the salubrious. He writes,

The name should have a clear meaning, be reasonably easy to spell and pronounce and not be too like some other name. Psychophrenics had to be abandoned and so did psychoplastics. Psychorhexics and psychohormics are doubtful. So far psychedelics-mind manifestors seems the most promising, psycholytics-mind releasers is doubtful because *lysis* in medicine is now associated with dissolution rather than release. Euletheropsychics, though accurate and euphonious is too

much of a mouthful. Psychodelics seems unambiguous, not loaded with old associations and clear. (24 March 1956)

This is a remarkable passage, revealing Osmond's judiciousness, caution, and open-mindedness. He is asking for Huxley's reaction, in advance of a paper he was to present, where the term was ultimately expressed publicly for the first time. The creation of the term bears an uncanny similarity to William Whewell's coining of the word "scientist" in 1834:

There was no general term by which these gentlemen could describe themselves with reference to their pursuits. "Philosophers" was felt to be too wide and lofty a term, and was very properly forbidden them by Mr Coleridge both in his capacity as a philologist and metaphysician. "Savans" was rather amusing and besides too French; but some ingenious gentleman proposed that, by analogy with "artist," they might form "scientist" – and added that there could be no scruple to this term since we already have such words as "economist" and "atheist" – but this was not generally palatable.<sup>60</sup>

Osmond's coinage was not by chance. Not only was he among those in the vanguard of LSD-25 exploration, but he was also a work-a-day psychiatrist steeped in a classical British education. Throughout the letters, he exhibits a sophisticated and informed perspective on the development of scientific theory and knowledge. Indeed, many of his remarks echo ideas made famous in Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). Kuhn's influential meta-account of scientific progress showed that the march of science is no march at all; any glance at the history of science bears this out. In fact, he argued, all scientific fields are marked by periods of routine scientific activity ("normal science") according to the prevailing scientific consensus ("paradigm").<sup>61</sup> Over time, anomalous phenomena arise, which cannot be readily understood or accounted for by the current theory, at which time it is possible that a "crisis" may occur, creating the opportunity for a new paradigm to emerge ("revolutionary science"). Kuhn argued that, with due respect to the occasional appearance of genius, "paradigm shifts" were often the result of a younger generation of scientists struggling to make room for themselves in a discipline. Osmond might well

have concurred. In the context of relating to Huxley his frustration in attracting money from the big science funders, he writes, “they will have to back unknowns against well knowns, outsiders against insiders, younger men against older. While all rules in picking up high talent are made to be broken, under 35 rather than over may help” (7 May 1961).

Osmond was intimately familiar with a wide range of scientific history. The opposition and occasional indifference he experiences in so much of his professional career – regarding hospital reorganization, psychedelic research, adrenochrome hypothesis, and so on – he relates to the stutter-step, seemingly arbitrary, and decidedly irrational progress of science in general. As for would-be upshots, self-appointed revolutionaries of all stripes, political or intellectual, Osmond is cheekily dismissive: “In the cool of the morning the revolutionaries always find that they are up against the facts of life, the slowly moving economies of human affairs which, like our autonomic nervous system, exerts itself ceaselessly to maintain homeostasis” (12 June 1954).

The psychedelic reaction, according to Osmond, created a period of reflection, or insight, allowing one to generate a perspective on oneself; the letters convey both men’s struggle to understand how exactly psychedelics opened doors to other worlds, or layers of perception, that remained invisible to the conscious mind. Some of these concepts are captured in the word itself – *psyche*, or mind, and *delic* from the Greek “delos” for “to bring to light” – as Osmond strove to capture a sense of the mind-manifesting quality of the reaction. The derivation is reminiscent of Freudian psychodynamic theories that describe the need to bring unconscious material to the surface for examination. However, the methods developed by Osmond and others clung much more assiduously to Jungian frameworks, as they seized upon elements of perception and self-awareness much more than Freudian theories allowed for.

LSD also borrowed from body therapies but differed from contemporary pharmacological substances tested during the 1950s, such as tranquilizers or sedatives, due to its capacity to provide users with a powerful consciousness-altering experience. The drug did not simply produce a chemical reaction with subjective responses; users described the LSD trip as causing philosophical, epistemological, and even ontological changes in perspective. Patients who underwent these experiences had complained

about the difficulties in finding appropriate language to describe the LSD reaction. Maria Huxley likewise describes this phenomenon to Osmond when she compares a psychotic reaction to a psychedelic one.<sup>62</sup> Unlike drugs that targeted particular symptoms, psychedelics produced a conscious reaction that was open to definition by the user more so than by the observer.

This reaction altered the relationship between the subject and the observer and, in the medicalized context, between the patient and the physician. Self-experimentation has a long tradition in medical science.<sup>63</sup> In psychiatry, Freud himself had inaugurated the requirement that analysts must first undergo therapy themselves. So too did Osmond and Huxley's psychedelic ethic embrace this element of knowing the experience firsthand before guiding another through it. Osmond was an enthusiastic and committed self-experimenter. In one humorous example, he describes to Huxley an experience he has had creating an adrenalin solution:

After some kitchen chemistry using a saucepan, some adrenalin solution, a \$2 nose sprayer and a little bottle of HCl and some hydrogen peroxide, I found how to discolor commercial adrenalin solutions and make my own ... There were some changes in visual perception. Things were sharper and brighter and sounds more distinct. I was inclined to put this down to apprehension. Not that I felt much, for I had no adrenalin response. In half an hour I had definite visual and spatial distortion and a feeling that I had been kicked hard and repeatedly in the solar plexus. I had three bowel movements, could hardly move, extreme lethargy, anergia and apathy. I thought I might die, but was not anxious. I very prudently did not call Jane (this was from midnight to 04:30) because I feared anxious colleagues might give me morphine or something and kill me. Not a paranoid idea but a wise move. I would have been tempted to intervene and we have no idea what might have happened. I did not sleep but lay in inert discomfort. At 04:30 I vomited and feeling better went to sleep. Awakening at 07:30 I could hardly move but once I did strength quickly returned. I felt well and worked all day. I only dared tell Jane the other night! Sunday I tried the same amount swallowed. I had very transient minor gut disturbance. Inhalation seems to be the important factor. This means that aberrant

adrenalin is wholly unlike adrenalin or adrenochrome, etc. A new outlook in psychosomatics. You can guess that we are greatly cheered. What other monsters are lurking in our refrigerator? (31 October 1956)

This personal approach shared much more with his early modern predecessors, but by the 1950s it increasingly stood at odds with the emerging methodology of the randomized controlled trial, which was becoming the standard measure for psychopharmaceutical treatments and prioritized the objectivity of observers rather than their empathy.<sup>64</sup> Above all, Osmond's desire to blend approaches, borrowing from different methods, philosophies, and disciplines, was critical to the foundation of psychedelic science.

In a search for more effective ways to measure the LSD experience, several investigators tested the drug's capacity to enhance creativity and spirituality, which explicitly moved them outside the boundaries of orthodox medicine.<sup>65</sup> Early in their relationship, Huxley and Osmond deployed various schemes to establish an organization they called "Outsight," which was conceived as a think-tank of intelligent, accomplished people taking LSD or mescaline to determine the effect that the drug had on creativity and intelligence. The project never took off, but it was indicative of their desire to handle psychedelics carefully by introducing them first to a small circle of investigators who shared an intellectual curiosity about mind alteration. The small group of explorers that Osmond envisions is referred to by Huxley as their "Pickwickian organization" (2 February 1958) – that is, odd and unusual. Outsight as a formal structure failed, but their circle of experimenters nonetheless widened to include priests, professors, architects, graduate students, psychologists, anthropologists, authors, pilots, and artists, along with a number of other individuals whose reports stimulated the growing curiosity about the consciousness-raising qualities of the drug. Although they recognized that their explorations were far from universal or democratic, they felt that these experiences were not necessarily suitable for everyone and that too little was understood about these substances to allow for more widespread endorsement of their use. "My point is that the opening of the door by mescaline or LSD is too precious an opportunity, too high a privilege

to be neglected for the sake of experimentation.” Huxley went on to explain,

I wholly agree that experimentation alone is undesirable and indeed dangerous simply because it tends to underline a small part of a very great whole and so distort the picture. This is exactly what many mediums, cultists and others do and we must take care to avoid this. Just as the mediaevalists were preoccupied with devils, hellfire, sin etc. and so in many cases shut out the wholesome clear light. Nevertheless I think that we have an obligation to explore if only because lack of exploration and of exact knowledge has led to such wretched misunderstanding. Also if we don't someone else will and probably someone far less aware of the numerous pitfalls, difficulties and snags which beset us. (28 October 1955)

Osmond agreed. Early on in their relationship, they shared concerns about the indiscriminate use and misuse of these substances, which reinforced their sense that responsible explorations should be carefully undertaken. Following a meeting in New York with the Japanese philosopher and principal popularizer of Zen Buddhism in the West, D.T. Suzuki, Osmond wrote, “more and more appalling weapons are being played about with by what seem to be almost totally irresponsible technical magicians and practical idiots ... we should try and press ahead with Oversight and if possible start it next year ... I should like of course to lure three more wise old men – Jung, Schweitzer, and Einstein.” He continued to justify this rather exclusive gathering: “Our objective is a simple one and one which has preoccupied very able people for generations – to draw people's attention to the inscape is one way of putting it. In the past there have been three ways of classifying the transcendental, the artistic, the philosophic and the religious. We now have a fourth way, the scientific” (29 October 1955).

The letters in this collection highlight this early phase of enthusiasm but also demonstrate a more cautious attitude toward the general use of psychedelics than would develop over the course of the 1960s. Within a few years of Huxley's death, psychedelics had become part of a different vocabulary, one associated with student rebellions, counterculture activities, jazz and folk music, bohemian fashions, and urban destinations like Haight-

Ashbury in San Francisco, Greenwich Village in New York, Yorkville in Toronto, and Gastown in Vancouver. Musicians, poets, writers, and artists glamourized psychedelic drugs by publicly admitting to their use and flirting with the law by embroidering drugs in their cultural products. The rock band Jefferson Airplane famously popularized the language of the drug culture in its 1967 hit “White Rabbit,” which simultaneously played upon Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and exposed an intimate appreciation for pills, mushrooms, hookah pipes, and “chasing rabbits,” crescendoing in a chorus that encouraged listeners to “feed your head.” When *Rolling Stone* magazine asked former Beatle John Lennon about LSD, he admitted that “he used to eat it all the time.” He went on to explain that he “got a message on acid that you should destroy your ego, and I did, you know. I was reading that stupid book of Leary’s and all that shit.”<sup>66</sup>

Timothy Leary emerges as a controversial figure toward the end of the letters. Although he was comparably a latecomer to the field of psychedelics, his association with LSD had grown exponentially by the second half of the 1960s. Before Huxley’s death in 1963, both he and Osmond are anxious about Leary’s flamboyance with respect to psychedelics and his liberal approach to their use. They complain to one another of his careless attitude, as when Osmond writes, “Indeed, what about Tim Leary? ... It is just blather. Talking for effect’s sake – not from the heart or the head but from the windpipe or the arse hole” (29 December 1962). For Osmond, there is a real danger in using psychedelics indiscriminately, in combination with other substances, and without proper care for safety. Leary’s approach, like Captain Al Hubbard’s, he worried, was too experimental, too incautious, and too careless. “About all one can say about mescaline, psilocybin and LSD is that however they work, which is still obscure, they probably don’t work in the same way ... this is all the more reason for proceeding soberly and quietly.”

Huxley did not live long enough to reflect on whether this was a case of letting the genie out of the bottle or whether this cultural reaction fit into his keen sense of human evolution. Osmond, however, grew more and more disenchanted with the cultural appropriation of psychedelics, although he remained concerned about human empathy, insight, and models of madness. His own career continued to knit together strands of medical humanities



with clinical sciences in an attempt to use psychedelics as he originally described, namely as “telescopes of the mind” that would enable a deeper appreciation for humanity rather than a recreational voyage into temporary madness or an escape from the modern, disciplined world of conformity; and his commitment to a more humanist science had deep roots.

Among the early committed psychedelic scientists, the term had offered a vocabulary that aided in the mobilization of a critique of medical language, psychoanalysis, clinical trials, and a pharmacological tradition that downplayed subjectivity in medicine. Within a few years, the drugs and the terminology appealed to other intellectuals who used them as tools for exploring spirituality and creativity in ways that presented alternative interpretations of orthodox religious authority and medical understandings of the boundaries between sanity and insanity. This move placed psychedelic studies on the margins of professional medicine but continued to advance the notion that psychedelic drugs themselves cultivated a desire to challenge fixed ideas.

The so-called hippies retained this feature of the psychedelic ethic but also pushed it in new directions. As the term evolved and absorbed ideological trappings of liberalism and collective action, it became disconnected from drug use itself and was applied more broadly to a group of people and of drugs, defined variously and conveniently through the concepts of youth, hippies, counterculture, student radicals, and so on. The disjointed application of the term, in combination with the glamourizing of drug use in general, led to the degradation of a more sober psychedelic age, the fractionalization of the psychedelic research community, and the stagnation of psychedelic science.

Another feature that set Huxley and Osmond apart from the emerging psychedelic gurus of the 1960s was their desire to regard psychedelics within a ritualized environment so that they would be able to draw inspiration from others, including Indigenous healers and occult figures. This element of their approach also made them comparably more cautious in their attitude toward psychedelics. They understood the psychedelics to be unmatched tools for strategic and therapeutic mind expansion, philosophical contemplation, and coming to terms with the spiritual dimension of health. As optimistic as they both were about the opportunities offered by the psychedelics, Huxley and Osmond also viewed

them as very powerful substances to be respected, not abused, and to be experienced during a ritualized ceremony, not simply in a casual encounter.

Their intention was to cultivate and appeal to the human desire to reach higher inclinations and improve one's experience of life. To paraphrase Alexander Herzen, their intention was to open people's eyes, not gouge them out.<sup>67</sup> The reference above to "technical magicians and practical idiots" was no doubt aimed in particular at the efforts of the American and Soviet governments to create thermonuclear weapons. The Soviet Union detonated its first H-bomb in August 1953, and the infamous detonation of Castle Bravo at Bikini Atoll in March 1954 was the largest such weapon exploded by the United States.<sup>68</sup> Prominent public figures such as the "father of the H-bomb" Edward Teller and US science czar Vannevar Bush promoted a mindset toward technology that urged building it now and understanding it later.<sup>69</sup> Both Osmond and Huxley loathed this perspective, seen in an early letter to Huxley: "We can either vaporize ourselves or learn" (20 November 1953).

#### MY NIGHT IN A TIPI

Learning about these substances came from a wide range of influences, extending beyond self-experimentation to include historical, philosophical, political, and anthropological knowledge systems. Mescaline, the psychoactive substance in the peyote cactus, which first brought these two men together, had important cultural roots that were more politicized than the laboratory-designed LSD, which was a synthetic of ergot. Peyote rituals had a longer history in Mexico and Central America, but its use spread north into the United States in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, the Native American Church sought formal religious status at the same time that colonializing pressures throughout North America continued to restrict Indigenous rituals. Some Indigenous groups promoted peyote use as part of a collective response to the loss of resources and power to the expanding American frontier; peyote use became part of a political act in response to colonialism. By the early twentieth century, peyotism had become part of an established religious movement that drew on both Christian and Native forms of spirituality. The movement culminated in the establishment of the Native American Church, which was first legally

recognized in Oklahoma in 1918. Within a few years, the church in the United States claimed over 22,000 members.<sup>70</sup>

Anthropologists were among the first scholars who were intrigued by the “peyote religion,” but they were not alone. In 1956 anthropologist J.S. Slotkin of the University of Chicago produced a pioneering exploration of peyote in the United States and the struggle of peyotists to stave off the accusations of nonbelievers who threatened to prohibit its use and, with it, the cultural, ethnic, spiritual, and healing ties between peyote and Native American people.<sup>71</sup> Slotkin’s study inspired others to examine this fascinating psychoactive substance that produced hallucinations that fast-tracked worshippers to a conversation with the almighty and to an ultimate spiritual conversion, often generating a religious experience so powerful as to forge a cultural bond of faith and commonality.<sup>72</sup> Slotkin described how peyotism emerged as a rational response to encroaching white domination, Christianity, the resultant isolation on reserves/reservations, and the cultural destruction fostered by state policies. Slotkin and Osmond corresponded during this period, and when Osmond was invited to participate in a Canadian-based ceremony, he accepted the opportunity to weigh in on these discussions from his own experience.

Whereas anthropologists debated the authenticity of the ritual as a legal expression of indigeneity, botanists and chemists had other ideas. German scientists, in particular, were fascinated by the chemical properties in peyote and concentrated on isolating mescaline from the cactus. The process of extraction, however, was both chemical and cultural. Vials of mescaline, whether ingested or injected, restructured the context of use significantly. Dissociating mescaline from the ritualistic use altered the relationship between the user and the substance, placing it firmly in the bounds of modern science but also distancing it from rituals that encouraged deference, produced reverence, and evoked the spiritual dimension of the experience.

Huxley and Osmond straddled these perspectives in their approach to mescaline, combining elements of Western science, but Huxley, in particular, ruminated on how the reaction compelled him to confront the sacred. He further elaborated on this idea by drawing attention to the rituals associated with peyote, which did not readily translate into Western medicine’s approach to pharmacology. Part spiritual and part medical,

Indigenous ways of knowing peyote imbued its users with a deep cultural appreciation for the substance, marked by values that involved modesty, humility, tolerance, and empathy, often culminating in a more holistic conceptualization of healing that embraced body, mind, and spirit. Such an experience, for Huxley, was a valuable salve for strained human relations, especially those scarred by generations of colonialism and paternalism, which had, in his estimation, negatively affected people both on an evolutionary scale and in terms of mounting resistance to further political discrimination.

In October 1956, Osmond participated in a peyote ceremony in Saskatchewan hosted by the Native American Church of North America. Honoured and anxious, he agreed to fully take part in the ceremony, whereas his three colleagues joined to observe the ritual without ingesting peyote. The “white scientists,” as they were described in the press coverage that followed, had been invited based on their growing reputation for scientific experimentation with mind-altering substances. Native American Church leaders in the United States and Canada were routinely under government scrutiny and were keen to secure allies who might help to preserve and extend the peyote ceremony.

Osmond’s notes from that experience, excerpts of which reappeared in a public statement included in [appendix 4](#), reveal sensations ranging from fear to humiliation, as well as from feeling distinctly out of place to feeling united with the others involved in the ceremony. He wrote that “by 9:45 [p.m.] there was a ghost of brilliant color in my eye grounds when I closed my lids. I felt remote and slightly depressed. The roof flap fluttered like a lost soul. The tipi is a microcosm, a tiny mirror for the universe.”<sup>73</sup> Later, he reflected openly about the meaning of the peyote ceremony for Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations: “It struck me that with another turn of the wheel of history we Caucasians who, by means of gunpowder and printing have gained so much authority in the world, might find ourselves subject to peoples who possess skills which we do not have. No one who had been with the Indians as I had been could feel superior to them.”<sup>74</sup> Taken in its entirety, Osmond’s essay functions as a treatise in support of the Native American Church as a significant political and religious force with tremendous capacity to balance Native and non-Native power relations.<sup>75</sup>

## MODELS OF MADNESS AND SOCIO-ARCHITECTURE

Drawing from a wide set of influences, the Huxley-Osmond correspondence similarly covers a range of potential applications for psychedelic thinking. By the mid-1960s a number of scholars were publishing critiques of progress, colonialism, modernism, technology, and bureaucracy. Within the study of mental illness and psychiatry, some of these critiques crystalized into an anti-psychiatry movement, zeroing in on what some argued was an abuse of power over vulnerable or unwanted citizens rather than a legitimate response to suffering. Although Osmond and Huxley are not considered anti-psychiatrists, their trepidation about the West's unflinching faith in science as a means to govern human behaviour reflects the cultural zeitgeist that inspired anti-psychiatry.

Osmond, from his vantage point administrating a mental hospital, decried the conditions that led to deculturation and depersonalization. He suggested that the way our society treated marginalized people and the way it pathologized disorder were symptomatic of how we viewed ourselves as a civilization. He recognized these features as a larger phenomenon of modernization, which included inevitable by-products of increased bureaucratization and urbanization. Moreover, he felt that these urban trends incubated mental disorders, thus fuelling their growth and expression. In the face of such strong socio-political currents, he argued, desocialization was more likely to occur as familial relationships were strained and more individuals were alienated from traditional support systems. As a result, they may seek, or be encouraged to seek, refuge within the mental health system. Mental health services, therefore, must be prepared to respond appropriately with forms of early detection and the ability to provide treatment that repairs socialization. Traditional institutionalization had failed in this respect, and care in the community was not a viable option, as it was the very environment that produced alienation in the first place.<sup>76</sup>

Huxley was extremely interested in this aspect of Osmond's work at the Weyburn asylum, often providing him with thoughtful and unusual insights about how to approach the architectural problem. A particularly striking instance of this input is Huxley's reference to the eighteenth-century Italian artist Giovanni Piranesi: "Piranesi's etchings of *The Prisons* give one a very

vivid idea of what an institution looks like to a schizophrenic – enormous, inhuman, full of vaguely sinister and perfectly incomprehensible features. It might be useful, if you have to convince legislators and suchlike, of the soundness of your views, to have photographs taken of your hospital – or, better, of some brand-new monstrosity – but taken with a distorting lens, or as mirrored in a curved surface, so that distances would seem exaggerated, surfaces un-flat, right angles obtuse or acute” (22 February 1957).

Building upon this idea, Osmond worked with architect Kiyoshi (Joe) Izumi and psychologist Robert Sommer to develop a study of socio-architecture, combining an appreciation for the built environment and the psychological and perceptual responses to that space. Socio-architecture was a study of how space was interpreted and used by individuals who were engaged, most importantly, in social interaction. In 1956 Osmond explained to Huxley that “a wholly new concept of mental hospital architecture is emerging combined with a new medico-nursing apparatus”:

Interesting, from this we have arrived at some general principles of architectural design which may have much bearing on old folks’ homes, prisons etc.

These are briefly that the function of a building can be usefully described in terms of *sociofugality* or *sociopetality* [words that Osmond coined in 1951]. The classical socio-fugal building is a railway station which is designed to move people about and to prevent the agglomeration of large groups. An hotel is highly sociofugal. The predominating relationships implied by the building are shoulder to shoulder ones.

The *sociopetal* building is designed to encourage and enforce group formation. The size of a group is limited by the human incapacity to incur and sustain more than a certain number of interpersonal relationships at a time. A home or a tipi or an igloo are highly sociopetal. We are accumulating much fascinating data on the variations on this theme. Churches for instance appear to be sociopetal, but because they are too big for face to face relationships they have attempted a compromise. I don’t know how successfully. (4 March 1956)

Fixated on how space generates or dissuades social interaction, Osmond began working with others and compared different groups of people to observe different degrees of social interaction depending on the group, as well as the space. For example, Sommer observed zoo animals in different kinds of enclosures as he developed different theories about territory and how specific animals feel threatened as boundaries are minimized. Similarly, he compared how groups of graduate students and patients with psychotic disorders perceived personal space, or special boundaries. The students, he found, were comfortable with greater distances between one another, and they also shifted their bodies or moved chairs in a room to create that space. Patients, he concluded, conformed to the setting as provided. They did not move the chairs to establish more comfortable surroundings, even when the chairs were set up back-to-back, thus prohibiting face-to-face interaction altogether.<sup>77</sup> Given these observations regarding the relative lack of agency or autonomy that patients felt, he agreed with Osmond that the exterior and interior designs of mental hospitals required even more care than other environments. Osmond went further to suggest that people with disordered perceptions felt uncomfortable in social encounters that occurred in locations with the ratio of personal space that most people felt was appropriate. In such “normal” settings, many of his patients had great difficulty initiating social contact because their perception of space was different.

Aided by the use of LSD, these men produced a trenchant critique of modern psychiatry and its overreliance on institutions for segregating people with mental disorders from mainstream society. In the Osmond family home, Francis Huxley, Izumi and his wife, Amy, and Humphry and Jane Osmond took LSD in 1957 with the express purpose of interrogating spatial reasoning and considering mental hospital design.<sup>78</sup> Within the first hour, Amy became nauseous. Izumi, in contrast, experienced vivid changes in his perception, including the feeling that he had regained hearing in his deaf left ear and that he could see perfectly without his glasses. He had the “indescribable feeling of hearing colours, smelling colours, seeing sound and ‘seeing’ texture in a form which was almost a direct tactile feeling with one’s eyeball or optic nerve.”<sup>79</sup> The effects of the drug distorted his perceptions and challenged his sense of reality. However, he described the experience as above all enlightening, and he looked forward to applying

these insights to his task of designing a new kind of institution for mentally disordered patients.

Izumi had been commissioned by the Saskatchewan government to conduct an assessment of the provincial mental hospital in Weyburn, where Osmond was the superintendent. Together, they made recommendations first to the local government and later to the American Psychiatric Association on how to improve the institutional circumstances for patients suffering from perceptual disorders such as they described, namely schizophrenia. Osmond and Huxley had already shared their concerns about spatial reasoning, and Osmond had regularly mused about the disorienting organization of the mental hospital, which was supposed to aid in the healing process but, for anyone with disordered perceptions, whether organic or the result of psychedelics, was more confusing than soothing. Osmond's position as superintendent encouraged him to consider these observations carefully, but he felt that he lacked the technical skills of design to implement meaningful changes. Huxley had a longstanding fascination with the subject but remained critical of the modernist impulse to prioritize form over function. In 1958, after meeting Oscar Niemeyer, architect of Brazil's capital city, Brasilia, he wrote, "Meanwhile the hygienic boys go on merrily producing buildings of the most amazing inconvenience and inefficiency. I have bumped my head and been roasted in Niemeyer's Brazilian hotels – low ceilings plus glass walls in a tropical climate. What idiocy. And from India I hear bitter complaints (from the Indian ambassador most recently) of Corbusier's entirely non-functional buildings in the new Punjabi capital."<sup>80</sup> He trenchantly critiqued the idea that homes were like machines, insisting that architects such as Charles Eduard Jeanneret le Corbusier, a French-Swiss pioneer of modern architecture who was particularly influential in urban architecture, were undeservingly lauded for creating uncomfortable spaces that were praised for their economy and austerity rather than their artistic or even imaginative interpretation of how humans use space. Corbusier was a particular target of Huxley's ire: "It was Le Corbusier, so far as I know, who started the current campaign against privacy" (14 March 1956).

Combining their mutual distaste for modernist architecture with their interest in human perception, they looked forward to an opportunity to bring psychedelics to spatial design. At Osmond's suggestion, Izumi, an



established local architect, trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at Harvard, wandered through the halls of the Saskatchewan Mental Hospital at Weyburn under the influence of LSD.<sup>81</sup> He noticed, for example, that the corridors seemed infinitely long, echoes sounded like voices, and dark colours appeared as holes in surfaces. These kinds of observations led him to conclude that the asylum was a frightening place for psychiatric patients. Contemporary publications, Izumi's architectural sketches, and records of his correspondence with local psychiatrists and policymakers reveal that he was attempting to merge features of the modernist style in architecture, which prioritized function over form, with emerging critiques of psychiatry that recognized the asylum as a symbolic representation of abusive power and social control.<sup>82</sup>

Izumi's musings about therapeutic space and mental institutions were hardly novel, and several historians have described the longstanding and dynamic relationship between architects and psychiatrists.<sup>83</sup> Osmond, Izumi, and Sommer spent several years studying at Weyburn to deepen their understanding of how the facility functioned as a therapeutic environment. Two dominant themes emerged from their observations: (1) patients, in general, exhibited a distortion in perception, which these researchers believed was the root of all mental disorders; and (2) prolonged institutionalization exacerbated the distorted perception and led to a generalized disculturation.<sup>84</sup> If they were correct in their assumption that mental disorders were primarily a disturbance of perception, isolation in an institution provided the worst kind of therapeutic environment. They became convinced that the primary dysfunction among mental disorders in general was one of desocialization, or losing touch with the outside world.

Osmond had long been frustrated with traditional asylums. He felt that the design of these buildings cultivated feelings of alienation and obedience, a situation in which the patient had very little power. He wrote to Huxley in 1957, "In the hospital changes continue. The dome, a symbol of sham, has been removed" (22 October 1957). The bronze dome on top of the mental hospital was an eyesore to Osmond, who had long held that such a building filled with misery and discarded people should not be adorned with beauty or built to hide the tragedies that existed behind its walls. These monuments of psychiatry, he argued, were being transformed in the twentieth century in a modernizing impulse that embraced scientific

reasoning, the central tenets of which included efficiency, technology, and sanitation.<sup>85</sup> The result, according to Osmond, was a highly depersonalized system that disregarded the fundamental function of modern hospitalization. With a greater understanding of mental illness, coupled with the ability to create an empathetic experience by taking LSD, they might enable modern hospital architecture to respond to patients' needs in a more sophisticated way.

Osmond even encouraged hospital administrators to undergo an LSD experience. One recalled that "the room seemed in a peculiar shape with the corners somewhat rounded, the doors at peculiar angles. The far wall seemed lower and the other walls seemed to converge on it. Somewhat later the people with me seemed to acquire auras of somewhat bluish tinge. Their faces and bodies were somewhat distorted. I thought that this was quite funny but considered it impolite to laugh."<sup>86</sup> Repeated experiments illustrated that LSD noticeably altered visual perceptions, but subjects also identified distortions in mood and thought patterns that often defied logical explanations. Recognizing how distortions in perception could affect behavioural responses, and believing that the LSD experience provided a relatively true representation of madness, Osmond felt confident that with the aid of LSD they could design a more humane and modern mental health facility, one that combined scientific approaches with patient-friendly environments.

Ultimately, Osmond and his colleagues proposed a circular design for the new hospital that he called "socio-petal." The combination of "socio" and "petal" underscored the prioritizing of social interactions in the new structure, and a rounded, or circular, environment was key, they felt, to repairing or establishing such interactions. This design contrasted with a socio-fugal structure, one that propelled people away from social spaces within an institution, thus reinforcing separation. Such spaces were later critiqued for exhibiting a high degree of surveillance, creating a panopticon effect, where a central nursing station staffed by a single nurse could monitor the activities of many patients down long corridors. The socio-petal design, by contrast, allowed patients the opportunity to retreat into private spaces around the perimeter of the building, as well as to conceal themselves in private and semi-private rooms, whose doors were later painted in different colours to encourage patients to distinguish one room

from the next. The initial socio-petal design incorporated features of modernism and austerity alongside a desire to build the hospital for the patients rather than for its staff. The proposed circular design expanded space for social contact as one moved outside one's private space. The extra barriers or buffers, Izumi suggested, created unambiguous divisions in the hospital and allowed for an unobtrusive entrance into a room or, similarly, an escape into privacy.

Inside the facility, the socio-petal design avoided long corridors that, according to patients and LSD subjects, echoed and reinforced feelings of paranoia and depersonalization, which made the transition from one space to another a frightening experience. In an attempt to limit the feeling of being under surveillance, Izumi removed the central nursing station. Izumi and his colleagues also paid attention to the interior design of the institution, continually retaining the core idea that the institution should foster a design that facilitated the building and rebuilding of social relationships. For example, Sommer paid close attention to floor tile designs with respect to appropriate colouring, texture, and arrangement. Conscious of the ways that coloured tiles could create illusions of distance, security, and gaps or holes in the floor, Sommer carefully chose patterns in common spaces that created a sense of security in a homelike environment. Conversely, he resisted arrangements in which solid lines might suggest barriers.<sup>87</sup>

When Osmond first published this architectural model, along with some of his interior design ideas, he encountered a mixed reception. The published responses and correspondence remained fairly favourable, and many correspondents agreed with the general principles behind his socio-petal model. The journal *Mental Hospitals* devoted a special issue to discussing the socio-petal building, which featured the comments of superintendents, architects, and psychiatrists, with the responses of the latter ranging from discarding the concept as “fanciful” to embracing it as “a fresh breeze of new thinking.”<sup>88</sup> Ultimately, Osmond writes to Huxley that the Weyburn Mental Hospital has won the American Psychiatric Association's Mental Hospital Merit Award for 1957, and “everyone wanted to know where Weyburn was” (24 May 1957). The award was a rather hollow victory, as the local government soon changed and the architectural model was never fully implemented, but perhaps more

importantly, the reliance on mental hospitals as the main portal to therapy also changed.

As American historian Gerald Grob has argued, in the postwar period the emphasis on mental health care had shifted from treatment to prevention, which transferred responsibility for mental disorders to the realm of public health. Following several administrative changes in North America, including John F. Kennedy's Mental Health Act in 1963, "the community, not the hospital, was psychiatry's natural habitat, and practitioners had to play a vital role in creating a healthier social order."<sup>89</sup> Meanwhile, policymakers and administrators embarked on the dismantling of the welfare state, which shuffled programs into new jurisdictions, reduced funding for frontline workers in health care, and limited state involvement in a move that initiated a reversal of postwar policies. The commitment to close or at least phase out asylums grew out of this discontentment with the modern project and was hurried along as the intellectual critique sharpened and aligned psychiatric patients with emerging human rights reforms.

Huxley and Osmond's in-depth discussions about the role of madness and its containers, whether classification systems or the mental institution, tapped into broader sentiments about human evolution, civilizing trends, empathy, and tolerance of difference. Their ideas remained predominantly intellectual, but Osmond's actions in the mental hospital suggest that he had genuine intentions to humanize madness in practical and administrative ways too, including introducing new nylon mattresses as well as Dacron suits – washable, wearable clothing for patients (1 July 1956). Many of his articulated concerns surfaced before anti-psychiatry had blossomed into a recognizable movement. His network of friends, colleagues, and literary influences inspired him to think critically about the state of psychiatry and the inherent disciplinary nature of managing madness. Although many of Osmond's writings predated the work of people more often associated with specific anti-psychiatry critiques, such as R.D. Laing, Erving Goffman, Michel Foucault, and Thomas Szasz, their criticisms suggest that perhaps these later figures were not quite as radical as they initially appeared to be. Huxley's and Osmond's criticisms reflect a less ideological, all-or-nothing approach. They are critical of Freud but also recognize useful elements. They are critical of parapsychology but are intrigued by its potential

benefits. Neither was a utopian. They confronted paradox, contradiction, and tension with more calm and intellectual agility than later critics who were much more dogmatic in their positions. The later anti-psychiatry critics differed somewhat, as they fed on the sentiments of disillusionment and developed more stringent and focused critiques of modernism as the thrust of their stance against psychiatry. Although Huxley and Osmond might not quite fit the profile of the 1960s-style post-modernist or anti-psychiatry figure, their work suggests that these kinds of ideas had been percolating for some time. Moreover, their correspondence reminds us that the postwar intellectual climate was richly endowed with examinations that highlighted global trends germane to the Cold War culture, an exhaustion with Marxism as a political economy breeding equality, discomfort with a liberal project that concentrated on vacuous consumption, and, above all, the absence of an ideology that produced human tolerance of difference.

#### PSYCHEDELICS AND THE ART OF DYING

In 1963 Aldous Huxley received LSD on his deathbed; he died of cancer mere hours after John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Huxley suggested that the effects of the drug bathed him in a vision of warmth and spiritual belonging, such that he could face death without fear. Huxley also had direct experience as a caregiver of the dying a few years earlier. He had nursed Maria through her final days as she succumbed to cancer. His care for her was aided in part by their mescaline experiences. He spoke candidly and compassionately about how their time together in the Mojave Desert had produced “genuine mystical experiences”; he suggested that these bespoke “an abiding sense of divine immanence, of Reality totally present, moment by moment of every object, person and event ... For her, it was not merely a geographical region; it was also a state of mind, a metaphysical reality, an unequivocal manifestation of God” ([appendix 3](#)).

Huxley later confided to Osmond his feelings of helplessness in this moment, explaining that psychedelics might have real potential to bring science and spirituality together in the art of dying care. He was personally committed to this idea based on his own experiences. His intellectual articulation of psychedelic dying care is indicative of some of the tensions that existed in Cold War science, in the hyperrational and increasingly

secularized and standardized approaches to therapeutics, and indeed in the approaches to clinical care. Some observers at the time contended that Western methods necessarily provided a better or more efficient form of understanding the value or benefits of psychedelics by confining them to scientific environments, whereas others, Huxley and Osmond included, were more wary of the consequences of isolation, arguing that the accompanying rituals had the positive effect of imbuing users with a kind of deference for psychedelics by treating them as sacred objects to be revered.

Conversations about death further illustrate the depths of the Huxley-Osmond relationship. When Maria died, Osmond immediately conveyed his sorrow, but also his admiration, for the woman and her openness to psychedelics, which may have eased her suffering by offering her glimpses of a new perspective on life and death, a sensation he conveyed to Huxley: “So it must have been a great help to reduce the spasm and nausea so that she could sink slowly from us, into the other way” (14 February 1955).

Huxley was also moved to words as he confronted Maria’s passing. He candidly reflected on his last days with her, as together they recalled their time in the Mojave Desert, a sacred encounter with peyote, and with it, a loosening of the bonds of mortality. He confided to Osmond:

I am sending herewith a short account of Maria’s last days. Gerald [Heard] has read it and thinks that it might be a good thing to write something about the whole problem of death and what can be done by those who survive to help the dying – and incidentally themselves ... The subject is enormously important, and it is hard to know how it ought to be treated so as to be helpful for contemporary readers who have to face the problem here and now, in the mental climate of today. (21 February 1955)

Osmond responded in characteristic fashion by stepping back from the immediacy of the situation and placing their grief in a broader human context:

I suppose that the only importance of the Roman last rites etc. is that these are a way of preparing the dying one for a peaceful and calm transition. We have got the whole idea upside down. It is not as the

priests would have us believe a passport to eternity letting one into heaven, purgatory or hell. It is just a way across the border, an easing of the strands that bind to this world and which if too strong may hold one in that treacherous inter-phase which separates the two. I feel that your keeping contact with Maria until she was finally through that strange and sometimes distressing barrier must have made the journey a gentle and happy one, knowing that you were doing this. I am sure that the worry and anxiety for you must have been greatly lessened, and so the way eased and the strands gently eased, loosened and finally cast off.  
Dear Maria. (25 February 1955)

A few years later, Huxley transposed his thoughts about Maria into a more specific clinical application: “Yet another project – the administration of LSD to terminal cancer cases, in the hope that it would make dying a more spiritual, less strictly physiological process” (2 February 1958).

As ever, Huxley’s views exposed his abiding conviction that science was best handled in partnership with a humanist tradition. When it came to medical science, humanism involved spiritual adherence in the most expansive sense. This subject captivated him: “My own experience with Maria convinced me that the living can do a great deal to make the passage easier for the dying, to raise the most purely physiological act of human existence to the level of consciousness and perhaps even of spirituality” (14 December 1960). Osmond concurred: “It seems that having miraculously found out how to reduce pain greatly by pharmacological means, we don’t want to be bothered any more ... I suspect that the dying need some direction which encourages letting go not only of their bodies but also of their past – indeed the latter may be even more difficult and more essential” (22 December 1960).

Osmond’s own death came 20 years after a “nearly fatal affair,” which he described in an unpublished letter to Dr Lawrence Davidson on 27 December 1983. After he was diagnosed with pneumonia in October of that year, doctors found a problem with his heart: “I had popped my mitral valve and chosen the right place to exhibit this oddity – a team of young, able, well-trained cardiac surgeons, physicians and nurses – opening their unit on that day. They kept me alive with a heart lung unit – made a tricky diagnosis because mitral valves rarely pop in healthy hearts, and had me out

in about three weeks. I was 35 pounds lighter, still rather poorly oriented and just beginning to realise how incredibly lucky I had been.” He fully recovered from this illness. About 15 years later, Osmond suffered a fall and head injury. After this, he was much less productive with reading and writing. In 2000 he and Jane moved to Appleton, Wisconsin, to live with their daughter Fee. He died peacefully at home, of cardiac arrhythmia, on 6 February 2004. In the end, both Huxley and Osmond returned to their homeland and were laid to rest within 80 kilometres of one another in Surrey.

Their reflections on dying were important at the time but have grown in significance as psychedelics return to science in the twenty-first century. Concerted attention in the new trials is focused on the role of psychedelics in terminal cancer wards and in palliative settings. Over half a century since Maria’s death occasioned their tentative thoughts on how psychedelics healed the grieving spirit and eased the transition from life to death, a new generation of researchers is exploring the role of psychedelics in this capacity. The candid words of the psychedelic pioneers may provide further reason to consider ritual, spirituality, and, above all, acceptance within the modern clinical setting.

Huxley and Osmond’s reflections on the art of dying and psychedelics were significant because they reflected a cultural ambivalence at that time toward the mechanization of human healing. In the twenty-first century, over six decades after they introduced the word “psychedelic,” those themes have reemerged in a different historical context. The acute fears associated with Cold War science, destruction, and cybernetics may now reside in a bygone era, but the return of psychedelics to the laboratory continues to animate discussions over the limits of science to improve humanity. In an age of climate change, terrorism, genocides, and war, the need for tolerance, understanding, and empathy is as poignant now as it was during the 1950s.

The current psychedelic renaissance might indeed offer a bridge between the past and the future, borrowing precedents from early pioneers of mind alteration, not just in terms of the science of psychedelics but also in terms of their abiding interest in humanism and their attempts to recognize the inherent value of empathy in a quest for healing. Decades of randomized controlled trials have left us wanting in terms of the artistry required for care of the dying. The extraordinary rise of the pharmaceutical



industry has brought more chemicals into modern homes than ever before and, with them, even grander promises about the capacity of pharmacology to neutralize human suffering, but we are nowhere near eradicating homelessness, poverty, racism, or most mental illnesses. Yet Western families are hard-pressed to escape the barrage of chemicals that now circulate in our environments, making us both more aware of and yet more complicit in their entanglement with modern life.

These letters are more than a window into a bygone moment in history. The communication age has altered the way that we record our relationships, sometimes with too much cyberdata and an erosion of privacy, but we may have also lost the arts of cursive and shorthand, along with the tactile legacy that comes from opening a box of letters. The correspondence between Aldous Huxley and Humphry Osmond is a testament to friendship, intellectualism, empathy, and tolerance. That those sentiments emerge so clearly from the letters, at a historical moment best known for polarizing ideological conflict, threats of nuclear war, and the rise of post-modernism, reveals much about the personalities of the authors and the persistence of these themes in our modern world.

#### NOTES

- 1 Osmond often refers to Hercules's fifth labour, where he cleaned the filthy stables of King Augeas in a single day. However, Osmond's labours were ongoing.
- 2 Leonard Huxley's biographies of Joseph Dalton Hooker (*Life and Letters of Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker*, 1918), the eminent botanist and close friend of Charles Darwin, and of his father (*Thomas Henry Huxley: A Character Sketch*, 1920) were balanced by editions of the letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle (*Jane Welsh Carlyle: Letters to Her Family, 1839–1863*, 1924) and Elizabeth Barrett Browning (*Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Letters to Her Sister, 1846–1859*, 1930).
- 3 Huxley, *Selected Letters*, 441, 448.
- 4 Huxley, *Time Must Have a Stop*, "Epilogue."
- 5 Huxley, *Eyeless in Gaza*, 470–2.
- 6 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 315.
- 7 Osmond-McEnaney Interview, 1960, 5, in Marjorie McEnaney Files, C128.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 11.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 11–12.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 19.
- 11 Memorandum, "Dr Osmond's Membership Application," 3 January 1955, in *Canadian Psychiatric Association Papers*. Osmond had some initial experience in psychiatry as an intern at Guy's Hospital in London in 1942. In 1944, after meeting Curran, he worked as a psychiatrist trainee at the Royal Naval Auxiliary Hospital in Burrow Gurney, Bristol, England, followed by a second navy assignment in Cholmondeley Castle at Cheshire. Following the war (1945–47), he

worked first as a specialist in neuropsychiatry in Bighi, Malta, and then as command psychiatrist in the 90th Military Hospital in Malta. In 1948 he returned to Guy's Hospital as an assistant in the Department of Neurology before becoming first assistant in the Department of Psychological Medicine at St George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner, London.

- 12 Smythies, "Autobiography." The editors are grateful to John Smythies for sharing this unpublished manuscript.
- 13 Gelman, *Medicating Schizophrenia*, 1.
- 14 Smythies, "Autobiography." Smythies contends that this was the first biochemical theory of schizophrenia.
- 15 Healy, *Creation of Psychopharmacology*, 183–4.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 191.
- 17 Hoffer, "Humphry Osmond."
- 18 Abram Hoffer to Mrs M. Clements, "Progress Report on Saskatchewan Psychiatric Research," c. 1955, in Abram Hoffer Collection, A207, III. 63.
- 19 Hoffer and Osmond, *Hallucinogens*, 269.
- 20 Burnham, "American Medicine's Golden Age."
- 21 For example, see Healy, *Let Them Eat Prozac*; and Tone, "Tranquilizers on Trial."
- 22 Dagmar Herzog suggests that the "heyday of intellectual and popular preoccupation with psychoanalysis reached from the 1940s to the 1980s." Herzog, *Cold War Freud*, 1.
- 23 The repressive tendency in the mind to keep uncomfortable/unwanted thoughts hidden.
- 24 In an early letter from Huxley to Osmond, he complains, "I suppose it was more than could be hoped – that Menninger should be simultaneously the fountain-head of American psychiatry *and* completely open to new, revolutionary ideas" (18 July 1955). The ongoing dominance of Freudian ideas is captured some years later when Osmond writes to Huxley about the latter's upcoming visit to Menninger: "You will be able to savor analysis en masse" (9 December 1959).
- 25 For example, see Valenstein, *Great and Desperate Cures*; and Braslow, *Mental Ills and Bodily Cures*.
- 26 For example, Julius Wagner-Jauregg introduced the therapeutic application of malaria for patients with dementia paralytica and for that received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1927. Egaz Moniz received one in 1949 for developing the "burr-hole" technique for lobotomies. According to historian Edward Shorter, this era marked psychiatry's return to physical and increasingly scientific approaches to defining and treating mental disease, realigning itself with its older biological roots after a brief "psychoanalytic hiatus." Although Andrew Scull describes the psychoanalytic era as a "meaningful interlude," both historians underscore how Freud's theories did not sit well with those who believed severe mental disorders were more physical than mental. Shorter, *History of Psychiatry*, 145; Scull, *Madness in Civilization*, 322.
- 27 Osmond wrote to Huxley, "It looks as if the current mental hospitals are the worst possible for schizophrenic people. They are unsuitable for human habitation and are especially bad for sick humans, particularly those with perceptual disorders. Sometimes I wilt beneath the follies" (31 January 1958).
- 28 J. Huxley, ed., *Aldous Huxley, 1894–1963*, 118.
- 29 An idea of Huxley's vast reading can be glimpsed in a description of his personal library in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 684–6. His library was destroyed in a fire on 12 May 1961.
- 30 Snow, *Two Cultures*.
- 31 Roos, "Matthew Arnold."
- 32 George Santayana remarked in 1913, "M. Bergson is at bottom an apologist for very old human prejudice. Bergson is afraid of space, of mathematics, of necessity, and of eternity; he is afraid of

- the intellect and the possible discoveries of science; he is afraid of nothingness and death.” Santayana, “Philosophy of M. Henri Bergson,” 126.
- 33 Osmond concurred in his letter of 23 October 1955: “I very much agree with the Aldous-Bergson idea that the brain *filters* out the greater universe most of the time.”
  - 34 Hoyle first used the phrase “big bang” in a March 1949 BBC Radio broadcast when describing the cosmological theory circulating for several decades and pioneered in large part by Huxley’s friend Edwin Hubble. Ironically, Hoyle advocated instead for a competing “steady-state” theory, yet his phrase eventually became synonymous with Hubble’s “expanding-state” theory. A transcript of Hoyle’s broadcast was printed in BBC Radio’s publication *The Listener* in April 1949, and the term appeared again in 1950 in Hoyle, *Nature of the Universe*.
  - 35 Wyndham, *Day of the Triffids*.
  - 36 Wiener, *Cybernetics*, 37–8.
  - 37 Wiener, “Cybernetics,” 14.
  - 38 See “Edison of Our Age?” 33.
  - 39 Bleuler also coined the terms “schizophrenia” and “autism.”
  - 40 Although later divisions between them play up Freud’s rejection of, among other things, Jung’s “occult” tendencies, Freud himself was deeply curious about occult and parapsychological phenomena. Roudinesco, *Freud in His Time and Ours*, 229–32.
  - 41 “Frederic William Henry Myers,” in Melton, ed., *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, vol. 2, 1078.
  - 42 See Huxley, “Oddest Science,” 32–3.
  - 43 Myers, *Human Personality*, xvii. Osmond’s professional associate Gardiner Murphy had issued a reprint of the entire two-volume edition in 1954.
  - 44 *Ibid.*, xv.
  - 45 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 581, refers to Huxley travelling to Glen Cove, Maine (home of the Round Table), in the summer of 1955 “to attend one of those parapsychological conferences he was getting addicted to.”
  - 46 Osmond wrote to Huxley, “Puharich is a strange fellow compounded almost equally of genuine scientist, comedian and something which seems, if reports be true, to resemble a crook” (11 April 1958).
  - 47 For further information on Garrett, see Angoff, *Eileen Garrett*.
  - 48 Osmond reported to Huxley that when Garrett underwent a psychedelic experiment, she was “delighted to feel that her mediumistic experiences tied into the LSD so well” (30 November 1958).
  - 49 For Huxley, mysticism was no dilettantish interest but a core element of his worldview, as he wrote in *Grey Eminence*, 82: “A totally unmystical world would be a world totally blind and insane.”
  - 50 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 498.
  - 51 Rafter, “Somatotyping.” Nicole Rafter notes that Sheldon also exhibited an inclination to anti-Semitism; however, there is no sign of this in the Huxley-Osmond letters. On the “anti-modern” charge, Sheldon speaks for himself: “Under no circumstances should a human child ever be born in a city, or allowed to spend any of the growing years within reach of the urban influence. This handicap is too much for any mind to overcome, and I do not understand how those individuals who had to spend their earliest conscious years near the environs of massed population, ever succeed in living at all.” Sheldon, *Psychology and the Promethean Will*, 205.
  - 52 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 427.
  - 53 Quoted in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 428.
  - 54 See Huxley, “Who Are You?”

- 55 Ibid., 519.
- 56 Huxley, *Island*, 141.
- 57 Osmond may have initially been more uncertain about Sheldon's ideas than his more or less enthusiastic letters to Huxley appear to indicate. Writing to Jane after meeting Sheldon at Huxley's in May 1955, he says, "I had never met him and had been a bit chary of his ideas, but I found him very congenial" (28 May 1955, private collection).
- 58 Osmond's retreat from Sheldon's ideas may have had something to do with Sheldon's involvement in what became known as the infamous "nude posture photo scandal" at Yale University. Rosenbaum, "Great Ivy League." Ron Rosenbaum's dredging of this unseemly episode in Sheldon's career has been criticized in Gatlin, "William H. Sheldon," 251–2.
- 59 For Huxley, this exchange reflects a spiritual concern as well. His suggestion, "phanerothyme" or "soul revealing" (30 March 1956), is perhaps even more provocative and intriguing than Osmond's famous counterpart. It speaks to Huxley's inimitable modern mysticism, with the image of mescaline or LSD acting as the medium whereby the soul is revealed to itself. It is an ineffably (at least for those of us who fall short of Huxley's high mysticism) profound notion, evocative of Krishna's revealing himself to Arjuna in Huxley's beloved *Bhagavad Gita* (Osmond also loved the book).
- 60 Whewell, "On the Connexion," 59.
- 61 Osmond might be seen to capture Kuhn's notion of "normal science" as well as anyone; see his letter of 7 May 1961.
- 62 See [appendix 1](#).
- 63 See, for example, Roy Porter's account of Werner Forssmann's harrowing experiment in 1929, which had him inserting a catheter into his own heart and taking an X-ray, thereby inventing the electrocardiogram diagnostic technique. Porter, *Greatest Benefit to Mankind*, 614.
- 64 For further literature on this subject, see Dyck and Stewart, eds, *Uses of Humans in Experiment*, 1–27.
- 65 Hoffer and Osmond, *Hallucinogens*, 234–6.
- 66 Wenner, *Lennon Remembers*, 76–7. It has been suggested that the Beatles' song "Doctor Robert" on the album *Revolver* (1966) may have been, in part, a nod to Huxley's character of the same name in *Island* (1962). Sullivan, "Twisted Tales."
- 67 Writing to Mikhail Bakunin, Herzen states, "Their eyes should be opened rather than gouged out so that they can be saved if they wish to be saved." Herzen, "To an Old Comrade," 594.
- 68 McDougall, *Heavens and the Earth*, 106.
- 69 In a US Senate committee hearing in 1958, Teller said, "If you asked me about ballistic missiles in 1945 or 1946, I would have said, 'Let's do it and let's do it fast,' and then you would have said, 'In what particular way will you apply this in a possible war?' and I would have told you, 'I don't know, but once we make it we will find some use.'" Quoted in *ibid.*, 152–3.
- 70 Schultes, "Peyote Cult," 24–6.
- 71 See Slotkin, *Peyote Religion*. James Sydney Slotkin (1913–58) was an American anthropologist who studied Indigenous peoples.
- 72 Anthropological studies from the 1950s to the 1970s tended to concentrate on these religious angles in their examinations of peyote. For example, see Slotkin, *Menomini Peyotism*; Friend, *Peyote Religion*; Furst, *Flesh of the Gods*; Myerhoff, *Peyote Hunt*; and Schultes and Hofmann, *Plants of the Gods*.
- 73 Quoted in Dyck, "Introduction," xxvi.
- 74 *Ibid.*, 78–9.
- 75 Some of Osmond's thoughts on this subject were later published in a revised and more polished format. See Osmond, "Peyote Night," *Tomorrow Magazine*; and Osmond, "Peyote Night," in

*Psychedelics.*

- 76 For more on socio-architecture designed with Osmond, see Dyck, “Spaced Out in Saskatchewan.”
- 77 Sommer, “Floor Designs.”
- 78 Kiyoshi Izumi, “LSD and Architectural Design,” 2–3, unpublished manuscript, in Abram Hoffer Collection, A207, I.
- 79 *Ibid.*, 3–4.
- 80 Huxley, *Selected Letters*, 474.
- 81 Teo, “Kiyoshi Izumi.”
- 82 Dyck, “Spaced Out in Saskatchewan,” 642.
- 83 See, for example, Yanni, “Linear Plan,” esp. 24.
- 84 Osmond, “Rehabilitation Services,” esp. 45.
- 85 Osmond, “How to Judge.”
- 86 Irwin Kahan, “LSD Report,” unpublished manuscript, July 27, 1957, in Abram Hoffer Collection, A207, II.A.3.
- 87 Sommer, “Floor Designs.”
- 88 “Sociopetal Building Arouses Controversy,” 25–6.
- 89 Grob, “National Institute of Mental Health,” 65. For a clear description of the various factors that contributed to deinstitutionalization, see Grob, “American Psychiatry.”

## Editors' Note

Thanks to the forethought and care exercised by Humphry Osmond, his family, and his colleagues, we are able to present the Huxley-Osmond correspondence in its entirety. The lone exception is one page, or possibly more, missing from Osmond's letter of 30 April 1956. We have transcribed over 275 letters from the copies found in Laura Huxley's storage bin, supplemented by the very helpful scans provided by Allene Symons. The primary material as well as three of the four appendices come from Huxley's originals and Osmond's carbons and photocopies. For the second appendix, we worked from the originals and copies in the private collection of Osmond's daughter Euphemia Blackburn.

Most of Huxley's letters were typed. Osmond's, on the other hand, were not. He wrote in a "short longhand" that, initially, presented a challenge for Huxley (as it has for successive readers and the current editors). In a letter written at the end of April 1954, Aldous begins with an admonition: "It took two days of intensive work to decipher your last letter (you will really *have* to learn to type!)." Humphry apologized by return mail: "I have not yet learnt how to type but will try to write more legibly. I am sorry, I did once try to type and it was so slow and much worse than my writing." He never did learn to type, although he did live up to his promise to write more legibly. A sample of his handwriting can be seen in the letters reproduced on pages xx and xxi, which contain the two earliest versions of Osmond's "psychedelic" ditty.

Our goal is to provide an accurate, authentic, and readable edition of the correspondence between Huxley and Osmond. Hence the letters presented here are unexpurgated; the very few occurrences of ellipses were carried forward from the original text, as were question marks in parentheses. Although candid remarks about colleagues and others are to be expected in such lively exchanges as we have here, nothing written about other people is slanderous. We have, however, protected the identity of the few patients whose names appear by replacing their names and those that could be used to identify them with a long bracketed dash [—].

The letters are presented chronologically by date, so some of the dialogue may appear to be out of sync when they occasionally “crossed.” We standardized the locations and dates, placing them in italics at the head of each letter. We retained the salutations and signatures as written but normalized their placement.

We followed the paragraph breaks used by the authors, which has resulted in some long paragraphs. In an effort to maximize use of space, Osmond often indicated a change in subject by using an extended dash; we treated these as paragraph breaks. Otherwise, we used standard editorial practices, such as brackets for emendations in the text and literalizing numbers ten and under. We silently corrected misspellings and obvious errors in punctuation, and we expanded ampersands and most abbreviations, which were a core feature of Osmond’s shorthand. We retained British spelling, as well as that of scientific terms (such as “mescaline”), as they appear in the text, resulting in some inconsistencies.

We tried to retain as much of the flavour of Osmond’s galloping prose as possible, although we did need to add light punctuation regularly. On a few occasions, we needed to fill in a word to make sense of a passage, most often a word that “dropped” when Osmond was going to a new page. These represent our best suppositions as to what was intended and appear in brackets. There are also a few occasions in which no word or punctuation we could think to add would make sense of an odd phrase; those are retained as written. We standardized the treatment of titles of books, journals, articles, poetry, and so on, which both writers handled inconsistently, according to modern usage. When an imprecise title is given in the text, it is retained without either italics or quotation marks, and the full correct title is provided in a footnote. On occasion, Osmond footnoted his own letters, usually indicated by an asterisk, or wrote postscripts in the margins. We reproduced them as he did, either at the end of a particular letter or in the footnotes.

These letters are peppered with names – of friends, colleagues, historical and literary figures, and even members of the general public – and with very few exceptions these are identified in the footnotes with a brief description and dates when known. Identifying notes are provided on the first occurrence of a name only, and the index can be used to locate this information for subsequent occurrences. Titles and abbreviations are

likewise noted only upon first mention. Informational notes are added throughout to elucidate parts of the text and provide pertinent background information. These include several excerpts from privately held letters by Humphry to his wife, Jane, that offer candid insight on his experiences with Huxley and his family. To the extent possible, we want readers to share Humphry's feelings, expressed in a letter to Matthew Huxley in July 1970: "I am in the middle of reviewing the Huxley letters – a slow task since I find them so enjoyable."<sup>1</sup>

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Humphry Osmond to Matthew Huxley, 22 July 1970, in *Dr Humphry Osmond Papers*.



## PSYCHEDELIC PROPHETS

1953

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
31 March 1953

Dear Mr Huxley,

You were kind enough to write an appreciative note about a joint article which Dr J.R. Smythies<sup>1</sup> and I wrote for the *Hibbert Journal* and to send us a copy of *The Devils of Loudun*. I am taking the liberty to send you a copy of a mescal experience of mine. It isn't in the least unusual but may be of some use to you. The most interesting material was not included because it would have diverted the people for whom the article was written from thinking about experiences of mine. We did some weird psychokinetic experiments which certainly did not reach the validity level that Rhine<sup>2</sup> requires but left me certain that in the mescal state one is at any moment liable to leave the time in which we are usually more or less snugly embedded for a wider and wider time for which our orderly, thing bound culture does not prepare us. Surin<sup>3</sup> at least had some frame of reference in which he could fix his psychotic descent into hell. Most of our patients have no frame of reference and neither do their doctors and nurses. It is a case of the blind leading the very imperfectly sighted in the country of the blind.

I was much misled by the criticism of *The Devils* which seemed quite beside the point and am very grateful that your kind thought allowed me to read this very important book. I'm sure you're always being told that by devotees, but I'm not particularly a devotee. The critics gave me to suppose that *The Devils* was on the vein of *Grey Eminence*, whereas it is an illustration to *The Perennial Philosophy*. Now I hold that *Grey Eminence* was a clever book but *The Devils* is a wise one – not lacking cleverness either but very different. I do not understand the critic's aversion to the details of the nun's possession, the parson's cruel but noble death, or the diseased, stinking but power-ridden Richelieu.<sup>4</sup> They are all essential to the picture, and the picture, if I read rightly, is a magic one, for it is a mirror. As

we gaze into it we begin to see ourselves as well as the 17<sup>th</sup> century witch hunters.

I hope to review *The Devils* for our little psychiatric journal because it seems absurd that psychiatrists who spend their lives dealing with variations on the theme which you described are often quite unaware that some, at least, of our present failure in dealing with the great psychoses arises from our entirely inadequate picture of man. Aspects of human personality can be described in terms of Pavlovian dogs or Grey Walter's<sup>5</sup> electric turtles, other aspects can be described in Freudian or Adlerian<sup>6</sup> terms, but when this has been done we are left with great continents of experience, with a stratosphere and a sub oceanic region still untouched.

John Smythies and I hope, using biochemical tools such as mescal, lysergic acid and new ones which we are investigating, to make exploration possible. It always has been possible but only, in our view, to a small number of people with unusual personalities combined with unusual body biochemistry. Such people always ran a grave danger because they could never be sure that under the grave psychic stress of spiritual experience, a biochemical disaster, not reversible, might be precipitated. Surin's case could be interpreted in this way. Our own experiences suggest that even the transient journeys in mescal are never to be forgotten.

I may possibly be at the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Los Angeles this spring (May, I think) and would if at all possible like to call on you. If you are considering taking mescal or lysergic acid yourself please do not do so without taking proper precautions. *Do not take them at all if you have had an infective or other jaundice in the last 20 years.* Proper recording is essential, and we would be greatly obliged if you could make such records available to us for research purposes. I hope that this doesn't sound grasping, but John and I hope to interest a number of able people in this work and get them to record their experiences. By doing this we hope to encourage our brother psychiatrists to take a more lively interest in the inner world than they have done, so far. No one should take lysergic acid or mescal without having at least two companions with him throughout the experience, which usually lasts 8–12 hours or more. If the experience goes on too long it can usually be terminated or modified by suitable intravenous medication. If you want advice about this let us know. Having given the necessary gloomy warnings I must add that in my view

experiences of this sort, however obtained, are of great value. Do they lead to enlightenment – you have pointed out that they don't, of themselves, but they can serve as stepping stones, at least to making one feel the need for enlightenment. Body-mind-soul relationships are rarely, among scientists, much discussed now, but I believe that they would become a very lively issue among a group of ex-mescalinated scientists. I hope to have the pleasure of meeting you.

Yours sincerely,  
Humphry Osmond

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
10 April 1953*

Dear Dr Osmond,

Thank you for your very interesting letter and accompanying article, and for the very kind and understanding things you say of my *Devils*. It looks as though the most satisfactory working hypothesis about the human mind must follow, to some extent, the Bergsonian<sup>7</sup> model, in which the brain with its associated normal self, acts as a utilitarian device for limiting, and making selections from, the enormous possible world of consciousness, and for canalizing experience into biologically profitable channels. Disease, mescaline, emotional shock, aesthetic experience and mystical enlightenment have the power, each in its different way and in varying degrees, to inhibit the functions of the normal self and its ordinary brain activity, thus permitting the “other world” to rise into consciousness. The basic problem of education is, How to make the best of both worlds – the world of biological utility and common sense, and the world of unlimited experience underlying it. I suspect that the complete solution of the problem can come only to those who have learned to establish themselves in the third and ultimate world of “the spirit,” the world which subtends and interpenetrates both of the other worlds. But short of this ultimate solution, there may be partial solutions, by means of which the growing child may be

taught to preserve his “intimations of immortality” into adult life. Under the current dispensation the vast majority of individuals lose, in the course of education, all the openness to inspiration, all the capacity to be aware of other things than those enumerated in the Sears-Roebuck catalogue which constitutes the conventionally “real” world. That this is not the necessary and inevitable price extorted for biological survival and civilized efficiency is demonstrated by the existence of the few men and women who retain their contact with the other world, even while going about their business in this. Is it too much to hope that a system of education may some day be devised, which shall give results, in terms of human development, commensurate with the time, money, energy and devotion expended? In such a system of education it may be that mescaline or some other chemical substance may play a part by making it possible for young people to “taste and see” what they have learned about at second hand, or directly but at a lower level of intensity, in the writings of the religious, or the works of poets, painters and musicians.

I hope very much that there may be a chance of seeing you in these parts during the Psychiatric Congress in May. One of the oddest fish you will meet at the congress will be a friend of ours, Dr Milton Erickson,<sup>8</sup> who is perhaps the greatest living virtuoso in hypnosis. (Incidentally, for some people at least, deep hypnotic trance is a way that leads into the other world – a less dramatic way than that of mescaline inasmuch as the experiences are entirely inward and do not associate themselves with sensory perceptions and the character of things and people “out there,” but still very definitely a way.) If you are coming alone to the meeting, we can provide a bed and bath – but unfortunately the accommodation is too small for more than one. You will be free to come and go as it suits you, and there will always be something to eat – though it may be a bit sketchy on the days when we don’t have a cook.

In any case I look forward to seeing you and to the opportunity of discussing at greater length some of the problems raised in your letter and the articles by Dr Smythies and yourself.

Yours sincerely,  
Aldous Huxley

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
13 April 1953*

Dear Mr Huxley,

First, I would gladly accept your very kind invitation to stay with you. I hope that I won't be a nuisance. If I should prove inconvenient please let me know. I expect to arrive in Los Angeles on May 3<sup>rd</sup> by air, but at what time I don't yet know. I shall inform you as soon as I do.

John Smythies and I would entirely agree with you, that our greatest need is to allow us to preserve our "intimations of immortality," which is so rapidly submerged in our restless, hygienic world. I like your vision of a human education for human beings which would recognize that we are more than cybernetic toys and which would lead up to some initiation which would allow perhaps both [a] backward and forward glance.

But I am even more interested in your conception of the child who is gradually weaned, seduced or broken off from that "other world." I have approached this from three very different directions and it seems to fit in. One's own memories of childhood with their brilliance and timeless quality – subjective no doubt the critic would reply. When a genius like Traherne<sup>9</sup> describes the child's-eye view it is so clear that it hurts. One has seen that world and will never see it again except in a rare dream – unless of course one takes mescal, lysergic acid, harmine, ibogaine or one of our new toys. David Eder,<sup>10</sup> one of Freud's pupils (maybe you knew him) once said, "We are born mad and happy, we grow old and sad, and then we die." The Freudians make a great deal of regressing and much of it is true and much not, but do feel that the earliest vision is something strange and they are right. The supra-renal glands at birth are enormously large. No one has yet explained why. On the current "regression to the nirvana of the world view where all desires are gratified" theory it would seem strange that the endocrine apparatus most concerned with flight and fight should be so large. What fighting or flighting can there be in the womb? Shortly after birth the supra-renals get smaller and smaller and are about their smallest

(relatively) from about 1½–2 until puberty. During this period schizophrenia is very rare, although known.

Suppose, however that we have set it topsy-turvy – as David Eder suggests – and as you also hint. Is the answer this: all children in their very earliest days are and must be schizophrenic and they have a biochemistry suitable for their condition? Their life is on the other side, but as the brains mature and their biochemistry changes their brain focuses on our side. In our culture not only does the brain focus on Sears Roebuck catalogues and television screens, but our whole endeavor is to ensure that the Door in the Wall which H.G. Wells<sup>11</sup> described so wonderfully is not only locked but its existence denied. It seems to me that it is essential for those whose job is in the field of mental illness and mental health to be pretty clear in their minds about the nature of man. If they aren't they do as much harm as good. Any way I am greatly looking forward to meeting you and discussing these matters. I hope that I shall meet Dr Erickson – the technique of hypnosis is always fascinating and it has been most useful in investigating some of the curious aspects of consciousness which we usually shy away from.

The really difficult thing, as I see it, is to maintain a spirit of detached enquiry into these matters and to refuse to be overwhelmed by their astounding nature or tempted by their power aspects. And when one has learnt that lesson, which isn't either easy or permanent, to realise that even the most astonishing voyages in the other world do not necessarily widen the spiritual vision, and may even make it narrower than when one started.

However, our field is schizophrenia and the great psychoses and our objective is to show that they could arise from a very simple biochemical misfortune. If we can show that, our next step is to see what can be done to correct that misfortune. I believe that if we can do something about these great illnesses we may then be in a position to start exploring the psyche with equipment which will allow us to do so. Nowadays we like our answers to metaphysical questions in scientific language. It doesn't make the answer any truer, but it may receive a better hearing if it is given in the fashionable lingo.

Yours sincerely,  
Humphry Osmond

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
19 April 1953*

Dear Dr Osmond,

Good! We shall expect you on the third. May I suggest that you take the airline bus to the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, from which we can come and retrieve you – or from which it is easy to take a cab. Going to meet planes at the airport has become such a nightmare, with the increase of traffic, that my wife, who drives the car, begs everyone to come as far as the Roosevelt – which is quicker for the traveler as well as easier for the meeter.

Hoffmann La Roche<sup>12</sup> has told my young doctor friend that they must send to Switzerland for a supply of mescaline – so it may be weeks before it gets here. Meanwhile do you have any of the stuff on hand? If so I hope you can bring a little; for I am eager to make the experiment and would feel particularly happy to do so under the supervision of an experienced investigator like yourself.

Yours very sincerely,  
Aldous Huxley

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
24 April 1953*

My dear Mr Huxley,

Many thanks for your letter of instructions. I shall certainly do as you advise; my experience of U.S. airports is that the big ones are only to be properly described by the adjective hellish, a rootless confusion, noise, glitter and dismay which I am sure is common to many hells.



I hope to arrive about 2:00 p.m. and should reach you some time in the afternoon.

I shall bring some of the cactus (synthetic) with me. I should be very glad to give you some. It will be a very great advantage if you had a tape recorder on the scene. We will discuss with your doctor friend any other precautions. Of course the quite astonishing thing about the hallucinogens is that they are, on the whole, very nontoxic. John Smythies is making up some sealed envelopes for psychokinetic or is it psychometric experiments should you care to do them. He is greatly cheered by your interest and encouragement in these rather specialized aspects of our work.

The main research is coming along well – I hope you will meet our biochemist colleague Dr Abram Hoffer<sup>13</sup> who will be in Los Angeles – it (the main research) is now reaching the stage of attrition so that the clinicians are temporarily at least taking a back seat. Luckily for us our interest in the laws and happenings in that other world will keep us busy for a long time.

We are planning some work on control of mood which plays such a part in *Brave New World* – incidentally I only recently realized that soma was not an invented name. Have you ever come across kava-kava – *piper methysticum* – or met anyone who has? We have been pursuing it for the last three years. I have even chewed a hygienic sample of it in the approved way and became nauseated and had an anesthetic mouth.

It will therefore be particularly interesting to meet a virtuoso hypnotist and discuss the limits of hypnotic interference with mood. It looks as if I should have to skip most of the conferring – which might not be a bad thing, for two or three gathered together are always more enlightening than two or three hundred – even or perhaps especially psychiatrists.

I hope that the narcotics people don't get on to me, but I expect they will wink at anything for an APA meeting.

I expect you know that there is a Red Indian Church which has an unusual version of the Eucharist using a decoction of peyotl for wine. It has proved resistive to Caucasian interference, for reasons which are quite understandable.

I plan to leave L.A. on Sunday or Saturday, but *please* let me know when I'm becoming a nuisance – I hope I shall observe for myself but when on holidays one is sometimes imperceptive. I may have an odd request to make

to you – my chief Dr D.G. Mackerracher<sup>14</sup> will be at Los Angeles. He is a close friend and helper on our work. John Smythies and I are very keen to get the huge field lying between neurology at the highest level and philosophy recognised and given support. We have a good deal of backing from Professor Price,<sup>15</sup> Russell Brain the President of the Royal College of Physicians,<sup>16</sup> Jung<sup>17</sup> and others. If the chance arises and you agree could you put in a word? I shall not work in this field much – my brain doesn't go that way – but I know that it is essential that those who can must be cherished and sheltered for, in my view, it is only by using the tools of science that we can demonstrate its real limitations to a technique befuddled world – however, time to discuss that later.

Yours sincerely,  
Humphry Osmond

P.S. I think your doctor friend should have the following substances available if possible (I don't think we should need them but they are means of terminating the mescaline experience should for any reason you wish to do so): 4 x 10cc Ampules 10% Succinic acid for i.v. injection; 4 x 10cc Ampules Nicotinic Acid for i.v. injection (these contain 1–200 mg nicotinic acid). One 20–30cc ampule 30% dextrose for i.v. injection. It sounds formidable but it is only to make us all, especially the doctors completely at ease; also 2 x 7–1/2 mg i.v. Sodium Amytal. The necessary syringes too. We always have these in our work here but have never used them except for curiosity.

P.S. I have a strange story about the mysterious affair at Pont St Esprit<sup>18</sup> – a little spine chiller which I am investigating – we seem to be on the track of an unknown hallucinogen of enormous power which is also very toxic and insidious.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
13 May 1953*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I am sorry for the delay in letting you know about my safe home coming, but I have been fairly busy since my return. I know that you both know how much I enjoyed my stay in your home, so that I won't try to put it all down in words. It is a week I shall always remember.

I hope that neither of you had any ill effects from your mescaline and look forward to hearing your retrospective views of the strange experience. We have a very able psychiatrist here, William A. Malamud<sup>19</sup> who is giving us a series of lectures and we hope to discuss the whole matter with him. It would be nice if we could fit it into the framework of modern psychiatry and psychology, but probably the frame work will have to be changed.

Our purchases have been a great success. The golden coat is the wonder of Weyburn – Jane will be writing to tell you all about it – so I won't poach. Helen's<sup>20</sup> sun suit fits very well and she is very pleased with the monkey which she calls Zephyr and the little blue doll. The pig, the bear and the little dolls from Guatemala are also very interesting to her. We rather suspect that she has had mild mumps in my absence. Jane has been having Helen's portrait painted by an artist friend who is the wife of a brother [of] Guy's doctor. If it is any good I'll get some color reproductions made. Helen is not the best sitter, but I gather she makes up for her lack of stability by her force of character – without which children make insipid subjects.

Our journey back from friendly Los Angeles was long, beautiful, comfortable but at the end of nearly 15 hours, fatiguing. I came back with an English friend – we both arrived with such wonderful punctuality that we had lots of time to talk and sit in the morning sun. We did this to such good effect that the time passed quickly. Indeed it was only on a pause in the chatter that we realized they were announcing departure of some plane. This proved to be ours and we would have missed it if we hadn't run.

Once on board we roared over mountains, great deserts, and lakes on and on and on. By the time we reached Salt Lake City there was much cloud and snow about and as we took off there seemed to be nothing but cloud and mountain, both looking very solid. My friend and I felt cheered at having taken out \$10,000 insurance on the early stages of the journey. It is a wonderful morale raiser. Somehow you feel that you win either way. In Lethbridge (Alberta) it was slashing down cold, brutal rain and this soon

turned to heavy snow. It was blizzarding when we touched down in Regina at 01:30 (the 24-hour clock is sometimes useful). This proved to be lucky for me because a friend of mine who was coming down from Saskatoon spent 40 hours on the road (usual time five) and I got his bed in the hotel. Even round Regina there were some drifts three feet deep. It was a change of climate, however, most of the snow has gone now and I think spring is really here.

John Smythies was very pleased with Aldous' picture. He is coming around tonight to try our new ESP cards on Jane who is usually a good scorer. My sister hasn't yet told me about the nylon coat but I'm sure that she will like it.

I shall be bothering you for ideas for music and poetry before long – I have got to discuss the technical side with Abe so that we make sure that we have the proper equipment. I am also going to look onto a method of training our staff in relaxation methods – after reading Esdaile<sup>21</sup> it looks as if it should be possible to teach our nurses fairly quickly. I hope that Abe will be back tonight so that we can have a research meeting tomorrow.

I am afraid this letter is a bit muddled, but what with the days conferencing and getting up at 6:30 a.m. to get to Regina I am feeling stuporose. Also I have to be up early again tomorrow. I shall write again when I am less dopey.

I am still astonished by Sophia's<sup>22</sup> strange little voices.

I hope that Mr LeCron<sup>23</sup> gets ololiuqui.<sup>24</sup>

Thank you both for a very happy week.

Your affectionate friend,  
Humphry

P.S. I had an interesting time at the APA.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
25 May 1953*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I am just about getting myself organized again after my wonderful dash to California, a week of listening to Prof. Malamud of Boston in Regina, and a week of reflection in Weyburn.

We are hard at work getting our “Schizophrenia: A New Approach” ready for publication. Abram Hoffer, John Smythies and I did the last corrections this afternoon. Somehow it didn’t seem to belong to us anymore. The references will go in and then it will be sent off to England. I have the feeling it is a good paper, which has something new to say and says it fairly pointedly, but it was like reading something someone else had done. Two more papers are coming out of Weyburn in June – one which shows that schizophrenics can take huge doses of histamine, probably about 5–10 times the usual fatal dose, and the other which discusses the lysergic acid phenomena and classifies them. Ben Stefaniuk,<sup>25</sup> our psychologist has worked out a method of classification which should prove very useful to us. J. Smythies is, of course, hard at work on three new papers (I trust you have received his recent one from Brain which I find first class). Abram has a new test of schizophrenia which he is getting ready to write up – and I have one or two to throw into the ring. I nearly forgot Alex Szatmari<sup>26</sup> our Hungarian neurologist has a smashing EEG paper on adrenochrome and its friends and relatives while Roland Fischer<sup>27</sup> will no doubt have something soon. It is queer to think of this distant prairie place churning out scientific dynamite and we haven’t begun yet.

How are you both – selfish of me not to have asked that before?

Spring is just getting here – we had some cold days accompanied by very heavy rains which are pretty welcome on the dry prairies; it looks as if the farmers should have enough moisture to carry them on for several months.

Have you seen Robert Hutchins<sup>28</sup> of the Ford Foundation? We had a daring and entirely original project which we would like to submit to him and also some other projects if his stuffy “experts” won’t let him put Ford motors on our best horse.

Our Number One project is the one which I outlined to you in Los Angeles – a series of recorded mescaline interviews with 50–100 really intelligent people on various professions and occupations. We might use lysergic acid too. Our object would be to explore the transformation of the “outer” world and the revelation of the “inner” world which occurs. It is

evident that until this has been experienced it is largely meaningless, but once it has been experienced it is unforgettable. Most of us experience the transcendental so rarely and so fleetingly that we doubt whether it “really” is there or not. The mescal and similar experiences removes this doubt. I don’t think it is possible to discuss psychology seriously without taking these extraordinary experiences into account. There is nothing very new in our idea – William James<sup>29</sup> had much the same hunch many years ago.

If Fords are frightened by what may sound a rather lively piece of work we would be glad for them to help our straight research into pharmacological substances which affect the psyche. We would be helped by an immediate sum of money for equipment and possibly a salary for a pharmacologist and a psychologist. Later if our work goes on we would ask them for much larger sums. I know that we have something to offer and believe the Ford Foundation should be glad to have the chance of backing something off the beaten track. I can and will give unimpeachable references – apart from my dear Huxley’s. Sir Harold Himsworth,<sup>30</sup> head of the British Medical Research Council, Prof. William Malamud of Boston and the Dementia Praecox Research committee should be getting enough, and we can throw in Nolan D.C. Lewis,<sup>31</sup> head of Columbia Psychiatric Institute because he is so amicable.

Later we should try to get backing of a permanent schizophrenia foundation in Saskatchewan.

But the first project is the really exciting one. It is the sort of thing which people never consider doing because it can’t be done in a lab – which is absurd. We (Abe, John and I) agreed that there is one condition attached to our accepting the Ford money. Aldous will have to sit on an advisory board to decide who we should allow to take part in the project. It does look a little fantastic on paper, rather like one of these queer equations by your Reverend friend (who is I hope flourishing amidst his plants and his dubious mediums), but I don’t think that we should have the slightest difficulty in getting our selectees to cooperate once they discover who else is on the list. Good planning – especially a good itinerary, will be pretty essential.

If the Ford Foundation are really nice to us I should make over the production rights on my EEG accident preventer and the device for preventing drunks from driving and let them work out the operational

details. Like the chap who turned up at the Admiralty during the war with a device for destroying dive bombers by freezing the clouds in which they might be lurking. In a lordly way, when asked how this should be done, he said that such a detail was merely a technical matter to be solved by the technicians.

I have just been in to look at my peachy daughter, and enclose some pictures of her. She is very jolly, but has been indignant at the recent bad weather which has kept her indoors more than she likes. She rides so much on her new tricycle that she is very tired at night and sleeps like a log. Jane is making a new dress to match the lining of her gold coat which is a great success. My sister who was here today is very pleased with her candy stripe.

I hope the Charles Williams<sup>32</sup> novels will reach you before long – I had found them first rate and hope that you do. Charles Williams must have experienced at least some of what he describes. His capacity for integrating the world of magic with the world of everyday has never been done better to my knowledge. It is odd to think of the other world literally just around the corner – a few atoms' breadth away, and yet for most of us forever hidden and so as unreal as ultraviolet or infrared. Yet in some queer way, probably from our early childhood, most of us know that the other world is there however much we like to say that it isn't. Our denial is mostly a cultural matter; our society, loaded with accumulation of things and struggling to straight jacket itself in the most rigid time schedule ever devised, cannot allow us to wander on the timeless fields of childhood. The school bell and mechanical siren now sing the most compulsive of songs.

I think there is another cultural factor which plays an important but rarely recognised part: our social emphasis on individualism makes empathy, which I believe is one of the great perceptions, very unwelcome. First we are always wondering what the other fellow wants, but even should we in error feel as he feels this is a great threat to our individuality. Being one with mankind endangers one's personal self. Every one of us is supposed to be a right little tight little island that can't possibly be part of the main.

Surely we are reaching the apogee of individualism when we begin to talk of ourselves as being machines. The disastrous thing about all this is that our ability to achieve oneness is greatly impaired by our individualism

and we feel acutely uncomfortable. Then we bury ourselves in a growing crowd of unhappy individuals and enjoy a lynching or a pogrom or if we are, as most of us are, mild natured, a good clean well organized war or extermination.

I have written to Eileen Garrett<sup>33</sup> for her account of Sophia's weird little voices – they are mysteries. I hope Sophia doesn't mind my nosiness about them but it is a tribute to the impression which they made on me. Very odd.

I hope that you will be able to persuade Robert Hutchins that if I am a bit cracked on mescal etc. this is no more than the subject deserves. His experts will most likely make some nice scientific remarks about "knowing all about it" etc. However at his own Chicago University is one of the few Great Men of experimental physiological psychology, Heinrich Klüver<sup>34</sup> – I think that no one knows more about this subject than Klüver and no one would minimise our ignorance less.

Best wishes to you both from your Affectionate Friend,  
Humphry

P.S. Please thank Marie and Onnie<sup>35</sup> very much for their messages and cards.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
19 June 1953*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Thank you both so much for your post card from Montana. I wish you had been able to make the extra 7–800 miles. Still next year you must get up here. The roads in Saskatchewan and the Dakotas have been pretty bad with unseasonable rain.

I am on my own in the house – Jane, Helen and my sister having gone north for a few days. It has been a busy week. One day in Saskatoon on a research conference. Two days in Regina negotiating about working hours for our nurses. One day in bed with a fever. Three days going to and from Winnipeg then back here for a lysergic acid experiment on Mr Sydney



Katz,<sup>36</sup> one of Canada's leading scientific journalists of the magazine *Maclean's*. Today back to work.

Winnipeg saw the launching of two papers at the Canadian Psychiatric – they were neither of them our heaviest argument but both packed in a fair punch. They were well, even enthusiastically received. The *Daily Press*, in spite of long and careful explanation, sent out a very garbled account, which stated almost the exact opposite of what we had said. However it is encouraging to start the ball rolling. Next year we shall have a number of papers ready and should be able to make quite a showing. It is necessary to do this not only to let people hear about our work but to get funds for its future development.

At Saskatoon we had an encouraging day too. I think we have a likelier candidate for the role of M-substance than adrenochrome – this hasn't got a name yet. Queerly enough, adrenochrome once had the oddest of names, CMEGA. No one seems to know why it got this queer title which may prove more appropriate than it seemed when it was given. The man who christened it CMEGA is still bitterly resentful that this original name has been dropped and adrenochrome substituted.

I see that the Rosenbergs have at last been hustled to the electric chair with an indecent, muddled haste which cannot fail to harm the U.S.A. Justice should not only be done but it should appear to be done, and whatever the rights or wrongs of the whole business, this slipshod, long drawn out, law ridden business leaves a bad taste in the mouth. Every country does and has done shameful things – I would guess that another Aldous H. in 50 years' time will write an account of the Rosenbergs which will be as pitiful as the Parson of Loudun.\* One is tempted to equate the Americans with their bosom enemies the Russians, yet it is unfair and stupid to do this. Wretched man is still from fear to fear successively betrayed.

One of my oldest patients (we have been corresponding since 1946) has just begun to discover Plato and Zeno the Stoic and to find that these ancients were well aware of the perplexities of living. I think my friend's progress is becoming steadily rosier; for many years he has been convinced that he is the only sufferer from anxiety but gradually he is learning that we are all more or less worried.

I have two sociologist colleagues back from Harvard – they are living in the hospital and discovering all sorts of surprising and interesting facts.

Sociology looks at people refreshingly differently from psychiatry. It is odd to discover how highly formalized is the role of “being a patient.” How much has to be surrendered to be a “good patient” and what a major achievement it is to attain this status, for a good patient in a mental hospital must accept a dependent life which would be intolerable to anyone anywhere else. The trouble is that the better patient you become the less likely you may be to preparing yourself for life outside the hospital. It seems likely that recovery from mental illness is not, on the whole, expected by the public who take the view that “there is no cure for this disease.”

The great advantage of a biochemical basis (if true) to mental illness is that while few of us can follow the subtleties of Meyerian<sup>37</sup> dialectic or the sophistries of psychoanalysis, nearly anyone can appreciate the idea that someone’s brain might be poisoned and that this could drive them mad. Once this is established, much of the magical nature of mental illness will go – and we are very afraid of magic. This is where the rabbit punch comes, for oddly enough our work will, I think, illustrate quite clearly and irrefutably the magic nature of man by taking the magic out of mental illness, a curious paradox.

I hope that the Charles Williams novels reach you safely and that you find them as enjoyable as I have done. I think they have the true magic which cannot be counterfeited and would be glad of your views.

Good wishes to you both from your Affectionate,  
Humphry

\* No doubt a large foundation will be bequeathed for the Rosenberg children once guilt sets in.

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
21 June 1953*

Dear Humphry,

Our trip ended only yesterday. Hence the long delay in acknowledging your letter. I will certainly talk to Hutchins about your project when I have a good opportunity. Meanwhile I think it might be a good thing if you were to set forth in a couple of typewritten pages the nature of your project.\* Touch on the potential importance of mescaline studies from a purely medical point of view, and then go on to their importance in the more generalized fields of psychology, philosophy, theory of knowledge. Point out that the available material is still ridiculously small, that greater numbers of cases are needed to determine how people of different physiques and temperaments react to the drug. E.g. do Galtonian<sup>38</sup> visualizers react in a different way from non-visualizers? (I am sure they must. I am a non-visualizer, and got very little in the way of imagery. And yet visions are reported by many of those who have taken the stuff.) Again, is there any marked difference between the average reactions of extreme cerebrotonics, viscerotonics and somatotonics?<sup>39</sup> Do people with a pronounced musical gift get auditory counterparts of the visions and transfigurations of the external world experienced by others? How are pure mathematicians and professional philosophers affected? (It would be interesting to try it out on a logical positivist. Would he, like Thomas Aquinas towards the end of his life, when he had been vouchsafed an experience of “infused contemplation,” say that all his philosophy was as straw and chaff, and refuse to go on with his intellectualizing?) Armed with this summary of a project, and also with my own essay on the subject<sup>40</sup> (which promises to turn into quite a long-drawn affair, owing to the number of questions it raises, and the different kinds of light it sheds, within so many fields), I will go to Hutchins and try to arouse his interest. I think it quite likely he might want to take the stuff himself; and as there are a number of people of diverse idiosyncrasies who have expressed, or will certainly express, a wish to try the experiment, might it not be possible to arrange for you or John Smythies to come here, later on, for a few days in order to conduct the investigation? Interested parties could put up travelling expenses, and accommodation could be found with us, or if it were necessary to go to Pasadena to try it on Ford Foundationers or Caltech physicists, with Hutchins or someone else. If you think this idea feasible, let me know and I will start preparing the ground. Meanwhile let me have your summary. When my essay is done I will send it you.

Maria joins me in sending all good wishes to yourself and the family.

Yours,  
Aldous H.

\* Ford doesn't touch medicine, but is interested in the humanities and would finance the project as a contribution to applied philosophy. Still, it is good to mention the medical angle – make them feel they are killing two birds with one stone.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
26 June 1953*

Dear Aldous,

Many thanks for your encouraging letter of 21<sup>st</sup> June. J. Smythies and I have been hard at work after consults with Abram Hoffer on preparing a brief which I should be sending on to you, perhaps with this letter or by the next post.

This raises the points which you suggest and a few others and gives an outline, not too detailed, of the way in which the work would have to be conducted. The laboratory methods which appeal so much to psychologists with constricted viewpoints are, for a job of this sort, *out*. We must have a flexible and simple method which will enable us to work on the same satisfactory basis that we did in Los Angeles. Something which is not too formal and formidable seems to me what we shall need.

Not only is the available material very small, but much of it is highly misleading – a couple of paragraphs frequently covers the whole of 8–10 momentous hours. Among other things, large tracts of experience are frequently left out for reasons which are often hard to follow. At the Maudsley Hospital,<sup>41</sup> Denmark Hill for instance, J. Smythies found some of the protocols of the excellent work which Maclay and Guttmann published on mescaline.<sup>42</sup> There is an account in great detail of a life-size, three-dimensional hallucination of an Eastern dancing girl which was entirely real to the subject who was an artist. The scientists suppressed this extraordinary piece of information – but why? One can hazard a dozen guesses, yet in

each one is the question, why investigate at all if you cannot put up with what you find?

This hallucination is however quite a minor matter compared with the transcendental experiences which so frequently turn up and which have so far received such scant attention that I doubt whether a casual reader would realise that they are frequently associated with mescal intoxication. It is queer for we are always emphasizing the need for showing that “the materialist way of life” is not all, yet when for years we have had at hand a tool which shows this with a painful obviousness we take great care not to use it – or when we do use it to emphasize such trivialities as the effect of mescaline on color vision, which is rather like discussing an atomic bomb in terms of the color of its flash – interesting, but trivial.

We shall have to start thinking about our all star cast – I know that J. Smythies is very keen to include A.J. Ayer<sup>43</sup> and Gilbert Ryle.<sup>44</sup> I would like to try Graham Greene<sup>45</sup> – do you know him by any chance? – and I have a contact with Chris Mayhew<sup>46</sup> who was Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs in the first post-war Labour Government before he was 35. He is a sensitive, intelligent and aware creature.

I do hope that we can interest Hutchins enough to get him to give his stuffy psychologists a go by. This would not be an expensive project and I believe that there is a good chance that once we get it going it would have an extraordinary effect on an exceptional group of people. It is still uncertain just how one should approach the job of changing the intellectual climate. Our climate is, on the whole, one of a rather arid disbelief and disappointment. We have sold ourselves for the refrigerator, the Hoover, and the washing machine and gracious living and gardens of rest and competitive living and free enterprise. But the bargain has been a hard one and much has been lost. We have now got a chance to use our wonderful technology to help us to find again some of those things which it has taken away from us.

LeCron tells me that ololiuqui is on the way from Cuba – it sounds very exciting and improbable. We received a great deal of information about kava-kava and are having some sent from the South Sea Islands. Will let you know what it is like. Soma (*Brave New World* brand, not ancient India) is just 'round the corner I would guess. The big drug firms have made two substances which seem to be possibles in this role. I suppose that a

hallucinogen plus a reliable euphoriant would probably be soma. It would result I suppose in a hallucinosis with a predominantly pleasant affect and presumably cheering content. Of course we just don't know if it is as simple as all that. I suppose that even when we have the perfect mood "homeostator" that such is our nature that some of us would always be wanting to venture into the wilderness of despair – longing for hell for relief from heaven.

If Hutchins would like to take Mescal I'm sure that John S. and/or I could fix to come down somehow. We are due at a research conference in Topeka, Kansas in October. J. Smythies has a meeting arranged with Gardner Murphy<sup>47</sup> – they have got some rather strong difference of opinion about time and space which they hope can be settled by meeting. In my view Gardner Murphy is being obtuse, but it always sounds a bit arrogant to say this about the president of the American Psychological Association – although of course it is likely.

Am keenly looking forward to your essay – perhaps you could lend us the records so that we could get them typed up and sent back to you plus a type script?

I feel that the immediate task is to get these huge philosophical, psychological and medical problems clearly recognised by the sciences and arts whose concern they are. Once this is done then there is little doubt that they will invite attention from the brightest and best in the various fields who can find challenge and illumination from the mescal and allied phenomena. Owing to certain peculiarities in the mind-brain relationship which are essential for adaptive living and biological success, it appears that the inner world must be hidden most of the time. Throughout the centuries a small number of people in any society experience this inner world spontaneously, another but still small group can experience it by exercising special techniques – fasting, contemplation, magic, etc. But the social outcome of these experiences must depend upon the mores of the group and upon the nature of the communication which those who have transcendental experiences can establish in each other and with those who don't.

It is only in the last 50 years that any but the most adventurous and hardy could be expected to travel long distances, but in addition poor communications made it unlikely that people would hear about each other.

It is astonishing how much people did get about the world 500 years ago. Unfortunately at the time when transport had become so efficient that world travel was possible, mystical experience had become so rare because of its low social value that there were hardly any mystics to get about. We have excellent communication and no mystics!

One can understand how Aquinas felt about his philosophy after his “infused contemplation” – it would seem so impossible to communicate what had happened and the inadequacy of philosophy would seem so immense that no wonder he gave up. I suppose that in addition he could find hardly anyone who could understand what he was talking about. His learned philosophical friends would certainly be useless when it came to imagining what is exactly unimaginable.

If we can build up a group of gifted people who have had transcendental experiences and then get them together, I think that there is a reasonable chance that they might find some way of passing on this experience and giving some chance to those who only have vague inklings of it or the splendor and terror that exist just around the corner. So far as I know nothing like this would ever have happened in the West before – the drawing together of gifted people who have had astonishing experiences. The usual trouble with jamborees of the extra bright is that the atmosphere is competitive or really serves no useful purpose. I feel that symposia should form the second half of the project.

John Smythies and I reckon that it would cost \$35,000–\$40,000 for the first two years after which would come the expense of the symposia, but in fact for what it could do and the information and enlightenment it would promote it would be very cheap. The cost of the psychiatrists would be much less than what would be usual because they are employed by the province and are not in private practice when their cost would be about twice as much. In addition the new project would have the use of many of the facilities which the Schizophrenia Research Committee provides which would otherwise have to be paid for.

If you feel that there are parts of our submission which would be better omitted let us know and we will of course do so.

I hope that you and Maria had a good holiday in Montana – we were sorry that you couldn't come further north but the state of the roads has been so vile that I'm glad you didn't.

I have had a most interesting letter from a man called John Murray<sup>48</sup> – late head of University College, Exeter and a philosophy don at Christ Church Oxford. He says that he frequently experiences people through their handwriting. His emphasis is less on their character and personality (which is I think what Maria does) and more on their personal appearance, clothing and occupation. I am going, if he agrees, to test him, and wonder whether Maria and you would send me two envelope[s] each addressed in your own handwriting. I will tell you when I want them – perhaps some that I already have will be good enough. Professor Murray puts his capacity down to second sight (Scotch). He sounds a sensible man and is probably right – but when you have to decide how he does it then the fun begins.

I hope it all goes well with you both. Tell Maria that Helen is very jolly but was woken tonight by fireworks and wailed piteously. However once she was down she cheered up greatly.

I am greatly looking forward to seeing you both again before long – I hope that Hutchins will look favorably on the project. It is, of course an extraordinary and unconventional one – but surely this is the sort of thing which Ford Foundation should consider seriously – there are plenty of ways of financing bread and butter stuff, but ours I think should be put in the vitamin and essential amino acid category. We are losing in the struggle with the communists because our ideas are less clear than theirs and because there is such a large gap between our theory and practice, anything that might bridge the gap is worth 100 Divisions and the stockpile of H-bombs. Official religion won't do it because it has become mostly a stale formula – perhaps we can find our ways. Jane sends good wishes to you both and Helen two of her very wet kisses with which she salutes friends.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

P.S. I have finished the submission. It should be typed tomorrow and posted next day – 30<sup>th</sup> June. Let me know and suppress anything which you think is unsuitable. I shall then rewrite it.

---



Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 July 1953

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Here are (on attached typed sheet) J. Smythies' and my comments on *The Doors of Perception*. All very small ones but they may tidy a few loose ends.

Having now read it 3–4 times I feel that I have got the full flavor of it and a very good flavor it is. In a worrying and vexing time your essay has been enormously helpful and encouraging in convincing me that our present troubles are but minor nuisances and that we have really important work to do.

We are just edging out of an awkward three weeks in which the defunct but not deceased superintendent has been walking about the grounds expressing dissatisfaction with his dismissal. He has not of course been put out of a job, but has lost a few hundred dollars yearly and much responsibility which he didn't take anyway. There have been all sorts of rumors about petitions etc., but not much has come of them. All a bit uncomfortable, especially for Jane who doesn't have my professional interest in humans and is keen to protect me from detractors who believe that I cuckooed the old gentlemen, which of course I did, simply by existing, being determined and not letting him get rid of me.

Just as this business has begun to calm down and as I have started to look at this huge, spiraling bin of a place to see what must be done and what can be done, we run into another and quite unexpected difficulty arising from an unexpected direction.

Abram Hoffer and Mackerracher have got the idea that great benefit would accrue to Abram if he spent a year in England in a year's time. During this year he would study general medicine at the Post Graduate School of Medicine in Hammersmith. This would have nothing to do with our present work whatever. I feel that it is a sort of learned craziness that assails clever men at times. An attempt to broaden the mind means to broaden the mind. I suggested that a spell at the Slade<sup>49</sup> might be thrown in and a term or two at RADA.<sup>50</sup> The folly is so appalling it got me nearly down

to four letter naval expletives, which were alone sufficiently stereotyped to handle my rage. I still find it very hard to put up with folly especially when it is the folly of able people whom I like and admire. It is as foolish as if I said that I would take six months off and write a play about schizophrenia because I felt that this was a way of broadening my experience – in fact that would be a deal more sensible since I have at least written plays and will do so in the future – while Abram, who is a medically qualified research biochemist working in psychiatry, is remotely unlikely to practice the sort of specialised medicine taught at Hammersmith. However I shall I hope batter and cajole them out of this nonsense and hope that some encouragement will come from our Ford.

It is horrid being outrageously angry with those with whom one is fond. I wish that I had the capacity for all acceptance, but it is a long way from me, perhaps not to be attained. Still I shall keep trying.

I told Dr Mackerracher that the Greeks recognised a condition known as hubris or insolence to the Gods, always to be followed by nemesis, the necessary divine punishment for hubris. Research workers who break off their research in the middle for a year's frivolity, however academic, are as I see it insulting those Gods who have smiled on them and there will be as an inevitable consequence nemesis. Cassandras are not too welcome, but the role must be played.

We have just heard from H.H. Price (Price the philosopher). He sends a list of philosophers for mescalizing, he also writes "I must at once however write to tell you how interested I am in the project you are submitting to the Ford Foundation and I shall be very glad indeed to be an adviser along with Aldous Huxley."

The news about Hutchins and Maria's letter is cheering. I hope that Hutchins can either get Berelson<sup>51</sup> to agree or get him to take mescal. Perhaps he would just have a terribly boring inscape in which to wander.

We are very keen to have Maria's account of her experience and not just to be polite, it will reveal another aspect of reality and is just as important as Aldous' from the point of view of what it reveals. Aldous makes this [point] himself in *The Doors of Perception*. It isn't what Aldous experienced which is unusual but his astonishing capacity for expressing himself in that wonderfully lithe and highly enviable prose style which is so

beastly hard to emulate. Maria has another contribution. She can compare it with her other experiences noting similarities and differences.

Glad you liked Helen's picture. I will send one of her and Jane when I have a really good one. Helen is ferocious but loveable, asleep at this moment. She much resembles a peach, at other times she is different.

I would very much like to meet Matthew,<sup>52</sup> but have no immediate prospect of being in Boston (though I never know for sure where I may be next). However staying with us at the moment are John and Elaine Cumming<sup>53</sup> who will be in Cambridge all next year. They are fine people and are full of fun. They are sociologists, John also a psychiatrist, Elaine a biologist. They have been of the greatest help to us and are our constant support and joy now.

Of course I should love to come south again. Jane and I could probably drive down, perhaps in the late fall before the heavy snows. Unless we can get some official money you certainly shan't pay for us because it will be a holiday which one day I shall need. I am lucky in having good stores of energy and recover quickly. The letter writing is a great safety valve, but there is the danger of becoming a bore.

Do let me know what you think of Charles Williams. I believe that he had a very great understanding of the inner world and such powers of describing it that his people are mostly secondary to their astonishing experiences. Sometimes his people are of the same calibre as the experiences but usually not.

Maria's point about the cardinal difference between mescal madness and real madness is crucial and as far as we know was never made until we wrote our paper less than two years ago. Mescal madness begins and has an expectation that it will end. Madness just is. There is a universe of difference in these two situations.

I must get down to the envelopes – I have been blocked on them.

I think Maria's typing is unique and I had a great satisfaction in receiving letters typed by the fingers which tapped out the first of Lady Chatterley.<sup>54</sup> Maria's style is of a different order from Aldous' for he has developed a wonderful tool for transmitting his great thinking, while Maria's style transmits feeling, her feeling very adequately.

I am a bit worried at the prospect of Gerald Heard<sup>55</sup> taking mescal or LSD. If he has had previous depressions there is a real danger that it might

precipitate another one. We know so little about these queer stuffs and I wouldn't want anyone to endure a depression even for a glimpse of otherness. Stravinsky's adopted son<sup>56</sup> should be able to give us some very interesting information about its effect upon those whose imagery is predominantly auditory – it is astonishing how little we know about this. Will he hear the music of the spheres?

I think it is much easier to be an involved participant now if not a good one – after all you and Aldous were brought up in homes where nannies and nannies' helpers were the order of the day. Now they aren't, so willy-nilly we have to be much closer to the children. Sometimes this is a mixed blessing, though it has advantages. The trouble is that the over anxious parent is much distressed by close day to day contact with the miseries of the very small, and so the whole family reverberates with the struggles of growing up.

I must get back to my administrating; I wonder just how bad I am at it – for I am really an entirely unmethodical scatter brain who just keeps together by a minimum of obsessional self-imposed discipline. Jung, deep down, is right, we are and must be compounded of opposites.

Knowing you both would, at any time in my life, have been a privilege and a delight. At the moment it is also something of a lifeline, or perhaps more correctly a counterpoise to prevent the kingdom of this world becoming too engrossing. Aldous had done it for me by writing *The Perennial Philosophy*. Read after mescal clicked, I knew and I knew that I knew, and I knew that others had known this before me. Of course I had read some of it before but *The Perennial Philosophy* presents it so well and without the nonsense which so many expositors feel bound to add off their own bat.

So you see we are mutually indebted and that is an exchange of the most precious gifts which can bind a friendship.

Your affectionate friend,  
Humphry

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
17 August 1953

Dear Humphry,

First a little business. Did you ever send me a brief list of the scientific papers relating to mescaline and the schizophrenia problem, by Smythies, Hoffer and yourself? If so, I can't find it and will ask you to send it me again, as I want to print it in a footnote. Can you do this, please, with the least possible delay? I ask this, because the essay is to appear in a separate volume on its own, both in the U.S.A. and, I think, in England. And the quicker all the material is in the printer's hands, the better. In the interval it is to appear serially – of all places – in *Esquire* – which is at present engaged in serving God and Mammon, Pretty Girls and moderately serious literature, with what I understand to be a remarkable success. The P.G.'s pay for the S. Lit. and both ends of the central nervous system, the cerebral and the sacral, receive their appropriate stimulation – to the satisfaction of everyone concerned. Owing to the length of the piece I never dared to hope that any magazine would print it, and I am very much pleased that it is to receive this wide circulation. D.H. Lawrence<sup>57</sup> used to say, about the habits of homosexuals, “The Higher the Brow, the Lower the Bottom” – and evidently we must extend the scope of this Natural Law to modern journalism and trace a direct relationship between height of brow and volume of bosom.

Meanwhile I have had to make some small changes in the article owing to the discovery of a long monograph on *Menomini Peyotism* (the Menomini are Indians in a reservation in Wisconsin) by Professor Slotkin<sup>58</sup> – put a pennikin in the slotkin – published in the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* in December 1952. This gives much fuller details than anything I had been able to find before on Peyoteating within a Christian frame of reference. The various Christian-Peyote churches are all, it seems, branches of a Native American Church, founded some time back to give the Indians who take peyote for religious reasons a respectable status. Incidentally, the drug is not listed as a narcotic and its use is not forbidden by the Federal Government – although certain states have

regulations restricting its use. Slotkin (the only white man who is a member of the Native American Church) says categorically that there is no increased tolerance, no need for larger doses, and no craving (habitual users often go for a month or more between rites) even among people who have been peyotists for forty or fifty years. So peyote really does seem to be, as the Indians firmly believe, God's special gift and peculiar revelation to the Red Man.

We read Charles Williams on the Grail<sup>59</sup> and greatly enjoyed it – though it is rather uneven, the ending, I think, being much less good than the beginning. We hope to get on to the other books soon. Meanwhile, we have been reading a curious and interesting book by a man whom you, as a medical gent, will have to regard as a quack – L.E. Eeman,<sup>60</sup> with whom I have corresponded at long intervals during more than twenty years, but have never met. The book, called *Co-operative Healing* is published by the author at 24 Baker Street and contains a great deal of exceedingly interesting material. If you have a chance, do look at it. Meanwhile have you made any experiments with treating the mentally sick with consoling and encouraging statements and suggestions during sleep? I have a strong feeling that this might be very efficacious for certain lost souls.

Maria sends her love to you and the family, as do I.

Yours,  
Aldous H.

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*22 August 1953*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I am greatly entertained and thrilled at your news. Modern journalism is a real hotch-potch – sex appeal and schizophrenia, mescaline and Marianne Moore. Still I suppose that as members of the minority we have no call to complain, for we do at least get a hearing even if there are unexpected overtones and underdressing in the chorus.

So business first.

Here are the references:

1. "Schizophrenia: A New Approach"  
By Humphry Osmond (n.b. minus e) and John Smythies *Journal of Mental Science*. Vol XCVIII No 411, April 52
2. "On Being Mad"  
By Humphry Osmond  
*Saskatchewan Psychiatric Services Journal*. Vol 1 No 2, Sept 1952
3. "The Mescaline Phenomena"  
By John Smythies  
*The British Journal of the Philosophy of Science*. Vol 3, Feb 1953
4. "Schizophrenia: A New Approach"  
By Abram Hoffer, Humphry Osmond and John Smythies  
To be published in the *Journal of Mental Science*. January 1954  
(This has been accepted by the Editor of this issue which by my reckoning makes it Vol 100 No 418.)

The technical reader could refer to the two New Approaches for reference of more interest to the specialist. A flock of papers on the New Approach are coming out from our team covering its biochemistry, pharmaco-psychology, neurophysiology, sociology, philosophy, etc. I would be glad to let the interested reader know about them. I am hoping to give a paper on "Inspiration and Method in Schizophrenia Research" in Montreal in November where I shall discuss our method of working and point out that inspiration always comes first, and where does it spring from?

It looks as if I shall hold our team together. Abram has seen that he cannot go away now and John Smythies seems more settled. We are in the phase break through, as they would call it in a battle, and daren't halt the pursuit longer than to sing the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm as Oliver<sup>61</sup> put it. If we are right Abram will get a bellyful of travelling before he is very much older. Abram feels that we must reach a point of diminishing – and one day no doubt we shall, but we haven't reached it yet and my guess is that we may not reach it for years. Everything suggests that discovery is accelerating not slowing and that we have picked on one of those strong points which, once you have broken them open, huge vistas of country appear across which one drives

on for miles, leaving others to occupy it and mop up pockets of resistance. This is my mental picture of our campaign – a sort of blitzkrieg with plenty of aerial (inspirational) support. Your work is a spearhead of one flank, just as Vernon Woodford's<sup>62</sup> work on the Warburg apparatus which measures brain respiration is on another flank. My job is to keep the various spearheads coordinated, in touch with each other and as well supplied with knowledge of what the others are doing as possible. Abram covers everything from the atom up (radioactive tracer work to pharmacodynamics psychiatry) and I go on from psychiatry through sociology, psychology, philosophy, theology – J. Smythies coming in at the level of neurology, electrophysiology, philosophy of science and philosophy. Our team is very small but its range and scope is I suppose as great as any that exists because we really do cross the frontiers of many disciplines and get the specialists to see where we and they are heading.

I have been a little uneasy about the publicity we are getting (and we shall get much more). Reputable scientists pretend to shun this. But we aren't reputable scientists and can't afford the niceties which established scientific gents claim are the proper way. It reminds me of a story about General Montgomery, before the Alamein battle he chose, it is said, to lecture his staff on great generals and opened with "Gentlemen, a great general needs to be a bit of a cad. I am a bit of a cad." Now a course in logic would have shown Montgomery that it didn't follow that he was a great general, but I doubt whether one can afford to abide by academic convention in the middle of a major campaign. We shall need men and money for many years. If we get them I believe that we shall learn enough about the greatest mental illness to be able to suggest some rational treatment for it, and this alone would be a major triumph. But we have every indication this would only be a small fraction of the knowledge which can be obtained from our work and perhaps in the long run only a minor part of it. The body, the brain, the psyche and the soul meet and conjoin in our field, and who can guess what may be seen if we only have the courage, contrivance, patience and good sense to look?

Glad you like Charles Williams – the Grail isn't his best but the fire and vision is there. I found *All Hallows Eve*, *Many Dimensions*, *The Place of the Lion*, and *Descent into Hell* splendid. A new book called *A Ray of Darkness* by Marg[ia]d Evans<sup>63</sup> has lately been publish[ed] by Barker in



London. It is an account of epilepsy by an epileptic poetess. 1) Please get it and read it. 2) Please review it – if you don't want to do so professionally, and I think you'll find it worth an essay review, could I beg a letter review for our little journal? But I think this requires a real review for a major journal. She has done for epilepsy, in my view, more than anyone since Dostoievsky<sup>64</sup> – and she has written more concisely and clearly than he. Her book comes up to John Custance's<sup>65</sup> classic *Wisdom, Madness and Folly* and Hennell's<sup>66</sup> wonderful *The Witnesses*. By the way your University Library should have *The Witnesses* – Peter Davies, 1938. I find her book a triumph of the same caliber as *The Doors of Perception*, though she is nothing like as learned as you are. You describe splendidly a raid – she describes a campaign which has its Dunkirks, its Normandies, and its Arheims. From my psychiatric angle books of this sort by professional writers are marvelously useful. They know how to report and communicate, while most of our expeditions into the Bardo<sup>67</sup> are lost without trace, or a few sentences float to the top of a case history. An artist patient told J. Smythies that he was enduring “Trial by Fury” – a wonderfully expressive phrase but there was so little more, for the rest he was blocked in by terror. Have you any publishing friends who want to reissue remarkable books? I would love to write a foreword to Hennell's *Witnesses* to pay a little tribute to the dead artists' contribution to psychiatry.

I shall put a pennikin in Slotkin's pipkin. His monograph sounds excellent. I hope that the white men don't muddy the pure waters of mescal revelation. But I don't think they can, for it is like the Stone called the End of Desire in Charles Williams' *Many Dimensions*, from which I quote:

“If the end is reached too violently it may mean chaos and madness”  
Ibrahim told her. “Even in lesser things it is not everyone who can bear to be carried higher and thither in time and place and thought, and so in the greater it is necessary to grow accustomed to the Repose of the End. I think if you were to set it on your head now and offer your soul to it, the strength of your nature would be over thrown and not transformed by its own strength, and you would be destroyed. There is measure and degree in all things, even upon the Way.”<sup>68</sup>

I shall get on to Mr L.E. Eeman and will of course steadfastly regard him as a quack in accordance with our regulations so that I don't get run in for covering. Of course this puts Mr Eeman in some rather select company if he chooses well – Pasteur<sup>69</sup> for instance.

The music and poetry for delighting our patients has not yet started, however I have some equipment and money for records and I shall try as soon as I can in a small way. Then I shall write it up and try and raise money to equip some beds and really try a Huxley on it. Such a project needs i) money, ii) thought, iii) planning, iv) good execution. Do think out some of the poetry for us and interest priest and poet friends. Also keep pressing me, for even if it takes a year or two it should be done.

I shall be in Trenton, New Jersey in mid-November and Boston about 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> and hope to see Matthew – perhaps you could let me have his address.

In the meanwhile on a quite different front we are beginning to attack our ineffective and beastly hospital. It is an Augean stables,<sup>70</sup> even down to dung on some of the ceilings – hard going, discouraging, exhausting and tough. But correct: this is how it should be – Research should not be in an ivory tower all the time – true it must withdraw to the lab and the colorimeter, but it must come out refreshed to renew the attack. It is the great tradition of medicine. I believe that we can do two things here – attack schizophrenia and persuade people to give us a reasonably equipped hospital in which to house and care for our patients. These things seem to me to be complementary. At times one or other gets very discouraging, but luckily this rarely happens simultaneously. The pair (research and hospital) have made a muck of my other interest, writing, although I have numerous ideas I have no time and have not written a play for two years. I have plots and skeletons stored away but no leisure for them. I cheer myself with the thought that one day things will let up and I shall be the better from writing from a full experience. Perhaps I won't ever write anything publishable but I shall try – one day. Anyway if I object to Abram going away to improve his mind because of the research I can hardly withdraw from the fray to improve mine.

I see there is a new book on conversations with Kafka<sup>71</sup> by a friend of his. I shall get them, they seem from the reviews to confirm our guess that

Kafka, poor devil, was mad and that his madness must have been much aggravated by Max Brod's<sup>72</sup> impertinent bumbling.

Strongly recommend Dingle's *Scientific Adventure*<sup>73</sup> – essays on the Philosophy of Science – lively. He is very amusing about one of our more bumptious scientific brotherhoods – the methodologists. He is one himself and points out that emphasis on method has much to commend it and should be encouraged, but there is just one little snag which is that there is not the slightest evidence that any of the great advances in science have originated from or been very much assisted by methodology.

I commend to you, should you have time, Tanner's<sup>74</sup> book, *Prospects in Psychiatric Research*, published by Blackwell, Oxford. Full of good stuff and some nonsense: one wonderful exposition on the “mad scientist” research attitude at its best (worst?) by a man with the wonderful name of Weil-Malherbe<sup>75</sup> – could he have made it up? I quote Vile Bad plant, “It has been mentioned from time to time this morning that we need more integration, more thought behind research. I believe that what we need most of all is more facts, and I believe that when we have enough facts the thoughts will take care of themselves. There is one thing we should primarily worry about. The ignorance about the fundamental problems in psychiatry is so great that there is enough to do for all types of research worker, and though at present the facts may seem rather like a jumbled jig saw puzzle, when we have enough of them they will all fall into place.” The simple faith is touching – there is a nightmarish quality in this staid Teuton's – for surely he can't be French (Alsace at the most) – metaphor of the indefinitely multiplying jigsaw puzzle scrutinized by the infinitely hope[ful] but abysmally foolish scientist.

Jane sends love. Helen is very fond of her monkey.

Look forward to hearing from you both soon. Love to you both.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

Have just heard that England has won the Ashes, a solemn moment to be celebrated among the baseball diamonds and dust of the west.

P.S. Please let me know when *Esquire* is coming out so that I can get some pin up girls and who is publishing *The Doors of Perception*?

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
25 September 1953

Dear Humphry,

I am afraid there is nothing good to report. The mesozoic reptiles of the Ford Foundation are being as mesozoic as ever. Hutchins, whom I saw two weeks ago when my brother Julian<sup>76</sup> was here on his way to Australia and Hutchins came to dinner, reports that he has received no word from Berelson – nor any word from the head of the education department to whom, on my recommendation, he had recommended the work of Samuel Renshaw,<sup>77</sup> of the University of Ohio, in the field of training the special senses and the memory. It looks, I am afraid, as though the FF were finished. The Trustees are so frightened of doing anything unconventional – for whenever the Foundation gets any adverse publicity, people go to the nearest Ford dealer and tell him that henceforward they will buy Chevviess – that the one overriding purpose is now to do nothing at all. The ideal programme for the Foundation will be to give every professor in the country ten thousand dollars, on condition that he goes on doing exactly what he is doing now. Hutchins, who represents the liberal wing of the affair – he has moved forward from the Tertiary Epoch to historical times and the Great Books, to Aristotle and St Thomas rather than the dinosaurs – is obviously in bad odour with the Bosses and seems to have no influence whatsoever with the heads of departments. My brother Julian, who has been trying to get the FF to back a grandiose scheme for producing some generally acceptable *weltanschauung*, a little more realistic than orthodox physicalism, found everything completely blocked by Berelson. So the outlook for our research in mescaline doesn't seem to be too good in this quarter. However Hutchins has recently flown to New York and has promised to do what he can with the saurians. I only hope he may prove successful.

The *Esquire* publication of the essay is off, since they could not bring it out until the August issue of 1954, and I don't want to wait so long. The

thing will appear in book form, here and in England, next February.

Maria has been very busy trying to help a man we met twenty years ago in France – a Lebanese doctor<sup>78</sup> who learned all the tricks of the dervishes and has made a living all these years by giving demonstrations of being buried alive, running skewers through his flesh, stopping and starting bleeding, healing himself without scars in a matter of minutes, doing telepathy, etc. He spent some time in England where he worked with that strange creature Sir Alexander Cannon<sup>79</sup> – on George VI, among others, whom he treated for stammering by oriental methods of hypnosis, which are non-suggestive and purely physiological – finding “hypnogenic nerves” and pressing on them till the patient falls into a state of hibernation, which may last for one or more days. A charming man – but unfortunately he contrived to spend more than two years in London without learning one word of English. This somewhat cramps his style when giving demonstrations here. He has been swindled right and left by his impresarios in New York, Boston, etc. Here, after two swindles, he is finally in the hands of some Armenians, who suck him dry, but at least can pay the little they promise – for they are pork manufacturers, with a farm where 5,000 sows work overtime eating the garbage of the city of Long Beach and producing 50,000 piglets per annum. At least they can talk with our poor friend Tahra Bey, who was brought up in Armenian – but he despises them as *marchands de cochons* and won’t accept them as interpreters. So his performances are a chaos of incomprehensibility. The quicker he gets back to Lebanon, the better. He has a house there and a clinic for the mentally ill (whom he puts into lethargy for two or three days at a time, leaving Nature to do the trick of making them well – which she often does; and when that isn’t enough he presses on their carotid arteries and pushes their tongues down their throats, which transforms the hibernation, with its slowed heartbeat, metabolism, etc., into a rampaging speed-up of all the vegetative activities – this last is generally infallible!).

Love to the family from us both, and to yourself.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
26 September 1953

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Very good to hear from you both again.

First about our Ford, it seems that the Controller is bound tightly by B minuses or even Y plusses. What wittlings they are! Of course if they want to have any chance of backing good research they must back the queer and unlikely, for what is about to be discovered must of necessity be unlikely. Why can't they remember Blake,<sup>80</sup> "what is now proved we once only imagined." I think saurian is a compliment to these dull fellows. Some saurians had at least a great sacral ganglion, which made them notable. What have these fellows got but PhDs! But one way or another we shall get the money, you see they are greedy to be associated with projects that "pay off" by which they mean end in being recognised with plenty of published stuff. I think that we can lure them or if not we can sting them with their failure to back anything worthwhile, carrot or stick it doesn't make much difference.

In the meanwhile our research presses ahead. I think that we are gathering momentum, at least there is no sign of a halt. Vernon Woodford seems to have found where adrenochrome affects the cerebral metabolism. It is going to end up in some tricky enzyme chemistry but it is pretty stuff, especially to translate it back into treatment, the first rational treatment of schizophrenia perhaps. I wish I could meet your friend Tahra Bey, he sounds very remarkable – not it seems a linguist. I have had several dealings with Armenians and always regretted it, they are a match for anyone, I suppose that is why the Turks were so beastly to them. There is so much we don't know. Can Tahra Bey put really mad people into these prolonged trances? I should love to do some work in this field – still there may be time later.

Sorry the *Esquire* was too tardy – do you want it published elsewhere or would you rather let it come out in book form? I am keenly awaiting its appearance which should be just after New Approach II, which by the way has received, perhaps I told you, the approval of Heinrich Klüver of

Chicago who is the great man in physiological psychology. We shall make FF very sorry that they showed so much good sense.

In the meanwhile we have finished our old building's budgeting – it is vast, over ¼ million square feet of floor and not one adequate mechanical cleaner. It is the biggest single building in Western Canada and probably one of the smelliest.

You will be getting a copy of *Maclean's* soon with Sidney Katz's article on LSD – he has done a good job – some good pictures and a very workmanlike narrative. He is one of the new breed of scientific journalists. A very personable chap who knows his stuff and is of course vital for us because we need good communications and haven't the time to write our work in two forms.

I hope to be in Montreal in December for a research conference. I am going to speak on "Inspiration and Method in Schizophrenia Research." I think I told you about it. It is now at least half done and should liven them up towards the end, after whetting their appetites with snatches of biochemistry, electrophysiology and psychology, a few words on adrenochrome etc. I twitch their noses with, "In the last 50 years scientists have slowly become aware of this combination of the mind and the soul. Psychiatrists, in spite of their title, find the latter word embarrassing, almost in bad taste at a gathering such as this. Embarrassment cannot however prevent us recording facts, any more than 19<sup>th</sup> century prudishness could prevent Freud pointing out that sex played a large part in human affairs. Perhaps in 10–15 years' time we shall be able to discuss the banished thing, the soul, with as much precision as the Eastern masters of 2,000 years ago and as little embarrassment as we now discuss castration fears and incestuous wishes."

I believe, Aldous, that we shall have some opposition but not as much as would have been there 20 years ago. The truth is that no one in his heart believes in orthodox physicalism and science no longer supports it. The Russians and some Chinese can no doubt enjoy an Islamic nationalism for some time, but the great industrial societies of the West do not know how to cure the sickness of the soul. Largely because they have banished mystical experience which is the gateway into otherness – even the few shreds of such experience which most of us have are unrecognized and unavailed. Raw experience cannot be classified or interpreted and frequently ends in

madness. Yet these experiences, even the ghosts of them, are as necessary to us spiritually as vitamins are physically. I think I shall have some fun with my fellow psychiatrists who certainly won't be expecting the medicine which I have in store for them. Their present attitude is one of patronizing superiority. I shall have great pleasure in biting the hand which hasn't fed me!

Abram Hoffer and I are planning our moves for the immediate and more distant future. The immediate aim is, of course, the attack on schizophrenia, but as soon as this seems to be developing well we shall switch our emphasis to the control of mood using our present methods. I have recently been looking up our specifications of M-substance which we made before we knew that adrenochrome was a hallucinogen. It is very interesting how closely we were able to predict which is very encouraging for our prospects when we come to U-Substance (the euphoriant substance which we postulate controls mood).

Jane and Helen are both well. Helen is very lively, we have just had her picture painted by a friend and if we get a good reproduction of it will send you one. Hope to see Matthew when I am in Boston in November. How are you both? Be sure to let me know.

I hope that perhaps next spring you will be able to move up through Montana and the Dakotas to the prairies and see what we are doing.

I am starting on Charles Williams' *He Came Down from Heaven*.<sup>81</sup> It seems even better than his novels – essays of Biblical criticism very illuminating. Tell LeCron I am looking forward to the ololiuqui and thank him for having ordered the pamphlet. Here is another major and neglected research – the *known* hallucinogens – still there is a mopping up operation. Good wishes to Onnie and Marie – love to you both from us three.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*17 October 1953*



My dear Aldous and Maria,

I suppose that you can't have it both ways. Life must either be regular and dull or irregular and baffling, and each type of life has its own pains and distresses. I have certainly been lucky in that I have never been bored and so never cease to be baffled. It is so hard not to forget that we are rationalising not reasonable creatures in our general affairs. Reasonableness and reasoning is our high peak of effort which we mostly only ascend after great endeavor and sometimes never reach. It is quite unreasonable to suppose that because a man is eminently reasonable in one direction he will be reasoning in another, indeed the changes are against it because he will use up his little store of reason and be left at the mercy of his moods and so his rationalising capacity.

This is a preamble as you have guessed to our present situation, which though much more favorable than six weeks ago is so vexing. Abram is thoroughly reconciled to sticking to his job and I am heartily relieved. The research will press ahead; our dynamo is not going to close down. Papers are churning along the production line. I suppose there will be 15 or 16 of them in 1954 at least and they will by 1955–6 be making people sit up – if only to disprove them. I am engaged on one for Montreal which is intended to be our first public indication that we are challenging all comers. It is fun. It is a wonderful pastime to pit one's wits against the best you can find and see what happens. I shall send it to you before I deliver it and hope that you will scrutinize it – I know that you don't do this usually and wouldn't impose on you, but you are an honorary member of our team and we shall want all the skill we can in showing that psychology is going to become something quite different from the pupaceous pulp which it is at present. The butterfly may not be ready to fly yet but her lineaments are showing.

I know I'm biased and may be quite wrong, but I believe that we may be making the foundations of a new and remarkable advance in many directions. Mind you, many people have seen that this would come, but it is good to know that it is coming – a psychology which is likely to bear some relationship to our intuitive knowledge of human beings – which, apart from Jung, none does at present. Jung's psychology is poorly related to physiology, neuroanatomy, etc. and is not very susceptible to experimental investigation.

So things are looking encouraging on the research front. But you might not suppose so from the actions of one of the researchers. My friend and co-worker John Smythies chooses this moment to let himself be lured off to British Columbia to work with a man called Gibson.<sup>82</sup> The position is comic, silly, annoying, and could even be tragic. Gibson runs a research group in B.C. who are noted for energy but not for inspiration. He is a busy man whose excellence in many fields – neuropathology through to psychology – makes one doubt his capability in any. It is given to very few people [to] cover such a vast range. Gibson came through here on the way to the Physiological Congress in Toronto, and was shown around. As far as we can make out his paper wasn't too well received at the Congress and on the way back he must have thought that it would be nice to have a few new ideas around. So he quickly telephoned to John and offered him a job and John, with the complete lack of common sense which sometimes distinguishes those blessed with uncommon sense, accepted without informing his colleagues or even enquiring much about Gibson and his set up.

This is one of the oldest tricks in the world and one can't blame Gibson for what was a distinctly unethical act. Nor I suppose can one blame John for the sort of folly which brilliant men have engaged in from time immemorial – yet this unworldliness is almost painful to survive among predatory *homo sapiens'* wisdom. Both dovelike and serpentine is needed, something that springs from both earth and heaven. Had John only consulted his colleagues he would have discovered something of peculiar irony. Three weeks ago the Dominion<sup>83</sup> were making various committees for the coming year including one for psychiatric research. Gibson came up as a possible member and was turned down as too unreliable and cantankerous. Abram Hoffer was unanimously elected. So now we come down to the ludicrous situation that Gibson depends for most of his funds on someone whom he has cheated in a stupid way, for any allocation of money on a parallel project to us must be very carefully scrutinized by Abram who is the only member of the committee who knows this field.

In the meanwhile John, who feels that somehow he hasn't had the recognition which he deserves, is putting himself in a situation where it will be hardly possible for him to meet anyone who would be wanting to meet him and give him recognition because he has put around 1,200 miles

between him and them. I suppose that someone might make the extra 1,200 miles, but I doubt it. Yet here is a brilliant mind. John has a capacity for abstract thinking much higher than anyone I have met among my contemporaries, behaving in a manner which when you analyse it is calculated to damage him. The abstract thinker rarely has the capacity for making close and satisfactory human relationships, for very obvious reasons close human relationships tend to drive out abstract thinking – hence the frequency of solitariness among great abstract thinkers. John wants to combine his great capacity for abstract thinking with running research for which he has no training and from my observation little chance that training would help. It is extremely vexing to see ability so far above the common run that it may well be the indefinable quality, genius, running itself to harm and perhaps grave damage.

But what can one do? History seems pretty adamant on this point and gives a discouraging answer in the short run, “nothing.” In the long run genius either gets through or it isn’t genius, yet it is hard to stand by and do nothing. I sometimes wonder whether one’s wish to help isn’t presumption and interference. The light will either flare up and illuminate our world, or it will go out, or it will burn just a fraction brighter than other lights and we must wait and see.

*A Ray of Darkness* is being published by the Roy Publishing Company, New York, the authoress is Margiad Evans. It is a remarkable book and worth reading, both for its style and its content. I am reviewing it for the Canadian Medical Journal<sup>84</sup> and the American Psychiatric Journal.<sup>85</sup> If you can interest LeCron and others in it please do – it will be worth their while – especially your neurosurgeon friend. Hope to be at Harvard 8 December. How are you both? Don’t worry about Fords – we shall shame them into doing this much more expensively one day before too long! Evil and adulterous, they want to back winners which Jesus said shouldn’t be done.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
31 October 1953

Dear Humphry,

I was sorry to hear about John Smythies. Alas, intelligence is no guarantee against poor judgment, not to say downright folly on occasion. The Quakers say that one must be guided by divine inspiration; but they also say that the way to find out whether an inspiration *is* divine is to consult with a group of "Weighty Friends." In this case you and Hoffer would have had enough tonnage to serve the purpose. But it was not to be. I regret it for all concerned.

Thank you for the copy of *Maclean's*. The article was most interesting. Does lysergic acid always produce these terrifying results? Or did you give your guinea pig an extra large dose? Or, alternatively, did he start with a mild neurosis which was exaggerated out of all recognition? Whatever the answer, the inexplicable fact remains the nature of the visions. Who invents these astounding things? And why should the not-I who does the inventing hit on precisely this kind of thing? The jewels and architectures seem to be almost specific – a regular symptom of the mescaline experience. Does this, I wonder, have anything to do with the phantasies of the Arabian Nights and other fairy stories? The jeweled palaces are partly, no doubt, wish fulfilments – the opposite of everyday experience. But they may also be actual *choses vues* – items in the ordinary landscape of certain kinds of people. It would be interesting to know whether something of the kind would be seen by children who know nothing about jewels, or by primitives, to whom diamonds, rubies, etc. mean nothing.

When you go to Boston, do get in touch with Matthew. His address is 21 Francis St, Brookline, Mass. Telephone Hazel 11816 – this is the number of the lodging house in which he has rooms.

Also, if you are in NY, do get in touch with Eileen Garrett at the Parapsychology Foundation, 11 East 44th, New York 17. She might prove to be useful in getting research started. The Foundation has some money. But what might prove more important is that Eileen has fingers in many

pies and tentacles out in many directions. The Round Table Foundation<sup>86</sup> at Glen Cove, Maine might be another useful contact.

Maria sends her love, as do I.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
7 November 1953*

Dear Aldous and Maria,

Thank you so much for your letter.

On reflection I think that John Smythies' peregrination is not tragic, though a nuisance. No great harm will come to the work and I hope none to him. We are planning a joint book and the distance makes little difference, in addition he may return in a few months. Maybe I let my feelings get involved, I like partners to let me know what they have in mind so we can discuss it. Perhaps John felt his "weighty friends" carried too many guns and that his reason would be forced against his inclination. I hope that all will go well, for this research is, I believe, of exceptional importance and must not be impeded by folly – as if this were ever so with human affairs.

I am enclosing a paper which I am due to deliver in Montreal in December and am asking you to make an exception to your rule about reading articles because this is our first public appearance. I want it to be something that states our position clearly and will shake them up a bit. We have, so far, at least ten articles ready for the press or printing, and this paper is intended to arouse interest in them. If you have time to read it could you send it back with criticisms as soon as you can so that I can incorporate them in a final draft. I hope I'm not encroaching on your kindness but this is so vital and unless we hurry time may be so short that I feel that I must impose on our friends. I am sending another copy to Heinrich Klüver of Chicago for his blessing and armed with your joint blessings (I hope) shall start on our campaign.

We have had a very kind letter from Professor F.L. Golla<sup>87</sup> of the Burden Neurological Institute, Bristol – one of the great English epileptologists – encouraging to know that such eminent men believe this work is worthwhile.

About *Maclean's* and Sidney Katz. We gave him our standard dose (200 micrograms). Some of what happened was because Sidney was quite unprepared. He is an intelligent journalist, but naturally he had no idea what would happen. He had read about it, but that still conveys little. He had some unpleasant bodily feelings early on and this set the tone for some of his experiences. A vicious circle of fear and fearful happenings then followed. My own view is that in some way the door in the wall opens and everything is available for exploration – heaven and hell. The price of experience is and must be all that a man has. Sidney wrote down all he dared. I shall see him next week and hear more, I hope. Where does it come from and what does it mean? The strange qualities of the inscape seem to have been noticed by all European workers from Havelock Ellis<sup>88</sup> and Weir Mitchell<sup>89</sup> on, but as we have done no systematic investigations and developed no method yet, we remain so bewildered that mostly we don't like to think about it all. Having persuaded ourselves that the mind is not, it is hard to discover that whether we like it or not the mind is its own kingdom. About children's visions, it is so hard to communicate when they are young enough to tell, but Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations* is suggestive. But we are so ignorant in every direction and not too keen to admit this.

It is interesting that Katz's people come from the Middle East – did this have something to do with the mosque like structures?

I would guess that the land of faery is part of the inscape – presumably at times the inscape and the outscape can and do interact, but we know little about the laws governing this.

I shall certainly try to see Matthew in December when I plan a flying visit to Harvard. I might manage Eileen Garrett next week, but if not I should be in New Jersey in the spring. We do need support for work in this field – we know so little.

The winter is closing in here, but fairly slowly. I am facing a constant change of doctors and shortage of nurses. The place is ramshackle in the

extreme. However it might be one of nature's jokes to choose our old bin as the place where we should find how to do something about schizophrenia.

Please remember Margiad Evans' *Ray of Darkness* – it is a fine book and should be known among everyone interested in this field especially neurosurgeons and psychiatrists. I have written reviews of it for the Canadian Medical Journal and the American Psychiatric Journal.

Could you let me know the American publishers of *The Doors of Perception*? I want to put them in as a reference – I suppose your English ones are still Chatto.

Hope all goes well with you both. We are busy – but I suppose there is no great harm. It would be nice to get away for many weeks; however it can't be done until the place is in better shape. Jane sends good wishes.

Love to you both.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

P.S. Do you know someone called Yandell? I wrote to him/her but the letter has been returned. He/she said that you had said that I might be able to tell him/her something about mescal etc.

P.S. I have a fascinating experiment which I am conducting with Professor John Murray in London (Eng). I send him snippets of letters and he sends me back brief mixtures of pictorial-character sketches. Would you like to join in? He likes doing it and I believe that we can evolve a scoring method. Let me know and I'll put you in contact with him.

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
16 November 1953

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter and the paper, which we read aloud last night. It seems to me very good – clear, comprehensive, well arranged and presented

– and I don't see the need for any changes, and don't know what you can add. I wish we understood anything about the nature of the world we get into, through dreams, visions, schizophrenia. All one can say is that it is objectively out there, that it has nothing to do, over large parts of its area, with the interests of the ego or the biological necessities of the animal. It is just One of those Things, which we have to make the best of.

About Yandell – I don't think you have to be much concerned with him. He approached me two or three months ago, saying that he was a friend and pupil of Milton Erickson. I thought he was a doctor, but it turned out when I saw him that he was a retired business man, living beyond his intellectual income – curiously empty and without any real understanding of the problems he is concerned with. He is also a bit of a snob – a getter-into-contact with everybody with any kind of a name. If I can find his address, I will forward your letter to him. But actually the only address I know is the one in La Jolla, which he must now have left. So don't feel too much concern if your letter never reaches him.

I had a talk the other day with a man called Dr Maison,<sup>90</sup> the head of a pharmaceutical house here – an Ethical Drug concern, attached financially to the World's Biggest Drug Store, which we visited on the day of my mescaline excursion. Maison is an able man, who has done a lot of medical and pharmacological research, knows a certain amount about consciousness-changing drugs, but can't as a business man concern himself with anything for which there is no obvious market. He gave me, however, the name of a man who might be of use to you, inasmuch as he is interested in the subject and has the ear of Foundations. He is

Dr William Malamud  
Boston University School of Medicine  
80 East Concord St  
Boston 18 Mass.

So perhaps it would be as well to see him when you go to Harvard next month.

Another possibility is Dr Henry Puharich<sup>91</sup> of the Round Table Foundation, Glen Cove, Maine – the place where Eileen Garrett did some very interesting research on the relationship between electronics and ESP. I



don't know Puharich, but have corresponded with him, mentioned the mescaline in my last letter, and have received a letter expressing much interest in the matter in return. He is for the moment with the Army, 2171 ASU, USA Dispensary, Army Chemical Center, Maryland. Probably he is a man worth exchanging ideas with, as he, like you, is working on a frontier between the partially known and the very much unknown – a different frontier, but in some way related to yours.

It has just occurred to me that perhaps man's obsessive preoccupation with precious stones – one of the most senseless of his concerns, by rational and utilitarian standards – may be due to the fact that these glittering objects are familiar to him from within. He is merely trying, when covering himself with jewels, to reproduce the marvels with which his visions have made him familiar.

I like the duck poems, and hope there may be more of them – a whole sonnet sequence. “Shall I compare thee to a summer duck?”<sup>92</sup> “The expense of spirit in a waste of shame, Are Ducks in action and, till action, ducks ...” etc.

Yours,  
Aldous

P.S. *The Doors of Perception* are being published by Harper's in New York, Chatto's in London.

I also send much more affectionate messages than appear in consideration of the rare words that carry them.

Maria

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
20 November 1953*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I am very glad of your comments and encouragement on the paper. I had an equally cheering send off from Heinrich Klüver of Chicago who is one of the pioneers in this field – a physiological psychologist who is the acknowledged great man in his field, and who agrees substantially with us, but then he has taken mescal, has seen and understood. Sociological, biological or economic “explanations” of man can be shown to be inadequate by one dose of LSD or mescal.

The jewel idea is an excellent one – it is one of those inexplicable things that man should have been so hugely preoccupied with these queer baubles to the exclusion of many worthier and easier objectives. The extraordinary skills and great fortitude which has gone into collecting stones and cultivating them is very hard to account for. People have recognised this by ascribing all sorts of odd properties to stones. The true devotee of precious stones seems to have much more invested in his collecting than money or even prestige. There is a mystique about jewel collecting which might be worth studying.

I know William A. Malamud and he is rooting for us and will I hope turn up some money one of these days. I shall try to get in touch with Puharich; we might have much that might be of use to each of us.

Glad you liked the duck poems – the poet is keener on drawing at present; unlike William Blake she seems to be both poet and painter.

On my recent visit to New York I met Eileen Garrett and was much impressed. Quite unlike my idea of a famous medium – I found her wonderfully robust, sensible and business like. I am sending her the micro-photographs of Harrison’s *Transcendental Universe*<sup>93</sup> and hope she will send you a copy. These Berean lectures of 1896 are, in my view, one of the most unusual and prophetic books which I have ever read, however I hope you will see them. I believe that our work may be useful to Mrs Garrett and I am sure that she can help us, so look forward to a successful symbiosis. She told me that Aldous is considering telling the philosophers where they could more usefully look than in the dictionary. She also told me that Maria had not been well and that she has some radiation sickness. I hope this is relieved – do let me know if there is any help that I can give in any way. I remember that Maria told me that after radiation she sometimes has disturbing psychical experiences. If this is so do let me know, I might be able to make a useful suggestion to your doctor – it would not be right of

me to make them directly to you – unethical and might distress your own doctor which would be unkind. I hope things are easier.

I won't worry too much about Mr Yandell; his letter was a curious one. I couldn't make out what he had in mind. I should think he finds these bouts of intellectual over spending a bit frustrating – it is an addiction.

The psychiatric meeting of GAP (Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry)<sup>94</sup> went very well. They have another meeting in the spring and are wondering about a subject for their Sunday morning discussion – a period always devoted to a major topic – last time it was on the state hospitals and the political spoils system. I am going to suggest a discussion on the nature of man, with a philosopher, a physiologist and a theologian alongside a psychiatrist and/or psychologist. I am suggesting you for the philosopher and Klüver for the physiologist and wonder about the theologian – Suzuki<sup>95</sup> perhaps. It would be a notable occasion – what do you think – would you be prepared to come (at GAP's expense of course)? Anyway I shall make the suggestion.

I shall put in the reference to *The Doors of Perception*. When is it due?

It seems to me that philosophers, psychologists and psychiatrists have got to meet with theologians and make some working arrangement with them. Is this possible? If we are just economic determinants, electrophysiological machines, or that mysterious emergent which the Marxists juggle with so skillfully, of course it doesn't matter very much. But no one is really convinced of this. The constant flicker of human altruism and decency has continued in spite of everything and so has a constant belief in otherness, the transcendental, etc. All our work in neurophysiology, neurology, psychiatry, etc. has simply emphasized the huge gap between mind, body and soul. The self-regarding "I" is a complete mystery and shouldn't exist, but does so with great stubbornness. We must overhaul our hypothesis. No one wants to do this: papist and Marxist, scientist and Jehovah's Witness are well contented with hypotheses, which leaves each one a comfortable and logic-tight system. It would be uncomfortable, even unbearable to look in and to look out on eternity's sunrise, yet such is our present state that we dare not remain blinded by our own conceit much longer. None of us really wants to accept the awful verdict of the mystics. The religious like their formula, the Marxists are sure Others, the scientists pretend to a quite different sort of

certainty, and deviant religions are even surer of themselves than the orthodox. Mystical experience is unbearable and yet its implications must be borne. We can either vaporize ourselves or learn. I hope we shall learn.

Love to you both. I hope things are not too hard. I think often of you – Jane sends love and Helen will perhaps make some more songs.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*15 December 1953*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Here by way of an odd little Christmas present is a copy of the review of *The Doors of Perception* which I wrote for Eileen Garrett. I don't know whether she will like it or not, indeed I don't much care whether anyone likes it but you two. I wrote as I felt. Reading it I realised just how remarkable a piece of work it is and how lucky I have been to be associated with it. It was a privilege.

This last month I have travelled something near 10,000 miles in the cause of psychiatry and tonight, after a drive home from Regina (70 miles only) in what was at times a very minor blizzard, I feel jaded, as if such virtue as I have had completely gone from me. I have had a debauch of remarkable, lively, learned, pompous, and just plain stupid people and many real first raters and so have something of a hangover of people generally – perhaps I have seen too much of the many! In all this I failed to see Matthew, my friends couldn't get him on the telephone and neither could I in my three short days in Boston – this was the only disappointment in my second tour.

The paper went surprisingly well, analysts and eclectics were very nice about it, and declared they liked it better than graphs etc. which are often part of the fare at these gatherings. I was glad to find that I could hold my own especially as I had an attack of stage fright just before I was due to

give my paper. I had flown up early that morning, having spent a very lively evening discussing the American form of government with a trio of Harvard sociologists, and was sitting waiting when suddenly I began to be really frightened. My predecessor at the rostrum had all sorts of slides, graphs, etc. and I wasn't even sure that I could draw the chemical formula correctly – I know hardly any biochemistry for Abram and I share our talents.

Heinrich Klüver was greatly taken by our special project and not unhopeful that we shall force the saurians to support us. He is very keen on our methods and wants to meet you. I hope to get him and Aldous on a mind-body symposium – you would be a formidable proposition for those of other viewpoints to tackle.

You should meet John Smythies in France this spring – Mrs Garrett has invited him to the symposium and he has accepted. This should be good for him and for the symposium. He is proposing reading two chapters from his book. I shall do my best to dissuade him – after that awful performance at the APM<sup>96</sup> meeting by Sandor Rado<sup>97</sup> nothing could be gloomier. These learned fellows have no idea how tedious the written word meant for serious reading can be when read aloud. A paper for reading should be written for reading with a few flourishes, a bit of dash, even a few histrionics – at least this keeps the audience awake. A little honest showmanship is never out of place. No paper should last more than 45 minutes. People should be able to compress and crystallise their ideas.

There was something very important at Montreal (apart from adrenochrome, of course). Dr [D].O. Hebb<sup>98</sup> told of how he had experimented with volunteers in a restricted environment. Young men were placed in moderately sound-proofed rooms, with ground glass goggles, cotton gloves and cuffs to keep their hands away from their sides. Those who put up with this developed mescaline-like experiences. Hebb was astonished. This was literally the last thing he had expected, two subjects complained of “otherness” which Hebb couldn't understand. Several found that when they left their environment the world seemed different. It looks as if when you interfere with the sensory input to the brain for a prolonged period, the inscape, normally held in check, predominates and forces itself to our notice. This is theoretically an enormously important observation and must surely have been known by some of the adepts, it is so very simple. Hebb was quite surprised when I referred him to William James and to the

huge mystical literature for more information on this topic. Did you know that William James took peyote, but it made him vomit and he told Henry<sup>99</sup> that he would take the visions on trust (suddenly struck me that maybe you told me this).

Dr Hyde<sup>100</sup> at Boston Psychopathic is another worker in the lysergic acid field. He is convinced that schizophrenic people have a wisdom denied most normals and that we are jealous of this and punish them by incarceration to make them deny what they know and what makes us uncomfortable. He feels they are a gravely persecuted minority who would have much to contribute if we would but let them and if we would listen to them.

In the meanwhile bigger and better H2 bombs.

I hope Maria is feeling better – please let me know and also let me know if she wants any more information about the niacin. Jane sends her love and Helen would no doubt but is luckily asleep. I may be in Boston in the spring and will try to see Matthew. I shall be in New York about 10<sup>th</sup> April when you should be on your way to Europe – any chance of seeing you? Best wishes to you both for Christmas and New Year – please remember me to LeCron – ololiuqui not yet arrived.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
17 December 1953*

Dear Humphry,

A Merry Christmas to you all. And in the meanwhile would you send the suggestions you so kindly volunteered to supply to Maria's doctor, in regard to radiation reactions, to

Dr William Kiskadden MD<sup>101</sup>  
1136 West Sixth St

Los Angeles, Cal.

Kiskadden is not Maria's surgeon or family doctor (he is a great virtuoso in the plastic field, especially in regard to burns); but he is an old, good friend and in close touch with the other men with whom Maria deals professionally, acting as a kind of interpreter when they keep her in the dark, which American doctors have a way of doing, more, I think, than is necessary. We were away in the northern part of the state for a few weeks, while I lectured at Mills College and at Palo Alto, and the country was incredibly beautiful. But now we are back and poor Maria has to have another dose of X-rays. It is rather disquieting that they have to go on so constantly with the treatment. The malignancy was caught at a very early stage; nevertheless there are suspicious symptoms – swelling of glands in the neck etc. – which make it seem as though there might be metastases trying to take hold. Presumably X-rays are the only appropriate treatment at this stage of our knowledge of the subject. But I wish the damned things didn't affect her so badly. She gets horribly nervous with them – feeling as if she were on the brink, or even over the brink, of madness. Vitamins and hypnosis help. But she is evidently one of those who can't take X-rays in their stride. The effects wear off after two or three weeks, but are very horrible while they persist.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 December 1953*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Your letter of 18<sup>th</sup> to hand.<sup>102</sup>

I have written to Dr Kiskadden and he should have it in a couple of days. The stuff is niacin in very massive doses and for this reason should be taken under medical supervision. In many similar conditions to Maria's we

have found that it helps and I think that it has an excellent chance of helping her. I certainly hope so.

Our brains are clearly only just capable of keeping otherness, faery, etc. in its conventional (if not proper) place at the best of times and are always liable to respond to bodily disturbances in this way. Does Maria feel that the anxiety and nervousness arises per se or because she finds herself on the brink of madness with a foot in both worlds?

We now know a great deal more about atebtrin. It is, of course, a hallucinogen of a not very potent kind. Roland Fischer, one of our biochemist colleagues, has been wool gathering to good effect. He has discovered that keratin (the protein in wool) is very similar to the protein in the central nervous system. Skin and brain are both ectodermal tissues. It is interesting that many pigments have a high affinity for ectoderm – atebtrin for instance stains the skin yellow. Roland therefore takes a special sort of wool and estimates the affinity of various substances for this wool. He has found that hallucinogens are possessed of a very great affinity and apparently the greater the affinity the more powerful the hallucinogen.

Turned another way around this gives us a possible way of trapping hallucinogens on wool and we are now doing this with some very interesting results. Roland who is a purist doesn't really approve of finding something when you don't know what it is! It makes his orderly mind quite uncomfortable. So Abram Hoffer has taken this over for the present. You can see where we are heading. If we can pick up a specific substance from schizophrenic urine (etc.) on the wool we can later elute it from the wool and cage the monster itself. Roland, although disapproving, is intrigued and those of us who don't claim to be purists are delighted. We are also doing some work on the changes which occur due to front changes in the weather. I don't quite understand what these front changes are – they are not or at least not only barometric changes but electrical disturbances which occur high in the atmosphere and are evident before barometric changes. A proportion of people are highly susceptible to them and so are some animals. One interesting thing is that they may have a considerable bearing on motor accident rates. Police have long known that there are peculiar epidemics of accidents which occur for no special reason and it looks (although it isn't certain) as if they coincide with front changes. About 40% of people are more or less susceptible to front changes, the rest aren't, we



don't know why. It would be interesting to plot air accidents against front changes, especially these 600 mph planes which must be flown in fractions of a second. It will also be interesting to see whether we can protect people against front changes. Clearly there must be some people who commit grave crimes when these changes in climate are reflected in their psychosomatic organisation.

How lucky lawyers are with their formula – the only person whose responsibility I feel capable of vouching for is my own. It is my conceit that I am responsible for my actions, but deciding about other people is impossible and we would do well to realise it. Jesus was being exact when he said “Judge not,” but what followed is not encouraging. I have a beastly murder-rape of a child coming up and we will scrabble over the mouldering McNaughten rules.<sup>103</sup> How can anyone involved be just to [the] wretched killer-victim? How can his appalling action be fitted into a formula? Perhaps we should follow G.B.S.'s<sup>104</sup> advice and not even attempt justice, the very beastliness of lynch law is at least calculated to produce revulsion. Our hygienic modern ways smarm the unpleasant facts. It is odd that reading nearly any trial usually ends with one feeling sorry for the prisoner however repellent and finds that the gap between accuser and accused is too narrow to concern oneself. However, I suppose that one has to press forward reform and try to keep people facing the facts.

Love to you both. I don't expect this will be in time for Christmas.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
22 December 1953*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter and the review of *The Doors* – at once so generous and so full of interest. I have taken the liberty of forwarding it to Cass Canfield<sup>105</sup> of Harper's, who may want to make use of bits of it in the

publicity. (I have told them, if they do, to check with Mrs Garrett and *Tomorrow*<sup>106</sup> and, through them, with you).

I'm glad you had a good trip and friendly audience, and wish you could have seen Matthew. Very likely he was in New York, over the Thanksgiving holiday, while you were in Boston.

We are retiring to the country over Christmas, to escape from the horrors of the season in town.

Our love to you all.

Yours,  
Aldous

1 John R. Smythies (b. 1922). Cambridge trained neuropsychiatrist and former colleague of Osmond at Guy's Hospital, London, as well as in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, and in Alabama. Humphry Osmond and John R. Smythies, "The Present State of Psychological Medicine," *Hibbert Journal*, January 1953, 133–42.

2 Joseph Banks Rhine (1895–1980). American psychologist and parapsychologist who was the founder of the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University as well as the *Journal of Parapsychology*.

3 Jean-Joseph Surin (1600–65). Jesuit priest sent to Loudun to exorcise Ursuline nuns, offering his soul in exchange.

4 Cardinal Richelieu (1585–1642). Prime minister of France under Louis XIII.

5 William Grey Walter (1910–77). American-born British neurophysiologist and robotician who produced a version of an EEG machine that was able to detect a variety of brainwave types, ranging from the high-speed alpha waves to the slow delta waves observed during sleep.

6 Alfred Adler (1870–1937). Austrian psychotherapist, colleague of Sigmund Freud, and founder of the school of individual psychology.

7 Henri Bergson (1859–1941). French philosopher known for his work on intuition, memory, and perception.

8 Milton H. Erickson (1901–80). American psychiatrist and psychologist best known for his work in hypnosis.

9 Thomas Traherne (1636–74). English poet, clergyman, theologian, and religious writer whose image of seeing the world through a "child's-eye view" comes from his *Centuries of Meditations*, first published in 1908.

10 David Eder (1865–1936). British psychoanalyst, physician, Zionist, and writer.

11 Herbert George Wells (1866–1946). English writer in many genres, including the novel, history, politics, social commentary, textbooks, and rules for war games. His "The Door in the Wall" is a short story published in a volume of the same name in 1911.

12 Hoffmann-La Roche. Swiss-based pharmaceutical company.

13 Abram Hoffer (1917–2009). Canadian biochemist, physician, psychiatrist, and longtime friend and colleague of Osmond. He was known for his "adrenochrome hypothesis" of schizophrenia.

14 D. Griffith Mackerracher (1909–70). Canadian psychiatrist who hired Osmond and was his supervisor.

- 15 Henry Habberly Price (1899–1984). Oxford philosopher and parapsychologist.
- 16 Russell Brain (1895–1966). British neurologist and principal author of the standard work of neurology, *Brain's Diseases of the Nervous System*, first published in 1933. He was president of the Royal College of Physicians from 1950 to 1956.
- 17 Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961). Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist who founded analytical psychology.
- 18 This event took place on 15 August 1951 in Southern France. A mass poisoning known as *pain maudit*, or “cursed bread,” which saw extreme hallucinatory experiences among some 250 people. The mass hysteria resulted in numerous casualties and psychotic episodes.
- 19 William A. Malamud (1896–1982). American psychiatrist and professor of psychiatry.
- 20 Helen was Osmond’s first daughter.
- 21 James Esdaile (1808–59). Scottish physician who experimented with mesmerism both as a means of producing analgesia in surgical cases, before the invention of chloroform, and as a method of treatment for medical ones. Huxley based the Dr Macphail character in his utopian fantasy *Island* (1962) on Esdaile.
- 22 Sophia Williams (fl. 1910–60). Voice medium and author of *You Are Psychic* (1946).
- 23 Leslie M. LeCron (1892–1972). American psychologist with primary expertise in hypnotism and parapsychology.
- 24 A woody-stemmed Mexican vine (*Rivea corymbosa*, syn. *Turbina corymbosa*) of the morning glory family having small fleshy fruits with single seeds that are used for medicinal, narcotic, and religious purposes.
- 25 Ben Stefaniuk (1927–85). Canadian research psychologist and colleague of Osmond who participated in several LSD experiments.
- 26 Alex Szatmari (fl. 1910–88). Hungarian-born Canadian psychiatrist and neurologist.
- 27 Roland L. Fischer (1915–97). Experimental psychiatrist and psychopharmacologist.
- 28 Robert Maynard Hutchins (1899–1977). American philosopher of education, former president of Yale University, head of the Ford Foundation, and founder of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions.
- 29 William James (1842–1910). American philosopher and psychologist who was also trained as a physician. His “The Final Impressions of a Psychological Researcher” was published in *American Magazine* in 1909.
- 30 Sir Harold Percival Himsworth (1905–93). British scientist best known for his medical research on diabetes mellitus.
- 31 Nolan D.C. Lewis (1889–1979). American psychiatrist whom Abram Hoffer called the first practising psychoanalyst in the United States.
- 32 Charles Williams (1886–1945). British fantasy novelist and member, with C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and others, of the Inklings at Oxford during the 1930s and 1940s.
- 33 Eileen Garrett (1893–1970). Irish-born medium and founder of the Parapsychology Foundation in New York who was the editor of *Tomorrow* magazine.
- 34 Heinrich Klüver (1897–1979). German and American psychologist who was influential in the field of animal behaviour and gestalt psychology.
- 35 Marie LePut was a cook for the Huxleys, and Onnie Wesley was their housekeeper.
- 36 Sidney Katz (1916–2007). Canadian scientific journalist whose “My 12 Hours as a Madman,” published in *Maclean's* in October 1953, was the first detailed account of an LSD experience in a general magazine.
- 37 Adolf Meyer (1866–1950). American psychiatrist known for his work in psychobiology who was the first psychiatrist-in-chief of the Johns Hopkins Institute.

38 Francis Galton (1822–1911). British psychologist, statistician, and inventor who published extensively on a variety of scientific topics and is best known as the father of eugenics and for developing psychometrics and strict methodologies to measure human intelligence. In the 1880s he described what is now referred to as aphantasia, or the inability to visualize images in the mind’s eye. He was also a pioneer in twin research.

39 These are personality classifications based on body type in William Sheldon’s somatotyping scheme, now generally abandoned. Cerebrotonics (ectomorphs) were thought to be quiet, sensitive types and were predominantly lean; viscerotonics (endomorphs) were relaxed and social types and were predominantly overweight; and somatotonics (mesomorphs) were active and assertive types and were predominantly muscular.

40 This essay became *The Doors of Perception* (1954).

41 Maudsley Hospital, a psychiatric hospital in the Denmark Hill area of south London, which later became famous for the *Maudsley Prescribing Guidelines*, a reference book for prescribing psychotropic drugs that was first published commercially in 1999 in its fifth edition.

42 Eric Guttman and Walter S. Maclay, “Mescaline and Depersonalization: Therapeutic Experiments,” *Journal of Neurology and Psychopathology* 16, no. 63 (January 1936): 193–212. See also Maclay, Guttman, and Mayer-Gross, “Spontaneous Drawings.”

43 Alfred Jules Ayer (1910–89). British philosopher known for his work on logical positivism.

44 Gilbert Ryle (1900–76). British philosopher and metaphysician.

45 Graham Greene (1904–91). English novelist whose works often focused on Catholicism and spirituality.

46 Christopher Mayhew (1915–97). British politician and advocate for the mentally ill.

47 Gardner Murphy (1895–1979). American psychologist and parapsychologist known for his theories on learning, social psychology, and human nature.

48 John Murray (1879–1964). Member of Parliament for West Leeds and later a public servant in higher education.

49 Slade School of Fine Art at University College London.

50 Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

51 Bernard Berelson (1912–79). American behavioural scientist and head of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences, founded by the Ford Foundation and Stanford University in 1954.

52 Matthew Huxley (1920–2005). Son born to Aldous and Maria Huxley. He became an eminent epidemiologist and anthropologist.

53 John H. Cumming (1917–2002). Canadian psychiatrist whose wife, Elaine (1915–2003), was a social biologist. They published numerous works together and separately on various aspects of mental health.

54 Reference to D.H. Lawrence’s novel *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928).

55 Gerald Heard (1889–1971). English historian and philosopher who was a close friend of Huxley and had a strong influence on his work and spiritual development.

56 Robert Lawson Craft (1923–2015). American musician and conductor who developed a close relationship with composer Igor Stravinsky that started in 1948 and lasted until Stravinsky’s death in 1971.

57 David Herbert Lawrence (1885–1930). English novelist and close friend of Aldous and Maria Huxley. Aldous, who was greatly influenced by Lawrence, edited Lawrence’s letters after his death. Earlier, Maria had typed the manuscript of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (1928).

58 James Sydney Slotkin (1913–58). American anthropologist who studied Indigenous peoples. This book’s full title is *Menomini Peyotism: A Study of Individual Variation in a Primary Group with a Homogeneous Culture*.

59 The “Grail” book is Williams’s novel *War in Heaven* (1930).

- 60 Leon Ernest Eeman (1889–1958). Belgian-born pilot of the British Royal Flying Corps who became known for his work in self-healing. His *Co-operative Healing: The Curative Properties of Human Radiations* was published in 1947.
- 61 Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658). Military leader and Lord Protector of England whose soldiers reportedly sang verses from the Book of Psalms as they went into battle.
- 62 Vernon R. Woodford (1920–79). Canadian biochemist and pharmacologist.
- 63 Pseudonym of Peggy Eileen Whistler (1909–58). English poet, novelist, and illustrator. *A Ray of Darkness* (1952) is her account of living with epilepsy.
- 64 Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821–81). Russian novelist and essayist who suffered from epilepsy.
- 65 John Custance (fl. 1900–80). Pseudonym of a British writer and scholar of Jung. His *Wisdom, Madness and Folly: The Philosophy of a Lunatic* was published in 1951.
- 66 Thomas Hennell (1903–45). English artist and writer.
- 67 Tibetan word for “intermediate state” or “transitional state.”
- 68 Charles Williams, “The Tale of the End of Desire,” in *Many Dimensions* (1931).
- 69 Louis Pasteur (1822–95). French scientist regarded as a pioneer in bacteriology.
- 70 “Augean stables” refers to the fifth labour of Hercules, which was to clean out King Augeas’s filthy stables, as they hadn’t been cleaned for over thirty years.
- 71 Franz Kafka (1883–1924). Czech-born, German-speaking novelist. Gustav Janouch’s (1903–68) *Conversations with Kafka* was published in 1953.
- 72 Max Brod (1884–1968). Czech-born, German-speaking author and journalist who was a friend and the literary executor of Kafka.
- 73 Herbert Dingle (1890–1978). English physicist and natural philosopher whose *The Scientific Adventure: Essays in the History and Philosophy of Science* was published in 1953.
- 74 James Mourilyan Tanner (1920–2010). British pediatric endocrinologist known for his work on growth scales whose *Prospects in Psychiatric Research* was published in 1953.
- 75 Hans Weil-Malherbe (1905–2004). English psychiatrist with a specialty in neurochemistry. “Vile Bad plant” seems to be Osmond’s play on the name Weil-Malherbe.
- 76 Julian Huxley (1887–1975). Aldous’s older brother and father to his nephew Francis Huxley (1923–2016), an eminent evolutionary biologist and eugenicist.
- 77 Samuel Renshaw (1892–1981). American psychologist and researcher on speed-reading techniques.
- 78 Tahra Bey (alias of Krikor Kalfanan, fl. 1897–1953). An Egyptian-born fakir whom the Huxleys first met, according to Maria, when he was performing in the Casino at Bandol, circa 1933, “sticking pins and doing terrific other tricks.” See Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 530. He is reported to have voluntarily left the United States before his visa was to expire on 31 October 1953. See “Deportation Notice Pains [Human] Pincushion,” *Victoria Advocate* (Texas), 6 October 1953.
- 79 Alexander Cannon (1896–1963). British psychiatrist and occultist.
- 80 William Blake (1757–1827). English poet and painter known for mystical visions, widely expressed in his poetry.
- 81 *He Came Down from Heaven* was published in 1938.
- 82 William Gibson (1913–2009). Professor of neurological research at the University of British Columbia.
- 83 Reference to Canada as a semi-independent entity under the British Crown.
- 84 *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.
- 85 *Journal of the American Psychiatric Association*.
- 86 The Round Table Foundation was established in 1948 and disbanded ten years later.
- 87 Frederick Lucien Golla (1877–1968). English neuropsychiatrist and first director of the Burden Neurological Institute.

- 88 Havelock Ellis (1859–1939). English physician and writer best known for his work on sexuality.
- 89 Silas Weir Mitchell (1829–1914). American physician and pioneer neurologist best known for his studies on pain.
- 90 George L. Mason (1911–93). American physician, pharmacologist, and president of Riker Laboratories who, with Irving Porush (fl. 1920–2012), developed the first asthma inhaler.
- 91 Dr Henry (Andrija) Puharich (1918–95). American parapsychological researcher who established the Round Table Foundation.
- 92 Playful allusions to two of William Shakespeare’s sonnets.
- 93 Charles George Harrison (fl. 1855–1929). His *The Transcendental Universe: Six Lectures on Occult Science, Theosophy, and the Catholic Faith* was published in 1896.
- 94 The Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry was founded in 1947 by Dr William Menninger (1899–1966) and others with the goal of reforming psychiatric care in postwar America.
- 95 Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki (1870–1966). Zen Buddhist and leading proponent of Buddhism in the West.
- 96 Academy of Psychosomatic Medicine.
- 97 Sandor Rado (1890–1972). Hungarian psychoanalyst and controversial theoretician.
- 98 Donald Olding Hebb (1904–85). Canadian psychologist influential in neuropsychology and best known for his book *The Organization of Behavior* (1949). Osmond’s text reads, “E.O. Hebb.”
- 99 Henry James (1843–1916). William’s brother, the acclaimed American novelist and literary critic.
- 100 Robert W. Hyde (1910–76). American psychiatrist who conducted early experiments with LSD at the Boston Psychopathic Hospital.
- 101 William S. Kiskadden (1894–1969). Plastic surgeon based in Los Angeles who was a friend of the Huxleys.
- 102 The previous letter was actually written on the 17 December.
- 103 The M’Naughten Rule, created after the acquittal of Daniel M’Naghten in an 1843 murder trial in Britain, became the basis for subsequent law and policy on the insanity defence.
- 104 George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950). Anglo-Irish playwright and critic.
- 105 Augustus Cass Canfield (1897–1986). American publisher and author who was an executive with Harper and Brothers, later Harper and Row, from 1931 to 1967.
- 106 *Tomorrow* magazine was edited by Garrett.

1954

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
8 January 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Thank you Maria for a lovely long letter and both for Helen's Nonsense Rhymes<sup>1</sup> which has been a great success with the poetess of ducks, who has taken quickly to "The Dong," "The Pobble" and all our old friends, including of course "The Owl and the Pussycat." The little girl is now mercifully asleep. We always feel relieved when the last hectic half hour of wakefulness is over and she has subsided into a tumbled heap in or somewhere around her bed.

Winter is here on the prairies, great snow, silences, intense cold and the realisation that life is very precarious, a slight error on icy roads or a misjudgment about the weather results in disaster. In threatening weather a blizzard may descend almost at any time and bring even the modern fully "winterized" car to a standstill, and then trouble starts. Driving across the prairies this afternoon we seemed enclosed in an ill-defined but still impenetrable drifting fog of snow, and the huge spaces were like some frozen, stilled inland sea. A few partridge, flocks of snow banting, and jack rabbits usually dead and frozen stiff before rigor mortis can set in, are all the wildlife which you see, but somewhere in the distance lurk coyote, and sometimes bear, wolf, wildcat and even lynx.

In the hospital we are getting over Christmas and preparing for new investigations and plans to get the wretched old building and its organisation into shape. It can be done, it must be done but sometimes I wish it weren't mine to do. It is perhaps essential to show that research does not mean being unaware of the day to day needs of humans, that it is something useful at every level. Isn't "active contemplation" the correct phrase in another setting?<sup>2</sup> Research should be, a[nd] perhaps at its best is, active contemplation. For the moment I am a little staggered at the flow of

papers which we are turning out and every one of them justified. There have been no padding papers and there are many more to come. We have the Rockefeller<sup>3</sup> people up here in three weeks or so and I hope to get something from the old tycoon's purgatory fund. We might, after all, be able to give the foundation some account of how the founder is finding the other side!

Jane and I are very excited at the prospect of your coming up to the prairies and look forward to getting the possible dates clearer. It depends on how you plan to come, which would be the best month, and also on one or two other considerations. The organisers of the International Congress on Mental Health in Toronto this August will probably be asking Aldous to give an address, at least that is their present plan. I am sure that we could either put you up ourselves or find somewhere close by as you suggested. I think you might find our house a bit noisy all the time with Helen and her boy friend Douglas dashing to and fro. But we will work something out. It will be lovely to see you both. If you would enjoy it we might drive down to Yellowstone or [we]st to the Canadian Rockies.

Up to about early June the Saskatchewan roads are recovering from winter, after that they settle down to dust and occasional mud baths.

I must break off to attend the national sport of curling, a sort of bowls on ice which this vigorous people greatly enjoy and spend much of their energy on in winter.

Like a gelid armada-less Sir Francis Drake I return from curling. It is about 15 degrees below zero – 47 degrees of frost and I can't conceive what makes the Canadians chase curls as a sport of winter evenings. It is a curious quirk that makes these prairie people spend upwards of two hours a night often in a temperature which is equivalent to the freezing compartment of a deep freeze. Tonight a slender, dark, close-cropped girl regularly threw herself prone on the ice every time she propelled a forty pound rock up to the other end of the rink, about 140 feet away. What would some observer from another planet make of it? I suppose it would appear to be some ritual, some antifertility dance with immolation on a frigid altar.

About Aldous taking mescaline on his own, there are some objections – though there is no reason at all why anything should go astray, it might and if it does it is useful to have someone experienced around. Suppose you



wait a little until we know when you are coming up here and we could arrange it all very quietly, perhaps in some mountains. I am becoming more and more convinced that mescal is one of many gateways into a multitude of kingdoms, a door in many walls. Lysergic acid, ololiuqui, delirium, schizophrenia, certain other intoxications, in some people prolonged contemplation, all open the door, but what we find there or what use we make of what we find depends largely on our resources, our wish to explore and our capacity to keep our heads. We can find what we want to find at a price. The voluptuary who takes hashish for paradisaical visions of houris<sup>4</sup> gets them, but he may always get other things thrown in. The trouble with the schizophrenic persons is that they are thrown in willy-nilly and have no means of controlling the experience except that of total immersion in it with social disintegration. To add to the predicament we give them no help since we don't believe in these visionary, mystic, magic happenings as *experiences in themselves*, we consider them symbolic of something else – early infantile deficits, etc. Hence we mostly refuse to discuss the *experience itself* and concentrate our attention on what we arrogantly proclaim is the underlying cause. Rather as if a gardener announced that dung was the real cause of an Etoile D'Hollande rose. This simply adds to the ill person's misery and dismay, but sometimes in desperation the afflicted person has to agree with the psychiatrist because no one else will even listen to him, and psychotherapists are very good listeners at a price and the price (apart from money) is that the mentally ill person *must* learn and talk their language. The analyst won't accept any other, failure to speak the analyst's language is a neurotic (or psychotic) defense. The sick man has no alternative but to learn and speak in the analyst's language – if he fails to do so the analyst punishes him by refusing to communicate with him. Many schizophrenics are in such desperate need to communicate that they would doubtless learn Urdu if they believed this would ensure a friendly and sympathetic hearing; however, the analyst only requires all discussions should take place in terms of certain early and usually highly emotionally charged experiences of the first five years of life. The nature of man and the universe is such that I can communicate eternity in terms of a grain of sand if need be, there is nothing especially insurmountable about communicating one's life in terms of one's childhood. Some people must

find it comforting, but it is I think utterly misleading to say that this tells us very much about the cause of and the nature of experience.

Congratulations to you all on a granddaughter – well done – I find my daughter most satisfactory in her own determined way.

I do hope that the X-rays are being easier. I shall ask Abram Hoffer to think about it and we should make some enquiries. Maria's distress has set me off on a line which may prove helpful. You see there is evidence that adrenochrome is an anti-mitotic agent and it has been used against cancers in Heidelberg. One must never neglect inspiration, and though much of it like air is breathed out again still we live by it.

Of course I agree that many of our "sick" people would not be "sick" if we valued their experiences, they would be explorers of the other, but as the priest relentlessly doomed the prophet and was in consequence easily himself doomed by the blind scientist, the schizophrenic person had his experiences entirely devalued. I am not sure how much certain experiences can be sustained even in the most accepting society; visions of Hell and Heaven must never be easy to endure even with the prayerful support of one's fellows. It will be much less easy with their scornful, uncomprehending and brutal antagonism. I think we must do two things simultaneously, i) try to find some way of alleviating their experience biochemically, and ii) gather enough scientific understanding of the door into the many walls that we can appreciate and cherish mentally ill folk.

Magic I suppose can never be communicated perfectly but Charles Williams provides glimpses and flashes where many writers give nothing of it.

Maria's observations on the other body are valuable and fascinating. I shall have to get Abram to think a lot about X-rays, his splendid questioning mind is like a bloodhound that only needs to scent a problem and will start worrying at it, sniffing it and trailing it. There is a good deal of evidence suggesting that in some queer way we certainly have two bodies – I have had several discussions with people who have had just that experience and found Maria's account most helpful.

I am keenly looking forward to seeing and hearing the views on *The Doors of Perception*. Have you had any other previews? The adrenochrome idea is starting to cause some interest, a pharmacologist from Illinois says that he will come up and see us about it, and we have *no* adrenochrome at

present – it is very annoying. However, we have been so [lucky] that we have no right to complain. I hope that in a couple of years I shall be able to unburden myself of the hospital and devote more time to research because there are aspects of it which I should be able to do as well as most. But clearly I have an obligation not to abandon Weyburn until it is fairly decent and a tradition of decency is established. Here I think the research can be used to force our legislators to do what is right, not what is expeditious – a little righteous blackmail. It looks to me as if we are making one of the big advances in medicine and that within a year they won't be able to ignore what has happened. Of course much more than medicine is involved but I don't expect many will realise that for some time. I should like to use our success in research not only on a long term benefit for schizophrenic folk, but in the short run to see that those who are in my care get a reasonably fair deal. I think that I shall have to set some sort of time limit because I should need to get out and about to keep myself critical and lively, but I must see that the real heroes, the ill themselves, gain from our good luck.

I am all agog in my other career (unsuccessful playwright) as one of my plays is being looked at again and I am filled with extravagant hopes which will I suppose go down again. I want to write some more but the research and administration don't leave me the energy and there is no doubt that however good I might become it wouldn't be right to reduce my energy for these vital matters yet.

I certainly shall try to be in New York about 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> April. I am due at GAP about 9<sup>th</sup> and with luck might get down.

I too was very sorry [not] to meet Matthew and blame it on my changes of schedule.

Time for bed and tomorrow I must clear up much work. I believe I am learning how to administer, and in a way it is best to start on something fairly big, more fun. It seems to be mostly a matter of thinking and delegating. If a thing is properly run the man at the top makes very few decisions and should have lots of time for clinical and research work. I have not become good enough for that yet, but I can see why this should be so – if you try to make the little decisions yourself, not only do you waste your energy but you remove from the people who should make those decisions the joy of doing so and the valuable experience of learning how to do it. If the place ever runs really well, and I hope and think it will, I shall spend

most of my administrative time writing congratulatory notes. If all the small decisions have been made, the large ones have been winnowed out, and as there are only a few of them they can be chewed on and usually some sensible course of action results.

Jane and Helen, both asleep, send their love and we all and many others in Saskatchewan keenly look forward to your coming in the summer.

I have no evidence that I shall be very good at all, only that hope which I suppose one must have to write at all.

Love to you both.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*16 January 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I was so glad to hear from Maria that she is feeling better and perhaps our niacin has contributed to making her feel more herself again. The information is most welcome and we shall now see if it will help others who get radiation sickness. Abram's bloodhound brain is already sniffing at a new scent and you may be sure that your reports will be highly valued by us and that we shall use the information you gave us for the benefit of others who have these troubles with X-rays. Tell Dr Hawkins<sup>5</sup> that if you need more niacin to let me know and I shall send him some account of the size of dose which we have given. Abram has tried it on himself in large doses over a long period – however I'm all for using the smallest dose that works.

I was much interested in Aldous' article in *Life* – most enjoyable and very hard to make the usual accusations of exaggeration etc. which are usually leveled at those who believe the world is odder than we like to suppose. I have been asked to amplify my review of *The Doors of*

*Perception* a little and am doing so, giving some account of how it all came about – it is a very unlikely story!

It is bitterly cold here now, 30 degrees below zero – 65 degrees of frost and more. The prairie is frozen six feet down. Winter is iron hard, with frost on the inside of double windows. Still our houses are warm and we have no complaints except that one knows that the slightest mistake can result in most unfortunate results. The next two months are the low ebb of life on the prairies.

I am very busy reporting on my hospital and working up a brief for my chiefs so that we can get money to make it better. It is a sad and bad place and must be changed. Sometimes wish that I were a full-time researcher, life would be more straight forward, but perhaps tortuousness is the essence of being alive. Real life is always loose ends and tatty bits, not a neat and regular design.

Thank you both for keeping up the call for funds. I am sure that they will come before very long, probably more than we need one day. We have Rockefeller up here in February. We need in our research about \$50,000 more this year (\$100,000 in all). Whoever puts up the money will do very well out of it because in 1954 we shall publish about 20 papers or more. I believe that before very long we shall get money on our terms which will be nice, when you come to think of it we have the ideas and the capacity for translating them into action – and what have they got? So don't lose heart and keep telling any of the money givers you meet that they are missing and have missed good opportunities of spending their money wisely. This is one of their paralyzing fears, that they will be accused of wasting the accumulated spoils of old, dead rogues whose plunder they disburse in a hope (probably vain) of either giving the deceased name a better smell in the nostrils of posterity or helping to atone elsewhere. How odd that these cunning and often wild old gamblers should be succeeded by smooth, safe, administrative one[s]. The strong man with the dagger is indeed followed by the weak man with the whitewash brush – our weary and bewildered generation ask for bread and get a hydrogen bomb, for a sign from the churches and get platitudes. If science can establish, as I'm now certain that it can, that otherness is just as real as is-ness and that the great religions, far from being escapes from reality, are essential tools for understanding and observing reality, How odd it will be! And will many or any of the great

princes and tycoons of the churches welcome this information? I doubt it – they are themselves products of an age of mechanical skepticism and will find it very uncomfortable.

In this good cause I am going to do something which, if it isn't possible let me know, but if you can do it please do. I am going to ask the parapsychology people to send you *A Ray of Darkness* by Margiad Evans for review. She is an epileptic poetess who has, in my view (also Golla F.R.S.<sup>6</sup> of the Burden Neurological Institute Bristol and Lennox<sup>7</sup> of Boston Neurological Institute) written one of the greatest books on epilepsy. A classic which must and should be recognised. Like Hennell's *The Witnesses*, Barbellion's<sup>8</sup> *Disappointed Man*, etc., th[ese] most valuable books are usually allowed to drift out of print and never reach the generations of doctors and medical students, nurses, families with the sick people in them, who would be greatly benefited, to say nothing of the sick themselves. There are perhaps 700,000 epileptics in the U.S. alone. Mrs Evans' book doesn't just deal with description but analyses with great skill the experience itself. I found it a most exciting book and have written three reviews of it for the Canadian Medical Journal,<sup>9</sup> the American Psychiatric<sup>10</sup> and our own little journal. I think you will find the book good stuff in itself but it is potentially enormously valuable.

The International Congress on Mental Health are thinking of asking Aldous to Toronto in August as a critical speaker and he asked me if I thought he would come and if he came did I think he would be the right sort of speaker. I have no doubt about the latter, about the former I don't of course know. It does seem very important to me that the aware non-psychiatrist should be keeping psychiatrists thinking about the enormous responsibility of the job and the need to approach it with weapons that are at least reasonably appropriate. Could you let me know what you think about this? The International Congress is the big psychiatric event of the year and the first time that it has been held in Canada.

We are looking forward to hearing when you might be moving towards the prairies, and I am looking forward to hearing when I shall be in New York and hope that it will be before you leave for Europe. The Duck poetess sang me a new saga about a duck, a dog and a rabbit this morning, but I was in the bath and didn't record it. The duck poetess is also responsible for some of the blots on this paper. She was helping to bathe me. At this

moment her voice floats in from the kitchen “Oh gosh, oh gosh” accompanied by sinister bumps, into which we durstn’t enquire.

What an odd accident it was that psychiatry drifted into Freudian, Meyerism (psychobiology) and variations on behaviourism, when at the same time as this movement was gestating Myers,<sup>11</sup> Sidgwick,<sup>12</sup> and Gurney<sup>13</sup> were investigating the subliminal self which was much more inclusive than the Freudian unconscious. Weir Mitchell and Havelock Ellis had started on the peyote and William James had just begun to interest himself in the varieties of religious experience. All the tools were there, and combined with Freud and Jung and Bleuler’s<sup>14</sup> knowledge of the psychoses (which Freud didn’t possess), a very useful working psychology could have been formed which would have used Pavlov<sup>15</sup> and Watson’s<sup>16</sup> observations sensibly. But the moment passed. However perhaps it is now going to be possible to do this. Fifty years later, but I suppose that isn’t very long in science. We all send good wishes to you both. Thank you for letting me know about the niacin – Abram will be greatly interested, another clue.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 January 1954

My dear Aldous and Maria,

My copy of *The Doors of Perception* has arrived safely and I am greatly pleased with it and with its generous inscription<sup>17</sup> – though perhaps my role was more that of midwife?

I am in the middle of a series of activities which seem to use up all my time so that I have now begun to learn how to do two simultaneously. Attending our negotiations with the union about wages etc., I have found that with a little practice one can write reports, drafts of papers, etc. and so lose as little time as possible. And all the time I have my notebooks ready for those ideas which suddenly well up from some unknown spot and must

be caught as they fly. For in spite of Blake's warning it is the function of science to capture and even dissect the joy as it flies, but not to be deceived into supposing that this is the joy itself.<sup>18</sup>

Yesterday there happened what may have been one of the great events in our research and in psychiatry generally. I suppose that in everything there are moments in which the effort of years and months is suddenly concentrated into a few seconds. Like the moment when Blucher's<sup>19</sup> army appeared at Waterloo, or when (in 1917 wasn't it) Einstein's<sup>20</sup> prediction came out right 17–18 years after he had made it, or when in 1939 the German group of physicists saw Uranium 235 breaking down – it is those moments that Keats expressed so marvelously well when inspired by Chapman's<sup>21</sup> quite pedestrian translation of Homer – the only time I looked at it didn't seem to warrant the wonderful outpouring.

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
When a new planet swims into his ken;  
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He star'd at the Pacific – and all his men  
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise –  
Silent upon a peak in Darien.<sup>22</sup>

The hunt for M-substance has been going at high speed and we are every day narrowing the field. Yesterday something happened that could cut matters by months or even years. Abram had a paper chromatograph done with special instructions to look for a group of compounds called indoles. Paper chromatograph is in principle very simple – you just put a drop of the fluid to be analysed (urine in this case) on a specially treated paper and the constituents are absorbed along the strip of paper at different speeds according (I think) to the molecular weight. Then you stain the paper and have the constituents spread along the paper in colored bands. In practice it is less easy than it sounds. Anyway we had two urine samples – one from an acutely schizophrenic girl and the other from a normal. On the special indole staining method each showed a heavy precipitation of yellowish pigment which under the fluorescent lamp was a tawny orange. But supposing that there were different types of indole present? Another method consists of using the ultra violet lamp with only staining. When we did this



on the normal chromatograph a small fluorescent streak appeared and on the schizophrenic [sample] a broad and glinting band about ten times as large and dense.

There are snags: there are always snags. The schizophrenic girl had been having niacin – could it be that? It might just – but its presence in the normal in the same place is against niacin – and indole compounds have greater fluorescence. So we shall have to see and will be on tenterhooks for the next week until we know. It may be a false alarm and we shall have to go back to our wool. But suppose it isn't, it means that M-substance or one of its derivatives has been caught in a trap and that we now have to move in for the kill. Abram and I both knew that this might be one of those moments for wild surmise. He wisely had a photographer come to take a picture, not of the hunters but of the hunted – that little glowing streak invisible except under the ultraviolet lamp, just in case it was the Pacific and not a mirage that we had seen.

If this is specific to schizophrenia then we start making dozens of paper chromatographs – cut out the glowing strips, elute the substance off them, concentrate it, identify it and finally collect so much of it that we can give it to a volunteer\* and see whether he will become schizophrenic and so carry out Koch's<sup>23</sup> postulates – in a modified form. However we have a long way to go. Our present hunch is that this M-substance might be leuco-adrenochrome or reduced adrenochrome as it is sometimes called – a much stabler compound than adrenochrome itself. We shall see, but I hope that it is the Pacific which we saw from our peak in Darien and not just a mirage – though even a mirage can be encouraging, for it usually means that what one sees is somewhere though not where you think it is.

Hope that all goes well with both of you. Still cold here, 20 degrees below and more – over 50 degrees of frost.

Could you let me have the name of the Gesualdo<sup>24</sup> disc – I would like to get it. Am seeing whether we can afford a really good record player – they have some remarkable ones now.

Love from us all,

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

\* Aesthetically more pleasing, though in principle exactly the same as the Siberian work with *amanita pantherina* – No one knows what would happen if someone took a great bumper of acute schizophrenic urine. Siberians might pronounce it a vintage brew.

P.S. Rare fun, the APA has relented and now want my paper on the nature of schizophrenic experience but the International Congress has bespoken it so that I doubt whether I can let them. I shall offer instead a paper on the specifications of a schizogenic agent by Abram and me which is a scientific effort in the best tradition, which we can put in from our notes in a couple of days.

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
25 January 1954

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. Let us deal with practical matters first. I will try to do a review of the epilepsy book, if I get a copy of it. I have been trying to procure the book at local stores, but without success, and so shall be glad to have an opportunity of reading it. If I can manage it, I will do a review quickly but I can't guarantee this, as there seems to be daily less and less time for more and more work, resulting in less and less accomplishment. I suppose this phenomenon is one of the symptoms of oncoming old age.

Next there is the question of speaking at the Toronto Conference. It looks at present as if we shall be in Europe next summer, if all goes well. So that rules out my attendance at Toronto. Moreover I'm not sure that I could contribute anything substantial to the psychiatrists – except perhaps along the lines of a lecture I gave recently at Mills College, on the training of the psycho-physical instrument as the basis (at present almost totally neglected) of education.<sup>25</sup> I talked in the lecture about such empirically developed procedures as the F.M. Alexander<sup>26</sup> technique, the Bates<sup>27</sup> Method, the Renshaw techniques for training the special senses, the Bonpensiere<sup>28</sup> technique in piano playing, the Zen art of archery (described by Herrigel<sup>29</sup>

in an excellent little book), with references to oriental methods for gaining control of the secondary nervous system and finally to “spiritual exercises” – the whole assemblage of facts being shown in a frame of reference where the coordinates are the conscious self and the various not-selves, personal subconscious, entelechy, collective subconscious, superconscious and Atman-Brahman. The lecture, which I have given twice, aroused considerable interest, and I am thinking of developing the theme more fully for a book. That is, if I can find time before time finds me.

I hope the visit of the Rockefeller representative will bear some fruit. I have given up all hope of these bloody Ford people. They are obviously dedicated whole-heartedly to doing nothing that might look in any way novel or unorthodox.

I don't envy your 60 degrees of frost. Here, at last, we have some rain. We had had only four inches of precipitation in a twelve month period, and the situation was getting very bad. In the last ten days we have had two good storms – the first which brought 2.5 inches and the second which is still in progress.

I hope we may see you in New York in early April. As for summer visits to the prairie, I am afraid there was a misunderstanding. Maria said “next summer,” meaning the summer of next year.

Love to you all from us both.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
6 February 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I have written off to the parapsychologists and trust that they have sent you *A Ray of Darkness* by now. I know that you are generally busy and that this is an imposition, but I believe this is a very important book both socially and medically. I fear that it may be allowed to drift out of print as so often

happens and that a generation of doctors, nurses, and educated people who should know a bit about the great falling sickness will remain ignorant. It also shows another way into otherness – in a way I shouldn't care to travel, but a way is a way.

Sad that you won't be in Saskatchewan this summer. I shall have to do my very best to get to New York in time to see you. If only I were just a researcher or just an administrator. It is crazy doing both and yet it must be done if either research or administration are to prosper. It is like building the wall for Jerusalem with sword in one hand and hod in the other, and an attempt to be a platonic philosopher king – before unfortunately I'm at all sure whether I'm a bona fide philosopher or not (read researcher for philosopher).

We had the Rockefellers up here in the person of Dr Weir,<sup>30</sup> a grand-nephew (I think) of Weir Mitchell, one of the first takers of the peyote among psychiatrists, and a leading novelist. I hope that this a good omen. He was friendly and sensible. He has been in mental hospitals in Egypt and Jamaica and doubted whether I could show him anything worse than he had seen. However, when I showed him some of our worst wards he agreed that he had nothing to teach me about the need for treating mental illness more efficiently.

I urged him as he left to give the biochemical approach ten years – if we couldn't do anything in that time we should agree that the answers probably lie in sociology and psychoanalysis and back them for a *steady 50 years*. Not that they shouldn't be backed now but there will be no illusions about their giving us an answer to the disease groups called schizophrenia.

I hope we shall get the money. He saw a copy of *The Doors* and was much interested. Have you any idea of its reception yet? My agents in the East tell me that “they are getting steamed up about adrenochrome in New York.” Cryptic – how steamed and in what direction? *The Doors* can be enormously helpful in opening people's eyes to possibilities in this field so that even if the saurians won't play someone else will. Of course once someone strikes oil we as most of the others will be glad to come in. O for the splendid days when the foundations gave their ill-gotten gains away on an old boy basis – there is room for enquiry here – how do they give their money away and may it not be better to have it given out oddly, even corruptly but with some inspiration rather than on a cash ledger basis?

I am going to ask GAP (Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry) to ask you and H. Klüver along to speak on the nature of mind one of these days, plus perhaps Russell Brain, PRCP<sup>31</sup> from England. It would be a lively affair.

We are hard at work on what may be preparing a new name for scientific immortality – like Alexis St Martin<sup>32</sup> whose stomach lining is known to every medical student. The new name is [—] and there are two [—]s, identical twins aged 23, both male, both schizophrenic. Twin studies have already played a large part in establishing that schizophrenia probably has an organic facet but no one has used them for evaluating treatments yet. Veterinarians have been developing techniques for economizing on huge herds of large animals by using identical twins which are said in some matters to be equivalent to as many as 50 matched pairs in a control series and obviously much handier, cheaper and more easily managed. Our [—]s are I believe a similar proposition. First we establish their identity. Then we do our battery of diagnostic tests which include five or six of our own home brew and then the therapeutic trials begin. We must get every detail correct because our [—]s not only have a chance of getting better themselves but getting better in a way which may benefit many others.

I must get the book on the Zen art of archery and look forward to your book on this matter of controlling the secondary nervous system. Queer creatures, men, generations learn remarkable skills and then hardly anyone worries about them. I'm *sure* that you have much to teach the psychiatrists and most of them would admit that this is so. Our faith in old Watson has worn thin, and even a few heretics feel that Sigmund Freud didn't know everything, in spite of the keen sort of disciple who finds everything in the text, like a good Communist and Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin (Malenkov) or was Beria<sup>33</sup> really in the line?

Our great cold has gone but may soon return. The snow is mired and the roads slushy.

The duck poetess sang for me tonight in her bath:

I had a little duck. He lived on a farm  
I fooded him. He eat wormies and fish  
He eat wormies and fish  
All the ducks in the farm eat wormies and fish  
Instead of meat – instead of meat

Ducks everywhere. Ducks in the pond  
Mother ducks and ducklings, ducklings, ducklings  
Flying in the sky and in the pond.  
Mother ducks and ducklings, ducklings, ducklings

I hope that we shall begin to get this place moving in the next six months and make it at least up to Geneva Convention standards. I have three standards for the wards. Below Geneva Convention for Prisoners of war – insupportable. Above Geneva, but below mental hospital standards, and mental hospital standards or above. At least one third of our wards are below Geneva Convention for POW in my view. This is not active cruelty, just the neglect of years which is often as blighting and harder to deal with than outright brutality.

You would be interested in the Ulsterman whose treatise on schizophrenia I am now reading – full of such remarks as “escape into fantasy” – I wonder what he really means, or if he has a clue as to what he means by the trite phrase?

Hope that all goes well with you – let me know when you will be in New York and where so that I can find a quiet (and cheap) hotel nearby. Canada is starting to get a small flow of refugees from McCarthy, which would be funny if it weren't pitiful and shameful!

Love to you both from us all.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
7 February 1954*

Dear Humphry,

The enclosed copy of a letter from Paul de Kruif<sup>34</sup> to my publisher may be of some interest to you. Perhaps it would be worth your while to contact him as he seems to have become a sort of lay go-between or ambassador,

from Medicine to the American Public. He may perhaps have the ear of somebody with DOUGH for medical purposes.

A copy of *The Ray of Darkness* turned up last night (I had ordered one month ago) and we will get down to a reading of it with dispatch.

I hope your cold wave has retreated. Here we have the opposite – no rain and temperatures in the higher 80's.

Love from us both.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn Sask.  
13 February 1954*

My dear Aldous,

Many thanks for the copy of Paul de Kruif's letter. It is good of you to keep probing every possible source of money – the dollar may not be almighty but it is mighty useful in this imperfect place.

Two bits of good news this week: 1) We have more evidence of a toxic substance in schizophrenia and much more easily reproducible evidence than we have had in the past. Just in case you are not up to date with the toxic theory of schizophrenia and the evidence on which it is based, here is a summary of what I know about it:

- a) It has been shown that schizophrenic serum from acute cases produces a catatonic like state in white mice.
- b) De Jong<sup>35</sup> extracted a substance from schizophrenic urine which he called catatonin.
- c) An American whose name escapes me shows that in schizophrenic serum there is a substance which inhibits the growth of lupin rootlets – common root inhibitors are plant hormones or auxins which are indole like compounds (adrenochrome is an indole).

- d) Roland Fischer who works with us has shown that tadpoles are killed by a substance present in schizophrenic urine and serum which is not present in normal.

Following this up we suggested to Professor Altschul<sup>36</sup> (who is a Czech and knew Kafka as a young man) that he should try this on his tissue cultures. He has a special sarcoma cell culture which is particularly useful in this work because it is completely standardized. Preliminary tests suggest that schizophrenic serum is much more toxic to these cells than ordinary serum. It may not hold up, but it looks and feels promising. We are also trying adrenochrome and its more stable relative leuco-adrenochrome on this culture and will see what happens. I think that the scent grows hotter.

The Rockefellers say they will give us \$50,000 for three years. It isn't signed and sealed but as good as. Queer that less than two years ago we hadn't a cent and now our research budget is about \$120,000 annually and we shall soon need more. This will mean that we can collect the mass of data we need and exploit the breakthroughs we have made with increasing vigor. This has been the secret of the great speed which we have so far maintained. I don't see why we shouldn't continue this way for many years to come. The field is unlimited and the number of people who can think the right way to work in it so few. All this fuss about analysis without any recognition that analysis deals with a tiny and restricted part of experience. As you said of Schonbrun's<sup>37</sup> (is that right?) music, preoccupation with dirty old clothes in a dark cupboard instead of with the wonder of the world. It is the absurd pretentiousness of the analysts which dismays me. Truisms inflicted as truth – I have just been reading their ideas on psychiatrist training and am a little embittered. Such windy pomposity and such self-satisfaction. I long to stick a sharp pin in their self-satisfied bottom! One lovely bit on selecting psychiatrists, emphasizing the need for well balanced, mature, sensible and sensitive people – shades of old Sigmund, Adolf Meyer, Harry Stack Sullivan,<sup>38</sup> etc.

I wonder whether I should send Paul De Kruif a copy of our insight? I am sending a copy to Dr Claire Hincks,<sup>39</sup> doyen of the mental health movement in Canada. We shall get our money yet.

Glad that *A Ray of Darkness* has arrived – will be interested in your views on it.



Our cold wave has receded and the thermometer leapt 100 degrees from 40 degrees below to nearly 60 degrees above in a few days. It has sagged since, but not so intensely.

How is Maria? We are pressing ahead with our investigations on cell metabolism. You see having found a selective cell poison like adrenochrome which could occur in the body, and ways of apparently greatly modifying its action (niacin), we have a very wide field for its possible application. We should be in the animal experiment field very soon. You may be sure that I shall pass on anything that may be of interest to you.

I am in the blues about my old building, it is an Augean stables and I feel un-Herculean – aftermath of flu maybe. But sometimes it seems a little odd that having helped in what looks like being one of the big advances of the century in psychiatry (and I don't think this is puffing it) that I should preoccupy myself with paint, plaster, laundry, flooring and dozens of other matters which are no mystery at all. Money alone is needed to put them right and a dozen men know more about them than I. But subjects on which I know as much as most tend to be neglected. I hope to use the research and the authority accruing from it to get our wretched people properly housed and clothed and believe I shall have the energy and determination to blackmail our decent governor into doing the proper thing.

All send love to you both,  
Humphry

P.S. How very good *The Doors of Perception* is. Have been rereading a bit. De Kruif should read it ten times, no doubt he will and I have. *The Doors* will be immortal in the mescal literature and in psychology and has a good chance in its own right. Splendid.

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
14 February 1954

Dear Humphry,

We have just finished the reading aloud of *A Ray of Darkness* and were both, I must confess, disappointed – neither of us feeling that it fulfilled the high hopes which your praise of it evoked. Indeed I don't really feel that I am any the wiser about epilepsy than I was before reading the book. The symptoms are well described – the restlessness preceding the onset, the momentary heightening of consciousness before the terror and the blackout, the sense (when drugs have slowed down the onset) of being possessed by someone other than oneself who co-exists with the ego before the fall of darkness. These are well rendered. But I don't feel that the author has thrown any light on what she keeps suggesting she is going to throw light on – the relationship between the epileptic's experience and the mystical experience. To start with, I think she has the wrong idea altogether of what the mystical experience is. Thus, she says that the mystical experience is orientated towards death. Surely this is quite untrue. It is orientated towards a more abundant life and is accompanied by a sense of indifference in regard to being either alive or dead, since both states are aspects of the more abundant life. The mystic doesn't "go somewhere else" when he dies; he is already there, as Boehme<sup>40</sup> says explicitly and as all the others, eastern and western, imply. Epilepsy, it would seem, may be related to the mystical experience in the same sort of way as is the Dark Night of the senses and of the will, in St John of the Cross.<sup>41</sup> Such Dark Nights may precede dawns – or they may not.

Another point. Although the author talks a great deal about her states of mind, she leaves one in uncertainty about several very important points. For example, she talks about the daimons which haunt her almost obsessively – the figures of Bach, Jacob Stainer,<sup>42</sup> Blake, etc. But she never makes it clear whether these daimons are thoughts, visionary figures seen with the eyes shut, or full blown hallucinations seen with the eyes open. Her experience seems to be more like obsession than vision. The nearest approach to vision occurs in the landscape dreams, which she doesn't describe, but hints at – dreams which many persons have and which evidently come from the same area of the mind as do the mescaline visions.

A curiously disquieting fact about the writer is that she never indicates that she felt love for anyone. She was obsessed by a dog, which had to be poisoned, and she speaks with appreciation of her doctors, her neighbours and the maid who lived with her during her pregnancy. But she never

indicates that she has any feeling for her husband and says nothing about the child which is finally born to her. The impression given is one of a character strangely remote and inhuman, in the sense of unbiological. Her concerns are an obsession with her daimons (historical figures refashioned to suit her own particular purposes), with natural objects and with her own writing.

Our feeling, when we had finished the book, was that, if it had meant much to you, it was because you already knew so much about epilepsy. To the lay reader, I fear, it doesn't convey a great deal. If I had to review it, I wouldn't know (being ignorant of the general field of epilepsy) what to say – except that I didn't find the book very enlightening or the author very sympathetic as a human being. And this, of course, I have no wish or reason to say. In view of all this, I think that Mum is the word. I wish, seeing that you think so highly of the book, that it were otherwise. But it isn't.

I have just read Klüver's little monograph on mescaline. Quite interesting. But how much space he fills with elaborate consideration of inessentials. Who cares whether the after-images left by a vision turn into other visions, or whether they don't? The only point of interest is that there *are* visions and that they seem to constitute a kind of autonomous fauna and flora, indigenous to a continent of the Unconscious much remoter than that which we visit in dreams and further off even than the world of the Archetypes.

Love from both of us.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
20 February 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Presently Jane and I plan to be in New York about 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> April and will be there until 7<sup>th</sup> when I think you sail. I then go on to Asbury Park and Jane

may come with me or go to Boston.

I am starting to get reports about the review of *The Doors*. J.Z. Young<sup>43</sup> the neurophysiologist, one of the most remarkable chaps in his field who has written a highly mechanistic account of the mind, was very enthusiastic in the *Sunday Times*. Muir<sup>44</sup> in the *Observer* rather narky – not at all what I had expected. John Smythies tells me that your Slotkin made some very silly remarks about hallucinations etc. rarely occurring in white men. We concluded that he was mixing up mescaline and the peyote. The latter would probably make white men vomit sooner than red men and hence the whites would hallucinate less because they ingested less. It would be easy for an anthropologist intent on sociologic variables to omit a physical variable of this sort. I have been reading *The Diabolic Root*,<sup>45</sup> an account of Delaware Indian religious peyotism – most interesting and instructive. There is one charming observation – God sent Jesus to the white men and they killed him and he sent peyote to the red men who have kept him alive so that they may learn and understand the road which Jesus trod. There is much about the peyote religion that makes one feel that the Indians had been given something of inestimable value. What distinguishes peyotism from the great majority of religions is that, whereas in most religions the many depend on second hand experiences from the few of experiences which we know are very nearly incommunicable, in it all members of the cult can enjoy and communicate the incommunicable. As you point out there have been various ecstatic religions which have allowed a high proportion of their celebrants to enjoy some sort of vision, but this has usually been at the expense of decency or health. Peyote alone almost ensures transcendental experience to its adherents. Peyote has disadvantages – but science can easily prevent that and has already done so with mescaline and lysergic acid. I don't think that in *The Doors* or that in my speculating that I have worked out the extraordinary implications of the peyote group of religions. It is clear for instance that their very remarkable tolerance arises at least in part from their great religious experience. Christian churches must be lucky if 1% of their population experience deep religious fervor and understanding at the same time. The whole nature of the ceremonies makes this unlikely. I suppose that in times of starvation, especially in towns during the middle ages at the end of the winter when vitamin B intake was short, there would be a better chance, but it would still be low. In any peyote cult they are

unlucky if 95% of the group don't have a transcendental experience. In addition the small groups seem admirable – Jesus always spoke of two or three gathered together not two or three hundred – or in our frightening age two to three million.

Klüver is of course interested in the wider aspects of mescaline intoxication, but psychologists like the specific phenomena which seems to them more susceptible to understanding than transcendental ones. I think they may well be wrong and that you have to start with the transcendental ones and work backwards. Scientists always prefer to elaborate from the easy.

Sorry you didn't like *A Ray of Darkness*. I do. Maybe it is a book for doctors in that it gives all sorts of fascinating sidelights on one of the great neurological problems. I wonder whether there is something antithetical in your personalities, for on the same day as I got your letter I had one from Mrs Evans apologising for not being able to read Huxley! Isn't it odd? I think that she is pretty angular but then she spends about two thirds of her life either going into or coming out of these convulsions and periods of disturbed consciousness.

Abram Hoffer will be traveling to Europe [o]n *Queen Mary* early in April – is that when you are going? Rockefeller are sending him on a three-months tour of European centres which should be very useful to us. Helen is probably flying to England with her aunt (my sister) in April. She will see her grandparents and they will all be thrilled. She is a little rascal, but very interesting.

Spent a long (ten hours) day and a half with a child murderer in gaol in Prince Albert. I think this appalling killing was the product of an epilepsy of a sort – but will the jury think so? It is horrible to kill a little girl this way, but why should we who slaughter thousands of children on roads and killed X thousands in Hiroshima and Nagasaki get so worked up over a dull youth's drunken epileptic violence? One sees exactly why we should and do. But what good will breaking this boy's neck do? He is, of course, murderers nearly always are, a model prisoner and much liked by the prison staff who may soon have the pleasure of hanging him. We are all upside down!

Tomorrow off again on a special research conference. I wish sometimes I could go nowhere, do nothing and never hear the telephone again.

Love to you both,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
2 March 1954*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. Our address in New York will be Hotel Warwick, New York. Our children's address is 186 Sullivan St, and they are in the NY phone book under Matthew Huxley.

Three interesting things have turned up recently. My old friend Naomi Mitchison<sup>46</sup> writes from Scotland, after reading the *Doors*, that she had an almost identical experience of the transfiguration of the outer world during her various pregnancies. Could this be due to a temporary upset in the sugar supply to the brain? (Also, a strange woman writes that she has had a mescaline-like experience during attacks of hypoglycaemia.)

A stranger writes from Seattle that he has produced extraordinary changes of consciousness – which he doesn't describe – by fasting and going without sleep over a weekend. This, of course, is what so many mystics, East and West, have done. Asceticism is only partially motivated by a sense of sin and a desire for expiation, and only partly, on the subconscious level, by masochism. It is also motivated by the desire to get in touch with the Other World, and the knowledge, personal or vicarious, that "mortification" leads through the door in the wall.

Another stranger writes from Los Angeles. He is an ex-alcoholic, who had ecstatic experiences in his early days of alcoholism and insists, in spite of what the Freudians may say, that the longing for ecstasy is a very strong motive in many alcoholics. He is also a friend of Indians, knows some who have taken peyote but had a terrifying experience, and hints at knowing or being able to find out a good deal about the relationship between peyotism and alcoholism among Indians. I haven't seen this man, and doubt if we shall have time to do so before our departure. But (I hope you don't mind!)

I have asked him to put down his information on paper and to send it to you. I think it might be of considerable value. He suggests that it might be very interesting to try the effect of mescaline on alcoholics, past and present. And I think that, if your research project gets started (or even if it doesn't), this might be a fruitful thing to do.

I also have an amiable, able and slightly lunatic friend, A.L. Kitselman,<sup>47</sup> who has evolved, out of the texts of Early Buddhism (texts which he can study in the original Pali) a form of psycho-therapy which he calls E Therapy. (E being equivalent to the Entelechy, the Bodhi.) He himself has taken peyote and proposes to launch out into mescaline, under doctor's supervision. Meanwhile he has made a few experiments with ololiuqui, has found that in some cases it seems to increase suggestibility, to give release from long-standing tensions, and to help the taker to obtain insights into his or her true nature. At the same time it seems to make it easier for those who are near the taker to enter into some kind of telepathic rapport with him – or should one say a sub-telegraphic rapport, inasmuch as the experiences shared are not thoughts but pains and discomforts, which the assistants feel vicariously (as has happened under deep hypnosis) and which in some way they “discharge,” to the benefit of the taker, who feels much better afterwards. Ololiuqui is used by the Mexican and Cuban witch doctors to increase ESP faculties and relieve disease; so it may be that there is something psychologically objective about all this. When we took it nothing much happened to Leslie LeCron and myself, except euphoria and relaxation. Maria got some very amusing and coherent visions – different in quality from those she ordinarily gets under hypnosis, and more obviously meaningful in a symbolic way. One of them was like a supplementary chapter to *Monkey* – the wonderful Chinese allegory translated by Arthur Waley.<sup>48</sup> It was a vision of Monkey trying to climb to heaven up his own tail – a really admirable comment on the pretensions of the discursive intellect.

Have you ever tried the effects of mescaline on a congenitally blind man or woman? This would surely be of interest.

Love from us both to you and the family.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
3 March 1954

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I have taken your name in vain, and now hope that you will not only forgive me but will aid and abet. The other day I had a letter from a school friend of mine, Christopher Mayhew, a young Labour MP who was Bevin's<sup>49</sup> Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 1945–1950. He is a bright boy. He works part time for the BBC and has just done a television assignment – his letter is self-explanatory: “Huxley's essay is brilliant, and opens up a vast field of philosophy, psychology and religion – and, I suppose, the chemists. I read it with particular interest having just come back from a journey through Rome, Jerusalem, Lahore, Benares, and Rangoon looking at the great religions of the world from television (BBC). I am putting on a series in May called *Men Seeking God*<sup>50</sup> trying to convey what representative adherents of religions really feel about their faith. I saw the devoted but primitive and clumsy attempts of men of different religions to understand Reality. How fascinatingly different was Aldous Huxley's method. At the moment his hypothesis seems to throw a flood of light on the whole question, but then I only finished the book yesterday so must allow it to settle before drawing conclusions.”

Now what I have done and if you are vexed with me please say so, is to urge Christopher to write to you without delay if he feels that *Men Seeking God* could be improved by the presentation of a persistent heterodox and eloquent seeker who has taken a very keen interest in other travelers on the road. Now I know that you may not wish to do this at all and when you are holidaying in Europe it is very unfair of me to suggest it. But on the other hand the need is so great. The hungry sheep are looking into their television sets for fodder, how splendid if a little manna fell into their mouths for once. The Kingdom of god is within, without and alongside you, always.

Christopher is an unusual politician and I am glad to maintain contact with him, because one day our increasing knowledge of the nature of man



will have as great political repercussions as our knowledge of the atom.

Could you let me know when you will be in New York? Jane and I plan to be there from about the third to the ninth but are waiting to know when you will be there. I would like to think that you could see Helen when she is in England but you will be very busy I expect with a thousand and one things to do.

We are just getting down to the deficiencies of this old building, truly a plague spot, or so the public health people tell us. Man's inhumanity to man is less appalling than his pure neglect of his fellows – oh *homo sapiens*, what a conceit.

Am talking, rashly, on the spoken scientific paper today and am bearing in mind the odd morning we spent at the Statler Hotel Los Angeles. Above all lack of preparation seems to be the bug bear – for would any with a grain of sense who had given a moment's thought to the matter read chapters from a text book and imagine they could possibly hold an audience? I was going to say that only psychiatrists would do such things, but surgeons and physicians do it too.

Please let me know about New York.

Yours ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
4 March 1954*

Dear Aldous and Maria,

Am I right in supposing that you will be leaving New York on the 9<sup>th</sup> April? Jane and I hope to arrive on the 6<sup>th</sup> with luck and so should see a little of you. Is the Warwick very expensive? If it isn't more exorbitant than most we will book there. Hope this isn't a nuisance but I am very ignorant of megapolis and we don't want to go somewhere above our station, in case we don't have enough money for visits to bargain basements which Jane is keen to see after her wonderful gold coat which we bought at Ohrbach's.<sup>51</sup>

Your letter of 2<sup>nd</sup> March to hand and full of interesting observations. Everything points to the only specific thing about mescal, LSD, etc., that in some way certain mechanisms in the brain which are usually acting aren't acting anymore, and so reality bursts through. Where it is enjoyed and appreciated it is one of the great human experiences, and also where other essential brain mechanisms are not interfered with. In schizophrenia for instance some people have much disordered thinking which at best is very inconvenient and at worst utterly crippling.

I was very interested in Naomi Mitcheson's experience – I wonder how early in the pregnancy it began. It is certainly very meet that pregnant women should be aware of the transcendent – incidentally a small proportion clearly have psychotic episodes associated with pregnancy.

About alcoholism and peyote, the Indians who are peyotists apparently aren't interested in alcohol according to Petruzzo in *The Diabolic Root*. Trying to get ecstasy out of alcohol is a very risky business. The margin between ecstasy and unconsciousness for most people is a small one. We shall certainly take a look at alcoholics. I, of course, agree that the constricted Freudian schema of the psyche has left out all sorts of very good reasons for seeking ecstasy, not the least being that it is ecstasy.

We want to find a congenitally blind person for mescal. We had one but she was epileptic and we were a bit afraid to give her any since she wasn't in very good shape mentally. My experiments with ololiuqui have been inconclusive but I intend to pursue.

I should love to see *Monkey*, and am full of envy. I bought a copy after re-reading a bit of *The Perennial Philosophy*.

I am amused about one aspect of *The Doors* no one has so far noticed, your remarks about adrenochrome, not even J.Z. Young or the psychiatrist who reviewed for one of the American papers. And yet because the *Journal of Mental Science* was a month late in going to press, due I suspect to Old Dr Fleming<sup>52</sup> the editor junketing over much as president of the Royal Medico-psychological Society, adrenochrome's first appearance in print was in *The Doors*. I can't have wished it in a better place, but it shows how slovenly we are as readers. I suppose that the answer is that no one who has read *The Doors* expected to find new scientific observations at the chemical end. Not all the reviewers seem to have understood that mescal is an

experience quite different from almost anything they have ever had unless they have been very lucky or unlucky.

Am planning my attack on our treasury, careful surveys by public health people and our own doctors, and tonight we have been planning a series of photographs which if they come out well will be horrific. If the governor and the boys generally don't pay up I shall tell them that the pictures will be sold to buy better equipment for the hospital. A new bed is on the market and 200 of them could deal with one of our major problems – laundry. Our German bacteriologist tells me that the nauseous smell of our disgusting basement wards is due to *bacillus proteus*. In an odd way this is comforting. He grew a culture and one of my colleagues recognised the aroma immediately.

Am started on my paper, “The Nature of Schizophrenic Experience,” which has been turned down in embryo by both the APA and the Toronto International Congress. I am determined to make it a first class paper now and will send you the first draft. I have about six papers on the stacks and could do with a long holiday to put them all together. However “Inspiration and Method” went off to the APA this week and the others will gradually get done. “The Nature of Schizophrenic Experience” suggests that the great disaster in psychiatry occurred in the decade 1895–1905 when there was a possibility that the work of Sidgwick, Myers, Gurney, William James, and Havelock Ellis might have coalesced into a psychology of experience much more inclusive than Freud's both in depth and width, but unluckily things went differently.

Do let me know when you will be in New York.

Love to you both from us three,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
7 March 1954*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. I shall be glad to hear from your friend, but can't as yet give any very definite account of where we shall be, when. As things now stand, it looks as though we might, after the Conference in the South of France, fly to Egypt for a little, to stay with our friends Dr and Mme. Godel<sup>53</sup> (he is the Médecin Chef of the Suez Canal Co's Hospital at Ismailia – a very remarkable man – a heart specialist who makes extensive use of psychological methods, a doctor who is an eminent Hellenist, respected by other Greek scholars, and finally a Western scientist who is interested in Enlightenment and has written some interesting essays on “L'Expérience Libératrice”). After that I don't know at all, except that C.G. Jung has asked us to go and visit him. The doctors here don't want Maria to stay away too long; but, after all, if she needs X-ray therapy, there are excellent men in Europe as well as here. We shall see. In any case I don't suppose we shall go to England before the end of the summer.

I met yesterday an interesting man, Dr Ladislao Reti,<sup>54</sup> an Italian chemist living in the Argentine, who is, I believe, the greatest living expert on cactus alkaloids, including of course mescaline. He knows the subject from the chemical, not the psychological end. I gave him your address and you may hear from him before too long. He might be of assistance. Have you read his little monograph, “Cactus Alkaloids and Some Related Compounds,” published (1950) by Springer Verlag, Wien, in *Fortschritte der Chemie organischer Naturstoffe* – but happily in English? He tells me he has also contributed a chapter to a symposium on Alkaloids edited by some Canadian chemist – Mansky?<sup>55</sup> (but I can't remember the name). Also that there is a man at Detroit doing good work on cactus chemicals. His address, for your files, is Dr Ladislao Reti, A.M. Aguado 2889, Buenos Aires, Argentina. A very able man, he runs a chemical industrial plant, and does research on the side – also is an expert on Leonardo as chemist. (It appears that no chemist, before himself, ever studied the notebooks. Leonardo, needless to say, was a first-rate practical chemist – produced acetone, which he used as a solvent for his paints, invented protein plastics, like the casein stuff they now make wool from. Etc. etc.)

We leave here Tuesday 16th and shall be staying at the Warwick Hotel, New York. I go down to Duke in North Carolina to see J.B. Rhine on the 21<sup>st</sup> for a couple of days; then shall be somewhere on Long Island for a meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. Some time we shall also go to Boston to see

Matthew. But from the beginning of April until the 7<sup>th</sup> we expect to be in New York.

Maria sends her love.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
11 March 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Jane and I plan to be at the Warwick Hotel about 4 p.m. on 5<sup>th</sup> April and hope that we shall not be too far away from you both. After you leave we shall go on to GAP (Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry) and Jane will be a lady for 60 hours and I shall work like a black on my Committee. However, Jane can do with a rest from the simple round, the common task, which in spite of the hymnodist can pall.

I may have a bite for “Outsight”<sup>56</sup> with a couple of big foundations – Grant<sup>57</sup> and Josiah Macy Junior.<sup>58</sup> If there is one maybe we could wring some dough from them.

I hope Christopher Mayhew will contact you – he could easily fly over to France with the apparatus. We must get scientists to turn away from much of the time wasting nonsense which at present occupies them and get down to important matters. It seems utterly *mad* that hundreds or even thousands of papers should have been written on Rorschach’s<sup>59</sup> ink blots for every one on the direct experience of the hallucinogens.

Take ololiuqui – known since Cortez, monographically described 20 years ago. The first work on it is by LeCron, you and me. It is a hallucinogen, a fascinating one – different from mescal, of the same family but not the same by any means. I took 60 seeds on Sunday and the familiar pattern of increased perception plus increased significance of objects began. The[n] something different – a paralyzing apathy, a great wish to be alone (with mescal and adrenochrome I was very glad of company). I had some

curious visions but the apathy and irritability predominated. It was nearly impossible to *start* writing, but once I started it was difficult to stop. Oddly enough this is exactly what the Indians said would happen, mescal they say is taken with people and ololiuqui alone.

I have written to Dr Reti, sounds interesting, and also sent for his cactus alkaloids. Could you tell me the name of your French classic on the hallucinogens – I mislaid it.

If you visit Jung and remember please carry my respects. We are following a trail he blazed in 1907.<sup>60</sup>

Very vexed the American Psychiatric Association don't wish to publish my "Inspiration and Method in Schizophrenia Research" which is the best paper I have written. I expect it will find a berth but they publish such trash that I don't see why they shouldn't publish something that has some guts. However I shall remind them of it one of these days.

Hard at working getting down to brass tacks in this slum. We are preparing a folder of photographs for our legislative assembly. I shall show them to you one day. They are unbelievable in their squalor and tragedy. The "somewhat overcrowded condition" of the hospital became appallingly alive. We have decided that if the legislators won't come to us we shall go to them and if they won't look at them privately we shall publish a few of them. Someone has got to fight for these unlucky souls and I am well placed to do so, and in many ways I like a fight.

In the meanwhile I have heard of a new sort of bed for incontinent people that uses *hardly any* sheets. If this is true it will be a technological revolution in the nursing of the old and we should order \$50,000 worth and solve our laundry problem. I am preparing a paper on the model psychoses, a preliminary report on ololiuqui, a paper on the nature of schizophrenic experience, and one on causation in medicine. Inspired by our joint suffering at the APA in Los Angeles I have written a paper on the spoken paper<sup>61</sup> and will send it to you for criticism if you will allow me to. I enclose an epilogue which I recorded for next week's broadcast account of a LSD psychosis, "Prison of Madness."<sup>62</sup> I am speaking it, anonymously, because we don't want to arouse the jealous ire of brother psychiatrists, who feel that we shouldn't have the publicity. As we are all in very poorly paid public employment this seems a little uncharitable (I earn about a quarter of what I might expect to get in private practice, but this really

means about half and my colleagues less). However, it doesn't matter because it will be worth being anonymous to tell this story one day!

I shall be glad when the day to day battering of equipment, men, nurses, laundry, clothing, etc. is over and I can return to clinical work, which I shall do as soon as I can be sure that this place is either on its feet or can't be resuscitated.

We have a tiny Chihuahua called Mescalina, which if they really were Toltec dogs as some allege is a good name, a fetys<sup>63</sup> and small creature and cuddly. Helen loves it.

Good wishes to you both.

Yours ever,  
Humphry

---

*The Warwick Hotel*  
*New York, N.Y.*  
*25 March 1954*

Dear Humphry,

The little piece about schizophrenia seems to me excellent. Perhaps you might develop a little further what you say about man's potentialities – point out that everything is in the universe of mind, heaven and hell, genius and subhuman imbecility, sanctity and diabolism; and that the schizophrenic gets a little of the good and a great deal of the bad. Making the matter more explicit will bring your point home more effectively, I think.

I flew down to Duke to see old man Rhine and give a lecture, but developed laryngitis and bronchitis and had to return discomfited to bed. However things seem to be going pretty well and I hope to be clothed and in my right mind by the end of the week.

I have also seen Puharich, the man of the Round Table Foundation, who is doing odd adventurous work on the borderline of psychology and physics. Rhine, who developed an almost pathological cautiousness, regards

him as reckless and credulous. But I think Rhine is wrong and that Puharich is doing things which may turn out to be very valuable.

Excuse typing. This is a new machine and I am still fingering it as though it were the old one. We are looking forward to seeing you soon, and Jane also.

Yours,  
Aldous

Keep your fingers crossed so that Aldous recovers quickly and thoroughly. We are very sad because we thought the old enemy was conquered – but now I know we can only keep him at bay. And how un-cautious he remains – he takes none of the “warning cues” his (?)<sup>64</sup> gives him.

[Maria]

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
29 March 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I do hope that Aldous has fought off the enemy. Jane and I are keenly looking forward to seeing you both a week today about 5:00 p.m. I am already getting in the mood for travel and beginning to think more detachedly about the numerous problems of Weyburn. As a matter of fact detachment combined with a great determination is the only way to cope with our slum. It is useless being either patient or impatient. We have to find out, consider what we discover and then act on it. It takes time but must be done.

I liked your addition to the little schizophrenia piece and shall certainly use it. Our ololiuqui work has shown up another series of schizophrenic possibilities.

Rather sad about old Rhine, I suppose that it is what one might expect. I heard Rhine once and felt that he was painstaking and honest but that



somehow the brilliant McDougall<sup>65</sup> had got him involved in parapsychology whether he liked it or not. I may be mistaken but it did not seem, listening to him, that Rhine really got much fun out of throwing a spanner in the works and that is a little bit sad. I enjoy the improbable and like to think others who are involved in it also enjoy it, but very often they don't enjoy it at all.

John Smythies has a new lead on the Grant Foundation for Oversight. He has got a guide to 14,200 U.S. fund granting foundations. Isn't that wonderful?

It is still very cold here – down to zero at night but jolly in the day, though still a bit too cold for Helen and our tiny three-pound dog Mesca to be out.

I have much to tell you about ololiuqui and have a paper on the stacks which I shall bring down with me. The whole matter is illuminating and has taught me much for future investigations. One thing is clear, ololiuqui is a model psychosis in its own right. It is not the same as mescaline, but is just as interesting though different. As I see it there is a huge field waiting for psychiatric and psychological research presently being obscured by preoccupation with ink blots and psychodynamics, but I suppose that the user of the Galilean telescope might be unenthusiastic about the Mt. Palomar variety until he got used to it. The Mt. Palomar is much harder to use.

Get well quickly – I hope the hotel people won't put us too far away.  
Love to you both from us 3.001 (Mescalina the Chihuahua).

Yours ever,  
Humphry

p.s. An odd thing happened. I got a letter from the Nuffield Foundation<sup>66</sup> (benevolence unlike the church having multiple foundations) about John Smythies signed C. Huxley. The writing was astonishingly like Aldous'. A Brigadier Huxley, a cousin I suppose.

---

*Cunard Line*  
*R.M.S. Queen Elizabeth*  
*9 April 1954*

Dear Humphry,

How good it was to have seen you again and to have made Jane's acquaintance! I wish we had had a little more time.

All is well here. Sea like a mill pond, temperature like Cornwall in May, steady eating and sleeping, with a lot of work in the rare intervals.

I hope something has come, or will come, of your activities among The Rich and the Foundations. Meanwhile I enclose the letter of which I spoke. It may lead to something of interest.

Love from us both to both of you.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Cunard Line*  
*R.M.S. Queen Elizabeth*  
*11 April 1954*

Dear Humphry,

I am forwarding a letter from a poor fellow (whose name I can't decipher), thinking that perhaps you might think it worth while to recommend him to someone who knows about mescaline in England. Perhaps it would be entirely pointless. Or perhaps something might come of it.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*

16 April 1954

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Here we are back again after an astonishing week in which so much was crammed that it is hard to realise that it was only a week. First I have now worked out down to the first detailing the plan for teaching with electronics. I think that it will work and will be sending you a copy of this plan in the near future. My psychologist colleague Neil Agnew<sup>67</sup> is going over the scheme with a view to seeing how it fits in with modern learning theory. On first thoughts he says that it fits in very well and should be as good as anything we can devise even with *unlimited resources*. Of course we have very limited resources so that this may mean a greatly improved teaching of our nurses.

Jane and I felt a little lost after you left, but we set to and spent Wednesday morning walking down Madison Avenue window shopping. When we had reached 200 we saw the hospital bed which was one of our excuses for staying in New York. I think that it will do what we hope. That afternoon I had tea with Max Sherover,<sup>68</sup> Dr Wolf and two other friends at Rumplemeyer's.<sup>69</sup> I had hoped to make a pig of myself on some of the delicious pastries, but this was not to be since Max and his friends were not greedy. One of the two others was a Dr Benjamin and the fourth a Professor Leo Katz<sup>70</sup> who apparently was a well known art lecturer at one time and is a remarkably fine draughtsman and lithographer. He told me that he was studying Zen Buddhism under Suzuki. You remember that you once said that we ought to discuss some of the mescaline matters with Suzuki when we were in L.A. Apparently Suzuki was greatly interested in *The Doors of Perception* and had insisted that his students read it. I spent a very interesting evening with Katz and he showed me his etchings and lithographs. I took a great fancy to one called Ophiuchus – which is a picture of a man wrestling with a serpent in the manner of the old star maps, but done with wonderful cunning. He gave copies of this to his friends and none of them even hung them. I should love your expert opinion on the work, because mine (and I am ignorant) was that it was very high quality and some of it well above that.

Professor Katz was very keen that I should meet Suzuki but we couldn't arrange this. Next day Dr Mackerracher came and we flew down to Asbury Park where we all worked very hard and Jane did much shopping. Jane went dancing with six psychoanalysts and narrowly missed doing the Samba with Sandor Rado. Incidentally, Jane spent a very pleasant evening with Ellen<sup>71</sup> in Greenwich Village. Interest in our adrenochrome work is already starting although I found it greater at the University of Columbia Psychiatric Institute than at GAP. At Columbia which I visited on Monday I was most kindly received, one of the oddest incidents occurring with Franz Kallman,<sup>72</sup> the famous geneticist, who asked me if I knew anything about "this group in Canada who are working with adrenalin and had published something in the recent *Journal of Mental Science*." I asked timidly if he meant adrenochrome, wondering if there was some other group of which I had not heard and he said "yes." I then said that I was one of this group. He was very complimentary, almost lyrical which is quite unusual for him. He is also much interested in the factor which we had found in urine, which if confirmed will be a wonderful tool in genetic studies.

While walking up 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the afternoon Jane and I met a social worker friend who had just come over from England. I wonder what the chances were? On my return from Columbia I found an invitation from Mrs Bouverie<sup>73</sup> for Jane and I to dine with her and another from Professor Katz to visit Suzuki – luckily they didn't overlap. We set out from somewhere in the region of West 94<sup>th</sup> Street and found ourselves in an almost slum district on the high steps leading up to a shabby house; a little black boy and a little white boy sprawled and played. We were ushered in by a very beautiful Chinese girl into a very spacious hall with scrolls on the wall, "a Japanese copy of a Chinese work," and I looked into the inner room. A tall scholarly looking man stood up and said to another invisible person, "I think I understand the tea ceremony now and anyhow I can come and see you again." The scholarly gent left and we were ushered in. Suzuki looks like a small yellow monkey. He talks like the sage that he is and he emanates a serene wisdom that warms the heart. How little and moth-eaten the old body is, so like a Chinese print. What a pity he wears our ugly Western clothes. Behind him was a screen of gold silk like the wonderful coat which we bought Jane in Ohrbach's and to his side a bookshelf with Chinese and Occidental books on it. He had a Chinese (or Japanese) book in front of

him. He is remarkably acute and asked whether many of our subjects had experiences “like Huxley’s.” We went over the whole matter of mescaline and he said that he thought that it would be valuable and useful “with metaphysics” but not so valuable without. I agreed with him. He took the same view that you do that there are many ways to this strange vision. The Zen masters he said had often discussed this, though not so much in recent years as in the past. The beautiful girl brought in tea in large, irregular greeny brown bowls, glazed of thin earthenware. The tea was bright green colored with froth and the consistency of pea soup. It was like the algid scum on a pond in mid-summer, but was deliciously astringent. I outlined our ideas on the research and the old man became increasingly enthusiastic and ended by offering himself as a subject. This rather took me aback, but it is not till next year. At last we had to leave, but all that had to be said had been said. I was glad to have had this entirely unexpected chance, but by now I am learning that unexpected chances must be expected.

Mrs Bouverie took us to dinner and was very kind. We both felt sad about her for I fear that she isn’t a happy person. She introduced me to Dr Puharich by phone and I found him jolly and sympathetic. I hope to meet him in the fall. The most disquieting thing about Mrs B. was her references to the Army and the Services generally, which suggested that they were powerful, arbitrary and unchallengeable. This is a feeling which I hear increasingly in the U.S. and I hope that I am wrong.

Have left only a little space to hope that your journey was good and to say how much we both enjoyed our brief encounter. I shall be sending on the first draft of the paper on nurses’ training soon. Hope the philosophers conference goes well and that John S. enjoys himself and gets the mescal. I wrote to him and to Abram to get some at any cost so you should have some available. Do look after yourselves – it is a duty to your friends. Jane sends love and so do I.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

P.S. Please thank Mrs Garrett for her kindness – I believe Mrs Bouverie will help when we need help. I received a welcome but quite unexpected check for reviewing *The Doors*. Only one complaint – I wish whoever edited my

manuscript wouldn't. How very vexing when one has written "gloomy consequences" to find it appearing as a weak and sickly "negative consequences." Still I suppose one learns to endure such things.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
23 April 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Here we are bereft on the prairie. Snow still on the ground and our little Helen far away in England, having left us about 42 hours ago. I have two parting pictures in my mind's eye. An indomitable little figure dashing up the gangway to the plane determined that she and my sister should have a seat and disappearing into the flank of the silver brute. Then a little face pressed against the plane's port with a Teddy Bear clutched close and waving the other hand briskly. Then the huge plane roared into the night leaving Jane and me weeping bitterly. However she will be safely in bed now at home in England.

After our lovely week in New York and Asbury Park, Saskatchewan seems very remote and bleak. The hospital almost unbelievably large and inefficient, though I suppose better than some mental hospitals and worse than far too few. The general standard of mental hospitals is really appallingly low.

"New Approach" II<sup>74</sup> as John Smythies will probably tell you is now out and being scrutinized. Its reception in the U.S. has been generally more favorable than I expected. I have not heard yet about England though I had one very nice letter from Lucien Golla, a very well known figure in English psychiatry.

I have written up a brief on training nurses and will be sending you a copy of it. I hope to start trying to use these methods in the very near future. However, you will see our plans in the brief and I would be glad of any criticisms. The more I think about it the more sensible it seems to use electronic devices in this way, indeed it seems essential to do so. I have

found one quite interesting thing, a 10–15 minute recorded lecture comprises about 1,500–2,300 words. Now this is a sizeable article and quite enough for anyone to absorb. Most lectures to nurses last three quarters to one hour, which must mean 5–8,000 words, far more than anyone could be expected to absorb. You will see that we have ways out of this difficulty.

We had our remarkable and quite brilliant premier T.C. Douglas,<sup>75</sup> who runs the only socialist government apart from Peru, and as he said, “I’m not too sure about our colleagues in Peru – they may have had another revolution.” He has among other things started a series of socialist collective farms. I told him of your interest in this and he says that if you come to Saskatchewan next summer a car will be put at your disposal to visit Matador<sup>76</sup> and some of the other farms. Unlike most socialist experiments these started by telling the chaps that they would have difficulty with inter-wife relationships in particular. So far the colonists seem to be doing pretty well. So you see that psychiatry apart you will be greatly welcome in Saskatchewan.

I shall look forward keenly to your views on the philosophers’ conference, and to how much progress they make. My guess would be that this depends upon how many of them can be lured into taking mescal. Experience is what counts, you can talk till you are tongue tied and get no forrader. My meeting with Suzuki, combined with the Gadarene rush of the last few months in which more and more appalling weapons are being played about with by what seem to be almost totally irresponsible technical magicians and practical idiots, has convinced me that we should try and press ahead with Oversight and if possible start it next year. I think we should try, at least, to get funds for a meeting in New York next spring with yourself, Klüver, Suzuki, and a few others. I should like of course to lure three more wise old men – Jung, Schweitzer, and Einstein, but if you see Jung you might find if he would be willing. The idea would be to get a steering committee who would back a project of bold investigation into the nature of man while we still have him with us. Could you speak to Eileen Garrett about this? It sounds fantastic and unlikely, but since the likely is now fantastic I don’t think that should deter us. The urgency of these days makes me feel that the rather leisurely plans which we made in summer ’53 should be speeded up, and that we should have to make a direct assault upon our problem. Our objective is a simple one and one which has

preoccupied very able people for generations – to draw people’s attention to the inscape is one way of putting it. In the past there have been three ways of classifying the transcendental, the artistic, the philosophic and the religious. We now have a fourth way, the scientific. These then constitute a four-fold path. At no previous time has it been possible for these four paths to reality to be combined. I am sure that it is now. In sane times I should have spent several years developing enough knowledge to approach the leaders in these fields. I believe that we should try to move much more quickly.

There are all sorts of dangers and difficulties. Obvious ones, such as the scientists, artists, philosophers and religious men not being interested. The evidence suggests that they are. Or that we shan’t get any funds, but I think we shall. Perhaps I’m over sanguine, but this last week about \$73,000 has come into Saskatchewan for two researches in which I am interested from Commonwealth and Rockefeller. If our work in schizophrenia progresses as it seems to be progressing I think there is a sporting chance that we shall soon be in a position to refuse money and so to get what we want, when we want it. Again I may be over sanguine.

But to me the real dangers lie in other directions. The dangers of success, not failure. You will see that so far I have assumed that I would play some sort of part in this work, and as far as I can judge I must. At least until someone better equipped to act as a liaison between psychiatry and the other disciplines comes along. It is so hard to decide whether or not one is just making a convenience of good fortune to further one’s ambition and selfishness. Non-attachment, the capacity to do something not for oneself but because the thing itself is good and must be done, is easy enough to talk about and so very hard to do. Yet somehow those who take part in this work will have to be capable of acting with supreme lack of attachment. Now I have to decide whether I can do this, am I doing it now? I fear that for the great majority of the time I don’t, and I wonder whether I shall ever be able to act better?

This may be sheer foolery and I may be teasing myself over decisions that I shall never have to make, but I don’t think that it is just foolery. There are very few people who are qualified to take part in work of this sort now, and by pure good luck I am one of them. You will have the chance to meet John Smythies and may feel that he would be better able to do this primary



liaison work than I. If you feel he is then I would no longer need to worry myself since I would press ahead in our research here. But apart from him there is no one else that I know who can, for the moment, act as a guide, who can to some extent speak their language.

Do you see what I am plagued by? It is so evident that work in this field would be exciting, strenuous, and full of astonishment that how can I be sure that it isn't just my wish to push myself forward rather than a wish to further our understanding of our own nature? I suppose that I can't and won't ever be sure all the time, but it is so easy to become convinced of what is in one's own interest.

There are other sides to it. We can be certain that once our ideas begin to filter out that in no time they would be found to be excellent "anti-materialist and anti-red" ammunition. Now the one thing about the perennial philosophy is that it isn't anti but pro. Much of the blame, if there is to be blame, must lie on those who have been so rash and ruthless with modern science. It would be very easy and popular to allow our recognition of the importance of the inner and the transcendental to be used by purveyors of "pie inside." We would incur much praise that way, yet it would be in my view a sin to do so. It is not that socialism is wrong, and it is certainly technically possible now when it never was in the 1920's; it is simply that while it supplies an answer to some of our troubles, these once answered will not automatically solve all others. Further, the search for power without wealth is even more pernicious than the search for wealth and power, since power alone is certainly insatiable.

I am full of doubts and perplexity.

Am I just being a fool? Wouldn't it be better to make a name for myself strictly within my own profession? If I can do so. Again judging as detachedly as I can, I believe that I can [do] so and may even have already succeeded in this. But I am sure that this tremendous challenge of investigating the nature of man must be taken up in a more determined manner and on a much broader front than has ever yet been attempted.

Do let me know when you will be coming back again. I might be in New York if it is November.

Abram Hoffer has your sister's address and should be in Paris in May. I have had no news of him but guess that he is very busy.

John Smythies tells me that he has plenty of mescaline in London and so there should be every opportunity for philosophers to enjoy the experience. I hope that they are as curious and as adventurous as old Suzuki.

Jane sends her love. Look after yourselves.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

Please write soon. I am perplexed.

---

*Le Piol,  
St Paul de Vence, France  
End of April 1954<sup>77</sup>*

My dear Humphry,

It took two days of intensive work to decipher your last letter (you will really *have* to learn to type!); but now we have its contents reasonably clearly defined in our minds, and I am writing quickly, before we set out for the next leg of our flight, to tell you what we both think.

(1) You unquestionably *are* the man to act as liaison officer between pure science and the rest of the world in this matter of the nature of the Mind. Smythies could not possibly do it. He is able and he is likeable; but he has not yet reached affective and intellectual maturity. He is obsessed by his ideas – rides them like hobby-horses and is ridden by them, so that there is in him a certain lack of flexibility, a certain one-trackedness which would be an insurmountable obstacle in performing the necessary task. I hope, and think, he will not always be like this; but at the moment the handicap is there, and it rules him out. He will continue, undoubtedly, to supply fruitful suggestions; but you are the one who will have to put them into effect. And you will do it, I believe, with as much non-attachment as the task demands – more (I also believe) than most men are capable of.

(2) As for the results of the research being used for polemical purposes – I feel that this is something we don't have to worry about. Anything can be misused. The Sermon on the Mount is treated as an instrument of

Western nationalism and a rallying cry against Russian nationalism – nevertheless it remains a good thing. In point of fact I doubt whether the results will be so very desirable in the Cold War context; for they are likely to take some of the specifically supernatural shine out of religion as well as the plausibility out of materialism.

The conferences are now over. There were no conclusions, of any kind, of course; but a lot of interesting things were said and there were occasions to greet very remarkable people. I liked especially Price, Ducasse,<sup>78</sup> Marcel<sup>79</sup> and Mundle<sup>80</sup> among the philosophers; and, among the psychologists and doctors, Bender<sup>81</sup> of Freiburg, Martiny<sup>82</sup> and Assailly<sup>83</sup> of Paris. Bender has a case of demonic possession on his hands, which exceeds in horror and in duration anything met with at Loudun – 13 years of blasphemy, split personality, stigmatization (with the forms of snakes appearing on the skin, of letters on the forehead), self-mutilation – and still no end in sight, despite repeated exorcisms and incessant medical treatment.

We leave for Egypt on Monday.

c/o Dr Roger Godel  
Hôpital de la Compagnie du Canal de Suez  
Ismailia, Egypt

Thereafter we shall be wandering, with a little stay in Rome (c/o S. Roth, 13 via Villa Ruffo, Roma) then to Paris (c/o Neveux, 82 rue Bonaparte, Paris 6) – the last address will always find us. Maria sends her love to you both, as do I.

Yours,  
Aldous

My love to you and to Jane. We think of you and talk of you and hope we meet again soon. We are pretty hectic just now.

[Maria]

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
30 April–1 May 1954

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Coming by sea is my draft “On Teaching Nurse[s]” – which is now being well received by my psychologist colleagues, who believe that it will work and that it offers the best chance of constructing a really good teaching system for our nurses. The local Canadian Broadcasting Corporation star reporter (a very skilled woman broadcaster) is going to check the scripts for technique (I shall edit them first) and I think that they will be pretty professional jobs. However the draft gives most details.

Two letters from Aldous with enclosures to which I shall attend and a post card from Maria, very welcome. I have been asked to write a commentary in *The Twentieth Century* (used to be the old *Nineteenth Century*) on a review of *The Doors* and shall be glad to do so. The reviewer, a man called Sutherland,<sup>84</sup> claims to take hashish occasionally, and so rather infers that he is playing a very high card, but I think that I can throw down a joker or two.

I liked the *Cactus and Succulent* writer’s account of the peyote taking,<sup>85</sup> most interesting. I shall keep it if I may and send for the articles mentioned.

It was 0° F. (zero) last night. We have several inches of snow on the ground. They say the north flying birds have turned south again (I thought the birds were driven on inexorably by their hormones but apparently not all are and those who disregard hormones will survive, something of cheer to both Freudians and anti-Freudians).

Have had Paul Haun,<sup>86</sup> a very civilized American psychiatrist, here for five days studying our hospital mainly from the architectural and also administrative view point. He is one of a small group who take up Corbusier’s<sup>87</sup> and Frank Lloyd Wright’s<sup>88</sup> attitude that the buildings themselves can exert a very damaging effect on the individuals in a hospital and the social system which those individuals create, and so on round and round. An eminently sensible man. He mildly said that it would be cheaper to carry out some necessary changes than to build a new hospital and

suggested that the cost would be \$5–6 million. As I had been alarmist when I had mentioned \$2–3 million I was cheered.

Paul Haun was telling me of the extraordinary arrogance of the U.S. psychiatrists in the early 1940's. They were he said quite sure that they had the answer to almost everything and inclined to consider any who might shew disagreement even by asking for evidence as being a dolt. Things have been changing greatly but it is interesting to discover how easily.

I am writing a little article on military secrecy which I shall send on to you because it deals with the much neglected question of the possibility of such secrecy and the dangers of having secret service men in any but the very minimal numbers. The history of spies and counter spies is not reassuring, it is so hard to decide which is which. Since spying (and also counter spying) is not very well paid it follows that the attraction is largely psychological – and in a dangerous profession of this sort psychopathology must play a large part. I think it will be quite lively and would like your views as to possibly placing it somewhere.

A year ago today I was on my way to Los Angeles, a little apprehensive first about getting the mescaline through the customs and then at the prospect of meeting Mr and Mrs A.H. It didn't strike me that you might be equally apprehensive at the descent of an unknown psychiatrist. What a wonderful week it was.

1<sup>st</sup> May. Snow on the ground and still falling slightly though mostly all slushy. Mesca(lina) our little Chihuahua is very lively. I saw in the Natural History Museum in New York a tiny gold dog from Chihuahua which might have been a model of Mesca, long nose, long ears, long tail, long legs. This rather supports her alleged Aztec or Toltec ancestry. Some say she is Chinese but I prefer to think that she came from the land of the peyote and the ololiuqui.

I do hope that you and Aldous will be about to come here next year, Maria. So much needs to be said about the hospital bound psychotic person. Some 700,000 of them in North America shut up for the most part in conditions that range from the totally abominable, both physical, psychological and moral, to the psychologically damaging. Here indeed is a persecuted minority whose feeble and often voiceless cry for help goes unheeded.

Jane greatly enjoyed her stay in New York and wants to go back there again. The prairie is tedious and for city dwellers it can easily become dreary and almost unendurable, especially when its winter is prolonged as this one has been. Hope all goes well with the Philosophers Conference, remind the philosophers that most of us feel towards the art as Romeo did – Hang up philosophy!<sup>89</sup> Unless philosophy can ---- do something or other which we have dear to our heart. This is unfair but it might keep philosophers more lively if they thought less about philosophy for philosophy's sake and more for its usefulness in a hard world.

Love to you both from us both.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
8 May 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I have not yet learnt how to type but will try to write more legibly. I am sorry, I did once try to type and it was so slow and much worse than my writing.

I was glad to have news of the conference and glad that you met John Smythies. I hope that he enjoyed himself and that he let some of the other people's ideas soak into him, that is what is needed. I think that he is a vintage wine which must however mature. The trouble is that instead of staying still and maturing he is moving about like a jumping bean.

I am both pleased and appalled at the sort of task that is looming up ahead. The non-attachment business is so damned difficult because at that very moment when you are congratulating yourself on being non-attached, you have of course become attached to the conceit of being non-attached. The "what a good boy am I" is so easy and so fatal. In a way one must do things in the destroyer captain's spirit of "don't think do something" except that what one sometimes must do is to think.

How curious it all is. A year ago I was leaving Los Angeles, sadly, and feeling that something quite unlikely was over. Now however it looks as if it was just the start. I am not yet sure how and where to start but again it is probably best not to be too clever and contriving but for the moment to press ahead in the research and running this strange place.

The research (I spent a couple of days this week solely devoted to it) is in the process [of] letting off a little literary steam while we prepare for the next phase. We have now four relatives of adrenochrome and adrenochrome itself ready for investigation. They all could occur in the body, though one is only known to occur in a pigmented worm that lives in the Gulf of Naples. As we get ready to make and test the chromes we are also preparing to get at this substance which Abram Hoffer has found in schizophrenic urine and which can, it seems, be caught on wool. A special sort of wool gathering. The chemists think that we may be able to get it on to wool, take it off again, isolate it, test it on animals, compare it with known substances, and finally pop it into someone and see what happens. We still cannot be sure that whatever is on wool is at all important, but we know that many hallucinogenic substances have a very high affinity for wool. At best we are probably several years from an answer, but we could be only a few months away. Two years ago we guessed at adrenochrome and this is another guess which might come off. Once we know that there is a specific substance and how to catch it then it is very likely that we can do something about it.

It looks to us at present as if the course of events in schizophrenia might be this. Certain people turn adrenalin into adrenochrome more easily than others. When this accumulates they become acutely ill because their brain allows things to get by which it usually suppresses and at the same time works badly so that in addition to having unusual perceptions they can't think straight. But in some people, if adrenochrome is produced long enough the breakdown of other similar compounds which are not derived from adrenalin becomes slowed. When this happens it is useless to stop the production of adrenochrome, because even when adrenochrome is removed these others remain. Adrenochrome fuses, as it were, these other compounds.

But how strange it is that we should make these weird things and how hard to shoot at the rumblings of a teleological answer?

Largely inspired by Sandor Rado's quite exorable paper at Los Angeles, I wrote a paper called "The Spoken Paper" which is coming out in the Canadian Medical Journal.<sup>90</sup> There is a certain rashness in this because one is likely to be hoist with such a petard.

I have had a very kind letter from Gerald Heard, who wants to take mescal. This seems, in view of his depressions, rash to me. I shall temporise and anyway there is no immediate opportunity – but what do you think we should do? Tell him frankly why it is dangerous or somehow not fit him in? I would prefer the former, but you know him better and it might distress him to feel that his depression resulted in his being refused access to a door in the wall.

My psychologist colleagues have been vetting "On Teaching Nurses" which you will be getting by sea mail, and they believe that provided we ensure that every session is part listening and part discussion, that we can have a very interesting and efficient system of teaching. Much better than anything which we can hope for by any means that we have at present. The proof of this pudding will be much later, but it seems a promising recipe.

I wish I had been at [Le] Piol – I should have especially like to have discussed Bender's weird case with him and you. In some ways the surprising thing is that this happens so seldom. Perhaps we don't recognise it, but even so major possession has never it seems been very frequent. I suppose what must happen is that the right sort of person must develop a suitable illness at some special time favorable to these breaks in the barriers. I wonder if you will hear of more on your travels.

Abram Hoffer is (I hope) finding men in England and Scotland and also collecting much useful data which can only be gleaned by personal contact. It seems that some of the really good men in the field are quite convinced that adrenochrome does occur in the body. It also seems that methods for measuring it have been worked out already. I expect him back in six weeks replete with ideas and ready for another sprint. He is an admirable man to have as a partner in this sort of work, possessing an optimism tempered by good sense which is much needed. It might be called faith. Abram is on the track of a new hallucinogen which has made its debut as a euphoriant. It is called it seems bufotenine and is found in a plant called *peptadenia peregrine*.<sup>91</sup> Have you ever heard of it? It is easily synthesized. The



relationship between euphorants and hallucinogens is not by any means clear.

Please let me know if this is more legible. I wish I could type.

Jane sends her love. We went out today and picked pasque flowers, which are called prairie crocuses here, but which Helen insists are *anemone pulsatillas*. Jane wondered whether you will be back in Los Angeles in the Fall. We thought we might tour south in the off tourist season.

So I must stop. Tomorrow I shall start seeing whether we can possibly expect to give good medical and psychiatric care for 12.8 cents per patient per day. This at current rates is about one-hundredth of what a psychiatrist can earn for one hour's work in Canada and about one three-hundredth of an analyst's hour (50 minutes) in the U.S. I believe that for 20–25 cents per patient per day (not all in medical but some in psychologist and social worker time) we can give a much more adequate service.

Look after yourselves. There is so much to be done and so few who seem to have the will and energy to do much. All the old mental hygiene stuff has been debunked, but it has not yet been replaced by a vigorous effort to come to grips with mind.

Reading Thoreau<sup>92</sup> for the first time. Long winded, repetitive, and at times a bit too damned reasonable, but I should like to have met him, though I have a feeling he might have becom[e] boring in large doses, but that is not unfortunately rare.

Love to you both from us both.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

P.S. Did the philosophers have access to mescaline? John assured me that he would take some over from London. You don't mention it, so I presume that even if it was there no one took any. A pity.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
12 June 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I wonder where you both are? I have had a letter from Carl Jung who seems to be keenly awaiting your arrival in Zurich to discuss the archetypal world and the need for a greater awareness of it. His letter was extremely kind and expressed “a vivid interest” in our work, to use his own words. I have also heard from Gerald Heard and have sent him a selection of our literature. He tells me that two Foundations are interested in projects in which disciplines overlap, such as psychology and neurophysiology. I have urged him to sustain the interest.

I am now, I hope, on the final written draft of flower-her-mother, lololiuqui.<sup>93</sup> I think that it will be a lively little paper. I have taken the liberty of quoting your experiment in Los Angeles, though not in detail as I have no details available. I have made four experiments using 14 to 100 seeds and feel that this is good enough to be able to introduce *rivea corymbosa* to the public. If you could let me know where you will be in the coming month I shall send you a copy direct for comments.

Helen has now been back nearly two weeks, she had quite an adventurous return journey. She debouched from the plane and in no time pulled out of her pocket what looked like a small, black, dead bird. We gazed in horror thinking that she brought this carrion about 5,000 miles and would be loath to part with it. However it turned out to be a toy seal which my sister had bought her in Gander. Helen spotted that our dog had changed color (our little Mescalina, a three-pound Chihuahua, died suddenly and we got a six-pounder called Brandy). She was much concerned to handle Mesca's corpse and see the little wormies, “just once.” But we didn't satisfy her scientific bent on this occasion.

We are having heavy and prolonged rain which is unusual and though welcome in some ways means roads in poor condition, oceans of mud and more seriously lots of mosquitoes. We don't have malaria here but we have had a small but sinister outlook of equine encephalitides (there are several strains) last year. This is spread by mosquitoes and so we are planning an attack on them by a new, simple and ingenious method. Our Medical Officer of Health has been many years in Malaya and has perfected a simple way of leaving a film of oil on standing water for up to two months with minimal effort. I hope this works.

I have read *The Imprisoned Splendour*,<sup>94</sup> a fine book and a very useful reference. I have also read Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*<sup>95</sup> for the first time though I bought the book eleven years ago. I found it very illuminating. Surely Blake must have been a very well adjusted schizophrenic. Yet how robust he was. He considered that his vision was superior to his contemporaries', he often said as much. Was not this grandiose delusions? Apparently not because for the last 100 years there has been an increasing agreement that Blake was quite right in his self-esteem. One day I hope to write an account or a play about the trial of William Blake for Sedition – it is a gem of a subject. The accusing soldiers claimed that Blake said among other things, "When Buonaparte comes it will be cut throat for cut throat and the weakest will go to the wall." This sounds very much what Blake would have said, since he was a very keen pacifist. I'm sure Blake would be in trouble now. Hayley<sup>96</sup> almost didn't live to see the trial because he was thrown from his horse on to his head. "He was in the eccentric habit of using an umbrella on horseback, to shade his eyes; the abrupt unfurling of which was commonly followed, naturally enough, by the rider's being forthwith pitched on his head."

Very slowly we are seeing small improvements in the hospital, one of them is an electric floor scrubber which will clean about 5–6,000 square feet an hour much more thoroughly than by hand. The place is, I believe beginning to smell less. There is so much to be done and the fruits of 30 years' lack of administration rotting around us. One can't do extravagant sweeps with new brooms, because we have 1,900 people who can't be swept out. We have to build on and with the ruins of the old, but I suppose that this is the microcosm of all government. In the cool of the morning the revolutionaries always find that they are up against the facts of life, the slowly moving economies of human affairs which, like our autonomic nervous system, exerts itself ceaselessly to maintain homeostasis. In some mysterious way societies resist change, unless one can do it by some sort of administrative ju-jitsu. So much we don't know!

We all look forward to hearing about your adventures. I hope you are both well and not letting friends over tire you, the hardest thing to resist. Jane sends her love. She, Helen, a friend and six children are going north 400 miles in a month or so. It sounds like hell.

I have almost finished the ololiuqui paper this evening and think it should be ready for its first typing on Monday. I feel that is a thoroughbred – hope that I’m not too much in love with my own horse!

Love to you both,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
1 July 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I hope that all goes well with you both and that the grand tour is coming up to expectations. We are having a holiday today, Dominion Day. Canadians seem to be keen on public holidays and have one every six weeks, which is not I suppose silly in a world which “over produces dangerously,” to use the economists’ strange notions. How solemn and well informed the economists always sound, yet since theirs is a very inexact science I suppose that they are just as ignorant as we are of psychiatry! It always helps me to compare disciplines in this way, then one can make some sort of rough reckoning. Again how wrong even the brightest can be. Bertrand Russell<sup>97</sup> in 1928 saying how unlikely, indeed impossible, television was as a means of public entertainment because it would use up too much wave space and because it was too complicated. He could hardly have been more in error. Experts it seems should always be looked at with a cocked eye brow.

Anyway I have gone on this assumption for the last 15 years and I think it works. One must *know* some field pretty well in order to become aware of the limitations of knowledge. Once you know the limitations in one field you can have a rough idea about many others. Perhaps I am reminiscent today as it is my birthday and I am wondering how I have accounted for my 37 years – well or ill? It is hard to say about oneself and yet who is better qualified to judge? Perhaps the only thing that I can be sure about and

happy about is that I am still changing my opinions, it seems to me that once one can no longer enjoy new ideas one has really begun to die.

I believe that my old hospital is on the move, people are now talking about millions of dollars for this and that, but my pride and joy is my \$2,800 cleaning machine which does the work of ten charwomen at five times the efficiency. It is a vast thing. Why people have put up with the stink and dirt of the hospital all these years when a couple of these would have done all the heavy cleaning I cannot imagine. I suppose the answer is that lacking imagination they couldn't understand what machines can do for us. Paradoxically by *not* using machines the hospital has become inflexible and unable to meet the needs of the individual. Of course there is another side to it too, group activity, developing individual responsibility, etc., but with the mechanical tasks done mechanically we can and shall insist that our staff treat our patients. Of course there is always the danger that with machines doing the work staff will do nothing, many of them are idlers now, but we are planning to circumvent that.

I have had several good letters from Gerald Heard who is full of flashing ideas and have sent him a sheaf of papers which should bring him up to date. Abram Hoffer returns tomorrow and we shall be planning our attack on schizophrenia for the next six months. *If* it goes to schedule (and it probably won't) we could know an answer by Christmas. This is unlikely but two years ago in the six months from April to October we found adrenochrome and demonstrated its peculiar qualities; this will, I believe, open up a new area for active research which will last many years. Adrenochrome is already fitting into a curious picture. There is some stuff called serotonin which produces constriction of smooth muscle (bronchioles, arterioles, gut, etc.) and some stuff called bufotenine derived from the cohoba (*peregrine piptadenia*). The cohoba is said to be a hallucinogen and was confused for some time with tobacco – one wonders what would have happened in Europe had this confusion continued. Bufotenine, serotonin and adrenochrome are all chemically very similar. This is obviously the place to look for some links in the psychosomatic chain.

Jane sends her love. Do let us know how you both are and what you are doing? Have you seen Jung? I know that he is anxious to meet you. I had a very friendly letter from Raynor Johnson.

I must write about Weyburn one day – it symbolizes our capacity for self-deception better than anything I have come across. Many decent people persuaded themselves that they were benefitting the numerous sick folk here in the teeth of plenty of perfectly good evidence to the contrary.

Love to you both,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
11 July 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I hope that all goes well with you both – I am looking forward to hearing about your adventures. Here I am sunk in idleness. It is a lovely day with blue sky, sun and the prairie, wetted by some huge storms, very verdant. However I am sitting inside lethargic. I suppose that it is a week's intense activity which accounts for this, at least this is a satisfying excuse. It has been a busy week. My friend Abram Hoffer returned from his Rockefeller trip and gave me an account of all the European centres. I think we are far ahead of them both in detailed plans and in general method. And having written that I wonder whether it doesn't look an idle boast, for this is such a distant place and our setup is so small, yet it seems to be true, and if true better to recognise it than not to realise that one is breaking the trail and so must look for inspiration inwards rather than outwards. It isn't much use running 'round asking the great men because they can't it seems tell us as much as we know already. Mind you, they can and have given us some valuable clues, but paradoxically these gifts are more useful to us than they are to their original possessors. We seem to have enough of the puzzle to make sense of them.

The Abram brought back with him a tube of greeny-gold crystalline powder trihydroxy n Methyl Indole<sup>98</sup> – for short I call it Iachimochrome after yellow Iachimo. This stuff is the stable (it can be boiled) and more toxic *isomer* of our fugitive adrenochrome. It is chemically the same, its

formula is the same, but the intramolecular electrical bonds are differently arranged. This is, of course, a number one candidate for M-substance. Abram found it in Harley-Mason's<sup>99</sup> laboratory in Cambridge (Eng!) and brought it back. We shall soon be testing it. It has a very vivid fluorescence under uv light. So perhaps we shall be able to spot our ghostly madness maker in the very near future. We are *possibly* much closer than ever before. Of course it might turn out that this has nothing to do with it, but I think we shall learn something. We also learned that Rockefeller have kicked in \$115,000 for three years (that is \$35,000 a year). This is largely for biochemical-psychological work and doesn't cover "Ousight." It will however put a seal of respectability on us and more important help us to get more people and some essential equipment. I think that we may be able to use Rockefeller as a lure for the really important work very soon.

In the meanwhile I have finished the first typewritten draft of "The Model Psychoses" – three months' work, about 9,000 words. I hope to send you a copy. I think that it is a good paper. I hope to start on the "Nature of Schizophrenic Experience" soon – I have the data assembled, but Abram wants me to join him in a theoretical paper on the relationship of sympathetic-parasympathetic "tone" to the effect of M-substance, and another paper called "Portrait of a Ghost" which discusses the qualities which are needed for a schizogenic agent. I have also to do the final revision on the ololiuqui paper (I have sent a copy to G. Heard for Leslie LeCron to see) and will send one on to you as soon as I have a spare typescript. I have almost finished a first draft of "Science and Secrecy" for *The Twentieth Century*, and will send this along for criticism. My thesis is that military secrecy and scientific secrecy are so different that it is futile to use the same words. Any but the most banal scientific "secret" is much more like the "secret" of poetry, e.g. it is useful only to the person who invented it and those who can practice it. However it is a longish story. Then I have a broadcast on the "Nature of Man" this fall, which should be fun, at least for me. And several other papers.

But the main work this week has been in the hospital. Tuesday an architect down to discuss an addition to our TB block, not a very inspiring fellow and I shall have to harass him. Monday I was making a report on a commission which I have been hatching since January. It is almost finished, thank Heaven. Wednesday, no I had forgotten, Tuesday evening when I

drove up to Regina on knobby gravel roads and spent a long evening with our Minister of Health, the Deputy, and Dr Mackerracher, putting our Minister in the picture so that he can squeeze and drag millions of dollars out of his fellow cabinet ministers. The outcome of this was permission to secure an architect to start the initial planning for turning Weyburn into a modern hospital. I drove back across 70 miles of prairie in the small hours very alert and cheered. The pace is beginning to increase.

Wednesday the patients' picnic and we had many helpers from outside who I believe enjoyed helping – brilliant sun, games and sports, took me back to sports day at school, but no parents. If I were a head master I would have sports days forbidden to parents.

Thursday 70 farm ladies visited us in the afternoon, saw 'round the hospital and shot questions at us for 1½ hours, very sensible questions too. Their leader was 200 pounds of massive matriarchy, and her biceps would have stopped any ball in his tracks. These ladies, if they become keen on us, and I think that they will, will do more to clean our Augean stables than anything. There are 40,000 of them in the province and they *are* public opinion. In the evening a Guy's Hospital<sup>100</sup> friend in practice 100 miles away came in with his wife and we reminisced. He is as highly qualified a man as you can get in internal medicine, but could find no really good job in England. Canada is lucky. Friday and a morning spent in getting the gear wheels of the hospital to fit each other, and to ensure that all its energies are used to curing patients. They are not – yet. Drove to Regina in the afternoon, the roads a little sticky in some places. Spent over an hour with a Japanese (Canadian I think) architect<sup>101</sup> who has been MIT trained. Very bright. He is coming down to give us the works and to advise what we should first do and how we should do it. At last I feel that Maria's prophecy, which she so strangely made when she hardly knew me, will come about. This hospital will become worthwhile. Perhaps it isn't correct to say that Maria hardly knew me, I am using commonsense terms. Anyway Maria's assurance has been very helpful because it has allowed me to work methodically and determinedly without worrying too much about the immediate day to day things and that was necessary to do this job.

In Regina I met MacDonald Tow<sup>102</sup> and his wife. They had driven nearly 3,000 miles from Boston to see our research, breaking down several times on the way. He is an Englishman who worked at Oxford under Hugh



Cairns<sup>103</sup> and is doing a fellowship at Harvard. He may come to us, but I expect that he will go back to Oxford. However, he won't do us any harm and has promised to encourage fellows to come here. He does not think highly of the psychiatric research he has seen in the States – too much psychodynamics and too little original thought.

We came back to Weyburn in a very remarkable storm. A sort of watery blizzard in which solid rain travelling sideways at high speed struck us and blotted out everything down to 50 yards. I have only seen this at sea before. After the storm a display of skyscape that was incomparable. Rainbows, several separate thunderstorms, clouds of every imaginable colour from black to palest green and the whole lit by sunset and vivid huge shattering flashes of lightning.

Books from England included Arnold Bennett's<sup>104</sup> Journals (selection) and also the Penguin D.H. Lawrence letters which Aldous edited. How lively those letters are still. I wondered what the "Grand Perverts" to which he refers was – and did you ever get your picture which was seized with the other 12 and was to be burnt? The last line of the last letter quoted which was to Maria "This place no good," was only, unhappily, too correct. I think that Lawrence's letters should be read first, and combined with Aldous' introduction it makes me like Lawrence much more. He was not only preoccupied with the dark God. Of course we still cannot say that he was mistaken in not wishing to illumine the darkness and being content to be the darkness. So far our attempts to illuminate it have threatened our existence much more than had we taken D.H.L.'s path. I must think that over. Helen is well and sunburned, Jane busy but getting wearied of prairie life. Our garden grows, Brandy our Chihuahua is adorable as a sacred dog should be. How are you both – send a post card and reassure us.

Love,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
13 August 1954*

My dear Aldous,

Maria tells me that you are now in London and I am envious, for as a Londoner of many years' standing I feel that there is no place quite so interesting, but I suppose that is prejudice. We were glad to have news that you were both in good health and that you have cleared your bronchitis. The prairies have excelled themselves in wetness and we are too humid for comfort which is very unusual here. The short summer is ending and the prairie people are preparing for duck shooting, one of the highlights of their year. I don't think that I can stand the prairies for more than a couple of years at most, paradoxically their immense space produces a claustrophobia as much as agoraphobia. Jane and I both feel hemmed in by the huge surrounding space which even in a car requires great effort to conquer. To enjoy this sort of country you must be born to it or much more introverted than I am.

I hear from my bookseller friend that *The Doors* remains popular and that he recently sold 12 copies to a Swiss. He is in the city of London. Gerald Heard sent me four long short stories – *The Lost Cavern*.<sup>105</sup> He is a very skilled performer in this medium. Two of the four were good but the last, “The Chapel of Ease,” seemed to me to be quite one of the most acute and sensitive ghost stories that I know. I thought that it was like a cross between M.R. James<sup>106</sup> and Henry James. I would pick it for any ghost story anthology. I am keenly looking forward to meeting Mr Heard, he seems marvelously well informed on so many topics. We share a mutual admiration for those who recognise the genius of Ian Suttie,<sup>107</sup> a Tavistock Clinic psychiatrist whose excellence is less widely known than it should be. His one book, *The Origins of Love and Hate*, is in my view one of the most telling criticisms of Freud, coming in the same class as Jung's. Are you going to see the Swiss Master? I do hope so. If you do please carry my respectful admiration which grows greater with everything I read of his. He was far ahead of his time and in many ways we are just catching up with his pre-1914 ideas. I have a couple of papers ready for your return. I have told Maria that if you will have me I shall be in California in the latter part of October. We budget in September, and in mid-October I have a beastly murder trial in which my evidence is crucial. My evidence, as I see it, is psychiatrically very elegant and legally valueless, but more about that later.

I haven't had a holiday for two years and need one. The edge has been taken off me (I hope temporarily) and it is a real effort to go to work, yet in a compulsive way I do so. I suppose what has kept me going has been the research and my varied activities.

Jane, Helen and Brandy our Chihuahua are off to the Black Hills next week. Helen, in a variation on the theme, "thar's gold in them thar hills," is sure that she will find silver. I told you that I have an invitation for you to visit Matador, a communal project in Saskatchewan, from the remarkable premier T.C. Douglas. He will have transport put at your disposal. After Ozymandias<sup>108</sup> it might be a worthwhile theme.

I have been put in (a complete bow at a venture) by an acquaintance as a possible candidate for the chair of psychiatry at University of Chicago. I am academically innocent and have nothing to commend me except that I believe that I could do such a job as well as many who profess now. It would be fun but I doubt whether it will come to anything. Somehow we must get money for a continuing project on the nature of man, but I think G. Heard has some ideas on this. I do want to see Jung before he dies. I believe that I could learn more from him than most and that he has much to teach.

Hope all is well with you. Jane sends her love. Helen is always keen to have her Lear read to her. Look forward to hearing how you are.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 August 1954*

Dear Professor and Mrs Huxley,

Congratulations on your ascension to the professocracy Academician Huxley, "bourgeois reactionary philosopher who reflects the general fear of the reactionary bourgeoisie before the authentic world of reality. In this world the science of historical dialectical materialism is conquering" – I expect you have localised this though your diagnosis may not have hit the

mark direct. It is Mr D. Zaslavsky<sup>109</sup> writing in *Pravda*, Moscow, the Communist Party's official paper. It is an attack on *The Doors* and upon two discussions of it in *The Twentieth Century*, London, one of them my little "Peeping Tom and Doubting Thomas." What is really interesting is that the c.p. official organ spends 1¼ columns on *The Doors*. Since the views are so insignificant and unimportant this seems a little excessive to me. I can't help wondering whether we ought not to take this as a sign that this is the sort of thing that worries them. The scientific exposition of the transcendental is what always alarms and dismays the pseudo scientist, he sees his weapons twisted in his hands against him. Mr Z is warning the faithful early on not to worry.

Mr Z's colleagues at the Toronto International Congress of Mental Health will have heard more reasons for being concerned. Our work in Saskatchewan was much emphasized in the key scientific address by William A. Malamud, one of the leading U.S. psychiatrists.

To return to Mr Z. He quotes old Leo Tolstoy<sup>110</sup> as an example of a great man who laughed at bourgeois pretensions in the matter of the "thing itself." But Tolstoy seems almost the worst choice imaginable. That appalling piece of his autobiography which William James quotes shows that the queer but magnificent old aristocrat was well aware of the dreadful nature of things. There is a queer old-fashionedness, a rationalist press association, pre-Einsteinian flavor about Mr Zaslavsky. The spirit of 19<sup>th</sup> century England, superimposed on 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia, all bustled into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Very queer.

My article on secrecy is coming out in October after two on the Oppenheimer affair.<sup>111</sup> It should be a suitable postscript to that weird struggle between scientists on the one hand and soldiers, sailors, airmen and businessmen on the other. Once one realises this was the line up it is easy to see why the huge difference of opinion exists, businessmen and military men don't have any understanding of science and very little of the wider issues involved. I am interested that my analysis starting from first principles seems to have come to much the same conclusion as someone who spent his time examining the documents.

Here we are about to launch into the main struggle on which the length of my stay here will depend. Briefly, are the government willing to attack their problem courageously or not? I don't know yet. But I have made clear

to them in the most unequivocal way that in my view if they don't, a major disaster lies ahead and that its exact shape can now be foreseen, though we cannot be quite so clear about its size because we don't know how close we are to it. I quoted Matthew Chapter 12, verses 43–4[5]<sup>112</sup> for their benefit. I think we have discovered enough to be very precise – when we couldn't be a year ago. The place is a slum, it is falling down, it stands to lose all its trained doctors within a year or so, its patients are aging at a fearsome rate, and they contribute something between a quarter and a third of the hospital wages budget in unpaid work which doesn't benefit them. It is a formidable picture of cruelty and exploitation which is sanctioned by kindly people, who have just never thought of it that way.

Jane, Helen and little Brandy are away in the Black Hills and I am lonely and alone – I can't agree with Marvell,<sup>113</sup> “Two Paradises 'twere in one, to live in Paradise alone.” The house seems dead without them and I would put up with all the interruptions which I usually resent to hear Helen shouting, “You can't catch me Daddy,” or even “I won't, I won't.”

My plans are to reach you about 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> October in L.A. How does that suit you?

Richard Evans Schultes<sup>114</sup> the Harvard ethnobotanist tells me that peyote certainly has more devotees now than *ever* in its long history.

Hope you both flourish.

Yours ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
27 August 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Welcome back. I hope that you had better news of Eileen Garrett before you left. I was so sorry to hear that she is ill.

I am in accidie,<sup>115</sup> the fatal sloth. Jane and Helen are away. The hospital seethes with its thousands of more or less insoluble administrative

problems. Many of them will be solved but cannot be done immediately. The research is waiting for fresh supplies of adrenochrome etc. The hospital replanning is going ahead. Weyburn should be a different place in two or three years. It will even look different, no pretentious slate roof with odd pseudo Queen Anne Attics, minarets and a gilded dome, but a much more modest and much easier to maintain flat roof. All this would have seemed very fine when I was with you in L.A. 18 months ago, but for the present I can hardly raise a flicker of interest in it. Even seeing patients is an effort. I know the signs and know there is only one answer. I must get away as soon as it can be arranged, for the virtue has gone out of me. Three years very hard work with ten days holiday (spent driving in the Rockies 2,200 miles) is too little. As soon as the murder trial is over I shall leave. I must do so; so perhaps I shall be leaving Weyburn by the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of October. I plan to write up my journey south for an English periodical, it is good exercise and pays for my book bill.

I told Aldous in my letter to him in England, which he probably hasn't got, that my article on science and secrecy has been accepted. It is to come after two on Dr Oppenheimer. I am pleased because it deals with a very important matter and the account of the Oppenheimer affair makes a very good prelude to my discussion of the different meaning of secrecy to soldiers and scientists.

The trouble about Weyburn is that I know most of its problems and how to delineate those that are left. The organisation to solve them can be made and the whole place transformed. It will be very costly, but I believe one way or another we can raise the money. The problem for me is how long do I wish to be here and do I want to spend years engaged on a major administrative job? I don't. I don't think I'm really much of an administrator. I'm not neat or tidy enough, and am a little doubtful about the long term planning so essential to good administration. Most of all I want to do other things and this takes up so much of my energy. Now one can and should administer this hospital to the Glory of God, but I should also like to pursue research to His glory. However, we must see what happens.

It is one of those days which makes me wonder what possessed me to come to Canada, for possession it was. I had no very good reason for going. I could have got a job in England and would be as well paid as I am now. Yet I would never have had the remarkable experience of the research, the

unpleasant but interesting struggle for the hospital, and the great pleasure of meeting you both. I suppose I have no real grounds for complaint, and that makes this present lethargy even worse. It will pass, I know, and it does me no harm to have from time to time some microcosmic form of my patients' misfortunes. I enjoy such excellent health and such abounding energy that I tend to make great moan over the very slightest discomforts.

Now after my selfish wailing, how are you both? I told Aldous that there was an interesting attack on us in *Pravda* by a man called Zaslavsky. It was rather oddly translated but the writer's burden was that only in healthy minded U.S.S.R. would such nonsense clearly be recognised as nonsense. But why devote 1¼ columns denouncing nonsense that no one believes anyway? That is the odd thing. My guess is, and Aldous will be able to confirm it, that many people in Europe have been deeply impressed by *The Doors* and the Russians don't like the entrancing music being played near there. Ideas are so dangerous.

My ololiuqui paper is awaiting a new typist. I shall bring a copy of it down with me. I am doing a lot of thinking on the technique of writing papers which are to be spoken. It is very tricky because medical papers are commonly read en masse and the effect of anything en masse is usually boredom. This means that technique is very important, for without it valuable scientific work may fall flat. Doctors never worry about such "trivial" matters and in consequence their meetings are almost wonderfully tedious. This has one good effect, it makes them pretty lively at the non-public meetings.

Please give both our love to Eleanor, we liked her so much. Jane still talks wistfully about her house in New York as we drive across the interminable and strangely claustrophobic prairie. Of course this year our sense of shut-in-ness is not entirely subjective, the heavy rains have made most of the roads impassible much of the time, so this means that we are in fact confined to a very few highways.

Jane and Helen and Brandy the Chihuahua (they are the only dog suitable for the modern house, portable, almost pocketable; very intelligent, good watch dogs and most affectionate, also smooth haired) are in the Black Hills, South Dakota. Helen sent me a postcard inscribed by the Duck Poetess herself ABC TIG XX. She is very determined as ever and very odd. They had some difficulty in getting away and were a day late. Helen was

very angry and said, “Mommy, it’s no use, you will have to go without your sweetest child.” Before they left I asked her whether I wouldn’t be lonely without her and she said, “You won’t be lonely. You’ll have the flies and the cats and the chairs and the carpets and the curtains to look after you.” However just before they left a little warm hand dragged me to the car saying, “Why don’t you come. I wish you were coming.” Her great energy is gradually becoming more controllable as her vocabulary increases. The psychoanalysts have made little use of the easily observed differences in innate temperament. My sister, who is a very skilled midwife, health visitor and premature baby nurse, is very illuminating on this. At birth (and with prematures before the usual time of birth) there are immediately evident differences of temperament which you ignore at your own and the baby’s peril. My sister gave me a very vivid description of a small Chinese baby (weight four pounds) who would not suck and had to have fluid into her skin. She was very angry, her little black eyes glittering and rolling with what my sister assures me was rage. However she fed regularly and well after this. Helen has always been determined, energetic, overactive, and when she was small this energy had to be expended, now it goes in writing, drawing, climbing and dozens of new skills.

Did I tell you that I have got in touch with Richard Evans Schultes, one of the great botanist explorers of South and Central America? He is at Harvard and seems very glad to have a medical man interested in his work, and of course it is a wonderful opportunity for me to learn about all sorts of unexpected substances, and to find out whether they all work in the *same* general way or whether there are great differences. I rather think that the latter is what happens, and if so this is very interesting, puzzling and important, for it suggests strongly that we can separate out certain peculiar physio-psychological effects and may hope to have substances that effect say time sense *only*, visual perception only, mood only. However that remains to be seen.

Keenly looking forward to seeing you.

Love to you both.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry



---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
8 September 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

How good to know that you are safely back and that Eileen Garrett is mending, she must have been very ill. Jane, Helen and Brandy the Chihuahua are back and I feel less gloomy in spite of continuing wet weather and the drawn in fall evenings, which remind us that winter is not far behind. I hope that you had a good meeting with Suzuki. I found him remarkable and was much surprised how easy he was to get on with.

Now about the holiday which I am looking forward to with increasing impatience. This week we do our budgeting. We are introducing a new pay scheme for physicians here, a complete reorganisation in nearly every direction. I think I told you that even the weird gilded dome with its attendant minarets will soon be gone. Can we also get rid of the inspissated despair and apathy? I hope so. I suppose that I am the first person who has ever really taken an historical look at this hospital from its start as a politician's bribe to its present state in which its future hangs on so many indeterminates. A murky story.

Now about the holiday once more! Are you going to Oregon near British Columbia? My plans could include meeting you there. All my affairs hang (the word is a sinister) on the murder trial for which I am waiting. I am seeing the accused's solicitor in a couple of days. It is all sickeningly obvious, a dim witted lad with a family background of mental deficiency has peculiar episodes which are probably epileptic. He drinks and having drunk too much murders a little girl of six. It is simple and quite beastly, but it will be interesting. I have just been up to the Commission (Royal) on Sexual Psychopathy. Some interesting figures come up. In the U.S. every year 25 women and girls are killed [by] sexual psychopaths, but well over 100 are killed by their husbands and 20,000 by cars.

I hope that the trial will be over by mid-October. Supposing that I get away earlier than I expect, could I perhaps dart down to L.A. and drive up

with you all? Let me know what you think of these possibilities. It is good to think that there isn't much more than a month. I shall be very glad to leave the prairies behind me for a bit.

Will you be able to see Ezra Pound at St Elizabeth's Washington when you are there? If you have time do drop Dr Winfred Overholser<sup>116</sup> a line. I know that he would arrange everything for you and it might give your old friend some pleasure.

Apparently my name has gone in for the Chicago professorship. I don't think for a moment that I will get it and I'm not even sure that I should be able to take it – so much has got to be done here and I'm not sure that the Americans would necessarily care for me to domicile among them. However, we shall see. It is something of a lottery and rather fun. I do want to get Weyburn really on the move and ensure that its fellness is well on the way to dissipation before I leave. Jane and I feel that we have had our fill of the prairies and long for a rather less isolated and small town life. Small places are so much more intrusive than big places.

I look forward to hearing from you both soon, I hope that you find your home in good condition after your long absence.

Love to you both from us three,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
12 September 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

A further and vexatious change of plans. My beastly murder trial doesn't start until 21 October so that I can't possibly be sure of joining you in Oregon by the 23<sup>rd</sup>. All my plans have had to be altered again. So here goes. I shall go down to GAP in the first week of November and then fly across to L.A. from New York and should reach you about 10–12 November. I will of course tell you exactly when. I shall come back via Vancouver to see J. Smythies. It will mean more time with you – if you can stand me. But my

only regret is that it means a month more without a holiday; however I shall survive, I suppose.

Jane is busy running over the age distribution of our male population, and from these figures we shall get a pretty clear picture of the hospital's demography. It is heavily loaded with old folk who have slowly accumulated here. We can now really tell what lies ahead and raise the cry of rocks on the starboard bow with real conviction.

I have had a very remarkable letter from a Mrs Marquis of San Francisco saying that Aldous had written her something very nice about me and asking whether \$1,000 would be useful in any way. I wrote saying that of course it would but suggesting that we should have some proper way of accounting for it etc. It would pay for some of those essentials which foundations are so sticky about, immediate needs such as special recording equipment, travel and special books. I see Evans-Wentz' book<sup>117</sup> is just out. I hope I'm not taking a widow's mite, if I am please let me know, but if not \$1,000 for the Oversight aspects of the research would be most welcome.

In the meanwhile Roland O'Brien, one of those engagingly English Irishmen who sell British Medical and Law books in Canada and the U.S. with enormous success and vast profit (he sold 1,100 sets of Halsbury's *The Laws of England*<sup>118</sup> in Toronto this spring alone). Halsbury costs \$1,000 a set, so you can see that he is a salesman on the grand scale. O'Brien has suggested that I write a handbook on psychiatric illness for lawyers. It should be rather fun, not too difficult to do because I have the necessary qualifications. I know my psychiatry, I know how to write it in fairly clear English and I have had a fair amount of court experience. I have roughed out a skeleton and an opening chapter. Of course it has a long way to go yet but if Butterworths accept the idea the next step will be to write it, and once that is done if they accept the book O'Brien has great hopes that it would sell all over the Empire and the U.S. He says that lawyers are always asking for a book of this sort. It would in fact be a departure in psychiatric writing because what I shall try to describe is the nature of the experience of the various sort of people who suffer from mental illnesses. I may have more to tell you about this later. Of course it may come to nothing – we shall see.

Medical writing is a very good source of income once you have a firm who needs you and of course we have our schizophrenia work to go into book form. It would be a great help to have a secondary income and so to

become fairly mobile. In the meanwhile Beaverbrook<sup>119</sup> is said to be interested in Canadian research and we might get him to build us a centre.

Winter is beginning to threaten on the prairies. Not quite here yet but our summer has been so very short this year. I am preparing an article on Zaslavsky's attack in *Pravda* – I think that this should be very useful to us – the politbureaucrat has shown us with dazzling clarity what they are frightened of, we mustn't relax. It is experience against which the dogmatists have always stubbed their toes.

Jane sends her love to you both. Helen is asleep. She is very lively and bright. Her energy exhausts us.

Love to you both,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
16 September 1954*

My dear Humphry,

Your letter announcing the change of plans arrived today. I am sorry your holiday will have to be postponed so long; but better late than never, and we shall be very happy to see you on November the tenth or whenever it suits you to come.

Your idea of a psychiatric text book sounds like a potential gold mine. I have always wished I could write something for students or a professional audience. Once you have broken through the academic barriers and got yourself accepted, you live in clover on a public which is *compelled* to buy you. It is the author's idea of heaven. Lacking the ability to write a text book, I have to plug on at these other, more precarious forms of literature – wishing to heaven, sometimes, that I could hit some dramatic or cinematographic jackpot. But these golden showers don't seem to fall on my garden. Perhaps we could write a play together one day and make enough to finance your research and our second childhood? It might be a good idea.

I can't remember if I showed you the first version of my paper on visionary experience and the account of the Other World in the various religious traditions. I have greatly enlarged the thing now, and have taken in the field of visionary art – which will be my excuse for delivering the thing as a lecture to the Institute of Modern Art at Washington at the beginning of next month.<sup>120</sup> Incidentally I was delighted to find that my theory about the cult of precious stones – men spend all that time, energy and money on coloured pebbles, because these things are the nearest equivalents in the objective world to the self-luminous jewels seen in visions<sup>121</sup> – was anticipated by Socrates. In the *Phaedo* he talks of the Other Earth, or Ideal World. Here all the stones are like our jewels, and in fact our jewels are simply tiny fragments of *their* rocks, gravel and boulders. Also I have brought up the odd fact that one of the standard ways of producing hypnosis is to make the patient look intently at a shiny object. There may be purely physiological reasons for this, as well as ordinary psychological reasons (induction of dissociation by concentration on a single perception). But there may also be a kind of visionary element. Shiny objects remind the subconscious of what is there, at the mind's Antipodes, and, being so reminded, the subconscious turns away from the ordinary world towards the visionary world, falling into trance in the process. But we will talk about all these things when you come. And I hope also that we may make some interesting experiments with mescaline.

The lady who wrote to you from San Francisco is a stranger to me. She wrote out of the blue saying that she would like to give some money for research into the subject. So I wrote back giving your name and saying that the best research would be likely to go on in your vicinity.

Our love to you both.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*21–22 September 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Your letter of 16<sup>th</sup> September to hand yesterday which as you shall hear was a notable day in most ways. There was your letter to start with. I shall certainly press on with the Handbook on Mental Illness for Lawyers and Others Connected with the Courts<sup>122</sup> – but more about that later. Are you serious about the joint play writing? I should love to have a go and will, if you do wish to try me as a co-author, send down two of my plays – at least you will know the worst and be able to reconsider your rash suggestion. But *please*, if you were just meandering say so, because although naturally I like my plays or I wouldn't write them, I don't, in my reasoning self, expect anyone else to like them. And I don't want to impose reading on you which you don't wish to do. I'm sure people are always wanting you to read things and the fact is that you can't and keep any kind of personal creative effort going. So please be quite truthful about it.

I very much want to see the visionary paper which you are giving in Washington. I remember that you mentioned the jewels. When you think of it, it is queer how much effort and energy has gone on them. I have a Mr [—], a schizophrenic patient who was in here not so long ago, making parcels of pebbles and stones which he sent to the local bank and to politicians whom he favored. These stones were he said precious, like amethysts. He told me of their superb and marvelous beauty. He was a simple fellow but clearly to him those pebbles were great and wonderful jewels. Do send me the paper.

Now about the Lady from San Francisco. After your letter I opened another one from her in which there was a cheque for \$1,000 dollars, which is to be used at discretion. She seems to like the idea of a visit to C.G. Jung – so do I. However we can talk about that later on.

Another letter from anthropologist friend Jules Henry<sup>123</sup> of Chicago – warning me about becoming *homo miserabilis americanis*, but saying that he would root for me in Chicago if I was serious.

In the afternoon I drove up and saw Mr Roland O'Brien, the superb salesman who sells Halsbury's *Laws of England* around Canada and U.S. I showed him the plan outline and the introductory chapter to my modest handbook. He approves and it is to go off to Butterworths. If they take it I shall write like fury all my spare minutes and get it out in six months. I

know what has to be done. He is a salesman and an Irishman so I can't be sure whether his idea of vast sales is not sheer word spinning, but your remarks on the value (in money) of a technical book with a wide appeal and usefulness made me feel that he might not be exaggerating.

That however has become almost a sideline since Mr O'Brien claims that he knows Beaverbrook's Canadian adviser, a female lawyer called Lynch.<sup>124</sup> Beaverbrook has it seems come back to Canada to die and spend \$150 million on his home land to stop it falling into the hands of his family. He wants to do something permanent for Canada and isn't too sure what to do. Miss Lynch is the key to his heart (?) and also to his pocket. She isn't sure what to do either. Mr O'Brien says that he is Miss Lynch's sole passion. Now it all sounds very unlikely but that doesn't mean that is untrue. So far I have found Mr O'Brien remarkably truthful, honest and likeable. I have checked up on his implied accounts of his prowess as a salesman and I think he is telling the truth. The next step is Miss Lynch and the Beaver. It is obviously the logical and proper step. It is unlikely, but what could be more unlikely than that \$1,000 cheque – or of our meeting when you come to think of it? I remember Maria told me I could depend on my friends to help me and it seems that I am lucky in this way and must not neglect this piece of fortunate endowment. I shall try and get the Beaver interested in a centre for studying the higher functions. A well endowed Canadian centre which can send men all over the world. It is improbable, but not impossible and I wonder whether it is less probable than say three years ago when John Smythies and I were pushing poor Jane on the last draft of "Schizophrenia: A New Approach" as she was doing the last bit of our packing. I suppose that if we had predicted that "Schizophrenia: A New Approach" would have \$250,000 invested in it in three years we should have been laughed at by the folecat.<sup>125</sup> So I will not neglect my good angel's promptings even when his voice is Roland O'Brien's, but will only try to avoid that hubris which understandably is not beloved by the gods or God. The narrow path between pride and gullibility and incredulity is no easy one – it is a sort of tunnel.

Drove up from Regina to Saskatoon with Elaine Cumming, a Harvard Sociologist. Moody, brilliant, irascible, marvelously intelligent and sharp as needles and vinegar. Curious mixture of dowdy chiqueness. She is helping us work on organization and I am always astonished at her splendid

analytical intelligence and at other times by her naughty childishness, but I suppose that you just have to put up with these things.

22 September 1954. Last night I tried my book idea out on a couple of very bright young lawyers (man and wife) and found they were both very interested and both more ignorant than I could have imagined about mental illness. It shows how much you take for granted once you are fenced off in your own specialty. However their interest is much more important than their ignorance, for that I pride myself the handbook will very quickly dissipate!

With my numerous schemes and activities I often wonder how much I resemble a confidence trickster, yet I have to get people to believe in something quite unreal and unlikely most of the time. Only in this way can it become real and likely. This is a situation where it is the different *end* that must be kept close to the means all the time so that the means do not corrupt the end – isn't it? Yet so much is similar. I spur people on with fairy tales and somehow when It wishes (as the Zen Buddhists put it so undogmatically) they make the fairy tales come true. I am left astonished and certain that I didn't do it and left with the enormous question mark: Who did?

So, if you start hearing from Lord Beaverbrook's lady lawyer you will know that the great and obstreperous Canadian is at least nuzzling the bait. So we must wait and see.

The wheat crop has suffered from a heavy and unprecedented series of rains which will make it harder to get our monies that we need for our decayed old bin (not the research whose funds are independent). So I must do much persuading and this means much writing. I have as my motto Florence Nightingale's<sup>126</sup> wonderful opening sentence to her Nurse's Handbook, "It may seem a strange principle to enunciate as the very first requirement of a hospital that it should do the sick no harm." 1859.

Jane sends love.

P.S. Have you heard Sophia Williams' little voices lately? One of the queerest things.

Love to you both,  
Humphry



---

*Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
25 September 1954  
Postcard*

[Addressed to Dr H. Osmond]

Of course send me the plays.

Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
3 October 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I shall be sending the plays in due course, and also, if you didn't get it in Europe, the final typescript of my ololiuqui paper which is now blessed by Richard Evans Schultes, the famous ethno-botanist of South America (Harvard). He was much pleased to be asked for his help and gave it generously.

Here life continues appallingly busy, tangled, and often difficult. This week we found that our chief male nurse is probably crazy. I think we suspected it for some time, but when he began to speak openly about keeping notes for "higher authorities" on what goes on in the hospital and alleging that I had wished to be rid of him but had been prevented from doing so "on political grounds" then clearly something had to be done. This poor old man, the late superintendent who was an ex-patient, a young doctor three years out of medical school with grave disseminated sclerosis, and the business manager, a shrewd, cunning, dull and at that time heavy drinking fellow, ran this huge hospital with its 500 staff and 1,900 patients. Naturally the doctors under them and everyone else was discontented, but

by pretending to political power which they hadn't got they managed to obtain a great deal of unwilling support.

Yesterday I saw our very remarkable premier (T.C. Douglas) who runs the most Left government in North America and had instructions from him to make quite clear that there was no "political protection" in Weyburn and that anyone who claimed it would be painfully disillusioned. It is unpleasant but also interesting and could so easily become an end in itself. It is good to feel that right can win at least sometimes, but right can so easily transmute into base self-righteousness. I try to keep that bit from the *Gita* in my mind where Sri Krishna is telling Arjuna that he must take part in the battle. "I have told you that in this world aspirants can find enlightenment by two different paths. For the contemplative is the path of knowledge; for the active is the path of selfless action." Each is a narrow path and hard to follow. It is so hard not to enjoy the struggle so much that you become incapable of "acting without lust or scheming for the fruit of the act." I suppose that one must just try to achieve that unattachedness even if one fails mostly. "To unite the heart with Brahman and then to act: that is the secret of non-attached work."

This last two weeks have been full of report writing on the grievous state of the hospital. Yesterday we found that a high proportion of the patients are lousy and will have to get down to a major campaign to deal with that. In every direction its appalling short comings become only too evident. However I'm not entirely sorry that if we had to find out that patients were lousy it should be now, for I have just sent in a most gloomy report and people like to feel that such statements are exaggerations. I did not mention lice in this report. Only about a month now and my holiday will be starting. I shall be very glad to get away.

I told you didn't I that Mrs Marquis sent me \$1,000 which I hope to use to go and see Jung in Zurich next spring. I feel that I must discuss his collective unconscious with him before he dies. I will also use a little to see John Smythies and plan our paper on the Nature of Schizophrenic Experience. She sounds nice and not as I had feared some crazy person giving away her last farthing, which would have been unlucky because the money would have to have been returned.

Any news of Eileen Garrett?

I have got an idea fermenting about the mescal phenomena etc. There is a tendency to discuss them as if they were a return to infantile thinking, but I don't think they are for most people – perhaps for a few Trahernes and Blakes, but I just don't believe that we could or would forget the astounding vividness of the mescal world. It would be engraved on the mind. However it seems likely that the mescal world etc. is a potential realm of experience always open to us. Clearly in childhood when we know we are much more plastic the *potentiality* of this experience is likely to be much higher. In our culture and in most cultures to a more or less great degree adaptation to the “real” world is essential for survival. Those who take that potential path and stray any distance along it have great difficulty in getting back again (True Thomas, Mary Rose, etc.).<sup>127</sup> I don't think most children in our culture stray very far – other cultures give them more leeway, but even so it seems, as one would expect from a creature that has adapted as well as man, that most people are in touch most of the time with the outer world and great effort has to be made to find the inner.

There is another interesting possibility; although it is often alleged that children represent the primitive in man, but they are equally the emergent, so possibly what we are getting, fleeting glimpses of now in our earliest years, is what will one day be a general realm of experience for most people.

Abram Hoffer has some further very encouraging news. (We have had a slight, but superficial disagreement. I think Abram is on the verge of getting a psychopath into our group and am very keen that he should not do so. However, we have decided what to do.) He has been making these studies with wool soaked in schizophrenic urine, and it seems that this takes up stuff from the urine that non-schizophrenic urine does not take up. I think I told you about that. Anyway some time ago we tested schizophrenic urine on tomato plants which are very susceptible to plant hormones (auxins). Adrenochrome is an indole compound (a six and five carbon ring joined) as are the plant hormones. We got some but not very clear results. Then last week Hoffer had a brilliant notion, why not take our wool and germinate wheat or other seedlings in it? If a plant auxin is present it will show some difference from those in which no such substance is present. It looks as if this hunch will be correct. Wheat seeds sprouted in the wool soaked in schizophrenic urine have an entirely different sort of root growth from those

germinated in wool soaked in normal urine. Clearly if this stands up it will be a very useful diagnostic aid, but much more important it gives us very strong clues that a particular sort of substance is present in the urine which is not present in non-schizophrenic urine, and this gives us hints for isolating these substances. We are narrowing down our range of possibilities and this seems extraordinarily hopeful to me. So far our hypothesis has been very fruitful and I don't see why it should not continue to be so. Its great strength is that so far it does not cut across any known fact about schizophrenia, indeed it seems to illuminate many odd observations which didn't seem to fit in anywhere in particular.

At last we have a lab technician coming and soon we should be beginning to investigate some of our huge number of schizophrenic people here.

Jane sends her love. She is having a period of depression to which she is subjected, a very unpleasant trouble for which (*pace* the psychoanalysts) we still have no full or clear explanation. Once you know what is happening it is a most irksome thing but at least in some way comprehensible. When you don't know it is one of the most alarming things that can happen.

I hope to be with you about 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> November if my present schedule works. I have discarded several already but I think you should see me then.

Love to you both,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
16 October 1954*

My dear Humphry,

Thanks for your letter and the ololiuqui paper, which I read with great interest. I wish it had been possible to try some ESP experiments while under its influence – for it is said to be used by medicine men for heightening their power.

My brother read the paper and found it very interesting – though he thought it too long for the *British Medical Journal* and advised complete publication elsewhere and a digested version for the BMJ.

I got back from the East last week. Frightful heat in Washington and at Duke – 97 degrees with 96% humidity. But there were nice people in both places. I learned incidentally that the National Institute for Mental Health is experimenting with lysergic acid – to what end I could not discover as I had no time to accept an invitation to go and see. But I pass this on for your information.

At Duke I saw much of J.B. Rhine and a young MD who is interested to combine ESP work with pharmacological experiments. He has worked so far only with benzedrine and barbiturates.

In New York I was happy to see my old friend W.H. Sheldon<sup>128</sup> again. He has just published an *Atlas of Men* (5,000 photos of naked gents) and is preparing an *Atlas of Women* which will, I fear, totally disillusion the young male about the Female Form Divine. A 6-5-1 female in her 50's is a real portent! Sheldon is most interested in your present work and future plans. So do get in touch with him when you are next in N.Y. He is at the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center at 168<sup>th</sup> St and Broadway. Ring him up and say I asked you to get in touch with him. You will find him pleasant and *very* able, with a fund of knowledge which may be very helpful to you in drawing up a plan for a general psycho-pharmacological research.

We are looking forward very much to seeing you.

Love from both of us to both of you – and to the unknown poetess.<sup>129</sup>

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 October 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

It was good to hear from you again. I'm glad you like the ololiuqui paper. I shall have to try some ESP work later. This was just a preliminary canter and most effort went on observing and classifying just what was happening. I am glad your brother approved. He is right, it is a little long for the BMJ, but it is only about 5,300 words and they regularly take articles up to 7,000. I haven't heard from them yet. I gave them a chance to publish it because they published Weir Mitchell's classical paper on the Mescal Button in 1896, and as ololiuqui and peyote were twin narcotics I thought that they should have the option.

I am now in touch with Dr Tobias Lasser<sup>130</sup> in Caracas, Venezuela through Dr Richard Evans Schultes, and hope to get a supply of yopo snuff, which is made from *peregrina piptadenia* also called cohoba. This has been known in Europe since 1496 when Ramon Pané who sailed with Columbus mentioned it. The important thing about cohoba is that its active principle is known to be bufotenine, an indole compound not so very unlike adrenochrome. Richard Evans Schultes is trying to get us yaké, also snuffed, which is made by removing the bark of a certain tree and processing the snuff in a rather complicated way. It seems that an expedition may have to go into the jungle to find it.

We have Dr Robert Hyde from Boston Psychopathic Hospital here, a very lively and entertaining man. You will be interested [to] hear that he has done as much work on lysergic acid as anyone in the world. He uses it for many purposes, among others training nurses. He is also using *The Doors of Perception* and the little version of the *Gita* to which you wrote a foreword as basic training books and is urging us to do the same. I shall be glad to do this. I have felt a little slow in pushing our views, feeling that I was biased, but I shall now be much keener to do so. The trial which kept me from coming to California this month is, as I write, slowing moving toward its climax. It is dramatic in a very slow and protracted way – and very impressive.

You must have been parboiled in Washington. I have had a letter from a doctor who met you at Duke (Cadornet? or some such name). Odd how benzedrine and amytal have been used instead of the more likely ones. Hyde is a man you *must* meet, he is an ex rum-runner from Vermont, a ripe, restless and remarkable character. He is the only person outside our group I

have met who is clearly aware of the real problems which LSD, mescal, etc. raise. He has taken a package of ololiuqui seeds away with him.

The trial is run with decency, dignity and sense, almost too civilized when one hears the whole beastly business and realises that the climax of it may well be another beastly business in the early morning some months or weeks ahead.

I haven't yet heard about the legal handbook, but lawyers are it seems keen for it, so that I shall start writing as soon as I hear from the publisher (if he is favorable).

The poetess is learning to write but still sings. Three songs last night about kings and queens, but I didn't transcribe them. The house is invade[d] by frogs and snakes which she finds.

Jane sends you both love, she hopes to see you in the spring and bring Helen down with her.

I didn't see the *New Yorker* article and am trying to get hold of it. It should be reaching Los Angeles between 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November. It will be wonderful to see you both and to be away from here for a bit. Most of all not to be in a great hurry. I want to recharge my batteries. The next six months, what with reorganising the hospital and the very critical and exciting research situation, will not be relaxing whatever else it may be. Selfless action would make it so but it cannot always or often be attained. I shall try.

Love to you both from us three,  
Humphry

I shall be bringing mescaline and LSD (or have you some of that left?). I shall not bring ololiuqui but it would be nice to do another experiment with it. I may have news of iachimochrome when I come. Abram and I are planning to test it soon, it is clearly a very important possibility.

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
25 October 1954*

My dear Humphry,

Just received your letter announcing your arrival around the fifteenth to seventeenth of November. I hope you will stay here as long as you can. If you feel the need of greater quiet, we could go out into the desert somewhere for a few days, or on to the coast, or maybe for a little trip combining both, which is very feasible in these parts.

We gave most of our mescaline to our friend Dr Godel in Egypt, who knew a little about the subject but wanted to find out more. This being so, please come supplied; for you know how hard it is to get hold of anything here. I can't remember if I told you about Dr Puharich's use of lysergic acid in ESP experiments – finding that there was a period of heightened ability near the beginning, a long spell of no ability, and then another lucid period near the end. He was going to try to cut down the dose in such a way as to keep the subject in the lucid zone all the time, without being carried out of bounds into the totally Other World. Obviously we have to think of the mind in terms of a stratified Neapolitan ice, with a peculiar flavour of consciousness at each level. Pharmacology may permit us to go precisely to the level we want and no further.

Did you, by the way, ever send the plays?

Our love to you all.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
29 October 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I think my plans are almost completed. I shall leave here on the 9<sup>th</sup> November, New York on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Asbury Park until 14<sup>th</sup>. Then to Philadelphia and Gettysburg to see Professor Katherine Taylor<sup>131</sup> who had a very remarkable mystical experience some years ago – a sort of elongated



mescaline do lasting five or six days. I intend to leave there on 17<sup>th</sup> and take a transcontinental plane from Pittsburgh. So I should be with you on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

I would love a few days of desert or coast just to stop being a social animal for a little and to think a bit. It will be fine to talk at leisure about what must be done to see that the few clues which we now possess are used to advantage for those who can use them. I would plan to be with you two weeks or so, but you must let me know if that is convenient or not.

I am most interested in Puharich's work and must somehow see him. He should try to use ololiuqui. If we could only enhance *psi*<sup>132</sup> a bit it would stop the work being so deadly boring. I am in many ways a poor scientist because of my rather low tolerance of doing the same thing over and over again the same way. However lots of people like doing that sort of work, so that I feel there is no point in trying to cultivate a gift which I don't possess very much of.

Yes the mind must be enormously complicated and varied, and we must expect to find new combinations of consciousness as we develop new pharmacopsychological tools for separating its huge variety. When you remember that the brain, which is about *one-fiftieth* of the body weight uses, I think, about *one-quarter* of the body's energy, it is clear that we have a great deal to investigate in its workings. I have spent the last ten days in court at [a] very interesting, sad but in its way splendid murder trial. I was nearly seven hours on the witness stand giving an account of the modern idea of epilepsy. The hallucinogen work was very useful because it means that I can speak from experience of some of the appalling variants on feeling to which we can be so easily subjected when our body chemistry goes out of action. In the best of us and the worst of us, the strongest or the weakest, the winds of heaven and hell can blow with hurricane force. For some reason or other they don't do so very often individually, so I suppose that instead we suffer them collectively. In Jung's terminology the archetypes denied their proper recognition don't fail to turn up in other forms. I have never been more impressed by the tremendous ritualistic quality of the law which it uses to purge away the individual ideas of revenge and to substitute calm thinking for hot anger.

The outcome of the trial was satisfactory in that the jury accepted the 1954 idea of epilepsy in spite of a very savage murder of a little girl being

involved. Even the little girl's grandmother said that she agreed. But what an odd thing it is to spend nine full days enquiring into 30 minutes or so in a little prairie town called Ogema in the night of 5<sup>th</sup> December 1953, "on or about" to use the lawyers' terms. I think the book I have in mind will be liked by the lawyers and useful to the lawyers. Also after nearly seven hours of examination and cross examination I think that I can write it.

I hope to send on a couple of the plays this coming week. I have been kept so busy this month that I forgot. Jane sends love. The poetess is in bed. She is learning to read and write. I shall bring mescaline and hope I'm not held up by the Harrison Act (narcotics).<sup>133</sup>

Love to you both,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46,  
Cal. 7 November 1954*

Dear Humphry,

Can you please give me a little information? Where is Hebb's work on the effects of restricted environment published? Or better still can you tell me in a line or two what was the nature of the experiences induced by being shut up in silence, in the dark? Were these visions of a mescaline-like kind? I want at least to mention the work in the essay on "Visionary Experience, Visionary Art and the Other World," which I am now enlarging.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.*

7 November 1954

My dear Aldous and Maria,

My plans have really gelled at last. I expect to breakfast with you in Los Angeles on the 18<sup>th</sup> November. I shall be flying from Pittsburgh that night and will take a bus to the Roosevelt Hotel and then taxi on. I should reach you about 7:30–8:00 full of unbearable early morning bonhomie, what used to be called the Kruschen feeling.<sup>134</sup> I would imagine that only a great chew of ololiuqui seeds will get me into such effervescent condition.

My New York schedule is very close packed. Puharich rang me up from New York to say that he will be coming up and we are going to discuss the use of hallucinogens in *psi* work. I think that ololiuqui and modified LSD should certainly be tried. There is good evidence that early in certain schizophrenic illnesses *psi* phenomena are facilitated. The highest scorer on the Zener cards<sup>135</sup> I ever saw was a young man in a mild schizophrenic episode. I shall also see Mrs Bouverie, Eileen Garrett, and the man from the foundation for the study of consciousness. I hope that from some, one, or all, funds for my trip to Jung will come (we shall also try Rockefeller, I think with a fair prospect of success as you shall hear later).

In the meanwhile the reorganisation of our old bin proceeds and gathers momentum. I think I told you that we opened 1½ wards<sup>136</sup> and had an unpleasant response from the business men of our little town. However it is gradually blowing over and the outcome is that we will have three times as many ladies and twice as many men on open wards as we did three months ago. We now have nearly 600 people and then we had only 250.

Our reorganisation is all ready to go ahead and when it is finished we shall have an entirely different and much more modern nursing organisation.

Do you know any wealthy engineer who would like to make some money? There is much money and social gain to be made by a clever engineer who can solve the problems of lifting patients in hospital at a moderate cost. If you know of any likely person do tell me. I have not yet managed to get down to my electronic nurse's training scheme but have been so very busy.

Butterworths are interested in my medicolegal book – not committed yet but I hope to get them hooked soon. Now the good news. Last Tuesday Abram and I made the first trial of iachimochrome (trihydroxyl N methyl indole), the isomer of adrenochrome of which I told you. We only had 40 mmg of it and this was not suitable for injection. We decided to use it orally and had to decide what dose to take. Guessing from rat work that it would be twice as toxic as adre-nochrome, we fixed on 5 mmg as a dose that would be unlikely to have any effect, but which would give us something to work up from. It is tasteless and dissolves in water. I didn't expect anything to happen, for although lysergic acid works in much smaller doses it is not a natural substance. However much to my surprise the stuff worked unequivocally, producing slight changes in visual perception, changes in thinking, and marked changes in mood and volition in the direction of apathy, anergy<sup>137</sup> and disinterest. It lasted for five or six hours acutely and in a lessened form for about 24 hours (I think). This is a very powerful and stable substance which has (I believe) been demonstrated in the animal body. It is much easier to handle and make than adrenochrome. You may be sure that we will pursue this scent hotly. My little lab here is ready and a technician moves in tomorrow. We shall study the chronic schizophrenics here and hope to isolate M-Substance from their urine in the near future. It is very exciting and hopeful. Try and find me an engineer with some money and ambition.

Jane sends love. So do I.

Yours affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. My addresses will be:

10<sup>th</sup> – November Hotel 70 Park Avenue

11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> November Hotel Berkeley Carteret, Asbury Park N. Jersey

15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> c/o Prof Katherine Taylor, Dept. of English, Gettysburg College,  
Gettysburg

18<sup>th</sup> – 740 N. Kings Rd L.A.

Helen says “send my love to Aldous and Maria – Maria, funny name. Give them my love, tell them that I’m tracing.” She would sing “Frère Jacques” and made a special song which I have promised to sing to you. “You don’t have to copy the same words Daddy.”

Duckies swimming in the water All the day and night  
Duckies swimming in the water When the stars were shining.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
7 December 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

We are all together again and very happy too except that Jane and I both wish that we were much nearer California. The prairie seemed very dreary as we drove across the flat succession of nine-mile stretches between the little towns. However the gloom lightened when I unpacked my bag and disgorged the treasures. Jane is greatly pleased, especially with the wonderful trousers and the black top which she is now wearing and which suits her as if she were one of George H-H’s<sup>138</sup> fashion ladies. Helen was much pleased by her duck brooches, by the cowboy (girl) outfit and of course Rose’s<sup>139</sup> doll. In fact everything including the handkerchief and even the potpourri (200 years old) has been much appreciated.

Jane has had the painters in in my absence and the house looks very chic and entirely suitable for lounging in black and scarlet. There has been some rearrangement of my books, for the better I expect but I shall have to get used to it.

I know you both know how much I enjoyed myself, from Joshua to Forest Lawns, from MGM Studios to the remarkable experiments in Santa Monica, from Auden<sup>140</sup> to Lutz,<sup>141</sup> from Brackett<sup>142</sup> to James,<sup>143</sup> from Mrs Kent<sup>144</sup> to Dr Swan,<sup>145</sup> it was an extraordinary, varied and delightful two weeks, a feast of people and places. Though of course the main thing was being with you both. I shall long remember my summer holiday. In Weyburn they are still trying to decide whether I have had a nervous

breakdown or not. The thought that I might have a holiday has not yet struck them. I am wondering whether the fact that I have brought back things from Japan will persuade them that I have been to the Orient. They are a funny though vexatious lot and I won't waste more time on them.

It was sad leaving you both and would have been sadder had I not been coming back to my dear Girls who are on very good form; although the small one was vexed that she didn't have a gun she is very pleased with her cowboy suit and the 3½ gallon hat.

The flight was uneventful except that I got an acute pain over one eye when we landed at San Francisco, very interesting though painful. I suppose that the frontal sinus blocked somehow. There was much cloud so I couldn't see Shasta. I had a Baptist minister as my stable mate who emphasized how valuable the written word was. He seemed a trifle idolatrous about it but I had to write to Jane about Forest Lawns so didn't discuss too much or refer him to *The Doors* which I'm told is being widely read on the West coast.

John Smythies met me at the airport and was very glad to have your messages. He enjoyed and benefited from the philosophers' conference. He is hard at work on his philosophic book which will I think be very important. He has found a valuable and interesting millionaire, Captain Hubbard,<sup>146</sup> a thickset active (pyknic,<sup>147</sup> not quite sure of the correct Sheldon classification) man who read *The Doors* and was enchanted, he has bought 20 copies so far. He is an airline owner and a uranium king. He is rich, but more important decent. He has taken mescaline and to quote a now hackneyed phrase says that it is the most wonderful thing that ever happened to him. He wants to help and I think is likely to do so because he looks upon his function as providing and seeing that money is provided, and not directing how it shall be used. He is in a position to help, having many well placed and well to do friends in both [the] U.S. and Canada, including Nelson Rockefeller who is apparently the most active of the old tycoon's spawn. The present plans are that Hubbard shall go down to New York after Christmas and should get (somehow) money for a preliminary planning group for Oversight to meet about February; this group would include you and Klüver (the original sponsors), Gardner Murphy, Abram Hoffer, John Smythies, Ducasse, Price, Nolan C.D. Lewis, and Suzuki if available. This would be a wide selection covering an enormously wide range of human activity. I have several politicians lined up. It will be one of the most

exciting pieces of work ever done. Do you know of any occasion reported in which many really able people have been able to meet and discuss transcendental experience from their own experience? Please tell Gerald about it. I shall be writing to him, but at the moment I have a great deal of back mail to catch up with, a book (perhaps two to write), several papers, several articles, and a few stories.\* If you see Mrs Leven you might tell her that I think I have a very nice story about foundations brewing up in my extra-liminal self.

I shall look forward to Aldous' ideas on the ending of *Mercutio*.<sup>148</sup> I won't send any flocks of messages because they are a nuisance to deliver, but please thank Marie and Annette for looking after me and Roselyn for the lovely stay in the desert, it was very fine. Please thank Miss Hall<sup>149</sup> for the fortune telling. I was very much impressed by her gift. Already it is becoming a list.

Jane sends her love as do I. Thank you both so much for a holiday which cannot be properly adjectived.<sup>150</sup>

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

\* Also 2–3 broadcasts

P.S. Remember about Trevor<sup>151</sup> and the Glucose. It may be helpful and is so very easy to do that it will be worth trying. I think it may be what he needs sometimes.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
24 December 1954*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I have been so busy one way and another (though often not very profitably) that I have done little writing. So much of one's time and energy here is expended on trivial and mechanical difficulties (or so they should be if we

were in any way properly equipped and organised), that a miserable accidie can descend and leave one doing nothing for several days. I have been in one of the accidie states and seem to be emerging. I must before long find some way to sustain us other than being a superintendent, but how remains to be seen. Still today I am more alive and possibly I have had a frustrated form of the flu which has been going around.

Jane has been very busy buying [at] all the Christmas stores and Weyburn has been full of various sorts of rejoicing. The liquor store is very busy and in spite of a bad year for grain the shops seem full. Helen is telling us that she isn't going to talk to us or give us any presents. This is a punishment for suggesting the Father Christmas might omit her if she were too horrid. "Mummy I'm not going to come near you any more. I'm not going to talk to you." However these threats don't last very long.

The three frogs and the red Japanese cow remind me that only a month ago we were experimenting in Santa Monica. I don't know which seems the more unlikely, Los Angeles or Weyburn, but I have no doubt which is the one I don't wish to be in. Yet places like this must be changed, they are such offences against dignity and decency, and when you know that there are several hundred Weyburns in North America, the need for adequate and sustained psychiatric research becomes clear and urgent. That is one of the most gloomy things. We are not the worst psychiatric hospital in North America, but lie somewhere in the upper part of the middle range. I would guess.

Did I tell you that we have done another iachimochrome experiment? There is, I think, no doubt that it works and that it resembles adrenochrome closely but is stable and can be taken by mouth. The condition that results is subtle and very queer. It is *not* in this dosage like mescal. One is just cut off from oneself and others. Everything is an effort, but one is not sleepy. One is not even sure that one has changed until afterwards. This is not heaven or hell. It is much more like limbo or the fields of asphodel, and I think that this is where most schizophrenic people reside most of their illness. Now the fascinating and very important thing about it is that this is a mild state of hallucinogenic activity. One is carried partly out of this world but not fully so and is in the situation of a ghost.

It is of peculiar interest that affect (mood) disappears in this condition but is very evident in the higher degree of intoxication. Whole new



continents for investigation are opening up and so far the evidence strongly supports the Bergsonian idea of a filter brain. A sort of osmotic membrane which is normally only permeable to this world, our world. Mescaline in high doses makes it permeable to the other and if pushed high enough the other ousts this. But there are conditions in which this world and the other can be in almost exact equilibrium. Then one is in a state of no world, for in some odd way one cannot have affective tone (mood) without involvement. The mescal world is one in which grand emotions can take charge, our world is mainly a place of small emotions (selfish), but in the world between there are no emotions. One lies becalmed between world and heaven or hell, drained of feeling. The Greeks as usual were well aware of this, but we seem to have forgotten it.

What is so extraordinary is that the disappearance of emotion and its reappearance has never been very much commented on before. Yet it is, I think, a very astonishing observation. Only the hallucinogens will bring out this – sedatives, alcohol, etc. with most people don't. Ether and CO<sub>2</sub> etc. are too transient and fleeting and no one has managed to keep anyone in the same condition as mescal etc. for more than a few minutes at most. How little we really know about these experiences!

It is very entertaining telling people about the James' (is that the name?) and the regression to previous lives. One could tell an obscene or blasphemous story with much less consternation. Some of my colleagues find that odd little story really disturbing. Such things cannot and must not be, where would our safe little world be if it were? One of my doctors, an intelligent man, even insists that science only concerns itself with what can be easily repeated. It is hard to see how astronomy, archaeology, sociology, geology would be judged if this were really the criterion of science. There is a tendency to equate the controlled experiment with science although this is only one of many methods which are available. It is interesting that [the] Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, who have a research committee, are now studying controls and show that these are only appropriate for certain sorts of experiments and are inappropriate in others.

Have you ever thought about an essay on the altering fashions in credibility? We now accept many ideas which the well informed and skeptical man of 50, 100, 200 years ago would have dismissed as nonsense.

Indeed I suppose that in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century intelligent men were at their least credulous. That outlook was the fashionable attitude for the well informed. Science was advancing, but not too quickly so that in a human lifetime it was unlikely that many or indeed any of the current views would be completely discredited. Superstition was rife among uneducated people, but the gulf was wide. The world was brutal, orderly and very predictable. In addition well informed people believed that although it might not become less brutal it would certainly become more orderly and predictable. The 18<sup>th</sup> century man of science would have scorned alchemists and puffers and other simpletons who believed in the transmutation of metals. Equally they would have scorned ESP phenomena. They could not have known that the common sense world was just coming to an end and no one would have credited that science would do the most to destroy it. What a strange construct that commonsense world was, although never of course complete. It is easy to see why it was so attractive to men of varying temperaments and political views. The only trouble is that it doesn't happen to represent the world, as it is.

To what extent does what we consider possible determine what is possible? In science once people seriously thought about flight, or radio, or the release of atomic energy, and very soon we discovered how to do it. There is a curious relationship here between imagination and discovery which Blake was well aware of, "What is now discovered was once only imagined." Though I don't know why Blake of all people wrote "only."

How is *The Doors* selling? I am especially interested because people in Canada seem to be getting very interested in it. I had enquiries from a man in Vancouver who had read about it in a German scientific magazine. It has become a landmark in this field and will, I hope, be much more of a landmark than most people imagine because it will, I think, be the first of a series of explorations. I am very hopeful that if we pick the right people we can change the intellectual and spiritual climate very quickly. We must select carefully. Let me know what you think of Captain Hubbard. Remember his function is that of quartermaster, not staff officer. Take care of both yourselves. The poetess is in a bubble bath. She is keenly awaiting Father Christmas. Let us pray that 1955 will see our enterprise progressing. Jane sends love.

Love to you both,  
Humphry

p.s. Please tell George Cukor<sup>152</sup> that according to Canada's leading commentator he is the director of the year. I felt very proud at having met him and enjoyed his warm and creative company.

1 Perhaps a reference to Edward Lear's *Laughable Lyrics* (1894).

2 Reference to St Francis de Sales's (1567–1622) *Introduction to the Devout Life*, first published in 1609.

3 The Rockefeller Foundation, established in 1913, has the mission of promoting the well-being of humanity throughout the world.

4 Houris are beautiful young women in Islamic mythology.

5 David R. Hawkins (1927–2012). American psychiatrist and renowned spiritualist.

6 Fellow of the Royal Society.

7 William Gordon Lennox (1884–1960). American neurologist who specialized in epilepsy.

8 Wilhelm Nero Pilate Barbellion (1889–1919). Pen name of Bruce Frederick Cummings, English diarist. *The Journal of a Disappointed Man*, based on Cummings's experience with multiple sclerosis, was published in 1919.

9 *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.

10 *Journal of the American Psychiatric Association*.

11 Frederic W.H. Myers (1843–1901). English classicist and a co-founder of the Society for Psychical Research.

12 Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900). English utilitarian philosopher and a co-founder of the Society for Psychical Research.

13 Edmund Gurney (1847–88). English psychologist and a co-founder of the Society for Psychical Research.

14 Paul Eugen Bleuler (1857–1939). Swiss psychiatrist, eugenicist, and early mentor to Carl Jung. Bleuler coined the terms "schizophrenia" as well as "ambivalence" and "autism."

15 Ivan Pavlov (1849–1936). Russian physiologist known for his work on behavioural conditioning.

16 John B. Watson (1878–1958). American psychologist and pioneering behaviourist.

17 The inscription reads: "For Humphry, the only begetter of this book, in friendship, Aldous 1954."

18 Reference to William Blake's poem "Eternity."

19 Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher (1742–1819). Prussian general who greeted Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo in 1815.

20 Albert Einstein (1879–1955). German-born theoretical physicist. The reference is probably to his prediction regarding light bending around large gravitational bodies.

21 George Chapman (fl. 1559–1634). English dramatist, poet, and classics scholar best known for his translations of Homer (1616).

22 John Keats (1795–1821). English Romantic poet whose sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" was published in 1816.

23 Robert Koch (1843–1910). German physician, microbiologist, and researcher who developed four postulates that became fundamental in subsequent research on infectious diseases.

24 Carlo Gesualdo (1566–1613). Italian musician. Huxley delivered a lecture, "Gesualdo: Variations on a Musical Theme," to the Southern California Chamber Music Society on 27 October 1955. The

talk was published in Huxley's *Adonis and the Alphabet and Other Essays* (1956).

25 Huxley's lecture, "Education in the Non-Verbal Humanities," was given in early December 1953.

26 Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869–1955). Australian therapist and inventor of the Alexander Technique who advocated "kinesthetic re-education." Huxley became his patient in 1935 and attributed improved health to him. The character Miller in Huxley's novel *Eyeless in Giza* (1936) is modelled, at least in part, on Alexander.

27 William Horatio Bates (1860–1931). Pioneering American oculist. Huxley became a practitioner of Bates's eye therapy methods and wrote *The Art of Seeing* (1942), detailing his experience using the method, which he claimed improved his own eyesight.

28 Luigi Bonpensiere (1895–1944). Huxley wrote the foreword to his book *New Pathways to Piano Technique: A Study of the Relations between Mind and Body with Special Reference to Piano Playing*, which was compiled posthumously by the author's wife and published in 1953.

29 Eugen Herrigel (1884–1955). German philosopher whose writings helped introduce Zen to European audiences. His *Zen in the Art of Archery* was published in English in 1953.

30 John Marshall Weir (1911–92). American physician and pathologist who became director of medical and natural sciences at the Rockefeller Foundation.

31 President of the Royal College of Physicians.

32 Alexis St Martin (1802–80). Canadian voyager known as the subject of experiments conducted on him by Dr William Beaumont (1785–1853) from 1822 to 1833.

33 Lavrentiy Pavlovich Beria (1899–1953). Soviet politician who served under Joseph Stalin.

34 Paul de Kruif (1890–1971). American microbiologist and author.

35 Herman de Jong (1895–1956). Dutch psychiatrist and neurophysiologist.

36 Rudolf Altschul (1901–63). Czech-born neuropathologist and neuropsychiatrist who spent most of his career in Saskatchewan.

37 Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951). Austrian composer and expressionist painter. Huxley knew Schoenberg and wrote about his music, generally with praise.

38 Harry Stack Sullivan (1892–1949). American psychiatrist and psychoanalyst.

39 Clarence Hincks (1885–1964). Canadian physician, mentalhealth reformer, and a co-founder of the Canadian Mental Health Association in 1918.

40 Jacob Boehme (1575–1624). German mystic and theologian.

41 St John of the Cross (1542–91). Spanish Carmelite and mystic who wrote extensively on the soul. His *The Dark Night of the Soul* was published between 1581 and 1585.

42 Jacob Stainer (1619–83). Austrian violin maker.

43 John Zachary Young (1907–97). English zoologist and neurophysiologist.

44 Edwin Muir (1887–1959). Scottish poet, novelist, and literary critic.

45 *The Diabolic Root* (1934) was written by Italian-born American anthropologist Vincent M. Petrullo (1909–91).

46 Naomi Mitchison (1897–1999). Scottish novelist who was the daughter of John Scott Haldane and the sister of J.B.S. Haldane, both noted scientists.

47 Alva LaSalle Kitselman (1914–80). American mathematician and psychologist.

48 Arthur David Waley (1889–1966). English Orientalist and translator of classic works such as the six-volume *The Tale of Genji* (1921–33). *Monkey* (1942) is his abridged translation of Wu Cheng'en's sixteenth-century novel *Journey to the West*.

49 Ernest Bevin (1881–1951). Labour member of Parliament and foreign secretary in the Labour government from 1945 to 1951.

50 *Men Seeking God* was produced as a television series by the British Broadcasting Corporation in May 1954 and published as a book of the same title in 1955.

51 Ohrbach's Department Store was based in New York with stores in Los Angeles and elsewhere.

- 52 Gerald William Thomas Hunter Fleming (1895–1962). British psychiatrist and botanist, as well as a co-editor of several editions of *Recent Progress in Psychiatry*, first published in 1944.
- 53 Roger Godel (1898–1961). French cardiologist, classicist, and spiritualist.
- 54 Ladislao Reti (1901–73). Italian industrialist, chemical engineer, and professor at the University of California, Los Angeles. He was the editor of Leonardo da Vinci's (1452–1519) *Codex Madrid* (1974), which contains a reference to da Vinci's "mechanical knight," or soldier robot.
- 55 Richard H.F. Manske (1901–77). Canadian professor of chemistry and editor of the multi-volume *Alkaloids: Chemistry and Physiology* (1950–77).
- 56 "Outsight" is the term Huxley and Osmond coined to describe the project discussed during Osmond's first visit to Los Angeles and referred to in Osmond's letter of 25 May 1953. It proposed involving 50 to 100 highly respected individuals in different fields, who would participate by taking mescaline or another psychedelic substance under the auspices of Osmond and his colleagues. The participants would record their experiences, which were to be later published. The project was intended to draw attention to the transformative power of a psychedelic substance for the individual (insight) but also had the aim of communicating to officials and the public in a larger sphere (outsight) an understanding of what might be called a higher reality. The project had a few draft plans, but none were ever published and the project was never done. See Symons, *Aldous Huxley's Hands*.
- 57 The William T. Grant Foundation, founded in 1936, supports research on the development and well-being of young people.
- 58 The Josiah Macy Foundation, founded in 1930, focuses on the education of health care professionals. Huxley and Osmond both had extensive dealings with the foundation, including publishing in the proceedings of their conferences.
- 59 Hermann Rorschach (1884–1922). Swiss psychiatrist best known for developing a psychological test based on people's perceptions of inkblots.
- 60 Reference to Jung's *On the Psychology of Dementia Praecox* (1907). Jung states that during his research for that book, he "realized that paranoid ideas and hallucinations contain a germ of meaning." See Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 127.
- 61 Osmond published "The Spoken Paper" in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 71, no. 1 (1954): 49–54.
- 62 Broadcast on the CBC Radio program "What's on Your Mind?" on 16 March 1954. Radio drama in which a psychiatric nurse volunteers for an experiment involving the use of LSD in the examination of the thought patterns of schizophrenics.
- 63 Elegant (Middle English).
- 64 Maria's insertion of the parenthetical question mark may suggest that Aldous was given such advice by more than one person, perhaps including a doctor or even herself.
- 65 William McDougall (1871–1938). English psychologist who was an important figure in the development of social psychology.
- 66 A charitable trust established by William Morris, Lord Nuffield, in London in 1943 that was aimed at improving social well-being.
- 67 Neil M. Agnew (1924–2016). Canadian psychologist.
- 68 Max Sherover (1889–1959). American inventor who developed the cerebograph. In 1929 he wrote a science fiction story, "Cerebro-phone, Inc.," about a sleep-teaching device.
- 69 A New York institution, located in the St Moritz Hotel, that began as a tea and pastry shop in 1930 and began serving alcohol when prohibition ended in 1933; it closed around 1998.
- 70 Leo Katz (1887–1982). Czech-born artist, printmaker, photographer, and teacher who trained in Vienna and moved to the United States in 1921.

- 71 Ellen Hovde Huxley (b. 1925). Matthew Huxley's first wife, who remained a close friend of Osmond for years to come.
- 72 Franz Joseph Kallman (1897–1965). German-born American psychiatrist and geneticist.
- 73 Ava Alice Muriel Astor (1902–56). American heiress and socialite, as well as the only daughter of John Jacob Astor, who was lost on the Titanic. She took David Pleydell-Bouverie, son of the 5th Earl of Radnor, as her last of five husbands.
- 74 Abram Hoffer, Humphry Osmond, and John R. Smythies, "Schizophrenia: A New Approach II, Result of a Year's Research," *Journal of Mental Science* 100, no. 418 (January 1954): 29–45.
- 75 Thomas Clement Douglas (1904–86). Member of Canadian Parliament and premier of Saskatchewan from 1944 to 1961.
- 76 Founded in 1946, Matador is one of the most successful co-operative farms established in Saskatchewan.
- 77 Letter not dated but written on letterhead showing conference dates of 20–30 April. This is a reply to Osmond's letter of 23 April. It was also apparently not received before Osmond's letter of 30 April since Osmond responded to Huxley's comment about his penmanship in his letter of 8 May.
- 78 Curt John Ducasse (1881–1969). French-born American philosopher and parapsychologist.
- 79 Gabriel Marcel (1889–1973). French philosopher and existentialist.
- 80 Clement Mundle (1916–89). Scottish philosopher and parapsychologist.
- 81 Hans Bender (1907–91). German psychologist and parapsychologist.
- 82 Marcel Martiny (1897–1982). French psychologist and parapsychologist.
- 83 Alain Jean Joseph Assailly (fl. 1909–80). French physician and parapsychologist.
- 84 Alastair Sutherland (1909–81). This review was published in *The Twentieth Century* 155 (May 1954): 441–9. Subsequent issues continued the dialogue between Osmond and Sutherland.
- 85 Seabury Edwardes, "An Experiment with Peyote (*Lophophora Williamsii*)," *National Cactus and Succulent Journal* 8, no. 3 (September 1953): 59–60.
- 86 Paul Haun (1906–69). American psychiatrist who is noted for his work on design of mental hospitals as well as the benefits of recreation for the mentally ill.
- 87 Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, known as Le Corbusier (1887–1965). French-Swiss architect regarded as a pioneer of modern architecture.
- 88 Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959). Prolific American architect and pioneer of the Prairie School movement in architecture.
- 89 See William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, III.iii.
- 90 *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.
- 91 Bufotenine is one of the ingredients in the seeds of *piptadenia peregrine*, from which the Indians of Trinidad prepare a hallucinogenic snuff they call cohoba or yopo.
- 92 Henry David Thoreau (1817–62). American writer and philosopher best known as a leader of the transcendental movement.
- 93 Osmond says that the "flower-her-mother" is a euphonic play on words in a language group of southern Mexico. See Osmond, "Ololiuqui," 537.
- 94 *The Imprisoned Splendour* (1953) was written by English physicist and parapsychologist Raynor Carey Johnson (1909–87).
- 95 Alexander Gilchrist (1828–61). English literary and art critic whose *The Life of William Blake*, from which Osmond quotes, was published in 1863.
- 96 William Hayley (1745–1820). English writer and friend of William Blake.
- 97 Bertrand Russell (1872–1970). British philosopher, mathematician, and peace advocate whom Huxley first met at Garsington in 1918. His "Wireless Notes" was published in the *New Statesman*, 15 September 1928, 708–10.
- 98 Trihydroxy-n-methylindole, a chemical compound also known as adrenolutin.

- 99 John Harley-Mason (1920–2003). English chemist and professor at Cambridge University.
- 100 Osmond attended Guy's Hospital Medical School in London.
- 101 Kiyoshi Izumi (1921–96). Canadian architect first mentioned by name in Osmond's letter of 4 February 1957.
- 102 Peter MacDonald Tow (1921–2015). English psychosurgeon whose *Personality Changes Following Frontal Leukotomy* was published in 1955.
- 103 Hugh Cairns (1896–1952). Australian neurosurgeon who spent most of his life in Britain.
- 104 Enoch Arnold Bennett (1867–1931). English novelist and essayist.
- 105 *The Lost Cavern* was published in 1949.
- 106 M.R. James (1862–1936). English author and medievalist known for his ghost stories.
- 107 Ian Dishart Suttie (1898–1935). His *The Origins of Love and Hate* was published posthumously in 1935. Tavistock is a psychiatric clinic in London that pioneered work in family dynamics and child psychotherapy.
- 108 Ozymandias was a Greek term for Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses II. Osmond here refers to Huxley's planned travels to Egypt. See Huxley's letter of the end of April 1954.
- 109 David Zaslavsky (1880–1965). Infamous journalist for *Pravda*, the official newspaper of the Communist Party.
- 110 Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy (known as Leo Tolstoy, 1828–1910). Prolific Russian writer best known for his novels.
- 111 Reference to the investigation of J. Robert Oppenheimer (1904–67), an American physicist known for his early work on the atomic bomb, by the United States Atomic Energy Commission in 1954.
- 112 Matthew 12:43–45: “When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds *it empty, swept, and put in order*. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.” Osmond wrote in error verses 43–46.
- 113 Andrew Marvell (1621–78). English metaphysical poet. Osmond refers to “The Garden,” published posthumously in 1681.
- 114 Richard Evans Schultes (1915–2001). American biologist who may be considered the father of modern ethnobotany for his studies of Indigenous peoples' uses of plants.
- 115 Acedia, sloth (Middle English).
- 116 Winfred Overholser (1892–1964). American psychiatrist who served as superintendent of St Elizabeth's Psychiatric Hospital in Washington, DC, for twenty-five years. The expatriate American poet and critic Ezra Pound (1885–1972) was a patient there from 1945 to 1958.
- 117 Walter Evans-Wentz (1817–1965). American anthropologist and pioneer researcher in Tibetan Buddhism whose *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* was published in 1954.
- 118 *Halsbury's Laws of England* was first published in 1929 by Butterworths, an English legal publishing company. The second edition, consisting of thirty-three volumes, was published from 1948 to 1954.
- 119 Max Aitken, 1st Baron Beaverbrook (1879–1964). Canadian businessman and politician.
- 120 Huxley gave the opening talk of the Institute for Contemporary Art's eighth annual lecture series on 1 October 1954. It was entitled “Visionary Art and Visionary Experience.”
- 121 In the margins of this letter, Osmond wrote “N.B. our patient Mr [—].” The patient is very likely the one referred to in Osmond's letter of 21 September 1954.
- 122 Working title for Osmond's handbook, which never came to fruition.

- 123 Jules Henry (1904–69). American anthropologist specializing in psychiatric approaches to the field.
- 124 Mary Louise Lynch (1909–2006). Canadian lawyer.
- 125 A folecat (variant of polecat) is a type of weasel; see Aesop’s mouse and weasel fable, where the mice, with pride and honour, start a war but are routed by the mocking weasels.
- 126 Florence Nightingale (1820–1910). English statistician, writer, and social reformer best known as the founder of modern nursing whose *Notes on Nursing: What It Is, and What It Is Not* was published in 1859.
- 127 Reference to literary figures (one based on Thomas the Rhymer) who were abducted when straying from their intended course.
- 128 William Herbert Sheldon (1898–1977). American psychologist whose *Atlas of Men: A Guide for Somatyping the Adult Male at All Ages* (1954) is one of several books he wrote on somatyping, or categorizing the physique by the relative concentration of three fundamental elements: endomorphy, mesomorphy, and ectomorphy. An individual was assigned a numeric profile using a seven-point scale based on physique. As Huxley explained in “Who Are You?” (1944), a 1-2-7 was likely to be thin and nervous, whereas a 4-4-4 would be perfectly balanced. Sheldon associated these somatypes with psychological traits, a practice that has since been abandoned. The planned *Atlas of Women* was never completed.
- 129 In the margin at the end of this letter, Osmond wrote “The poetess’s three songs about kings and queens.” The poetess here is Osmond’s first daughter, Helen, and he references these songs in his reply to this letter.
- 130 Tobias Lasser (1911–2006). Venezuelan botanist.
- 131 Katherine Kressman Taylor (1903–96). American author known for *Address Unknown* (1938), a collection of short stories.
- 132 The factor in extrasensory perception and psychokinesis experiences that is not explained by known physical or biological mechanisms.
- 133 Reference to the Harrison Narcotics Tax Act of 1914, which combined three US House bills targeting opium.
- 134 Kruschen medicinal salts, popular in the 1920s and 1930s, were notable for a popular advertisement jingle that promised invigoration and eternal youth.
- 135 Karl Edward Zener (1903–64). American psychologist and colleague of Joseph Banks Rhine. He developed “Zener cards” in the 1930s as a means of testing extrasensory perception. Their use was found unreliable for various reasons and has been discredited.
- 136 Opening a ward means leaving the doors unlocked, allowing the patients to come and go as they wish.
- 137 “Anergy” here is used in the archaic sense, meaning lacking energy, rather than in the modern scientific sense related to immune response.
- 138 George Hoyningen-Huene (1900–68). Russian-born fashion photographer who worked primarily in the United States.
- 139 Rose Nys de Haulleville Wessberg (1908–99). Maria’s sister, whom Osmond met on his second trip to Los Angeles.
- 140 W.H. Auden (1917–73). English poet who became an American citizen.
- 141 Dr Lutz was a physician who treated Maria Huxley.
- 142 Charles Brackett (1892–1969). American screenwriter and film producer.
- 143 Edward James (1907–84). English poet and patron of surrealist art who came to know Huxley, Heard, and the English-American novelist Christopher Isherwood (1904–86) through their shared interest in mysticism.



144 Anne Marie Louise Wanamaker Kent (1895–1955). Granddaughter of John Wanamaker, the department store magnate.

145 Harold J.C. Swan (1923–2005). American cardiologist and pioneer in heart catheterization.

146 Alfred Matthew Hubbard (1901–82). American businessman and early proponent of LSD.

147 Stocky, thickset.

148 “Mercutio” was the working title of a play that Osmond began to write but never completed.

149 Elsa Hall. Clairvoyant who was a close friend of Maria Huxley.

150 In a privately held letter to his wife, Jane, on 22 November 1954, Osmond provides his impressions of the Huxleys on his second visit to their home: “Aldous is very shy and also very self-centered. He is also enormously intelligent. He peeks at people like a bacteriologist examining queer bugs and includes himself in this relentless and often destructive analysis. He is fearfully well equipped, for he is not only intelligent, but industrious and in his own unexpected way both obstinate and determined. He could very easily become, what brother Julian seems to be, almost ahuman. That he has not done so is, I think, due to Maria whose unselfishness and humanity has acted as a lens of Aldous’ weak spiritual as well as his physical vision. Once he has such a lens he becomes much more effective than a normal person, but without it he could very easily get lost. Maria has done this wonderfully well and so inconspicuously that I doubt that one person in ten who knows Aldous realizes how vitally important she has been. Without her I think that his great intelligence might have drifted away from any real contact with the world of human beings. As it is he is slowly getting closer to it.”

151 Reference to Mark Trevenen Huxley (b. 1951), son of Matthew and grandson of Aldous.

152 George Cukor (1899–1983). Legendary American film director and friend of the Huxleys.

1955

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
11 January 1955*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I do hope that Maria's lumbago is better. Thank you for the letter. It was splendid to hear Aldous' voice, though quite unexpected. It made the short and bitter day a little warmer. It is cold enough here, 15 below tonight, that is about 50° of frost. It is to be hoped that it doesn't get much colder – a steady 60–70° is both inconvenient and dangerous.

I have just finished carving \$40,000 of a budget (our total budget is \$2,400,000) and luckily we can do this without damaging anything vital. Indeed we have kept our most important money completely intact, \$10,000 for patient incentives. We are now wondering how to work it.

So glad you like the Captain. I felt he was the sort of man we need. I wish he would come and be my business manager here. He would make them scuttle. However I have two groups of advisers in the hospital and feel we are moving. It has taken a year's heaving and pulling to do it. But to return to the Captain. He is just cut out to get these projects going. The practical man to all outward appearances but with a fine sense of adventure. I will see what we can do to get John S. to go on further expeditions. It is a trifle idolatrous to make too much of fear.

Now I am enclosing a script (not quite completed) of a Sunday night talk on *The Doors* for the CBC (the official Canadian radio). This will be in a very favored position and is called our special speaker. It has not been accepted yet but I think it has a good chance of being taken.

First, do you approve of it?

Second, if you do, would it not be wise to let your publishers know that they will be getting nine minutes free radio time and that they are dunces if they can't ensure that plenty of copies are available soon after the broadcast?

I will tell you as soon as I know when the broadcast is due so that you can let Chatto's or should it be Harper's know. It seems to me that we shouldn't let this opportunity be missed.

News keeps on coming in. The latest is most interesting. First, work on urines shows that there is something odd in schizophrenic urines suggesting that organic acids are present. Second, work in Utah shows that schizophrenic urines contain very different indoles from normal. There are 27 of them and some are quite new. The chase is getting very brisk now. Abram feels that the break through may come quite quickly. I feel that this makes it essential to use this momentum to launch Oversight. We must get working on these great matters.

I was much interested in the group experiment and am eagerly awaiting reports. I wish I had been there as a participant, not an observer. We have just lost five grams of adrenochrome, went bad on us, and so we have no iachimochrome for the present. It is very annoying to be sitting playing around with \$40,000 when we should be exploring. However I suppose that it is as well to have our poor patients' plight in front of one's eyes.

Please send me your approval or disapproval without delay. Am very interested in the witch's<sup>1</sup> for us on the west coast. They seem unlikely at present, but she may well know. Do tell me more about Dr Lutz and Sophia. What happened? What about the treasure? Jane likes the idea of the West Coast. Have you seen the previous lifers yet? Why not future lives too?

Did you hear from Dr Carlyle King?<sup>2</sup> He said that he would send you his essay on Aldous and I wondered whether it arrived safely. I know that he is very anxious to know what the subject thinks of the painter. He is a nice man. The political chief of the party in power here. He seems an honest and honorable man to me, he spends much of his energy trying to see that political string pullers don't interfere with decent government. A humanist not a sentimentalist.

I hope that the new nursing script has arrived safely. It didn't matter losing the other because I have a master copy here.

Helen is out skating much of the day and is very ferocious.

Please remember me to everyone. I do hope we shall meet again very soon.

Let me know if you have any difficulty getting the niacin and I will see what I can do.

Jane sends love to you both and so of course do I.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

P.S. How are Marie and Annette?<sup>3</sup> Have they tried Trevor with some sugar in the evenings?

P.P.S. Very interesting account of an epileptic who in a psychic epilepsy spoke excellent Russian. No trace that he had ever known or met any Russians, am searching for doctor who told this story. It will be interesting to get it from her. May be a false scent. But will tell you later.

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
12 January 1955*

Dear Humphry,

It was good to hear your voice so clearly across the intervening spaces. Your nice Captain tried a new experiment – group mescalization. It worked very well for Gerald and myself,<sup>4</sup> hardly at all for Bill Forthman,<sup>5</sup> who was given a small dose (200 mmg to our 300) and who had a subconscious resistance of tremendous power, and rather poorly for Hubbard, who tried to run the group in the way he had run other groups in Vancouver, where the drug has worked as a device for raising buried guilts and traumas and permitting people to get on to better terms with themselves. Gerald and I evaded him and went somewhere else – but not to the remote Other Worlds of the previous experiments. In both cases, albeit in different ways, it was a transcendental experience within *this* world and with human references. I hope to write something about my experience and will send you a copy in due course. Meanwhile I am hopeful that the good Captain, whose connections with Uranium seem to serve as a passport into the most exalted spheres of government, business and ecclesiastical polity, is about to take off for New York, where I hope he will storm the United

Nations, take Nelson Rockefeller for a ride to Heaven and return with millions of dollars. What Babes in the Wood we literary gents and professional men are! The great World occasionally requires your services, is mildly amused by mine; but its full attention and deference are paid to Uranium and Big Business. So what extraordinary luck that this representative of both these Higher Powers should (a) have become so passionately interested in mescaline and (b) be such a very nice man.

I am enclosing a letter from France, which I mislaid and have just recovered from the depths of a coat pocket. I have asked this pharmacological lady<sup>6</sup> to send you a copy of her thesis direct. It might be of some interest.

Poor Maria still has the lumbago. We have begun an ultrasonic treatment of the back under Dr Lutz, who recently acquired one of the new German machines, and I hope very much that this may do the trick.

Our love to you both.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
15 January 1955*

My dear Aldous and Maria,

Your letters and pc's keep me informed of the battle and it is all interesting and exciting. I do hope that Maria's lumbago is better, on such occasions I wish that I had studied some more immediately useful branch of medicine. But had I done so I would never have met you both. So I suppose you can't have it every way.

The Captain as you say is what we need as an ally and friend and what we seemed quite unlikely to find. The practical man who doesn't believe in being practical except in business. I hope that this improbable good fortune continues. I think Gerald's idea of changing the focal length of awareness is

a very good one and it seems that there are all sorts of possibilities, many of which have never even been properly thought about let alone investigated.

Rarely is it possible for a symbiosis to take place between men of different temperaments, interests and capacities, but when it does take place what marvelous opportunities will occur. For the goal here is not a selfish personal one, and does not call for each to sink his individuality for the common aim. Each is to expand his individuality and in that way the selfish "I" will be eroded into a selfless "we." But this "we" is not based on the regressive mass mind which is what we see in most self-losing group activities so far. This arises from an expansive mind into which one merges by growing upwards and not downwards. The individual discrete "ego" very much objects to becoming "part of the main" when the main so far as he can see it is nasty and brutish. The possibility of expanding into a higher group activity has only been the preoccupation (in the west) of rather crankish groups whose main idea was usually to be different from their fellows. I look forward keenly to more news. I am very hopeful that the answer to the regressive mass mind is the potentiated group mind which can be carefully designed and balanced so that its creative energies will be self-perpetuating. Do let me know your views on this. It looks as if Gerald's hunch under mescaline about William Forthman was right.

I can see why you and Gerald did not preoccupy yourselves with the buried past, "let the dead bury their dead." It may be necessary to come to terms with the past, sometimes it is essential but it is a grievous mistake to suppose that delving into it is sure to make everything fine.

My Special Speaker program has been accepted and I put it on tape next week – if you utterly object please let me know, otherwise let your publisher know that if he is at all wise he will ask CBC when it is going on the air and get some supplies over pronto. I shall be very interested to know if your publisher sees any difference in sales. I have no idea whether it will have any effect or not, but of course I hope so.

I hope that the thesis will arrive safely. We are very interested in iachimochrome, it is queer and powerful and once we have a supply of it we shall be able to get a more accurate picture of it. On first acquaintance it is a strong bidder for a real schizogen. Waiting for supplies is so annoying, ... one<sup>7</sup> feels that the mechanical detail shouldn't hold us up. We should have chemists and all available but we haven't and the irony is that those who

have often can't and don't know how to use them. However in spite of this we are making progress so I suppose it is churlish to complain.

The ololiuqui paper (an abridgement) has been accepted by the *BMJ* and I hope to get the full version in the *Journal of Mental Science*. I have a paper called "The Doctor in Court" coming out in the Canadian Medical Journal.<sup>8</sup> We hope to be publishing a "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III" soon.

So we must wish the Captain God speed and hope that he will raise the needed monies expeditiously. I think that at last science has provided us with the tools to evolve in wisdom as well as cleverness. The Diabolic Root ↔ The Divine Plant. At least I hope so. Hope Maria is feeling better. Jane sends love. I have some new pictures of Helen and will send one soon.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
16 January 1955*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter and the script of the talk, which I like very much indeed. All I can suggest by way of change is an addition of a line or two, indicating a little more specifically than you do what may be expected from systematic research with mescaline and similar substances. One would expect, for example, that new light might be shed on the workings of artistic and scientific insight, and perhaps some control gained over the otherwise random and gratuitous process of inspiration. One would also expect light to be shed on the problems of parapsychology. Also on those of philosophy and religion.

Gerald and I had another day with Al Hubbard, down at Long Beach. He has provided us both with a stock of carbon dioxide and oxygen mixture. I have tried this stuff before, without much effect. But I suspect it was not administered properly, and maybe there will, after all, be something

to be learned by means of this simple and harmless procedure. Hubbard himself swears by it.

Maria has just left for a couple of days at the hospital, where the doctors want to run a series of tests to see why, as well as this long drawn lumbago, she has been running temperatures every evening. I suppose it is some infection in the intestine or kidney, and hope they will be able to put their finger on it and get rid of it; for she has had much too long a siege of pain and below-parness. I will let you know when I hear what the results of the tests are. Meanwhile, fare well and don't work too hard. A live grasshopper is better than a dead ant.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
22 January 1955*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter.

First as to Maria – she returns from hospital today. The brace with which she has been fitted seems already to have made a great difference to her general state. For by taking the strain off the damaged area, it prevents a constant leak of vitality from taking place and at the same time permits the nerves issuing from that area to carry their charge, unimpeded, to the viscera. Some liver trouble was found; but the doctor seems to think that much of this will clear up spontaneously as the result of helping the back. I think he is also embarking on a treatment of some kind. So I hope all will be well within a short time. Meanwhile she has had, and is to have more, X-ray treatments on the back, which are often very helpful in these vaguely arthritic conditions.

Now for what you say about crowds and groups. This whole subject has been well discussed, with copious documentation from past and current history, by Philippe de Félice<sup>9</sup> in his *Foules en Délire, Ecstases Collectives*,



which is a most valuable book. He draws the distinction between crowd psychology and group psychology – comparing the downward self-transcendence of crowd consciousness to a kind of collective psychological cancer, and the horizontal or upward self-transcendence of group agape and solidarity to the growth of a healthy organ. And, in effect, democratic civilization is based on voluntary group activities; dictatorship, on mob emotions and non-voluntary groupings, where the aim is above all to indoctrinate the members with the ideology, in terms of which the mob-ecstasy is rationalized, and to promote habits of obedience and mutual espionage. The frenzies induced by mob ecstasy are beyond imagination. What fiction writer could have invented, for example, the self-castrations during the Adonis rites? or the collective flagellations of the great whipping crusades of 1259 and 1347? or the orgy of destruction described by Ortega y Gasset,<sup>10</sup> when an entire Spanish city was devastated by a crowd which, so far as I remember, was simply celebrating some kind of a national holiday. It seems possible that there are physiological factors involved as well as merely psychological ones – that the mob produces an electrical, chemical, thermal field, in which the nervous system of its individual members bathes as in a poisonous bath. If mescaline can be used to raise the horizontal self-transcendence which goes on within purposive groups – professional, religious, therapeutic, artistic – so that it becomes an upward self-transcendence, partaking in some measure of the mystical experience, then something remarkable will have been accomplished.

I received yesterday a letter from a Swiss literary critic, who had reviewed the *Doors* in a Zurich paper, and, along with the letter, a pamphlet, *Mescaline and LSD Rausch*, by László Mátéfi.<sup>11</sup> The pamphlet was sent to the critic by Prof. F. Georgi.<sup>12</sup> I haven't read it yet – and hesitate to begin, since it is always such a sweat to read German. Do you know this document? And, if not, would you like it?

Love from us both to both of you.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
29 January 1955

My dear Aldous and Maria,

I am so glad to hear that Maria is better and that the back support is giving her relief. "One May Morning in Hollywood" has been accepted by the CBC and will be broadcast on 6<sup>th</sup> February (next Sunday) at 8:20 p.m. I'm told from Toronto. I hope that people will rush out from their houses and storm the book shops for copies of *The Doors*. Without being too narcissistic it sounded well to me when I listened to them playing it over on the tape.

I am writing this from a sick bed, not a very serious one. Two weeks of hotel life have sapped me so that last night after a drive of 70 miles in a ground blizzard I got home with a mild fever and an ache in every joint. Large quantities of fluid are driving away the aches and agues and I hope to be up tomorrow.

It has been a hectic two weeks. The mornings and afternoons spent in negotiating a contract with our union and the evenings at meetings with colleagues usually on research. I suppose I did a steady 12 hour day and more. The research is galloping. I think we can now say with *fair certitude* that there is a toxic factor in the blood of schizophrenic people and that in most schizophrenic people this toxic factor is there to such an extent that they can be easily differentiated from non-schizophrenic people. There is a plant growth inhibiting factor in the urine of schizophrenic people and here the overlap between normal and schizophrenic people is very small. This work would be important but it is made much more significant because our iachimochrome is proving a most useful and useable tool.

You may remember that adrenochrome was very tricky to handle, painful when injected and unstable. We are now discovering the right doses of iachimochrome which can be given by mouth and is very stable. Harley-Mason in England has made us two grams and will make us more. The dose range is something in the 5–50 mmg region. It produces changes in perception, mood and thinking and these are combined with physiological changes which suggested a marked alteration in supra-renal metabolism.

We are now hunting this down for it is, I am sure, much nearer an artificial schizophrenia than lysergic acid, mescaline, etc.

The crucial experiments were done this week. On Tuesday I gave Abram Hoffer 20 mg of iachimochrome. We had him linked up to the EEG (electroencephalogram for the brain waves). On over breathing after iachimochrome, some very queer waves appeared. The slow waves with spiking which indicate, they say, the deeper centres of the brain. The appearance of those waves on the huge paper record of the EEG was the first incontrovertible evidence of iachimochrome's extraordinary nature. For although its psychological effects are far more significant, people will find the wiggles of the mechanical pens far more "objective," blessed word.

"Schizophrenia: A New Approach III" is now being written and will I think be a real goody.<sup>13</sup> It starts with a suggestion of failure (our lack of adrenochrome, etc.) and ends with iachimochrome and what it shows us. Because we now have two certain and one probable adrenalin derivatives with hallucinogenic properties. We also have three similar compounds which are *not* hallucinogenic. By studying their spatial formula certain very clear differences emerge. Of course I don't know whether these will be sustained, but if they are it means that we now *know* what to look for in the body. At last we are merely looking for a needle in a haystack and not for a needle in a pile of needles. With modern equipment the haystack is no problem. We think that the villains are a group of quinone indoles whose chemical properties can be fairly easily recognised. I hope we shall have the paper away in a couple of months and printed by the mid year or so. If we can show that something has gone wrong chemically in schizophrenia I don't think that it will be very long before some very effective treatments will be devised and a very different attitude to mental illness will result. Almost as important a result will be a new and perhaps sounder approach to some psychosomatic problems. It is undeniable that mind and body are linked but just how is very obscure. We would suggest that metabolic errors in the chemicals that mediate the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems could be a very potent and unpleasant way of linking psyche and soma.

I enclose a letter from John Smythies in reply to yours. I'm sorry about the delay in forwarding it but it has been delayed by my preoccupation with iachimochrome. The hunt is up and I feel that we must press ahead with all we have. I think John's letter a good one. He errs I feel on the side of

caution and the Captain on the side of rashness, each of these may be right at the right time. My belief is that John was more distressed by a very severe panic in one of his subjects than on his own account. This was the lady who had the very unpleasant experience when she held my letter which contained so much smothered but still burning anger.

I feel that we must report and record these experiments. Not to do so may result in our missing vitally important information. It would be like sending up a new plane without a log. Much worse, for now in planes we venture, at most, in four dimensions. In the interior it is X dimensions.

I was greatly interested in your account of Félice's book. I suppose it hasn't been Englished. My education was so defective that I read French so slowly that I almost lose interest in what I have read. I suppose that we are still almost totally ignorant of how these self transcendences start and yet they are enormously important to us. Do we know at what size of group these things manifest themselves? My guess would be that the larger the group the greater the chance of taking the downward path.

Have had two pleasant happenings. Have been invited to the Josiah Macy Foundation meeting at Princeton next May. This is on LSD etc. and is limited to 25 people for three days at the Foundation's expense. I hope to fly to Europe after it and see Jung whom I have always wanted to meet. You may remember the murderer who kept me from coming to California until November? My neurologist colleague and I claimed that he was an epileptic but could find no brain wave evidence. He was found not guilty because of insanity and placed under my colleague's care. Further brain wave examinations have shown very clear abnormalities which are now being investigated. Once we have them clearly pictured we shall have a very nice paper and some interesting information for the lawyers who were inclined to be scornful.

Maria's witch will be interested to learn that I have had a substantial salary increase, and that the queen of spades is giving some trouble. The decision as to which line of work to continue in is becoming quite acute. Ask her to think about it. I have not yet heard about the book, the publishers are still considering it, one of their staff members being ill.

Jane sends love. We will be in New York in early April and she intends to see Ellen. Abram and I are dropping iachimochrome in Montreal and Topeka, Kansas. I think that it will go off with a bang.

My flu is going and when the weekend is over I should be ready for work again.

Love to you both,  
Humphry

How are Annette and Marie? Please remember me to them. Is Rose under snow now? I heard you had a heavy fall in the mountains.

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
3 February 1955*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. What exciting news about the new toxin! It really looks as though you were almost on the point of putting salt on the monster's tail. I am glad, too, that this new stuff is proving to be somewhat unlike mescaline; for it will give that elixir a bad name if it continues to be associated, in the public mind, with schizophrenia symptoms. People will think they are going mad, when in fact they are beginning, when they take it, to go sane – or at least to understand what going sane must be like.

John Smythies sent me a copy of the letter he sent you, along with another full of his new hobby, cultural anthropology. He seems now to have allowed the culture-boys to convince him that the desire for self-transcendence is a wholly environmental phenomenon and that we are all wrong in thinking that it is a personal appetite. And yet he continues to talk of the possibility of transcendental experiences, and regards the mescaline experience as being one of them. But how illogical and unrealistic to suppose that a man capable of transcendental experience must wait for cultural influences to make him crave for self-transcendence! His letters confirm the impression I had of him at Le Piol – of a very able man hampered by temperament and his private history, which conspire to prevent him from establishing a total relationship with events and persons and so make it impossible to use his intellectual powers to the best

advantage. There is a mediaeval proverb, The heart makes the theologian. When the heart doesn't function at the full, you get monstrous heresies, like that of Calvin, or blind spots and eccentricities and naïve pedantries, as in the case of John. I have written to him begging him to read Dr Hubert Benoit's<sup>14</sup> books (*La Doctrine Suprême* and *Métaphysique et Psychanalyse*), which set forth what a very able psychiatrist, who has taken to Zen, thinks about the relationship between ego, transcendent not-self and environment.

Meanwhile the news here is discouraging. Maria is not getting better, but has recently begun showing symptoms of a liver upset – very slight jaundice and nausea. This was certainly aggravated by the X-rays on the spine (which were given partly to relieve pain, partly to guard against the spread of malignancy to that area). But she has not responded to anti-jaundice treatment in the way she should have, now that the X-ray is over. I asked Dr Hawkins this morning whether there was a possibility that there might be malignancy in the liver, and he told me he and the surgeon, Dr Lawrence Chaffin, have naturally considered the possibility, but that at present there is no means of pronouncing definitely one way or the other. But he added that he was discouraged by the way things were going – even though he thinks the back is now out of danger. The result of it all is that Maria is very weak and low. As soon as she can get out of hospital, I shall bring her back here and try to get hold of some sympathetic practical nurse (Hawkins doesn't think she will need a full blown registered one) to live in and take care of her, preventing her from doing more than she ought. Then I think it would be worth trying something in collaboration with Leslie LeCron, something which was done by Wetterstrand<sup>15</sup> in Sweden and a few others, at the turn of the century – namely to keep the patient under hypnosis over a long period, several days and nights. Wetterstrand often got remarkable results from this – presumably by freeing the *vis medicatrix naturae* from all tensions caused by the interference of the ego. The process corresponds, without the toxicity, to the prolonged barbiturate sedation now used in hypertension etc. But hypnotic sedation seems to be far better, as you don't load the organism with poison and can give healing and encouraging suggestions, which may bring about functional and even organic improvement and will almost certainly improve the state of mind.

Our plans, as you may imagine, are vague in the extreme. If Maria is well enough, we want to go East in spring. If not, then we shall stay here. I wish you weren't such a hell of a long way away, my dear Humphry!

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
8 February 1955*

My dear Aldous,

I am naturally very sad to hear that Maria is not well. Jane and I have discussed the matter and if you would be agreeable she would be glad to come down to look after Maria until it is clear how things are going. Jane has done a great deal of nursing. It might be nicer for Maria than having someone to whom she would have to adjust. I would be glad to know that Maria had someone near her whose kindness and competence is proven. Please let me know by return. Jane would have to bring Helen and her little dog, but I don't think you would find them too much of a nuisance. She is also a capable cook and secretary. I don't want you to feel that it would be an imposition, we love you both very much. Jane would not be sorry to be away from Weyburn for a bit, and although I would miss her and Helen I would feel happy to know that they were helping you both. I expect that we can put her on a train here and she would take a couple of days to reach you.

The iachimochrome hunt continues with the tempo mounting. It is very queer stuff. Abram and I are pretty sure from our own experience that it can work for as long as *ten* days. It is *not* an elixir. I think it lands you in limbo not in paradise or hades. We are getting it tested in numerous ways. For instance, on rat brain, unlike adrenochrome it produces a great *increase* of metabolic activity. We are most surprised by this. But you can imagine what happens if the brain is being simultaneously attacked by substances which increase and decrease its activities in *different* areas. Chaos would and we

think does result. There is already evidence of this on the EEG and in other ways.

Your comments on John are very accurate. This whole business about the cultural business arises from his new degree. It is I fear quite brash. The most interesting thing about human beings is that in spite of enormous differences in nature and nurture, in culture and society, nevertheless a very large degree of agreement is possible at the highest (and lowest) levels of performance. It seems quite over looked by anthropologists etc. that this is what is astounding. In any case the feature of our day is that mores are being pummeled and thumped by the impingement of modern science. I suppose they have never been more in flux than now.

Abram and I have just had an example of John's pedantry. We wrote asking him to join us in "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III." We have (you will see the draft soon) the best paper yet in my view. I have to get a certain feeling about a paper, but once I get it (and I have it now) it usually turns out well. John wants to write up something very trivial on his own and of course we shall let him. But what is really odd is that he suggests that with iachimochrome we should do some carefully controlled "double-dummy" experiments. You know, psychology lab stuff in which neither victim nor observer know what is being taken. This seems entirely inappropriate to me. I *know* when I've taken a hallucinogen. The remedy for disbelievers is to take them themselves. The changes in the body (which are impressive) are very unlikely to spring from suggestion. They are changes in the ratio of sodium and potassium in the blood found in schizophrenic people.

John has clearly fudged this up from his psychology course, unaware it seems that we went into this nearly three years ago and decided that the controlled experiment is an entirely inappropriate method. Oddly enough at GAP the research committee are dealing with controls and pointing out that although useful for some things they are no panacea.

However, John will collect his degrees (of which I am sometimes a bit envious) and will move off to Australia. I think that we shall then have to get some scheme worked out. If men who flew and designed planes were such monsters of common sense as John would have us be I don't think anyone would ever have got off the ground. Anyway he isn't really like that at all and can be astonishingly rash at times.



Don't be too worried about Captain Al's report about hallucinogens and defense. Some of this probably springs from a report Abram and I made 3½ years ago to the Canadians. Though others were doubtless working on it too. We suggested that it would be prudent to seek for antidotes for lysergic acid. Incidentally we have found an at least partly effective one, which is now in print. LSD would be a humane and very disorganizing weapon compared with most. The expense seems high but the defense people will probably turn up information which will later be useful to us. The point is that they have all sorts of beastly weapons anyway and trying to find antidotes for them greatly enlarges our knowledge. This work on LSD could be very useful later.

Please let us know as soon as you can and don't feel that it would be an imposition.

Love to Maria,

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd,  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
10 February 1955<sup>16</sup>*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letters to Maria and myself and thank Jane for her offer to come here and help in the nursing – an offer I would accept, if it were not already too late. The old malignancy, for which M was operated in '51,<sup>17</sup> has now attacked the liver and is advancing so rapidly that it looks as though the end must come within a matter of days. She has the nurse<sup>18</sup> who looked after her in '51, a good, gentle, devoted woman who is very fond of her and for whom M has a real affection. Since yesterday we also have a nurse for the night. She came back from the hospital on Monday and though she is happier at home, though by dint of hypnotic suggestion I have stopped the nausea which made it impossible for her to keep down any food and made intravenous feeding necessary in the hospital, she has gone down

a long way in these three days. Matthew flew out from New York yesterday and she got a great deal of pleasure from seeing him. Today she hardly recognizes anyone. I keep up the suggestions, however, trying to maintain her physical comfort (she has had no severe pain, thank God) and keeping her reminded of that visionary world and the Light beyond it, of which she has had experience in the past. It is hard to tell if she hears me; but I hope and think that something goes through the intervening barrier of physical disintegration and mental confusion. The *Bardo Thodol*<sup>19</sup> maintains that something penetrates even after death; and of course we know that something penetrates during sleep. Think of her with love; it is the only thing we can do. I think you know how deep was her affection for you. She always regretted that she had not had the opportunity of getting to know Jane better.

Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
11 February 1955*

My dear Aldous,

I have been wondering whether to write for I'm sure you have so much on your mind, but perhaps this is the time to write. We have been thinking so much about you and our dearest Maria and wishing that things were different. Yet I suppose in a way they are different and you and I know this in a small way and Maria very much more clearly. We are like those animals who have become convinced that the electric fence round their paddock is impenetrable, though it is only a single wire with a small charge in it, someone can even show us how frail the wire is and how small the charge, but still we shy away.

So I shall write because if you haven't time you won't need to read it and if you have I would like you to know how much we are feeling for you both. Odd how little we understand friendship, and how little thought we expend on it. We have seen so very little of each other, measured by clock

and calendar and yet there are clearly other ways of measuring, but we have no yard sticks: yet. So I will tell you about the everyday and trivial things of the clock and calendar, because, as they should, they pass the time.

It is very cold 25° below. Ice on the inside of the double windows, and the wind makes the skin go hard on the cheek bones. I can walk up to the hospital in a light overcoat, but not much further. My day goes on many small matters, which will, I hope, end in mak[ing] this place better. Indeed they are beginning to do so. In the evenings I write and think. Puzzling at the oddness of our adversary, schizophrenia, whose grip is everywhere visible, I like to personify the great madness, it may not be science but it is sense. What bunk is talked about the objectivity of science, it is surely one of the great irrational passions. There seems no “reason” why we should be so furiously put out at not knowing: but we are.

I suppose there are all sorts of searchers and that this is as well since if we use our special vision like some compound eye we may see better. The only error is to suppose that there is only one way of seeing, that my way is SCIENCE and yours is something else.

Tonight I had a long screed from John Smythies on “Schizophrenia: A New Approach III,” with all sorts of helpful but to me wholly silly comments. I have no intention of writing a dry and dull impersonal paper on a really important piece of work. Why should we pretend that scientists are unworried when they cannot get supplies vital to their work? Why should we deny that it is no particular fun taking the first dose of a drug whose action is uncertain and unknown? I don’t believe this is irrelevant. It seems to be that this is how things are really done. The neat PhD science student experiments come later in the day. Why should one write of exciting happenings as if they were the boring routines of everyday life? John it seems to me plays a sort of Tom Tiddler’s ground<sup>20</sup> with life. One moment adventuring into the unknown territory and the next scuttling back to familiar safety shouting “You can’t catch me.” Can you have it both ways?

Our research has prospered from luck and boldness. We have said what we would attempt and so far God has been with us. We have recognised our good fortune. I do not think we have been guilty of hubris. But why now, when we have come so far in the teeth of most of the professors, should we suddenly become converts to their arid ways? It beats me. All the evidence of our own experience shows that we have done best when we followed

where it led. Yet now, if we took John's advice, we should put up the play safe sign and pull out the professors, and begin to call upon them for the advice which has been so useless in the past.

Of course we won't. Better to be wrong in our way than in a way that we don't even believe in!

Next week two or more iachimochrome experiments – John wants us to call it adrenoleutine because someone says they called it this. But adrenoleutine seems a bad name and doesn't link it to adrenochrome. The stuff is not yellow adrenalin any more than adrenochrome is pink adrenalin. We shall do two more here and then I think we shall send in our paper. The academics can do what they like. We are not writing solely to amuse, but equally I don't see why we should be pledged to bore. It is interesting how the modern scientific paper, which John it seems would have us write, compares with the lively writing of the 90's or your grandfather's time. Havelock Ellis and Weir Mitchell on peyote were very lively and full of fun. Not much fun to be had these days. However I suppose that John has still to grow up and that one should not be impatient. Though I must say that I find his strictures annoying. The method of writing and the type of research which Abram and I have developed together has so far built a team and the monies to sustain it. Perhaps \$250,000 in all. It has made many discoveries. I don't see why we should discard it because the professors find it unscientific. What a storm in a teacup.

Read to Helen tonight from the Nonsense Book which you and Maria gave her, "The Duck and the Kangaroo":

“And we'd go to the Dee, and the Jelly Bo Lee.  
Over the land and over the sea  
Please take me a ride! Oh do!”  
Said the Duck to the Kangaroo.

Then Jellicle Cats by T.S. Eliot.<sup>21</sup> A great favorite.

So I am sitting here in the cold prairies, thinking very much of you both. Far away, but also, I believe very near. I wish I weren't so far away, like all the animals I have been conditioned by that electric fence, but once or twice, I have, almost incredulous, found that there is somewhere beyond.

Though now safe back, snug inside the paddock edged with pain, I can hardly credit that those wider spaces exist.

Love to you both. Love to Maria. Jane sends Love.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
14 February 1955*

My dear Aldous,

Your letter of Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> to hand.<sup>22</sup> I am naturally very sad, but a sadness that is not a dull melancholy. I was so very lucky to meet Maria. She taught me so much in a little time, enough not to be mournful as I would have been two years ago. I have thought of her very lovingly these last few days and of course of you. I am sure that because she could not respond to you doesn't mean that she did not know what was happening and appreciate its value. Maria in particular having passed the threshold before would have had few of those fears which distort the passing of those who are ignorant, and would be without those worldly attachments which make it so hard for many. So it must have been a great help to reduce the spasm and nausea so that she could sink slowly from us, into the other way.

I don't think I have ever told you a curious happening in my 1953 visit. The last night I was with you Maria and I had a few words. She knew that she would not be very long here. I recognised then, that I was losing someone, a friend whose like I would not find again. I was filled with grief and wept for nearly half an hour. It seemed so hopeless. However since then I have gradually become persuaded that hopelessness was in me and not in the situation. Maria played a large part in altering my outlook. I am and always shall be most indebted to her.

Dear Aldous. If you should wish to get away and feel that you can endure the long flight up here, do come. You would be warm. We have a good gramophone and I have a small but fairly useful library. Jane would be

glad to type for you. The house is small and Helen is sometimes noisy. Weyburn is not very beautiful. But we should be glad to have you. Don't bother about deciding, but when you get over the blow let us know. Al Hubbard can put you up in Vancouver or even fly you up himself. We can pick you up in Regina.

Perhaps Maria has already left us, but if she is still here, whether she seems aware or not give her our love. I am not sad for her but for us who will miss her so very much.

You have still much to do, Aldous, and we need you greatly. There is work to be done which only you can do and for which you are so incomparably well equipped. You will be weary and discouraged, but remember there is so much to be done, and in the next few years we shall be, I hope, in a position to start those great changes which must be made if the machine age is not to become the Brave New World which you so keenly foresaw.

Jane sends love to you and Maria wherever she may be, as do I.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

I wish we were nearer you.

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
21 February 1955*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letters, Jane's and your own. Matthew is still here, but returns to New York on Thursday. The mechanics of life are pretty well settled. Marie will come five days a week and Onnie, the dear kind coloured woman who was with us at the time of your first visit, will come once or twice a week. Gerald's friend Michael<sup>23</sup> will drive me wherever I want to go three afternoons a week, and one of Matthew's old schoolfellows from Dartington, a pleasant and extremely efficient young woman,<sup>24</sup> can come in

the other afternoons and in the evenings, if I should need secretarial help or someone to read aloud. It is good of you to ask me to come and stay with you; some day it would be nice. But for the moment I think I will stay here with my work. I have much to do – a play which I am adapting from the short novel you read while you were here – it is being serialized, incidentally, in *Harper's*, from March to May, will be published in book form here in the autumn and in London probably in April. Then there are various essays which I want to do and – if I have time – sketches for a kind of Utopian phantasy which has been haunting the fringes of my mind for some time past. In late April or May I think I shall go East, stay in New York for a bit and then perhaps find some place on the New England coast where I could stay for the hot months with Ellen and the children, while Matthew toils at a job – which, it seems probable, will be ready for him in New Haven, when he has taken his degree. Let me know your own times and seasons, and I will try to make my presence in New York coincide with yours.

I am sending herewith a short account of Maria's last days.<sup>25</sup> Gerald has read it and thinks that it might be a good thing to write something about the whole problem of death and what can be done by those who survive to help the dying – and incidentally themselves. What do you think? If I wrote it, I would do so anonymously and after consultation with people who have had a wide experience. The subject is enormously important, and it is hard to know how it ought to be treated so as to be helpful for contemporary readers who have to face the problem here and now, in the mental climate of today.

I am glad the iachimochrome work goes forward so hopefully. Let me know of any new development.

Give my love to Jane.

Affectionately,  
Aldous

P.S. I would like the typescript back when you have read it as I shall have no copies after sending one to M's sister in France.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
25 February 1955*

My dear Aldous,

Thank you so much for the letter. I am glad that you have got the mechanics of living fixed, they are important. I am sure that it is a good move to keep at your work and am glad that you are doing so. I greatly enjoyed *The Past Is Present*<sup>26</sup> and as you know Maria was most delighted by it. May I see the play? It was good of you to send the typescript which I am returning. We took the liberty of keeping a copy as a special memory of Maria and I am sending you a number of carbons which Jane made. It struck us that you might need them. I much agree with Gerald. The more so after our visit to Forest Lawns, we have made death into a macabre industry instead of having some proper ceremony and preparation for one of the great transitions. What we do is either to ignore the problem or to use formulations which have little or no meaning.

I suppose that the only importance of the Roman last rites etc. is that these are a way of preparing the dying one for a peaceful and calm transition. We have got the whole idea upside down. It is not as the priests would have us believe a passport to eternity letting one into heaven, purgatory or hell. It is just a way across the border, an easing of the strands that bind to this world and which if too strong may hold one in that treacherous inter-phase which separates the two. I feel that your keeping contact with Maria until she was finally through that strange and sometimes distressing barrier must have made the journey a gentle and happy one, knowing that you were doing this. I am sure that the worry and anxiety for you must have been greatly lessened, and so the way eased and the strands gently eased, loosened and finally cast off. Dear Maria.

We are having a very cold spell here – 20–30° below zero and minor blizzards. It is not as bad as it sounds.

The hospital planning and reorganisation continues. It is irritating to give so much time to it, but also fascinating to begin to turn modern technology on to a hopelessly old fashioned place. For years they have carted round four tons of foul smelling mattresses a year and spent



thousands of dollars replacing them. By getting a mattress coated with plastic, money, labor and stench can all be saved. In dozens of ways this can and must be repeated. But sometimes I wonder if I should be devoting all these hours to things which others could do more efficiently. Yet in a way it serves as a spur to the attack on schizophrenia and the other great madness[es]. It makes it an urgent and personal issue, a campaign, a battle. I urge and drive my colleagues to waste no time in academic niceties, but to strive to find a way out for these unlucky marooned people. Of course if we can do this then I feel that the immediate urgency will be to turn our knowledge, technique and the monies that we shall command to the problem of the mind. We may (indeed I think we shall) have a flying start. Our great advantage over the Freudian concept of mind is that ours is not reductive and analytic, but exploratory and synthetic. It is unlikely that we will confute any known view point, but we shall I hope expand and dignify all of them.

I shall be in New York, i) Early in April, ii) At the end of May. I do hope that we shall be able to meet. I am planning to see Jung in June. I suppose there is no chance of your coming over too?

Let me know once *The Past Is Present* is out. I wish we were closer, there is so much that can be said, or even better doesn't need to be said when one is at hand. I am so glad we spent those days in the desert which Maria loved.

Jane sends her love. We are taking Helen to see a new and good version of *Robinson Crusoe*.<sup>27</sup> I have not been to a film with her before. She loves her Edward Lear. Last night we read "The Dong" and she recited most of T.S. Eliot's *Jellicle Cats*. She also had a bit of "The Snark"<sup>28</sup> which she likes. Jane sends love, as do I.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*27 February 1955*

My dear Aldous,

Here are two more copies of your typescript about Maria's passing.\* I have kept a copy for us.

The cold continues here with the thermometer hanging somewhere below zero. Tomorrow we start early for Regina. I have a meeting and Jane is seeing a friend. We shall drive about 75 miles across the prairie, dead flat nearly all the way and I expect that if the wind is blowing the visibility will be fairly difficult, the dykes at the side of the road are filled with snow now.

We have run into one of those odd snags with iachimochrome. Our new batch seems to be less strong than our original lot. The question is why. If we can answer that question we may be very close to the solution of the problem. We shall be at work at that these coming weeks. In the meanwhile we are hunting for the factors in the blood and urine, and are working out the techniques for spotting the toxic indoles. As we do this I am having a long wrangle with John Smythies on the latest bee in his bonnet, the double dummy experiments. This is a method for testing substances by giving the subject something whose composition [is] unknown either to him or to the observer. John has developed this as one of his hobby horses (though he has never used it). He presses it on us with an irritating and childish insistence, that underlying assumption that those who don't happen to agree with him must be congenital idiots which brings out the worst in me. However it is a small matter, because we shall go on doing what seems best and disregard John and his hobby horses which have obviously sprung fully accoutred from someone's textbook of psychology, methodology section. Dingle,<sup>29</sup> the London University philosopher of science, has a nice comment on methodology: "a discipline conducted for the most part by logicians unacquainted with the practice of science; and it consists mainly of a set of principles by which accepted conclusions can best be reached by those who already know them. When we compare these principles with the steps by which the discoveries were actually made, we find scarcely a single instance in which there is the slightest resemblance." But it is a storm in a teacup.

I have an interesting letter from Jung, of which I shall be sending you a copy with my reply and comments. I want to see him. I think that he has fallen into one half of the materialist-idealist trap. One might call it the "one

road there only” theory which keeps on cropping up. His view seems to be that self-transcendence couldn’t possibly come via mescaline because it is a chemical and that even if it did this would be one up for materialism. How useless these labels are. On these grounds it would seem to me that St Paul’s experience would have to be discounted because it was probably epileptic. And of course any experiences from fasting or other austerities would need to be cut out.

He is of course quite right in his view that having these experiences is no indication that good will come of them; but it seems to me that unless some proportion of human beings have them, understand them and learn their meaning nothing will come. However I shall send the letter and hope to see him. It would be wonderful if you could come too. It is marvelous how in a world in which annihilation is just ’round the corner the “extraordinary dangers” of these very important explorations are what preoccupy people rather than the extraordinary possibilities of exploring. Jung does not feel that any of the accounts that have come his way yet have been genuinely “transcendent.” I think there are two good reasons for this, i) They have usually been explorations undertaken with no special end in view by an odd miscellany of people who found themselves unprepared in very strange country. ii) When they have occurred they are hardly ever published. I certainly did not publish the strangest things that happened to me, for rather obvious reasons.

I must to bed, up early tomorrow. Jane sends Love, remember me to Marie and Onnie.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

\* If I have not said much about this wonderful and very moving account of her death it is because I do not feel able to discuss it yet. I am very grateful that you told me about the last days of someone I deeply admired and loved. Queer how little attention we doctors give to death, the preparations required and the changes in dying which our extraordinary technical skills are making. Much thought and effort are needed in this area.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
15 March 1955*

My dear Aldous,

We have just had the Captain here for three days, bringing me first hand news of you and discussing our plans for the future. What a remarkable fellow he is. A very careful blending of all sorts of characteristics make him an unusual person and one whom we need greatly in our group. Business man and scientist, shrewd yet also simple, tough and yet kindly; a man with a sharp eye for the main chance yet not dominated by it; a man who understands money without worshipping it; a man as much at home in Kentucky as Washington; a man who understands power in many forms but does not worship it. My original impression has been more than confirmed. The Captain is no crackpot; he will do as he says and I would guess usually exceed rather than fail in what he promises. I would be deeply surprised if I am proved wrong in my estimate of the Captain.

So it becomes very odd that this powerful, well disposed, trusting and trustworthy man has been treated by John Smythies with that flighty contempt which a flighty young woman treats an oldish and none too attractive suitor. The Captain's story of John advising him "to see your priest because you have a personal problem here" is very funny. But much less funny when you understand that this was a responsible scientist meeting a well to do backer, genuinely interested in his work and in a position to contribute both scientific knowledge (the Captain is well informed in electronics and has his own laboratory for working on radioactive materials) and to secure money. John's odd, stand-offish condescension shows the poorest judgement and with anyone but the Captain would have led to disaster. Luckily for everyone the Captain is not to be put off by such folly. But had he been an ordinary man he would have been. However the Gods have been kind. The Captain found that you and Gerald did not spend all your time in school girlish panics about "what might happen if gangsters got hold of mescaline." I think that he also found that Abram Hoffer and I were not inclined to look upon John as "the" expert in this field, and we rate his capacity for common sense very low. However

John will be off to Australia soon and we must get an adequate organisation going while he is away. The Captain's account of his methods of interviewing prospective adventurers is very disturbing, but not unfortunately surprising. I am working on a formula which should show the difference between psychotic and elixiral conditions. After John's emphasis on their sameness we shall need one.

In the meanwhile the work goes ahead. A new supply of adrenolutine (it turns out that as John alleged iachimochrome had been named adrenolutine in 1951 or so. Vexatious. It is a bad name, luteus being a golden yellow so far as I remember) is being flown up from New York, also adrenochrome. Our experiments are pretty clear that adrenolutine works over a period of several days. Abram now has strongly suggestive evidence of a fluorescent substance in schizophrenic urine (adrenochrome and adrenolutine fluoresce because of the molecular instability, a characteristic of quinones Abram says). The Captain has given us what may be a splendid lead. He found, quite by chance, that a flicker lamp (10–40 per second) appears to enormously enhance hypnagogic phenomena after taking minute amounts of mescaline. *If* he can repeat this and it applies to other substances of this family (and this has still to be proved) we may have a research tool of extraordinary value and flexibility. Of course nothing may come of it. The Captain told John about it but in accordance with John's views that only "scientists" know anything he took no notice of it. If something comes o[f] it I hope that it will be a lesson to John to have a bit more humility. I doubt it though for he does not usually care to face unpleasant facts. This arrogance, which is connected with though not the same as uncertainty, is a great disadvantage.

I am not particularly fond of John's idea, which is I think partly Ducasse's, that "centres" in London and New York would be better than our travelling scheme. As the Captain and I are the only ones who have done much itinerant mescalizing (he more than I) I think that we and some of our subjects should think about this. My own view would be, i) The two centres would be more costly than the scheme that I had laid out in Outsight and more complicated. They would involve full time employees – perhaps as many as five, and floor space in the most expensive areas in the world. They would involve considerable difficulties in disposing of our subjects which do not arise in their own homes. If misfortunes occurred it would be

even more unfortunate for them to be concentrated in London and New York, such publicity centres. ii) We would lose all those marked advantages of being in or near the subject's home, the opportunity to get to know the subject in his own surroundings, the chance for him to see familiar things in an unfamiliar way. In short the chance to make a warm human relationship which so enormously enhances the value of the expeditions.

In brief, and I don't want to be unkind about it, but this seems a typical "philosopher's" notion. In the process of abstraction and extraction almost all that is unusual and valuable seems to have been removed.

I am very keen to hear of your group experiment and intend to run some here. It is quite clear that you are well ahead of us "scientists." I hope you will soon be able to let me know a little of what happened. The richness of this field astonishes and dazzles. It is so hard to select. The Captain is going to try several very grave alcoholics on his return with mescaline followed by massive niacin. We are sending him schizophrenic urine to try in a radium beam. If fluorescent substances are present they may become even more so under radium.

How are things with you Aldous? We think often of you and hope it is not too hard. I shall try hard to shake off this hospital in 18 months or so. I must as Maria's little red haired witch said choose between two ways. It would be impossible to attempt both. I could do so if this place were running properly but it is not and won't be for some time to come. However I am determined to press ahead with the research here. It cannot fail to pay off.

I shall be in New York in two weeks' time and shall see Eileen Garrett and Suzuki if he is around.

I have just read an excellent review in the *Spectator* called "Court Life at Washington" by D.W. Brogan.<sup>30</sup> Power in Washington, he observes, using Harold Ickes' diaries<sup>31</sup> as an example, goes "if not by kissing, by favor." The Captain understands the nature and manoeuvring of such power and such a man can be invaluable to us, provided he is not himself power hungry and so far as I can see he is not in the least.

Let me know how you are.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
18 March 1955

My dear Humphry,

A word, first of all, as to plans, times, seasons. I expect to drive to New York with Rose about April, arriving about May 1<sup>st</sup>. Then I have been invited to attend the mescaline evening of the American Psychiatric Association meeting at Atlantic City, and to talk for five minutes. The invitation stated that you would be on the panel that day. Is this true? I hope so. After that expect to be in NYC until mid-June, when I am to be lent a penthouse on Park Avenue with two retainers – very much above my station in life!

Dr Puharich was here for a few days last week, with Alice Bouverie, and we had long talks about his latest preoccupation – *amanita muscaria*, which he thinks will open the doors of ESP in a big way (provided always it doesn't first open the doors of an untimely grave). Puharich is a lively bird, and I look forward to seeing what he does when he gets out of the army.

How goes the research? Not to mention the family? For myself, I work hard at the play and seem to have interested a producer even at this early stage of the proceedings – Alfred de Liagre,<sup>32</sup> who has produced most of Van Druten's<sup>33</sup> plays, is pleasant and a gentleman, and has a record of successes. So let us hope the project will materialize. Health is pretty good; but the house is full of the presence of an absence. My love to you both.

Affectionately,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
23 March 1955

My dear Aldous,

Your letter of 18<sup>th</sup> to hand, with plans and news. It is so good to hear from you and I am glad that you are at work and bearing the presence of an absence.

First my plans. I am on that APA panel and most unhappily I will not be able to attend it. I had to give it up because I was asked to go to the Macy Foundation Neuropharmacological Symposium and not knowing you would be at the APA judged it the more important; worse luck. Still I can see you in New York in your penthouse when I come down to Macy's. That is one of the difficulties of a job of this sort. I am, for this sort of job, lucky about conferences, but it is not recognised as being an essential part of my work as it would be in a research job. I come down for the Macy meeting in the last week in May. Jane and I are off to NY early next week and will stay at the Warwick and think of our very happy meeting there last spring.

I agree with you about *amanita muscaria* – it may do the job rather too well. I would suggest that we learn how to use mescaline etc. in a similar way, at least until we are sure what makes the *amanita* tick.

The research goes very well. I only wish my other preoccupation, the hospital, went as well. I have every sort of difficulty here. These salvage operations are very tricky and one depends on so many variables which are difficult if not impossible to control. I wonder how long I shall continue trying. Jane is very keen for me to give up, but I am loth to do so without some appreciable improvement in the hospital and although there are some advances I'm not very impressed by them. Although the research activities of this broken down place have been extraordinary. I suppose we have published a dozen papers in less than four years where none had ever been published before. I am not counting our major research. I have just heard from Captain Al and it sounds as if his observation with the flicker lamp will be very well worth pursuing. It means, if it holds up, a very remarkable research tool which we are getting ready to use.

Last night and yesterday afternoon I came to grips with my first Canadian blizzard. I started out in slight snow and the last few miles before I stopped was like driving through a white dust storm. At times I couldn't see more than two or three yards. I spent about five or six hours in the little hamlet of Corinne and then started out again because the snow had stopped,



although it was still blowing and the thermometer was just about zero. After about five minutes driving it was clear that although the snow had stopped, the blown snow sifting across the roads produced a weird feeling that one was driving on the surface of a seething cauldron. I had a companion going ahead, but lost him and soon after I lost the road and found myself in a snow drift in the ditch. It was a gentle but firm removal. I got out, and then realised that this was a situation in which I could lose my life by doing the wrong thing. A zero wind of 30 mph is very cold. The night was dark. There were no houses for about five miles in any direction. The snow was in drifts up to three or four feet deep. So I sat in the car and waited. There might be eight hours or so until light. But in half an hour a truck came by and we spent the next two or three hours edging our way through the swirling dust. I think that every muscle was tired with tension by the time I finished. Jane was very vexed with me but I am now forgiven, but I shall never take any liberties with a blizzard again, though such experiences are not entirely harmful.

So glad to hear about the new play. I look forward to seeing it. I have done no play writing – I must get more time. But I have about six or seven papers to be finished. I will write again soon. I think I have told you that Abram Hoffer has a fluorescent test for schizophrenic urine. It sounds very promising. Jane sends good wishes as of course do I.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
14 April 1955*

My dear Aldous,

I hear that *The Past Is Present* has already started as a serial and that one reader at least found it as enjoyable as I did. Jane and I are just back from a 5,000 mile sweep, New York, Topeka, Kansas and so home. It was a very interesting though exhausting journey. I had two hard days in New York

where I met Bill Wilson<sup>34</sup> of AA and found him very lively and keen on our new idea for using mescaline etc. as a transcendent experience for alcoholics. I also met Keenleyside,<sup>35</sup> one of the big men of [the] U.N. – very amiable. I like to make these contacts well before asking for money.

Then to GAP where we made a brief for the new Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health. My committee members were all pretty expert men so that I learnt a lot in preparing the brief and was glad to find that I was able to contribute my share.

After that a long flight to Topeka and the Menninger Foundation. I had a hateful cold on the way and was apprehensive. This is one of the greatest psychiatric centres in the U.S. and to capture it for the New Approach or at least to make them reasonably interested would be a triumph, but of course exactly the opposite might happen.

When I got up to talk I was as nervous as I have ever been. Yet this can make one give a really good performance and I think it worked that way. I left on Monday last having established a very friendly relationship with Dr Karl Menninger,<sup>36</sup> the remarkable head of this centre, which trains about 1/10 of the psychiatrists in the U.S. and gives them a very thorough training. I am to go down to treat a few “absolutely hopeless” alcoholics by our new method later in the year. Dr Menninger was fascinated by this but even more so by our work together. I told him that you would be at the APA meeting in Atlantic City and urged him to contact you. I hope you will do the same. Karl Menninger can be as helpful to us in his way as Captain Al in his.

Before I left he was kind enough to ask me if I would consider joining his staff and indicated that I had only to name my price and the Foundation would pay. I have indicated that I would think it over. I wonder if he really means this and what am I worth? Presently I have just become worth \$11,000 a year to Saskatchewan, what am I worth to them? It would be unwise to ask too little and presumptuous to ask too much. I think I am worth somewhere between \$15,000 and \$25,000 a year to them but where?

However this is the least of my troubles. I want to leave Weyburn and Jane hates Saskatchewan. Yet I have two major obligations – the hospital and the research. The hospital is disastrous, but I doubt whether I shall have time to get it completely into shape. The government are not yet fully aware of the urgency and believe that they have all the time in the world. They

may have but we haven't. Much can be done to improve the place but much must also be done in the research.

The research seems to be at a critical phase. We are trying a new test tomorrow which picks up very close relatives of adrenolutin (iachimochrome). It is quick and simple, unlike our previous ones, and depends on a colorimetric method which is very easy. It sounds almost too easy. Also we are doing a new experiment with a fresh batch of adrenolutin tomorrow. I don't want to leave the research completely, yet there are aspects of it which could be much better handled away from Saskatchewan. Oversight for instance.

I have sent Karl Menninger a copy of Oversight, the original and not the philosophers' version. I hope he will discuss it with you. What I should like is a job that would allow me to visit Saskatchewan about once a month and travel on experimental work, while having my headquarters in Topeka or in L.A. I wonder if such jobs exist? Karl Menninger raises my hopes!

I am looking forward to seeing you in New York at the end of May. Have you any room in your penthouse or is there a hotel next door? How is the play going? The hospital is changing, not as quickly as we might hope but gradually improvements are showing. I don't want to make a career in administration, fascinating though it is, and one can't manage three careers at the same time.

Jane who is recovering from a heavy cold sends her love.

Yours ever,  
Humphry

---

*Marlborough-Blenheim Hotel  
Atlantic City, N.J.  
11 May 1955*

Dear Humphry,

Here I am in this Dome of Pleasure, floating midway on the waves, where is heard the mingled measure of the Electric Shock Boys, the Chlorpromaziners and the 57 Varieties of Psychotherapists. What a place –

the luxury of early Edwardian days, massive, spacious, indescribably hideous and, under a livid sky, indescribably sinister!

I am under the protective wing of a bright young researcher from the National Institute of Mental Health called Louis Cholden,<sup>37</sup> and his wife. They steer me through the tumult and introduce me to the Grand Panjandrums, who mainly speak with German accents and whose names and faces I can never remember for more than five minutes.

I talked with Karl Menninger yesterday, who spoke in the friendliest way of you. I fancy that, if you want to go to Topeka, he will welcome you on your own terms. If you can get the kind of peripatetic research job you envisage, it would be a fine thing both for you and psychology and psychiatry.

I also had a chat with Abram Hoffer – who evidently hopes you will stay in Saskatchewan, very comprehensibly so far as he is concerned. Another familiar face was Dr Max Sherover's who is here exhibiting his walky-talkies, or rather his sleepy-squeakies. (The trouble with his instruments, as I have found, is that they are so badly made that they are never in working order. Consequently I have not, after two years, been able to use mine once.)

Tomorrow we have an evening party with speeches about mescaline and LSD, at which I am supposed to hold forth for ten minutes. On Friday I return to New York. I am staying c/o George Kaufman,<sup>38</sup> 1035 Park Avenue.

I'm afraid I can't invite you there, as the only other bedroom is Mrs K's and I have a strong feeling that they don't want it to be lived in by strangers. However there are hotels pretty near and, if you like, I will reserve a room for whatever date you specify. Or else at the Warwick, if you prefer.

My love to Jane and the poetess.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.*

13 May 1955

My dear Aldous,

Your letter from the great jamboree to hand. I do wish I could have been there, but I expect that I shall have a much better opportunity to see you in New York. So first my plans.

I shall leave here on 22<sup>nd</sup> May late, reach Toronto on 23<sup>rd</sup> and spend the day there. I have a date with the CBC on a mental health program for the fall. Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> I shall fly down early to New York and should reach you by midday. I have to reach Princeton by 6:30 pm on Wednesday and remain there till Friday afternoon when I shall return to New York and spend the next two days near you if you have time. Sunday afternoon, if my present plans hold, I shall fly to Topeka and spend a few days with Karl Menninger seeing whether LSD will help a few very intractable alcoholics. I think that it may and so does Bill Wilson.

If I can get a job on my own terms, which would include ample travel, maintaining a liaison with Abram Hoffer, reasonable pay and a chance to think, I will probably take it. My present position is becoming intolerable because the research and the hospital are tugging me in opposite directions. As it happens I have the capacity to handle both, but not the time and energy. The hospital could be handled with enough money and resources, but without them it can be quite nightmarish. At Saskatoon there is really no job for me. However we maybe can discuss that later on.

The research progresses, indeed this has been an exciting week for I have had some interesting hunches and so has MacArthur,<sup>39</sup> one of our biochemist stalwarts at Saskatoon.

I am glad to see that you are coming out as a Penguin millionaire, but sorry that *The Past Is Present* was not used for the new novel, but maybe it will be in England. *The New Statesman* did a very handsome review of *Brave New World* – any news of its film rights lately?

I have just finished a long paper on the public mental hospital and Abram and I have three to complete. So my plays and stories don't get done, but one day I hope to be able to write them. I feel these papers must be written. I know the conditions of the mentally ill and anything that can be done to help must be done. Then we have got to study how to live (if we

survive) in this weirdly changing age. So little thought has been given to this.

The psychiatrists are an odd lot on the whole. Mostly they seem to have few ideas about the psyche, indeed it is a trifle improper to discuss it. Dr Karl is not at all typical. A really interesting man, who for all his ambition and power interests has used most of his energy beneficially so far as I can judge. The new group of drugs, chlorpromazine, serpasil, etc. undoubtedly do something, but the whole thing is what and how. I think the age of the shrieking lunatic may soon be over even in the worst run mental hospitals. The docile and flattened out shell of a person may appear instead. However we shall see – William Malamud an old campaigner once said “always use new treatments for schizophrenia in their first six months if you want to be successful.”

I am hard at work on Evelyn Underhill's<sup>40</sup> *Mysticism* which I had often seen referred to but never read. A remarkable book, but how much of the mystics' lore arose from their never being sure whether they would be able to experience otherness or not? Could there be a more appalling anxiety? Yet a bit better diet, a slight physio-psychological change, it could be gone forever. We must discuss this.

Enclosing a reprint of “Inspiration and Method.”<sup>41</sup> Jane sends love. The poetess is asleep, but we read some Lear tonight.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

\* About a hotel, if there is a reasonable one close by 1035 Park Avenue as near as possible it would be fine. A room with a shower suits me. I don't want an ambassador suite which they usually seem keen to provide. One of their small cheap back rooms, usually quieter too. Am travelling alone.

---

*c/o Kaufman  
1035 Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y.  
17 May 1955*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. I hope to see you on the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup>. Unhappily I am booked for dinner that night and don't see how I can get out of it. But I will keep the rest of the week open. Might even go down to Princeton for a day, to see Professor Stace<sup>42</sup> – a very nice English philosopher, to whom you might also like to talk. Incidentally, what are you doing at Princeton – lecturing?

I will look out for a room today.

In haste but affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*c/o Kaufman  
1035 Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y.  
17 May 1955  
Postcard*

[Addressed to Dr Humphry Osmond]

I have reserved a room (\$10.00 per night) for Tuesday and again Friday and Saturday next week at the Croydon Hotel, 12 East 86<sup>th</sup> St, one block from 1035 Park Avenue and 1½ blocks from the Metropolitan. Looking forward to seeing you. Love to Jane.

Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
(Actually at the Menninger Foundation)  
2 June 1955*

My dear Aldous,

How good it was to see you and how much I wish I could have been longer in New York though it would have used up much of your time. I think you know how much I enjoyed myself and how enlivening it is for me to be in your company. It has only one disadvantage, apart from the discomfort of not enjoying myself this way more often. I get used to the atmosphere where ideas are examined critically and good humoredly without being frightened of them, but more of that later.

Can you meet Norbert Wiener?<sup>43</sup> I am very keen to do so myself but won't be able to do so for a bit. I'm told he is odd, but he is also very bright. A rather silly endomorphic analyst told me how disturbed Wiener was, "like a child who has found something he cannot control." A more reasonable analogy would seem to be like an adult who sees children playing with a bomb he has just fused. But I am a little tired of the Northwesterns<sup>44</sup> and their simple formulations. If you can see Wiener I hope you will for if he is a man we could work with he might be enormously important. He has seen the point which few others seem to have done, that the cybernetic age forces us to expand the psyche or become slaves of the machine. Most people are wholly unaware that this is an immediate urgency. Karl Menninger is still among those who don't, can't or won't see, in part at least due to a stupid blunder on my part mixed with some sheer ill luck. However the game has only begun so that it is no time to call in the cards and throw in hands.

It is a good story and I think it should amuse Eileen in her recovery. I went down to Topeka to do several LSD or mescaline experiments on drunks. Karl Menninger had been very keen on this and so am I. I think we have the bones of a wholly new technique which should produce a great improvement in psychiatric education, since psychiatrists would have to acquaint themselves with much of the mystical and similar literature to understand it. Anyway I wanted to do at least a couple to leave them something to think about. They had told me a very interesting account of an intelligent alcoholic woman who had been two years or more in the clinic and who seemed a suitable case. I saw her and found her to be most suitable. Her alcoholism had that poignant quality which so often precedes a conversion experience. As a child she had wanted to be a nun, and when she should have been working through this she was snatched away by a distant globe-trotting mother to become a boarder at an English girls'



school. She has drunk steadily, heavily and often brutishly for perhaps ten years. She has talked to a multiple drug addict (more of him later) who dates his determination to stop heroin addiction from his first experience with peyote. This lady seemed in every way suitable, for she was keen and interested. Having let me talk to her they all got cold feet. Began talking about risks etc., though I suppose that on dozens of occasions her drinking has one way or another pushed her close to death and since I am a fairly experienced operator I would have met any risk more than half way.

What had happened was that Karl Menninger had been talking with his colleagues and their doubts had fed back into his doubts. I was not in a position to pressure any of them as a visitor and as an exponent of a view point which I don't intend to sell whatever American customs. However I did not go patientless, for the state hospital found me a 31 year old man (with a good deal of ectomorphy I should think) who had been 12 times and many months in mental hospital, whom they all felt was hopeless. Do tell Sheldon that our meeting has made me realise my folly at neglecting his work and I am urging body typing in connection with all of our work. I keenly look forward to getting his book. Anyway I was annoyed at this, not because they hadn't found someone but because they were indecisive and had not understood, in my view, their patients' needs. They have [had] plenty of time to do this in 2½, years! The "hopeless" drunk they had for me had many features which did not really fit him for this role and a deeper understanding of personality would have, I think, spotted certain assets which were only waiting for a chance to develop.

I spent all Thursday working – a very fascinating multiple addict, a Mr G of whom I shall tell you later, took up my morning and the afternoon went on the drunk. I didn't get any food and often don't take breakfast so had not eaten for 20 hours or more. We were to go out to an early supper. There were a couple of long whiskies before and then we set out for the country club. Dr Karl apparently thinking we were going to discuss business and I not considering a meal at the end of a long day at all a suitable time. He was foolish enough to ask me and I was foolish enough to accept his request without qualification, something to the effect "What would you do if you had a free hand?" I told him. It shook him.

It was really very naughty of me, and must be blamed on the whisky on an empty stomach, my delightful talks with you which have made me

disinclined to hedge too much, my irritation at the bungling of the previous few days, and my greater awareness of the psycho-socio-physical problems which face us. Dr K loves innovations but this was not the sort that sounded very sensible, for partly out of a wish to make the story more enjoyable for the other diners and partly because I foolishly thought it would bring us down to brass tacks, I told him that we were faced with devising a new society. My friend Derek Miller, a very diplomatic young Englishman, was horrified. However what was worse, I demonstrated very clearly that we had no way out. Wiener who knows the dominating scientific influences has already said as much. The other difficulty is that I know the defensive game that one plays to cope with that gambit. One says psychiatry deals with sick people, sick societies are for someone else. The key question is whose job then is it. The answer should be the sociologists, but we know they depend on us enormously in these matters. All current social anthropology is built on Freud's work. It was horrid of me and in a way I went berserk. No jumping on the table, but I felt that Karl and my friend could now do a little stewing in their own juice. The consternation was great. I also reckoned that as nothing that I said could not be well substantiated it would be a way of discovering how likely he was to be able to absorb new ideas. My friend complained that he felt that this was more like a final survey of someone leaving a subject than someone actively engaged in it. Oddly this was a criticism of an early submission which Abram Hoffer and I made. It is apparently not customary to sweep a subject from a high peak of vision, yet it is essential to do so. In fact Freud made a huge survey in the mid 1890's which was never published but on which he based much later work.<sup>45</sup> I feel that we have made big enough discoveries not to spend the next 30 or so years repeating ourselves. Banting<sup>46</sup> spent 20 most unhappy years because he didn't take the precaution of having something else to do after insulin. If our work is as important and I suspect that it may be I don't want to make the same mistake.

So the party was not a success and it became clear that something must be done. I must at least not close the door completely, it would be silly, impolite and imprudent. So I went along to hear Dr Karl give a very good account of his meetings with Freud and Schweitzer.<sup>47</sup> I indicated that I would be glad to discuss actual programs. Next day I did. Under eight main headings we laid out work which I might possibly do to the tune of, I

suppose, at least \$1 million. They were all touchingly pleased that I was so sensible. Indeed the whole business of the party will be forgotten as soon as possible. Now obviously it can't be. My tactics were bad, though not half as bad as my friend thought, nothing irremediable took place, but I shall, if I go to Topeka, have to reckon on Dr Karl moving less quickly than I had hoped. He is gifted and very able, but not I fear very far sighted. He doesn't read enough science fiction!

My alcoholic turned out very well. A wholly positive experience which contrasted sharply with his DTS. I think I am on to a method for maintaining positive contact without intrusion. It consists of using a friendly relationship established before the treatment and during the early phases of tension to introduce the patient to areas of experience which seem relevant but not to butt in too much.

Even where negative topics are introduced it is always with a positive question attached. The drunk is asked to take a look at himself and how he behaves so that he can understand and at the same time do better. The realness of the inner world is emphasized and its value affirmed. Of course this is very crude but as my drunk said, "This is the greatest thing that ever happened to me."

Mr G the multiple addict had a very interesting story about peyote and marihuana. I had always supposed the hemp and the cactus would be closely alike, but he assures me I am wrong. The cactus he claims is unlike any other drug. It is not addictive – it expands the mind while others dull, contract and stun it. The hemp has more auditory than visual effects, but most striking is its failure to produce the expansion of the cactus. It does seem that LSD and mescal possess this property and it suggests that there are fairly specific means of turning the key to the doors. We shall have to follow it up, but it is very exciting. He is going to write up his multiple experience with drugs and is translating *Les Paradis Artificiels*.<sup>48</sup> If it is any good I will encourage him to publish both.

So I am on my way home, tired but refreshed. A little disappointed in Topeka, but I suppose that it is as much my fault as anything. Though I believe that some of these things will sink into Dr Karl and make him think.

I hope your suit proved as satisfactory as mine. Please give Eileen my best wishes for a very speedy convalescence. It was so good to meet Ellen again and Matthew for the first time. Good luck with the play. I hope you

will give us an essay on the artist's vision. Those visits to galleries were delightful and taught me much. That glowing Polish horseman by Rembrandt<sup>49</sup> and those strange and very disquieting Gericaults!<sup>50</sup>

I would like to see an essay on the need for facing the facts of life about scientific change. The gap between discovery and application is dropping very quickly and will continue to do so. Unless we understand this we will run into chaos. We have whether we like or not got to redesign our social system. If we don't it will certainly founder. No aspect of science can be exempt from facing this since the most obscure may have the most profound results. Freud changed or impinged on sex habits, feeding and care of babies, the upbringing of children, and the whole of medicine, psychology, sociology, anthropology and many aspects of the arts. It seems idle folly to ignore or deny this. Yet in dozens of other directions huge changes are being made while we sit by and twiddle our complexes!

I may not write for a bit as I shall be embroiled in Weyburn.

Yours affectionately,  
Humphry

It was very sad being without Maria and I had rather dreaded the inescapable realization that she wasn't with us. My feeling was however that she wasn't too far away enjoying the fun.<sup>51</sup>

---

*1035 Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y.  
18 June 1955*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your long, good letter. I suppose it was more than could be hoped – that Menninger should be simultaneously the fountain-head of American psychiatry *and* completely open to new, revolutionary ideas. We *must* have the defects of our virtues – or at least we must have them until such time as we do something pretty heroic and immensely skillful *not* to have them. It is a matter of will plus what the Buddhists call (I think)

*upaya*, appropriate means. And the appropriate means, in cases like this, are psychological, or rather psychophysical, re-education of a kind that will cause the self-educator and self-educatee to realize his absolute existence independent of his conditioning, his virtually infinite potentialities within a world of infinitely varied opportunities and complete impartiality. Which is obviously too much to expect of an elderly gent, however intelligent, at the head of his profession. But I hope all the same that he will end up by giving you the kind of job you want and a free hand to do it.

Play negotiations go forward. I was disappointed with one producer – de Liagre – who got cold feet about the “unhappy ending” and wanted me to change it – which would mean, of course, a totally different story. However the other producer I have discussed it with doesn’t mind the ending. The problem in his quarter is the director, who, so far, doesn’t understand anything and perhaps may never do so – which will mean looking for somebody else.

I enclose a curious letter which may interest and amuse you, and perhaps throw some kind of light on something.

My love to Jane.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
21 June 1955*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you again. I was much interested in the benzedrine inhaler gentleman. As far as I know these inhalers contained about 200 mmg of benzedrine, a very sizable dose! They also have menthol and other aromatics whose effects are not known. I wonder what made him use the inhaler? The difference in experiences is not at all mysterious, yet this is what people emphasize. What I find surprising is the sameness of so much

of the experience in so many people. This seems more surprising and remarkable to me.

It seems clear that if you start with predominantly psychoanalytic interests, mescaline etc. will give you plenty to think about; if you are interested in color perception ditto; if you are preoccupied with hell and its suburbs or with paradisaical hours ditto. Lastly if you wish to glimpse something of the real you may be able to do so. Mescaline etc. allows one through the gateway, but it does not determine where you wander once you are through, that is for you to decide and discover. The psychologists have got to recognise that many of their psychological tests though interesting here are largely irrelevant and may distort and cramp the experience. The observer and the observations are inextricably bound together.

Hope your second producer sacks his director, or doesn't the hierarchy work that way? How queer they are! Another ending would be impossible without another beginning.

As it turned out it was as well that I didn't jump at Karl M's offer. There are new possibilities in Boston and it is usually a mistake to try to do things of this sort too quickly. I am at work on a paper on the use of mescaline etc. in psychotherapy and this plus the three or four papers that Hoffer and I have on the stocks should place me in a fair position for choosing where I want to work, with whom and in what direction.

Mind you my behavior was not very sensible, at least by normal standards. But as my whole need is to find someone whose standards are somewhat abnormal it may not have been as unwise as it appeared. I am sure that we must be prepared to build a new psychology which will incorporate much of the empirical observations of the old but will necessarily place a wholly different interpretation on them. Awesome but also rather fun! However KM and I have not abandoned each other yet. This sounds a bit stuck up, I fear, but I think you'll understand. In immediate assets I (and here I mean we in the New Approach) have only a little to offer while KM has much, but in potential assets I believe ours are far greater than his because our field is wider than psychiatry and psychoanalysis combined. Hence I think that we meet as equals. I don't consider myself a suppliant and if I can't get what I want I won't go. I think that before long we will be able to get what we require. One of the real difficulties is to be sure what one wants. Directing a major biological cum

physio-psychological research is very well, but unfortunately much more urgent is a psychosocial research into the possibilities of these extraordinary substances. An exploration rather than a geographical survey. I hope to make this clear in a coming series of papers.

The great difficulty facing a psychiatrist is that he tends to think “a new field, cautious advances etc.” In fact this is only a new field psychiatrically. There is an enormous amount of data which has been collected from other disciplines. In fact this is a field in which we could and I think will advance very quickly once we get going.

This last couple of weeks I have been enjoying something which is, I suppose, wholly or nearly unenjoyable for you. Reading your new Penguins. Some I had read as an adolescent, some not at all. How good they are. Philip Quarles<sup>52</sup> is I suppose one of the most accurate self portraits. Did you distribute Maria between Rachel and Elinore Quarles? It is fun trying to spot how much of whom you put into some of the characters, but not I suppose of much interest to you now. What good reading they are. Good luck with producers. I am hard at work refurnishing the hospital and preparing some ololiuqui experiments. Jane sends Love, also the poetess. Good wishes to Matthew and Ellen.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
30 June 1955*

My dear Aldous,

Just entering my 39<sup>th</sup> year, in a few hours another birthday is past and I realise now why older folk were never as enthusiastic about birthdays as the very young. They become formidable in middle years, then perhaps later one takes them less seriously. This last year has been full of ups and downs, ending for us in a conspicuous down when Jane's father died unexpectedly. I hope she will get away and stay with Al soon.

I have just ended an austere period of research, six or seven substantially negative experiments in a row. Scientists say glibly that a negative experiment is as valuable to a “real scientist” as a positive and maybe it is, but nearly 30 hours’ work, all of it after hours with nothing but honorable scars to show for it, was beginning to make me wonder whether I qualify for “true scientist.” In many ways I don’t and anyway I don’t think they exist. Anyway after giving five adrenolutins and one ololiuqui with minimal results I was beginning to wonder whether my 39<sup>th</sup> year wouldn’t be spent writing recantations of my views of my 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> years. However, it wasn’t quite as bad as that. Abram has done four or five successful adrenolutins of which four are wholly unequivocal. Three of my unsuccessful ones were on one man who may have some unusual capacity for detoxicating adrenolutin – I expect we will find such people. Or his body type may be such that he responds much less than different body types. (More of that later.) But of course apart from Maria and me no one has ever responded to ololiuqui. I wanted to get a few more cases and did a psychologist a week ago with absolutely no result. I did another tonight and for an hour and a half nothing. Then it began. Not too dramatic but quite characteristic. Curious tinglings all over, curious heaviness in his limbs and then mild but certain perceptual changes. We must follow this up with a larger dose and see what happens. So when my ololiuqui paper comes out, which it does very soon, I shall not have to recant and our group will have launched four hallucinogens in three years. John S. has just reported another which I got ICI<sup>53</sup> to make some years back.

William Sheldon has sent me his great *Atlas of Men*, what a very remarkable book. As you say it allows us to look at human beings as they are for possibly the first time. Who would have imagined that the hugest monsters of the Northwest were five times as heavy as the tiny fragilities of the Southeast. Dare we ignore the possible differences which such disparate creatures must show in every direction? I am trying very roughly to type our subjects, for I am sure that among other things the cerebrotonic and the viscerotonic are likely to be much more susceptible to hallucinogens than the powerfully somatonic. The somatonic with his life in the motor world can at his most extreme be very opaque internally. I don’t think he is so opaque that we won’t be able to open him up using the proper technique and framing, but it will be a huge effort. I believe however that we shall,



one day, be able to make you *feel* what it is like to be Joe Louis by changing the psychosomatic economy so that the cerebrotonic learns how the somatotonic lives. Excursions of this sort will be very beneficial for all concerned.

I have always been puzzled as to why I am so very susceptible to hallucinogens yet I can drink heavily and remain usually pretty sober. My guess is my body type. If I am right, and I don't think this is narcissism for Jane did the same thing without reading the text or the method, I lie close to 4-4-4. The top of the mountain predicament. My guess is that these people are susceptible to hallucinogens because their affective life is touched by them and their perceptive-cognitive. Conation is interfered with, but if you have little cognition or affect you may hardly realise this, but tend to rationalise your failures by paranoid ascriptions. The fully somatotonic, I would guess, requires large doses of hallucinogens, but we shall see. Anyway all sorts of exciting possibilities exist. I do hope you will persuade Sheldon to think about our work so that we can benefit from his acute and critical mind.

His formulation of the 4-4-4 group has been very illuminating to me – it seems to click. My dilemmas become more understandable and my inconsistencies more of a piece – but to have known this 20 years ago!

If instead of peering uncertainly in the psychoanalytic underbrush we took a good look at the Sheldonian wood, the size, shape, color and variety of the trees. After that we might now and again look at the country side in which the wood is set and even gaze at the stars sometimes. We are so well equipped to know ourselves if we care to do so and it is only by such self knowledge that we are likely to make the best use of our potentialities. Not, of course, that this in any way denies the child-parent dramas of the psychoanalysts, but it allows one to understand the *dramatis personae* better and to see that there are other plays as well as *Hamlet* and *Oedipus*. My friend Ian Clancy,<sup>54</sup> a Northeastern I would guess, was plagued by a father who wanted his five sons to be Northwesterns – two were. One was a subtle fellow lying between ectomorphy and endomorphy, but my friend found his father's ideal life impossible. There is little doubt that a proper understanding of human constitution backed by family doctors trained in such matters would solve many dire Oedipal problems!

Parents could quickly learn as they are learning with IQS that they can no more alter a child's somatotype than they can alter the color of his hair or increase his height. Of course it is not merely parental expectations, but social and self expectations which make life so complicated. I could never understand why I could so easily switch from being highly extraverted to highly introverted and sometimes be both at the same time. But there is no great mystery when, if Jane and I are right, you look at my somatotype.

It isn't very difficult to see why somatotyping will make only slow headway at first with medical doctors. It is a cerebrotonic matter, it is not "practical," it will not ease aches and pains. It will not appeal to the muscle men and the belly men who are I would imagine conspicuous among surgeons and physicians. However it will win through I am sure, at first I suppose because of its public health uses, especially in medical care schemes where I suppose it could save huge sums of money.

What are the socio-psychological consequences when a highly technical society accepts as an ideal stereotype a somatotype which is in fact very infrequent? We do not know but the possibilities in mutilations of various sorts are rather appalling.

I have heard from John Smythies. ... he does not seem very happy with his papist neuro-physiologist chief Eccles.<sup>55</sup> Eccles has some theory of mind at the cell level (so far as I can make out). John has a scheme which will "help" Eccles to prove [or] disprove his theory. I have urged John to find out first whether Eccles is seriously intending to do something with his theory. Nothing could be more annoying for a popish physiologist who has some rather "advanced" ideas to find himself landed with a ruthless younger man determined to take him at his word. I hope and believe John will take some notice of my suggestions. John is sometimes quite blind to other people's feelings and he has no dragoman to instruct him. He is only just beginning to see that most of the time most people don't mean what they say and that this applies as much to academic people as to others. When someone has got into a trap it is as well to decide whether they want you to spring it on them or not. At least if you are going to continue working with them.

Off to Ottawa on a committee next week for three days. Not, on the face of it, the gayest sort of jaunt but you never know. I wish I could scoot down to New York for a couple of days but I can't.

Look forward to news of the play. Everyone who has read *The Goddess*<sup>56</sup> seems to have enjoyed it. When is it being published as a book?

I hope Matthew, Ellen and family are well. How is Eileen Garrett doing? Al sends you good wishes. He says he hasn't written much because of secretarial difficulties. Gerald is hard at work on his Bollingen.<sup>57</sup>

Evidence accumulates for M-Substance. A man in Israel (did I tell you?) has shown that schizophrenic serum inhibits glucose metabolism in rat brain and retina significantly more than normal serum. I think we are closing in. Jane sends good wishes. The poetess is a bathing belle at present. She tells me she intends to become a millionairess, that the government will make her one! Who knows?

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*20 July 1955*

My dear Aldous,

I hear from Gerald that *The Goddess* is to be made flesh\* in October so I suppose that you are very busy. We are enjoying a heat wave which is not unwelcome as our income depends on the wheat crop, but we wish that there was some way of moderating the fierce heat. Canada does not go in for air conditioning except in Cinemas.

Talking about Cinemas Jane and I went to a drive-in the other night with the duck poetess in the back. You drive in and take up your position next to a microphone that fits on your car window. Then in the gathering dusk against a sunset which mocks the good painter and tempts only the hack you see some incredibly inane drama projected on the huge aluminum screen. It is all very very interesting and part of a "decentralization" not of entertainment but certainly of our enjoyment of it. Television and the drive-in are cutting the social links, the nuclear family seems to be contracting. With this contracting family comes a growing need for a real good wallow

in a group, a dangerous situation. The duck poetess soon went to sleep and here the baby sitting problem is solved for there are many worse places for a small girl to sleep in than the back of a modern car.

I am hard at work carrying out some double dummy experiments on adrenolutin. In spite of John Smythies' insistence that they are no difficulty to carry out, we note that he and his late colleagues in Vancouver didn't use them in a recent series of tests they were making with another new substance! We do them from 5–10 p.m. and it makes a long day. The "double dummy" means that neither the experimenter nor the experimentee knows whether a placebo has been given or not. I don't want to do any more of these than is necessary. They are tedious and tension making, you never know whether you are imagining what you observe or not. However they will tell us something once we have put in the 50 or more hours' spade work here.

I have had a very nice letter from William Sheldon. He is looking around for suitable niches in Portland Oregon. It is a very beautiful part of the world, but the first thing is to decide whether any such niches exist. I like the idea of the west coast better than Kansas or Boston. Kansas gets fiercely hot for two or three months of the year. And anyway I don't want a close quarters fight with the analysts yet. One could waste too much energy. I don't think that the analysts can let the scheme of psychology which we plan to introduce come in without a fight. It would undermine far too many of their high places.

Jane and Helen are off to stay with Al in about a week and are much excited. I wish I could go but I can't, we are so busy with experiments, new papers, budgeting, building etc. I shall be glad when I am not combining running a \$2½ million business with trying to reable an obsolete hospital, treat patients and do research.

However scarcely a week passes without some discovery, I suppose because we are so ignorant. Recently while reading Hediger<sup>58</sup> on animal psychology in zoos and circuses I came across Carpenter's Formula.<sup>59</sup> This is a formula used by animal sociologists for calculating the number of social relationships which can occur in any group. So far as I know its remarkable possibilities for human groups has never been exploited. Certainly they have not reached psychiatry. Carpenter supposes that if there are two animals A and B their relationship must be reciprocal. Therefore the

relationship  $AB = BA$ . He then says that granting this the number of relationships in a group  $N$  is  $N(N-1/2)$ . If the group is 3 we get  $3(2/2)$  or 3, 4 it is  $4^2$  into  $3/2$  or 6,  $8 = 28$ ,  $10 = 45$ ,  $15 = 105$ . One can see why teams have nearly always been less than 15! In a group of 50 there are over 1,200 relationships and in 100 over 4,900. What happens clearly is that the group very soon becomes an unmanageable crowd which can only be considered as a mass. It is easy enough to see why dramatists and authors stick to small groups of characters, the complications in large groups rises so very rapidly. Have you ever seen this stated explicitly before? I never have. It is now quite plain why these gigantic bins are so intolerably difficult to run. In this hospital we have, including staff, about 2,400 people, and from Carpenter's formula this means over 3,000,000 different relationships. True they are split up into wards, but most of these are over 100 and some over 150, one over 220. Which means over 11,000 and 24,000 relationships. The application of this information is now what we require.

Good wishes to Matthew and Ellen. Jane and the duck poetess send love.

Yours ever,  
Humphry

\* Not I hope too solid or too much influenced by the idiocies of directors or the oddities of actresses. How frail these brain children are and surely we are as rash with them as spawning frogs?

---

*Newcomb House, Clapboard Hill Rd  
Guilford, Conn.  
26 July 1955*

Dear Humphry,

I am two long good letters in your debt. No excuse, except that I have been trying to catch up with vast arrears of correspondence and to finish the series of appendices which will be published with the essay on Visionary

Experience and Visionary Art,<sup>60</sup> when it comes out next January. The publisher's deadline is August the first; so I have to keep very busy. I have done one of the appendices on popular visionary art – e.g. fireworks, pageantry, theatrical spectacle, magic lantern shows (very important in the past) and certain aspects of the cinema. A curious and interesting subject. One of the striking facts is the close dependence of such arts on technology. For example, the progress in artificial lighting since 1750 – spermaceti candles, Argand's<sup>61</sup> burners for oil lamps, gaslight, limelight from 1825 onwards, parabolic reflectors from 1790, electric light after the eighties – has immensely heightened the magical power of pageantry and the theatrical spectacle. Elizabeth II's coronation was better than anything of the kind in the past, because of floodlights. It could also be preserved on film – whereas all previous pageants were ephemeral shows and could only hope “to live in Settle's numbers one day more.”<sup>62</sup> The producers of Jacobean masques were hopelessly handicapped by having no decent lighting. Magic lanterns are very interesting. The fact that Kircher's<sup>63</sup> invention was christened “magic” and that the name was universally accepted is highly significant. Intense light plus transparent colour equals vision. And did you realize that the word “phantasmagoria” was coined in 1802 by the inventors of a new and improved magic lantern which moved on wheels back and forth behind a semi-transparent screen and could project images of varying sizes, which were kept in focus by an automatic focusing device? I cannot help believing that many features in the Romantic imagination were derived from the magic lantern show with its “dissolving views” (produced by two lanterns with convergent images and shutters that could be stopped down and opened up in correspondence with one another), its “phantasmagorias,” its “chromotropic slides” (producing three dimensional moving patterns, very like those of mescaline). One sees hints of the lantern show in Shelley<sup>64</sup> and, in another aspect, in Keats, in Fuseli<sup>65</sup> and John Martin.<sup>66</sup> And, talking of lanterns – did I tell you that my friend Dr Cholden had found that the stroboscope improved on mescaline effects, just as Al Hubbard did? His own geometrical visions turned, under the flashing lamp, to Japanese landscapes. How the hell this fits in with the notion that stroboscopic effects result from the interference of two rhythms, the lamp's and the brain waves', I cannot imagine. And anyhow what on earth are the neurological correlations of mescaline and LSD experiences? And if

neurological patterns are formed, as presumably they must be, can they be reactivated by a probing electrode, as Wilder Penfield<sup>67</sup> reactivates trains of memories, evoking complete vivid recall?

I too have had a birthday, this very day.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of age,  
Stol'n on his wing my first and sixtieth year!<sup>68</sup>

How little to show! One ought to have done so much better. But perhaps it's never too late to mend. And what sad, sad, strange experiences since my last birthday, which was in France! Last week, when I was in New York to see the dentist, I had a sitting with Arthur Ford,<sup>69</sup> one of the best mediums now working. He reported, exactly as Eileen had reported, that his impression of Maria was one of lightness, youth, gaiety, freedom. "I have lost my leaden feet," he reported her as saying. And there was evidential material in this case as in Eileen's. With Eileen, the communicator had talked about the last days and hours, speaking words which Eileen didn't understand and got slightly wrong, e.g. "the Bardle" – meaning, of course, the *Bardo*,<sup>70</sup> in reference to the things I had talked to her about. And then, "Tell him I liked that thing from Eggert" – which was evidently a quotation from Eckhart: "The eye with which we see God is the same as the eye with which God sees us."<sup>71</sup> With Ford the reference was to an episode last year in Lebanon – the so-called miracle we witnessed at Beirut,<sup>72</sup> in an Armenian church. And there were references to the essay I subsequently wrote about it. Many names were given, correctly, and a lot of odd extraneous information, some of which, referring to one of my cousins, who is still alive, I still have to check on. There is at the least a great deal of very far ranging ESP – so far ranging that the survival hypothesis seems simpler.

Earlyish in August I shall go to Maine to see what Puharich is up to at the Round Table Foundation. Then return here and go back to California in early September. The play is still a subject of negotiation; at least three producers are after it; but I doubt if it can come out before the end of the year.

Affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
28 July 1955*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. I am keenly looking forward to the new essays, the appendices sound fascinating. Are you considering anything on painting? Your point about light is a good one. I am now listening to a High-Fi machine of extraordinary fidelity and it seems that rather the same thing must be happening in sound that began 170 years ago in light and color. The phantasmagoria of 1802 seems to have been very well named – they already had 3D! The John Martin pictures are very extraordinary. Interested in Cholden's confirmation of Al's work. Abram Hoffer has shown that adrenolutin alters the stroke patterns. But what are they and what do they mean? Depth beyond depth, surely it is lunatic supposing that it is all a series of meaningless whats? One can hardly call them purposes or coincidences, just a queer lot of happenings which we view teleologically. But why should we? Why must we see these patterns if they aren't and how dare we say they aren't there?

Working hard at the double dummy experiments to which John S. was so addicted (in theory only because he and Gibson published a paper on another hallucinogen, a close relative of mescaline and there were no double dummies!). They are far more complicated than he supposed. So far we have done four, one a full one, the others still have another one to be done. In the completed one the subject and I are both sure that we know which was the control and which was the real thing. I pressed her hard to convince her that she had lost insight and couldn't tell whether she was herself or not, but she wouldn't budge. However I shall have to complete the series before I know whether we are right or not. I am working on a group experiment which should be very interesting.

Last week we held our research meeting, two very hard driven days. The work is forging ahead and we should be ready for a very big paper this fall, a much more formidable paper than any we have written so far.



Adrenolutin and adrenochrome seem to be queer substances, almost exactly alike in formula and very similar psychological effects, yet one appears to inhibit brain function 80% and the other speeds it up that amount – what can one make of that? What will they do in combination? I think I told you that we already have evidence from the Mayo Clinic that adrenochrome and adrenolutin are very powerful when put into the ventricles of cats. We hope to have our own specially prepared cats soon. The hunt for M-substance continues. We are hunting now with brewers' yeast. I am sending our chemist up to Regina to visit the local brewery to get some yeast, bakers' yeast we will get from our own bake shop. We have been working with cell cultures and yesterday it struck me that yeast is the most quickly dividing of living things. Why not try the effect of schizophrenic serum on a yeast sugar mixture and measure the result by the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> given off? So we shall try. If it works it will be a very simple and handy test with all sorts of possibilities. But the proof here is in the fermenting. We should know in a week. New therapeutic ideas coming along. Odd that when, which is rare, a chronic schizophrenic gets diabetes he shows improvement, while diabetes and fever seems especially beneficial! What about insulin, plus sugar, plus nicotinic acid, plus an experimentally induced fever? We shall know soon.

In the meanwhile I am preparing an article on the mental hospital and also on the psychiatric nurse. They are part of an attempt to get the public to realise our problem and our great needs. I shall send you copies later. I believe I know why and how the great disaster that swept over mental hospitals in the 1860's, '70's occurred. So that psychiatry – one of the leading specialties in nearly every way (the first professional specialist journals were psychiatric) fell far behind. The value of knowing what has happened is that it allows one to take off the spectacles of 1955 and look with the eyes of a Shaftesbury<sup>73</sup> trying to see why his reforms of the 1840's "for the most helpless if not the most afflicted of human beings" had, over a century later, still to be fully accomplished.

So no plays and stories get written, but I feel that this must be done, and one day possibly I shall be able to turn my energies to those fields where I should like to use them.

It has been a hard year for you Aldous, and yet one of accomplishments. I think there are more to come. "Voices"<sup>74</sup> in *Atlantic* was a very high level

chiller. I was taken back to that weird little episode in Los Angeles, May 1953. Those are brute facts that find their way on to a Dictaphone. Surely they should be fully recorded in the literature. If Sophia W. is a ventriloquist she is the best I have ever heard, astounding. I was watching her larynx in full light!

In the meanwhile the good citizens of Weyburn snipe away at us. Disliking our activity program and attacking us because our ideas are unfamiliar. The worst about these attacks is that one begins to enjoy the fight. They have had a good effect because of their excessive silliness in making our staff start to rally round our new policy – one of the unintended consequences of the really stupid critic. It has been very good for me in some ways. I have had to sharpen my ideas on the mental hospital and to see how we can meet this great abuse of our generation, where neglect has reached absurd proportions so that many hospitals have no means of getting recovered people out. However I believe we are reaching an age when something can be done.

My future is uncertain. I have an offer for the new medical school. Jane isn't very happy for various reasons. She is terribly weary of Saskatchewan and I can't blame her. She also feels that I should have been asked up there sooner. Again this isn't wholly wrong. Mackerracher did not think his department out too straight. But my overwhelming reason for remaining a few years is that I feel Abram Hoffer and I can do together what we can not do apart – drive through to a successful conclusion: the fall of schizophrenia. After that I think we shall want our own departments, but if we separate now I believe this work might be delayed years. John S. may join us to write the great book we have in mind, Schizophrenia: a Study of Mind. I cannot stay in Weyburn much longer – I am getting too keen on administering mental hospitals. 4-4-4s have to recognise the specific weakness of plasticity.

Deeply interested in your account of the sitting with Ford, of course one can always use telepathy against any survival hypothesis, but does it make the world any less odd?

I don't think I told you about a very curious experience I had in the very early hours of 16/2/55. I wrote it down at the time and copied it out later. "A very curious happening last night just after I had turned off the light about 00:40. I was half asleep and heard a sort of glad song. 'Away, away,

welcome to me.' I immediately concluded that Maria was dead. I was not going to write it down because I was on the brink of sleep, then I felt that I must and roused myself, put on the light and wrote it down. It seems much more likely that Maria died three days ago from Aldous' account. But what a strange magic song that was. All today I have been very much aware of Maria's presence and feel that she is close and near. I am sure now that she is dead but far from feeling dejected about this as I did a week ago, I am cheerful and know that somehow I am in touch with her. Is this just a delusion, something too subtle to be recognised as true? I am sure now there will be no miraculous recovery and reprieve which I was hoping for months and weeks back. This would be unnecessary and inappropriate. It is not what Aldous or Maria needs. My dear friend has not gone as I feared but is near and closer than before. Is this just the denial of an unpleasant fact and a way of checking myself? We must wait a little and see." That harplike musical voice was astoundingly gay and lively. I very rarely have auditory hypnagogic phenomena. It wasn't a proof of anything, it was only very convincing to me. Perhaps that was what it was intended to be. The sort of proof for which Gardner Murphy looks will not I think ever be discovered. I think it would be quite unhelpful, but for those who care to explore the nature of the transcendental there will always be enough fleeting glimpses, one way and another, to make a passable sketch map, and that is perhaps all we require.

Please remember me to Ellen and Matthew. Jane and Helen are off to the coast and Al's stronghold on Saturday. I drive them up for the transcontinental bus. I shall miss them. Helen was roaring tonight that she "didn't want to go to Vancouver," possibly because to encourage her bedwards we had foolishly suggested that she might not be ready for the journey.

Jane sends her love. When will *The Goddess* be out?

We hope William Sheldon will drop in on his way back and give a talk on his body typing at the University. Mackerracher is very interested. I have a feeling this may be enormously enlightening once we know the different breakdown products of adrenalin available at the extremes of body build. Suppose the control of mood depends on adrenochrome-adrenolutin relationships? But we must wait.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
20 August 1955*

My dear Aldous,

Jane and I are delighted with *The Goddess*. I am glad th[at] most people seem to agree with Maria that it is one of your very best. My bookseller friend tells me that it is proving very popular in London. It is an excellent length. Too many novels go on laboring the point. *The Goddess* leaves you longing for another 100 pages about Rivers and Helen but knowing that it would not be relevant.

Jane is back from a wonderful ten days with Al in Vancouver on the idyllic island. It sounds a paradisaical spot and might give good detail for your Utopian story. The duck poetess sent me some fine pictures from her journeys and has returned as indomitable as ever. Blue eyes, red hair and tawny skin makes her a remarkable sight.

The experiments continue, 11 done, seven more to do, and then we see how many boobs we have made. At five hours a piece they are a hefty investment of time, but well worth while and will I hope be the back bone of "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III" which is rapidly shaping up.

This week the hospital reached an all time low, 1814 (last year 1894, year before 1916). This is not seasonal so far as I can make out and must be attributed to our new policy of getting people out whenever possible. But as we do this the damnable nature of these places becomes clear, people come up who have been here 5, 10, 15 or even 20 years and it is hard to guess why, except that the place is as possessive as Rivers' Lutheran mother.<sup>75</sup> It is marvelous how quite normal behaviour seems lunatic in a mad house. Men who ask continually to go out are noted as being in special need of staying in. It is the old "he that asks doesn't get and he that doesn't ask doesn't want" – get you either way.

We have succumbed to the Hi-Fi, more than we can afford but about 1/3 of its real price (\$400 odd instead of \$1,200) and as perfect a reproduction as I have ever heard. For us cut off on the claustrophobically vast prairies this means great pleasure for the long winter months of a sort wholly unobtainable otherwise.

Last weekend drove 1,200 miles to West Ontario to the Lake of the Woods area. Forest and Lake – very beautiful. Fished a day with an old ship mate from destroyers. Caught a five-pound pickerel and cooked it in the open. Came back with a couple of new play plots at least. Hope to try a shortish novel, have a good story and if I make it will let you know. But budgets, my Macy Foundation transcript which is nearly 20,000 words and lots of references, hate them, hang heavily on me. Editorials, articles, so much to be done, but I suppose that really I am lucky, it would be sad to have no ideas and nothing to write.

Believe we have found a new a[nd] highly efficient DT treatment, but need some more DTS, they aren't too plentiful.

Much interested in the point you make in *The Goddess* about *not* putting certain feelings and ideas into words. I think it is very important psychotherapeutically. There are many experiences which are best left un verbalized. Our symbology is likely to be too crude and too definitive. What is more symbols are not more controllable than the experience they symbolise. The best must always be left unsaid. Talking it out is not a sovereign remedy, it does work when a common symbology is possible, but how often and how does one know when? But we shall have our work cut out with the pow-wow men who believe that talking it out answers everything, a magic and pathetic belief in the symbol rather than the experience itself.

Please give good wishes to Matthew and Ellen. Shall you be in New York this November? I hope to see *The Goddess* on the stage.

We know enough to transform these horrid places, in five years they could be swept away and be replaced by something wholly different. No magic. Only as Lord Ashley (Shaftesbury) said in 1845 introducing the Lunacy Acts, "It is remarkable and very humiliating, the long and tedious process by which we have arrived at the sound practise of the treatment of the insane, which now appears to be the suggestion of common sense and ordinary humanity."

One hundred and ten years later we are still waiting for that common sense and ordinary humanity, but perhaps the day is not too far away. Jane sends love and the poetess a kiss.

Yours affectionately,  
Humphry

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
5 September 1955

My dear Aldous,

I hope that the gap in our correspondence means that you are busy getting *The Goddess* staged and not that you or yours have been harmed in the recent floods. Here the great grain harvest pours in. I watched some hundreds of bushels being spun up into a granary on the Hoffers' farm about 50 miles from here. The heavy clean grain comes in by truck from the combine where it has been thresh[ed] and winnowed and is allowed to run out into a box at the back of the truck. Into this box an augur is placed: this is a power operated helical tube which scoops up the grain and whisks it up to the granary far more quickly than could possibly be done by hand. It is simple, ingenious, but noisy. The Hoffers lost much of their crop by hail and still have 10,000 bushels or so. These modern power operated farms use very few people. Two men ran this one with old Mr Hoffer who must be 70 directing. Twenty-five years ago they would have had 20–30 men harvesting. Now a huge red combine does 20 acres or more daily. This still depends on men to drive it and so can only go 10–12 hours a day. The next move is clearly a radio or electronically controlled one that will run 24 hours a day at higher speeds. It will come, but what its implications are for these huge grain lands I am not sure.

Jane and I have much enjoyed *The Goddess* and *Heaven and Hell*.<sup>76</sup> I have just read a translation of Baudelaire's *Les Paradis Artificiels*, very interesting though disappointing. A young acquaintance of mine, himself a multiple addict, made the translation which I found excellent. It is a classic

which should be available, although I completely disagree with Baudelaire's thesis, which is that what doesn't come naturally is hellish. It depends what you mean by naturally – also hellish. Would you be interested in seeing the translation and giving your opinion? It is only 70 pages. I wondered whether Eileen Garret or *Harper's* might be interested. The book should have a commentary so that Baudelaire's views should not be accepted too uncritically. Do let me know what you think.

I have finished my Macy Foundation transcript, it turns out to be over 15,000 words and 60 references. Can you send me the one of Levy Bruyell? Levi Bruell?<sup>77</sup> on Soma? I have not been able to find this. Abram and I a[re] almost ready to write "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III." I have almost completed my 18 double dummy experiments with adrenolutin. We shall then have 30 experiments and much other data. It should surprise everyone in conjunction with the Macy paper and another one Abram and I have just put out. The hunt for M-substance is now up and Abram is hopeful that we are closing in on it. We have a new and very able biochemist who is joining us to take up the pursuit. We have just put in to Ford's for about \$700,000 (\$90–100,000 for seven years under their new scheme). I think that I shall almost certainly be in Saskatoon next year. The position is this. Our research is not quite generally accepted so that I cannot go anywhere I wish *carte blanche*. Further to do so means that someone must put up *several hundred* thousand dollars to get the equivalent facilities to what we currently have in Saskatoon. This would take two or three years to organize and would be a waste of energy. I would much rather be elsewhere and Jane hates the prairies. I am thinking of sending Jane and Helen home to England for a year or two. It will be a painful wrench but Helen will get better schooling and Jane will be in a county that has such a much greater variety. I have thought long and hard about this and feel that Saskatoon for the next two or three years has much more to offer than far more attractive places. John Smythies left this dreary steppe land for what seemed much more enjoyable places. I think he lost by it and knows it now. I want to be in at the death of schizophrenia and believe there is a sporting chance that it won't be too far off.

Meanwhile I shall be in New York about November and may go with Captain Al to see Jung then. Will you be in N.Y. then? If so we will come to see you.

I am starting a short novel about prairie life and hope that I have the time and horsepower to complete it. I have a good story and must now see whether I can build it into something coherent, readable and entrancing. So much easier said than done.

Jane sends love – good wishes to Matthew and Ellen.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
25 September 1955*

Dear Humphry,

It was good to get news of you, all the more good since I had failed for so long to give you any account of myself. I got back here early in September – to find, after the hottest, humidest summer in the history of Connecticut, a heat-wave in full swing with temperatures all over Southern California of 110 and up. However, in spite of it all, I have managed to keep pretty well. My doctor, to whom I went for a check-up, pronounces me healthy, and I managed to do a good deal of work – mostly of a very exasperating kind; for I have been revising and re-revising my play, first putting in the subsidiary characters who were in the novel (Rivers' daughter and grandchild) then taking them out, as I instinctively felt they should be out and as everybody, except my over-enthusiastic director, considers best. But I am keeping most of the other suggestions made by the director and incorporated into the script, and hope to be finished with the whole wearisome proceeding, at least until rehearsals begin, in another week or so. All this jigsaw work entailed in shaping a play for stage production is extremely boring. But unfortunately it is necessary, since the neatness of the constructional carpentry may make all the difference between a good acting play and a hopeless stage failure.

I am sorry to hear of the projected separation from Jane and the poetess; but perhaps, in the circumstances, it is the best course open. You must hurry



up and exterminate schizophrenia, so as to be able to move to some more congenial clime.

Before I forget, the book you referred to is *not* by Lévy-Bruhl. Its title is *Poisons Sacrés, Ivresses Divines* by Philippe de Félice. Paris, 1936.

While in Guilford I read, or rather nosed about in, Penfield's book on epilepsy and the brain in general. I wanted to find out whether there was any place on the temporal cortex where an electrode would evoke anything like a mescaline vision. But so far as I could make out (and I followed up every reference in the index to hallucinations) the hallucinations produced by the probing electrode are always characterized by a sense of unreality – the antipodes of the mescaline vision, which is characterized by super-reality. Also I noticed that (in his accounts of spontaneous cases) epileptics seemed to speak of a similar unreality attending their visionary experiences. So there would seem to be little or no relation between the visions of a Blake or an AE,<sup>78</sup> or the visions of a mescaline taker, on the one hand, and the electrically induced vision for the epileptic's visions on the other. Of course, as Penfield says, absence of evidence, in the present state of neurosurgical knowledge, proves nothing. But at least it is curious and interesting to find that, as yet, no direct stimulation of the cortex can open the door.

I have undertaken, rather rashly, to talk at one of the Monday evening concerts on the madrigals of Gesualdo (the psychotic prince of Venosa, who murdered his wife and could never go to the bathroom unless he had been previously flagellated) and on the Court of Ferrara, where he developed his utterly amazing musical style. This has required a lot of reading – Einstein's history of the Italian madrigal,<sup>79</sup> books on Tasso<sup>80</sup> (who was a good friend of Gesualdo), histories of the post-renaissance Italy. Very strange stuff that makes one marvel at the extraordinary versatility of the human species, capable of practically anything and able to flourish in the most improbable social environment. I always have the feeling, when I read history, or see or listen to or read the greatest works of art, that, if we knew the right way to set about it, we could do things far more strange and lovely than even the strangest and the loveliest of past history.

My love to you all.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
28 September 1955

My dear Aldous,

How very good to hear from you again. I am glad to hear that all is well and that *The Goddess* is getting ready for the stage. When and where? Will you be in New York in mid-November? I shall be on my way to GAP and also I hope to see Jung and spend a couple of weeks in England. I intend to visit Ciba and Sandoz, two great Swiss Chemical concerns in Basel, for adrenochrome and adrenolutin isomers. I believ[e] in begging from these vastly rich industrial republics.

I am now more hopeful that Jane and the poetess will be with me, but we shall see, this is an odd situation. I suppose that as good and important work is being done in this hospital as in any of its type in the world, work that covers a very wide range from simple patient comfort up to the genesis of illness and new theoretical formulations. This is being constantly sniped at and partly hindered (though not very significantly) by a group of mischievous and miniscular small town politicians who are mostly less than life size. I refuse to inflate them above their worth with my own annoyance. They are not so much contemptible as irrelevant and yet a nuisance.

Did I tell you about the result of the 18 Double Dummies? They were interesting but very annoying in a way. We had to do them in a limited time and consequently our subjects had to be taken whatever their duties. Some were on night duty. It seems that people working all night and sleeping all day have a very different response from those who work during the day and sleep at night. This wrecked our experiments but has provided us with some interesting data. Of course the experiments will be valuable and will be in with Abram Hoffer's, now in progress, but I wish that humans were more wieldy experimental animals.

I have just finished budgeting for about \$3 million and am very tired. I believe that a budget is an instrument of policy, so my main effort has been two 5,000 word statements on the effect of the mental hospital as it now

stands on the psychotic person and a second on the way to meet the present disastrous situation in these hospitals. In Canada and the U.S. they are increasing their population at 1.7% per annum. At present this means 14,000, which is beyond the resources of the continent to train people. If we aim at making better mental hospitals by continuing with our present practises we are up against an insoluble problem. We have got to wholly alter our ideas about mental hospitals before we can do something about them. Our present ideas for more and better mental hospital beds is a contradiction in thinking. The only way to get better mental hospitals is by having less and less of them. The more they are the worse they get.

What we have to do is to make the hospitals smaller and fewer, cut our beds by at least 50% and probably 75% and put up our costs two or three times per bed. We shall save handsomely. I have worked out that in Saskatchewan about \$30,000,000 can be saved in this hospital alone.

I believe that I know what has happened. By failing to provide for the *needs* of psychotic people we have achieved the same results as are inevitable in any other illness in which medicine has depended on symptomatic treatment rather than on aetiologically based treatment. By over concentrating psychotic people, putting too many of them together, we drive them into a retreat into their personal past – regression. For some reason the schizophrenic antipodes of the mind seem to be fairly close in to the personal life of the sufferer in many cases, and the disability that predominates is an incapacity for thinking and feeling. Herding too many schizophrenic people together is the greatest possible mistake and is probably the greatest single error that has been made in their treatment. I can now demonstrate this psychologically and statistically. I believe that it will gradually sink in. I hope to send you the several papers that I have in mind on mental hospitals, they have been paid for dearly, but may be worthwhile. I believe that when one can show that decency pays a cash dividend, as I can, there is a chance that people will do something.

I can also show the specific sort of harm that the various short comings of mental hospitals do to mentally sick people. Why for instance food choice, individually fitted clothes, properly screened toilets and single rooms are not “luxuries” but as essential as aseptic technique in surgery. I believe that this has never been done in this way before and it seems a good way to use what is mostly psychoanalytic theory.

So my novel has not progressed, but I shall return to it. I suppose that I *must* do this first, yet I wish sometimes I didn't have to.

Thank you so much for the Félice reference, it was silly of me to get mixed up.

I have only glanced at Penfield's work, but have it on my list and as you note it deepens the mystery of LSD and mescal rather than clarifies it. The mind is always showing itself wider and weirder than we suppose. Some epileptics do have a heightened sense of reality, but most don't. This seems to be so with most schizophrenics. As one would expect, the effect of a brain disorder is negative *mostly* but by no means always.

Shall you be publishing the Gesualdo Lecture? I hope so.

Rejoice we all that your doctor finds you well. That is good news.

The poetess is at school. The classes are too large and she thinks too quickly but I hope she won't come to too great harm. She is a jolly little girl.

Plastic mattresses, nylon clothing, group activity, plus relentless lobbying are gradually changing this place. Not as quickly as we could but I believe that we have found out how to reduce mental hospitals at a rate of 200 beds a year – without depending on the new tranquillisers. My objective is to destroy this type of hospital and with it the problem of mental hospitals. There is now *no* problem connected with bleeding, thought it used to be one of the great preoccupations of medicine. Similarly the great difficulties of the phlogiston theory<sup>81</sup> puzzle us no more. We have scrapped the whole thing. But one has to ask the right question. As soon as one asks, what are the requirements of psychotic people? What makes them better? What worse? It becomes clear that the mental hospital – as we know it – is a machine calculated to damage the mentally ill. Queer and sad.

How is Gerald? Are Marie and Annette looking after you? How is Rose?

I do hope that I shall see you in New York. I hope to see Eileen and the Hon. Frances Bolton.<sup>82</sup> I want to interest her in my mental hospital liquidation scheme. I think she is the sort of dynamo who might take it on. She is clearly aware of the possibilities and once she got her teeth in wouldn't let go.

It is odd to think that tens of thousands of people are locked away in looney bins quite unnecessarily. This is not rhetoric either. We have cut our

population by 5% with a small program and in the U.S. that would mean 35,000 people. Topeka in seven years cut their hospital by 30%.

Good wishes to Gerald. Jane sends love.

Yours ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
23 October 1955*

My dear Aldous and Gerald,

Al has just left after a very strenuous five days here and will be with you in about a month. We have had a very remarkable time and I am writing this while some of the results of it are fresh in my mind. I hope to write again before I go East or while I am there, but in case I don't this should give you something to think about.

Al brought his special CO<sub>2</sub> which is a powerful brew. He has made an important discovery about CO<sub>2</sub>. This is that the usual stuff is mixed improperly so that one has almost no control over the concentration. In addition the valves are not set properly. Al is very observant and full of ideas. We are hoping to use his CO<sub>2</sub> in our adrenolutin work.

On Friday we did a joint LSD here, starting at about 2 p.m. with 100 gamma each. We set down our objectives first on paper and kept them close by us. The experiment continued until about 9 p.m. We had one or two personal things to unravel but our main objectives were to develop group feeling. To explore Jung's ideas of archetype, anima and shadow. To see ourselves as cause not effect, to scan time Backwards and Forwards. To understand the potential of this work. In an hour the stuff was working and we had at least 3½ to 4 hours of extraordinary experience *much of which was shared*. In spite of a number of interruptions which would have ordinarily been both vexing and distracting we continued our work. We are

now pretty certain that shared exploration is possible where people trust each other and where there are not too many neurotic blocks.

I have asked Al to do a similar experiment with you both. My belief is that Al will provide the energy, the driving force to get you up into the psychic stratosphere. Once you are up there Aldous should direct the intellectual aspects of the expedition and Gerald the religious. Al will always be able to turn off the power if you get into difficulties. You will combine your diverse gifts at this high level and the resulting experience should be very unusual. I am not going to give you details of our work for several reasons, first I don't want to contaminate your expedition. Second I have not organised it properly yet. Naturally psychologically sharp people will say that I haven't yet rationalised it enough, but my belief is that *much* work is needed to turn an experience of this sort into understandable language. Language is a symbolic way of communicating. The symbols must bear some relationship to shared experience. Our expedition bore very little relationship to shared experience so that language is not very useful. We will have to make some new symbols.

Our impression bears out Gerald's mescaline experience. There *are* many levels of experience. My guess is that we were operating two or more levels above *base line* (normal living). These levels are a useful working concept, and we need such concepts if we are to discuss them.

*Don't* distract yourselves with predetermined experiments. We may and probably will be able to devise experiments later, but at the moment they are futile. Al and I are convinced that telepathy, prevision etc. are common place at these higher levels. Once you are on them, however, it becomes clear that there are grave objections to producing effects at lower levels. This seems to involve certain time-space barriers with which we tamper at our own peril. In any case we must explore first and then decide what sort of experiments are necessary and permissible. Our impression is that Zener card guessing etc. without exploration is a waste of time and also not very interesting. It tells us almost nothing about the mind even when successful. It is a bore and so the skill drops off. The high levels of mind are not going to waste much energy on something so trivial.

While we worked I gave Al some instructions which will come back to him perfectly clearly when you reach the required level. He also of course has discussed them with me before he left. I have suggested that *no one*

distracting should be with you and only you three should participate in. Michael should be there to minister to you all, but not William F. because it makes him anxious and Gerald worries about him, while his rather sterile intellectuality annoys Al.

Don't, unless you are all three very well integrated and feel fully confident, go in for any deep religious exploration. We know too little about this yet.

Al and I have developed some useful techniques and hope that they will work with you. Al plans to lead until you are all well underway and will then hand over to whichever of you two are most in tune with the group. He will then devote his main energy to keeping you all three at that high level while you two steer through the new universe of timespace. It sounds odd, but I'm sure you know what I mean.

My belief is that in a group 100 gamma will be quite enough. Al will do his best to have adequate recording equipment. It has some use, but not as much as we are inclined to think. Al is going to get a recorder which is not too much of a nuisance, the snag is that most of them are a nuisance.

Al feels that I should be with you but that cannot be this time. However we shall have a team session next year on his island, when we shall be able to pool the results of both experiments. My belief is that we shall have to make a relay of communications from the very high levels down to base and that a team will best be able to do this. A team also maintain[s] a much higher degree of stability and purpose. It is important to have written objectives to which one can refer. I believe that you will find with the team that the whole process is kept more under control. You can come down from the higher levels, discuss and return there again. But of course Al and I cannot be too dogmatic, but only urge you to go and see.

As I see it what happens make[s] very good sense and it is clear enough why it has not been discussed much before. Psychiatry and psychotherapy (even including Jung) know very little about these upper levels and are mostly concerned with near personal matters. The psychiatrist is not at all keen to venture with his patient, indeed it is doubtful whether he would be well advised to do so for neurotic preoccupations are wholly distracting and might ruin an expedition. I don't think this would be dangerous though it can I am sure be very unpleasant. Cultist groups are preoccupied with proving their particular point and whether this is survival, transmigration of

souls or what not makes little difference. Witches and magicians have been preoccupied with acquiring power either directly or by means of time changes. Very few people have been keen to explore and discover the laws which govern our relationship with these higher levels. Yet this is of paramount importance. In the past the techniques for reaching these levels have been so faulty that a team experiment has seldom been possible and very rarely repeatable. The elixirs alter this. Of course it is still no easy task but our recent experiment suggests that it is possible.

The whole matter bristles with difficulties but we must not be deterred. Clearly if we get *outside* our space time it must be very difficult for sensory impressions from that other space time to register on our brains, and not really easy to see how they do it all. It looks as if memory has a brain component and a mind component which are capable of autonomy but usually closely linked. My guess is that if we can get these teams working we must get a philosopher mathematician into one so that he can help to conceptualise some of these weird happenings.

The people we must avoid are those crippled by neurosis who will become immediately involved in their own problems at our level, though not in time present, and those who want some personal gain out of the expedition. This applied with utmost severity would rule all out, but we must at least be attempting unattached action, hard though it may be.

We have developed a wonderful new game to play, which AI will introduce to you. I am keenly looking forward to hearing from you both and particularly the results of the experiment. I shall be home by Dec 8<sup>th</sup> and if AI rings after that will be hoping to hear how things have gone.

The mind brain business is fascinating. I very much agree with the Aldous-Bergson idea that the brain *filters* out the greater universe most of the time. Not only does it filter it out, but it also provides no means of describing it. Anyone who has censored thousands of letters from the semi-literate soon discovers how little capacity they have for describing the most ordinary event. It is not surprising that they cannot communicate the most extraordinary happenings for which there are few real parallels.

Good wishes to you both.

Yours ever,  
Humphry



P.S. Will either of you be in New York Nov 8<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup>? Please let me know.

P.P.S. It must be clear that if we can develop a form of group experience independent of words, and this seems possible to Al and me, then long range telepathy between members of such a group should be possible at a later state. Once this has been established with the drug it should not be too hard without it. However this is something for the next round but one. It is however very exciting.

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
24 October 1955*

Dear Humphry,

I fear we shall not meet in New York, unless perhaps on your return from Europe. I do not expect to be in the East until the last days of December – and perhaps later: one never knows, where the theatre is concerned. How long do you propose to stay in Switzerland and England? It would be a happy thing if our trajectories were to intersect on your way home.

I had another most extraordinary experience with mescaline the other day. After reading an account by one of Al's patients – a young Canadian engineer, who had recovered all kinds of buried and chronically debilitating traumatic material under LSD, worked it off with appropriate abreactions and had a beatific vision thrown in as a bonus, so that his whole life was transformed overnight – after reading this, I decided it might be interesting to find out why so much of my childhood is hidden from me, so that I cannot remember large areas of early life. So I sat down to a session with a woman who has had a good deal of experience with eliciting recalls and working off abreactions by the methods of dianetics – which do in many cases produce beneficial results, in spite of all that can and must be said against the theorists of dianetics and many of its practitioners. I took half the contents of a 400 mg capsule at ten and the other half about forty minutes later, and the effects began to be strong about an hour and a half after the first dose. There was little vision with the eyes closed, as was the

case during my experiment under your auspices, but much transfiguration of the outer world. Dianetic procedures were tried, along the lines described in the account given by Al's patient; but there was absolutely no recall. Instead there was something of incomparably greater importance; for what came through the closed door was the realization – not the knowledge, for this wasn't verbal or abstract – but the direct, total awareness, from the inside, so to say, of Love as the primary and fundamental cosmic fact. The words, of course, have a kind of indecency and must necessarily ring false, seem like twaddle. But the fact remains. (It was the same fact, evidently, as that which the Indians discover in their peyote ceremonies.) I *was* this fact; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that this fact occupied the place where I had been. The result was that I did not, as in the first experiment, feel cut off from the human world. I was intensely aware of it, but from the standpoint of the living, primordial cosmic fact of Love. And the things which had entirely occupied my attention on that first occasion I now perceived to be temptations – temptations to escape from the central reality into false, or at least imperfect and partial Nirvanas of beauty and mere knowledge. I talked a good deal about these temptations; commented on the light this realization threw on the legend of St Anthony,<sup>83</sup> on the Zen statement that, for a Bodhisattva, the Samadhi of Emptiness, Nirvana apart from the world, apart from love, compassion and sentient beings, is as terrible as the pains of hell. And I remember that I quoted the remark of Pascal,<sup>84</sup> that the worship of truth without charity is idolatry, for truth is merely God's idol, which we have no right to worship. And of course the same is true in regard to beauty. (Actually the Platonic trinity of the good, the true and the beautiful is a faulty expression of the facts. Good implies bad and so perpetuates dualism. Love reconciles all the opposites and is the One.)

I also spoke a good deal, to my own subsequent enlightenment, about objects and subjects. How easy, I kept saying, to turn whatever one looked at, even a human face, into a pure object – an object of the most magical beauty, strangeness, intensity of thereness, of pure existence! Do you remember that account given by Blake of seeing a fold of lambs in the corner of a field, and how he approached and suddenly saw that the lambs were pieces of the most exquisite sculpture? This is a good description of the process of objectification. It is a kind of Gorgon's-head effect – you

look at a thing solely with a view to seeing truth and beauty, and it turns into stone – living, changing, self-luminous stone, but still stone, still sculpture. Love de-objectifies the perceived thing or person. At the same time it de-subjectifies the perceiver, who no longer views the outside world with desire or aversion, no longer judges automatically and irrevocably, is no longer an emotionally charged ego, but finds himself an element in the given reality, which is not an affair of objects and subjects, but a cosmic unity of love. The thought of my own and other people's constant effort to impose objectivity and subjectivity on the cosmic fact, thereby creating untold miseries for all concerned, filled me for a moment with intense sadness. But that too, I saw, was a temptation to subjectivity on a higher level, a larger scale.

I looked at some picture books, and was struck especially by a full length portrait by Boucher,<sup>85</sup> of a lady in court dress of the time of Louis XV. It seemed the most perfect example of objectification. The couturier's function is to turn women into objects – objects for men and objects for themselves. Looking at the object they have been turned into by the fashion designer and by their own bovaristic craving to be something other than what in fact they are, the women become self-satisfied and self-dissatisfied subjects, purring with quiet glee or caterwauling with self-pity or spitting and scratching because somebody has blasphemed against the object which is their idol and so has offended the subject which worships the object. And of course the same is true of men – only there didn't happen to be any pictures of masculine fancy dress to remind me of the fact.

I also looked at a volume of photographs of nudes – a lot of them very tricky, bits of bodies taken from odd angles and under queer conditions of light. Objects again. Lust is sexual relations with an object for the benefit of a subject – who may also enjoy, as a kind of bonus, the manifestations of subjective enjoyment proceeding from the object. Love de-objectifies and de-subjectifies, substitutes the primordial fact of unity and the awareness of mutual immanence for a frenzy heightened to despair by the impossibility of that total possession of the object, at which the subject mistakenly aims.

Among the by-products of this state of being the given fact of love was a kind of intuitive understanding of other people, a “discernment of spirits,” in the language of Christian spirituality. I found myself saying things about my dianetic operator, which I didn't know but which, when I said them,

turned out to be true. Which, I suppose, is what one would expect if one happens to be manifesting the primordial fact of unity through love and the knowledge of mutual immanence.

Another thing I remember saying was that I now understood such previously incomprehensible events as St Francis's kissing of the leper.<sup>86</sup> Explanations in terms of masochistic perversion etc. are ridiculous. This sort of thing is merely the overflow of a cosmic fact too large, so to speak, for the receptacle, fashioned by the subjective ego in its life-long relations with objects and not yet completely melted away, so that the new fact finds itself constricted by the old confining habits, with the result that it boils over, so to speak, under pressure and has to express itself in ways which, though not particularly desirable, are completely understandable and even, in the particular context, logical.

Another thing I remember saying and feeling was that I didn't think I should mind dying; for dying must be like this passage from the known (constituted by life-long habits of subject-object existence) to the unknown cosmic fact.

I have not retained the intensity of my experience of the state of love; but something certainly remains and I hope I shall not allow myself to eclipse it by succumbing to old bad habits. I hope and think that by awareness of what one is doing from moment to moment, one may be able to remain out of one's own light.

What emerges as a general conclusion is the confirmation of the fact that mescaline does genuinely open the door, and that everything including the Unknown in its purest, most comprehensive form can come through. After the theophany it is up to the momentarily enlightened individual to "cooperate with grace" – not so much by will as by awareness.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
28 October 1955*

My dear Aldous,

Your most welcome letter of 24<sup>th</sup> to hand. Ours have crossed so it is most appropriate that we should be telling ourselves of expeditions, different in some ways but equally strange.

I was most interested that you also tried some early recall stuff without very much success. Al and I started out with the intention of doing this but after a time it became evident that it was of so little importance compared with the extraordinary possibility of a shared experience of certain aspects of another level of existence. In this state I concluded these minor personal oddities were of little or no importance compared with the astounding facts of existence. That we really are members one of another, whether we like it or not! But the prodigious creativity of that other mind has to be experienced to be believed. I do not think that our experience reached the theophanic level of yours, but because of its joint nature we were keen not to attempt too much at one go.

We became aware that unlimited knowledge is available but is only valuable if used in spirit of loving wisdom. There is no such thing as knowledge for knowledge sake at this level. I wholly agree with your observations on subject and object and the unifying nature of Love. I suppose that this capacity has in the past been of considerable biological value and that it is only now that we have mastered many biological problems that we realise that our present perils are mostly psychological.

About dying, what happens if one has been fixed and set in this subject-object world and finds oneself adrift in the unknown word of cosmic fact to which one has been determinedly blind? I feel that your idea earlier expressed for a discussion on death is much needed. I am thinking of preparing a psychiatric paper on it and wondered whether you might later like to use some of it, or we might possibly work together. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century Holy Dying was an important part of living. Now it is Hygienic Dying that we seek. Yet the two are not incompatible and dying is the one absolute certainty that confronts us.

My impression is that we just don't want to think about it and that we substitute more and more pleasures which become increasingly pointless or nauseous. We have more time for these pleasures and far more of them. As Bergson observes they are extinguishing joy.

As I see it our task is to explore and report our findings as clearly as possible. People may not like this immediately but they will not for long be able to ignore it. The religious feel that it lifts responsibility, but in fact it imposes it and yet makes one better able to bear it. Others feel there is something “unnatural” in using a “drug.” This seems wholly silly since our whole existence is strictly unnatural *vis-a-vis* Neanderthal man but wholly primitive *vis-a-vis* the man of 2055. It has the great advantage over other methods that not too much effort is expended in techniques for getting loose from our reality. When this happens the means may well obscure the end. The man who has conquered the fear of pain and death in himself is like the school boy who having been bullied himself feels that he must pass it on to others “because it will be good for them.” Far better, I think, that we should realize that this is a universal human capacity. Every one of us from the imbecile slaving in our basement wards to the greatest genius is an inheritor of that Love, Knowledge and Beauty. Not everyone can use that knowledge here and now. Our minds don’t focus right. But those of us who know more are more obligated because of our good fortune.

Your remarks about St Francis and the leper struck me oddly. On the Sunday morning after taking LSD with AI I was thinking of my experience (shared with AI) of the holiness of every sort of deformed creature. I saw the weirdest monsters, cyclopeans, Mongolians, three eyed hydrocephaloids, microcephalics and myriads more as being beautiful with me and of me. The story of some of those enthusiastic saints came back to me and I realised what their actions meant.

We will have to think hard to decide how to present these matters and discover how people can best discover this wonderful thing. I believe that this, far more than the scientific parlor tricks of psychical research, is what the world needs. My present thinking is for small exploratory teams who will add new members and bud off new teams. If we pick our people properly we should quickly begin to set the divine yeast multiplying, and our errors won’t I think do any harm.

I see no point in doing conjuring tricks for Gardner Murphy – let him participate with a group and I don’t think we shall need tricks. I’m sure that we can do them, but why should we? We have no idea yet what effect these level changes have if extended to physical phenomenon and they are obviously of a tempting nature – a source of great and wild power. So let us

explore first and ask others to join with us in exploration. It is now abundantly clear that the limitations imposed on mankind are not those of technology but of his own nature. No exploration could be more valuable.

I think one *cannot* maintain for very long the intensity of these experiences simply because our brains, which must play some part in recording, communicating and decoding them, are just not accustomed to this sort of thing. However we are marvelously adaptable, and as we have evidence that a few people from time to time have spent much of their lives on these high levels I don't see why many more should not do so.

Talking last night to a young and intelligent Baptist minister who was concerned that this might be "too easy" and lead to a sort of uncharitable cultism cut off from the uninitiated. My feeling is exactly the reverse. I think one realises far more clearly how each of us is part of the other and all part of the One. Far more clearly than any talk could possibly convey. He also seemed worried (but not too worried) at the idea that Sin might be largely accidental. As I see it Sin is literally inherent in the sense that the development of technological-scientific-socially organised man from preliteracy and primitive beginnings made this development of subject-object relationships necessary. Separateness is a step towards Oneness. Of course if one stays still and takes no further steps then it will result in separation of a temporary sort. But it seems to me that the overall picture is one of Love and goodness. Everything that is, is Holy.

I notice that you say you spoke about subjects and objects "to my own subsequent enlightenment." This is very curious, at these levels one's thoughts move far more quickly and deftly than usual. There is no groping for words and ideas, they flow. Yet this is against all neuropharmacological "reasoning," the brain is being poisoned. Once more we come back to the brain as a focusing device for ensuring that we pay proper attention to biological living. In most psychotic illnesses it is out of focus. In neurotic ones long past patterns of response are obtruding into the present. In the LSD work we focus it elsewhere. As you have emphasized, this elsewhere may mean anywhere in our time and space and anywhere in myriad other time spaces. This astounding activity is not however pointless. It is part of a huge unfolding pattern which cannot possibly be grasped by our three-or four-dimensional minds except through our awareness of Love. Love is the only universal link in this unthinkably vast and complicated Universe. Without

love it would be a nightmare. Love is the transforming quality. Santayana<sup>87</sup> was perfectly correct when he said Life is not a spectacle or a feast. It is a predicament. For no feast or spectacle is so delicious or superb that we will not at last tire of it. But the oneness of Love is above time and so there can be no tiring of it.

Our problem will be how to communicate this to people in contemporary language so that they will be impelled to learn and see for themselves. But perhaps that should wait for a little. A revision of *Outsight* is required with more positive goals. I go East in just over a week, I won't be in New York on my way back. But may be in Toronto in February. I do hope the work with Al goes well. My best wishes to Gerald. Jane sends her love. The poetess is now also a painter.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
29 October 1955*

Dear Humphry,

How strange that our letters should have crossed! I shall be much interested to hear the details of your joint experiment and to repeat the procedure with Gerald and Al, when the latter comes to Los Angeles. From my own experience I cannot see that it is necessary for anyone to do anything to keep the mescaline consciousness on a high level – it stays there by itself, all the time, so far as I'm concerned. A director or master of ceremonies would be useful, as far as I can see, only if you want to keep the consciousness away from the highest level, only if you want to have it directed into other channels on the side, so to speak, to lead it into such "psychic" areas as telepathy etc., or into an awareness of archetypes (if they exist, which I sometimes wonder!) of shadows, animas or animuses as the case may be (all of them, so far as I personally am concerned, entirely hypothetical and Pickwickian entities). It is, of course, perfectly legitimate and desirable to



make such experiments, provided of course that one remembers the warnings of the mystics, the only people who know anything about the subject. First, that though miracles take place, of course, they are gratuitous graces, not saving graces, and have ultimately no importance, or anyhow no more importance than anything else – everything being, naturally, infinitely important if you approach it in the right way. Second, that *siddhis* or odd powers, are fascinating and, being fascinating, dangerous to anyone who is interested in liberation, since they are apt to become, if too much attention is paid to them, distracting impediments. However rich and rewarding, an expedition into the areas on the side of the direct route to the Clear Light, must never be treated idolatrously, as though it had reached the final goal. My own view is that it would be important to break off experimentation from time to time and permit the participants to go, on their own, towards the Clear Light. But perhaps alternation of experimentation and mystical vision would be psychologically impossible; for who, having once come to the realization of the primordial fact of unity in Love, would ever want to return to experimentation on the psychic level? So it will be better to close the proceedings with undirected ascent towards the unknown highest awareness. In this way there will be no need to interrupt the experience of what is supremely important to each participant, in order to bring him back to experiences of lower, ambiguous value. My point is that the opening of the door by mescaline or LSD is too precious an opportunity, too high a privilege to be neglected for the sake of experimentation. There must be experimentation, of course; but it would be wrong if there were nothing else. There is a point where the director must stop directing and leave himself and the other participants to do what they want, or rather what the Unknown Quantity which has taken their place wants to do. Direction can come only, or mainly, from accumulated notional memories of past experience, from the conceptually known; but the highest mystical awareness comes only when there is freedom from the known, when there is no purpose in view, however intrinsically excellent, but pure openness. God's service is perfect freedom and, conversely, perfect freedom is God's service – and where there is a director with a scientific or even an ethical purpose, perfect freedom cannot exist. In practice, I would say, this means that, for at least the last hour of mescaline-induced openness, the director should step aside and leave the unknown quantities of the participants to do

what they want. If they want to say things to one another, well and good. If they don't, well and good too. François de Sales's<sup>88</sup> advice to Mme. de Chantal,<sup>89</sup> in regard to "spiritual exercises," was not to do anything at all, but simply to wait. Every experiment, I feel very strongly, should terminate or (if this should be felt to be better) should be interrupted, by a period of simple waiting, with no direction either from the outside or from within. If we don't do this, we shall be, I feel, committing a kind of sin against the Holy Ghost. Direction necessarily excludes the Holy Ghost. Let us give the Unknownst Quantity at least one hour of our openness. The remaining three or four can go to directed experimentation.

And now let me ask you a favour. There is an unfortunate man in this town (I don't know him personally, but he is a friend of a friend), who has been using peyote on himself and other people who want to explore the remoter regions of their consciousness, get rid of traumas and understand the meaning of Christian charity. He is, apparently, a very worthy, earnest fellow; but, unwittingly, he has committed a felony. For in the state of California it is a felony to be in possession of the peyote cactus, and this man had a consignment of the plants sent to him from a nursery gardener in Texas, where peyote is legal. He will have to plead guilty, for he has undoubtedly broken the law. But meanwhile he can make a statement about peyote not being a dangerous drug. He has some of the references and I have given some others. Can you, without too much trouble, supply other references, medical, anthropological and psychological? I'd be most grateful if you would send me any references you know, so that I can pass them on to this poor fellow who is liable, under this law, to be sent to San Quentin for five years, but who may, if character witnesses are good (which they are) and if expert evidence can be marshalled to show that the stuff is not a dangerous drug, get off with a fine and probation.

My love to the family.

Affectionately,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
1 November 1955

My dear Aldous,

Your most welcome and excellent letter of 29<sup>th</sup> October to hand. I wholly agree. The conjuring tricks must be approached with circumspection and if done at all done with holy awe. I was peculiarly aware of this and discussed the matter with Al at great length. They are important only in so far as we are able to understand that the Other is far more important. I feel that you, Gerald and Al should set your objectives first and arrange them so as to suit you all. I wholly agree that experimentation alone is undesirable and indeed dangerous simply because it tends to underline a small part of a very great whole and so distort the picture. This is exactly what many mediums, cultists and others do and we must take care to avoid this. Just as the mediaevalists were preoccupied with devils, hellfire, sin etc. and so in many cases shut out the wholesome Clear Light. Nevertheless I think that we have an obligation to explore if only because lack of exploration and of exact knowledge has led to such wretched misunderstanding. Also if we don't someone else will and probably someone far less aware of the numerous pitfalls, difficulties and snags which beset us.

I was very interested in your point about archetypes, animuses, anima[s] etc. My impression was that these are part of generalizations. At certain levels of awareness we are "part of the main" to a greater or lesser extent. Clearly as we become part of the main we can extend our sense of "unseparateness" to include other aspects of ourselves, past, present and future, female or male, animal, vegetable or mineral. Clearly when these aspects of ourselves impinge on our commonsense psyche, *particularly* if they are mistaken for a symbol or occur singly, then the psychopathologist will be put to great lengths to explain them. It is to Jung's great credit that he has recognised that they are real and are important, but this does not mean that he has estimated correctly what they are. I don't believe that he had the instruments available to give a more accurate opinion. I think however that I may be able to find out from Jung how he reach[ed] his

conclusions. Was it by diluted direct experience or by a compilation from other people's experience?

I very much like the idea of dividing the time as you suggest, a part for experiment and a part for sheer openness. I think you may find that they will overlap. I shall greatly look forward to news of your expedition.

I am very sorry to hear about your unlucky friend of a friend, what damn fool laws people think up, in intervals of mischief making. I expect that you have already advised *The Diabolic Root* – Petruccio, University of Pennsylvania 1934. Then there was Le Barre's monograph,<sup>90</sup> and a recent U.S. Public Health Survey which showed, one of the participants told me, that the peyote taking Indians were richer, better behaved and more happily married than no-Peyote taking Indians. Abram made a statement to the press regarding Peyotism in Canada and I shall ask him to send it to you. I would be glad to send a signed statement myself if this would be of any use. The whole point is that there is no evidence that it is a drug of addiction or that its use leads to antisocial or even asocial behaviour. If he needs the statement in the near future my best address after 8<sup>th</sup> November will be Onet Cottage, Godalming, Surrey England. Abram Hoffer is Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Director of Psychiatric Research, the Department of Psychiatry, University Hospital, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. I will certainly go on the record that alcohol is far more dangerous, habit forming and addictive than peyote. How stupid it is and yet for this explorer how very unpleasant to be caught by savages. We must do all we can to help. You will find quite a bit about the value of mescaline in my "Inspiration and Method." I will send you a spare copy in case you need it. What idiots we are. Kill tens of thousands on the roads. Have hundreds of thousands of alcoholists. Hundreds killed by lung cancer somehow associated with smoking and it becomes a felony to chew the harmless self-limiting cactus. Lord what fools these mortals be.<sup>91</sup> So let me know any other way that I can help. How happy we are forbidding people to do what we are not inclined to. This is another reason for getting our work established inside science, where people are less inclined to interfere and so the work can go on. Jane and H. send love.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Los Angeles, Cal.  
5 November 1955  
Telegram*

Dr Humphry Osmond  
Box 1056 Weyburn Sask.

Please send your statement and Hoffer's at once. Bon voyage.

Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
5 November 1955*

My dear Aldous,

Your telegram received. I have set to and composed a 1,200 word statement of opinion<sup>92</sup> which I shall have typed on Monday, shall sign in front of a commissioner of oaths and will send off on the same day. I hope that it will be useful to your friend's friend. I think I have made the document fairly detached yet with those bits which from experience in courts I know lawyers like. It helps them to know who a doctor is and what he has done. They often complain that doctors do not make this at all clear. I shall telephone Abram Hoffer this evening but I happen to know that he is en route from Regina to Saskatoon, about 160 miles, so that it is no good ringing him now. I have written him already but he may not have realised that there was any special urgency. I think that some of the points I have raised will shake the prosecution a bit. You will note that I have included alcohol and the barbiturates in the grave addictives.

In two days I shall be on my way. I am thinking of last year and that very wonderful time with you and Maria. We must meet again soon, Aldous. This trip will be very full. I leave on Tuesday night and have a full

day in Toronto, starting at breakfast with a potential publisher of that little law manual I have in mind. Then a visit to the CBC (radio). I am reviewing vol. 2 of *Sigmund Freud* by Ernest Jones.<sup>93</sup> As I shall, I hope, be seeing Jung while I am reading the book it all seems very appropriate. Further as we are going to alter the cartography of psychiatry just as much as Freud did, it seems fitting that we should say a few words on the pugnacious old master. Freud had no doubt about the value of the ideas that he was working with and I see no reason why we should doubt the importance of ours. It would be a treason to do so.

Next day to Rochester and a representative of the Ford Foundation, for whom we are angling. We want a middling size sum of about \$630,000 spread over about seven years. It would ease matters if we got it.

On again to Asbury Park for my GAP meeting and then back to New York for 1½ days. I hope to see Eileen G, William Sheldon and others. Tuesday I start my flight to Zurich and the wise old man. Then a couple of weeks in England before coming back via Montreal. It should be interesting. I have a couple of papers to write while I am flying. Jane will have another series of letters to add to her volume recording my journeys.

The winter sun sinking bluish white on snow. I don't think winter is quite in earnest yet, but he is sharpening his claws.

Coulton's<sup>94</sup> *Medieval Panorama* is a fine corrective to those romantics who picture that era as a pleasant one and long to return to a benevolent paparchy. He quotes William Langland<sup>95</sup> very tellingly. The more power the church had the more oppressive and capricious it became. It must have been so very *inconvenient* to depend so much on a distant foreign speaking prelate who was, so far as I can make out, *at least* a month's communication time away in good weather with fast horses. What a long shadow Imperial Rome cast that 2,000 years later the Pope can still use its pagan prestige in a small way. I think that the dirt must have been so oppressive, but then the darkness since light was so expensive must have been even worse. One realises that those who felt that earth might be purgatory had much to go on.

The poetess is much concerned because a friend has told her that there are bobcats in the hospital grounds as big as collies. Helen and her friends delight in telling each other the most horrific stories. I suppose the analysts would put this down to a way of dissipating internal anxiety. But I suppose

that it is just as likely that invention gets out of hand and so produces anxiety. We have ample evidence that man's extraordinary inventiveness is one of the greatest sources of anxiety if we support Freud's *Eros-Thanatos* views. Let me know how your peyote friend fares. If you want to contact me specially my English address till 4<sup>th</sup> Dec. is Onet Cottage, Godalming, Surrey. Next Friday, Saturday [and] Sunday I shall be at the Berkeley Carteret Hotel, Asbury Park.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. I have phoned Abram and he will be sending off a statement similar to mine tomorrow. These statements look a bit inflated, but from my court experience it is a great help to a lawyer to have a means of building up his expert. Le Barre's monograph should be consulted for the beneficial effect of peyote on Indians.

P.P.S. I have just had what on first thoughts seems to be an excellent idea. Bergson points out that there are two wholly different forms of religion. The static which is a useful way of obtaining coherence in the closed society, and the dynamic which makes open societies. Though dynamic religion commonly uses the vocabulary of static religion it is wholly different, in Bergson's view, and is direct contact with the creative source of evolution. It draws on God, by direct experience of him.

*Homo Faber*, the tool making man, has been an astonishing creation, but frightfully dangerous. For man has depended on static religion to keep intellectual adventure within bounds. This it is now failing to do, indeed if the ideas of static religion were applied sufficiently rigidly to have any effect scientific advance would come to an end. I suppose that this is impossible.

We are then faced with the problem of changing man from *Faber* to *Sapiens*, a title he has usurped and modestly has been diffident about sporting too conspicuously. *Homo Sapiens* is the creature of Bergson's Dynamic Religion and the open society. We are faced with the task of developing *Sapiens* quickly enough to cope with *Faber's* creativeness. We have several possible methods which rule themselves out.

- i) Selective breeding – the eugenist’s answer. Man is one of the worst experimental animals for this sort of work. He lives too long and his genes are too complicated. We don’t even know for certain how to breed intelligence let alone wisdom.
- ii) Major social experiments – the smallest social unit for this would have to be a country and could only be achieved by some sort of fanatical revolutionary process which would make one very doubtful about the subsequent social engineering.
- iii) Special psycho-social conditioning of the *Brave New World* type, more psycho-biological than ii) but still not very reassuring.
- iv) Religious Revival – The evidence is that the more successful the reaffirmation of static religion the greater the chance of *lateral* or even *downward* self-transcendence. These are neither very likely to encourage the development of *Sapiens*.
- v) Finally we come to what seems like truly Divine rightness. *Homo Faber* is to become *Sapiens* and enter an era of dynamic religion by means of one of his own tools. It is indeed wholly fitting that the flight into the laboratory should find the Hound of Heaven<sup>96</sup> in hottest pursuit. It seems to me that we *must* do this otherwise *Homo Faber* will soon become extinct, he isn’t nearly sensible enough to cope with his inventiveness. We must now seek to develop *Sapiens*, who must possess a dynamic religion, develop an open society with a creative morality.

Of course there are dangers, but far more dangerous is not trying. A very small number of people, comparatively speaking, could change the world from one in which *Homo Faber* reigns insecurely, to one in which the emerging *Sapiens* can grow. For wisdom surely is Love combined with knowledge?

Surely Bergson foresaw this, his last paragraph in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*<sup>97</sup> clearly shows this. “Joy indeed would be that simplicity of life diffused throughout the world by an ever spreading mystic intuition; joy, too, that which would automatically follow a vision of the life beyond attained through the furtherance of scientific experiment. Failing so thorough going a spiritual reform, we must be content with shifts and submit to more and more numerous and vexatious regulations intended to



provide a means of circumventing each successive obstacle that our nature sets up against our civilization. But, whether we go bail for small measures or great, a decision is imperative. Mankind lies groaning, half crushed beneath the weight of his own progress. Men do not sufficiently realize that their future is in their own hands. Theirs is the task of determining first of all whether they want to go on living or not. Theirs the responsibility for deciding if they want merely to live, or intend to make just the extra effort required for fulfilling, even on their refractory planet, the essential function of the universe, which is a machine for the making of gods.” We must not lose too much time but refreshed and reassured by that Clear Light must play our part in the evolution of Faber to Sapiens. Blake surely put his finger on it with those two great proverbs about “if the fool would persist in his folly he would become wise” and the “Road of excess leading to the palace of wisdom” (I think that is it).<sup>98</sup> But God always seems to have enjoyed a good paradox, and surely none is better than that *Homo Faber*’s tools should be made to save and destroy him. Jung it seems to me is wholly wrong in supposing that there is something surprising that God should confute materialism with material (in this case LSD and mescaline). It only shows his courtesy, humor and perhaps a gentle mockery that we have been arrogant and pretentious enough to cut up slices of his unity into the real and unreal, material and ideal. When as Bergson constantly emphasizes they are one. God can show Himself in any and every form and does so to every seeker. Our way of looking has been through certain amine chemicals. He is perfectly ready to show himself, so long as we seek and see.



*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
15 December 1955*

My dear Aldous,

I have neglected you on my long travels, but felt that on such an expedition the game is the thing, and concentrated [on] my writing to Jane who gets a

full account of the journey to which I have reference. My route was Winnipeg, Toronto, Rochester, New York, Asbury Park, New York, Zurich, London, Montreal and home. Each bit of the journey provided its surprises and delights. In my month's travel I suppose I did three times as much as I expected and am now sorting out my treasures. Organising them is no easy matter for they cover everything from the size of wards in mental hospitals to the problems of high flying in jet planes (not as far removed as one might suppose since each is a lesson in the relationship between specialized people in a specialized environment).

At Rochester I called in on John Romano<sup>99</sup> who is one of the assessors of our project for Ford Foundation monies. Will we at last get the dinosaurian dough?

At GAP we had an interesting research symposium which showed clearly, i) The massive way in which U.S. research works. ii) Its very low level of inspiration. iii) Its insipidity. There was a very interesting account by Lilly<sup>100</sup> of NIMH<sup>101</sup> (whom you met earlier in the year) on his studies in the reduced environment. He is following up Hebb's work with persistence but without very much imagination. I think that there are two very interesting examples of his way of looking at things, i) As soon as the three-dimensional "inscape" began to show itself he stopped. This with his present method takes about three or four hours in his water tank. ii) He read up a number of arctic explorers (such as Byrd<sup>102</sup>), seamen such as Slocum,<sup>103</sup> ship wreck survivors and experimenters such as Bombard.<sup>104</sup> But he did *not* do as you suggested, read up Buddhist and Christian mystics, or any of the magic and theosophical literature, or any parapsychological work "lest it should bias him." It shows such lack of understanding that I could have kicked him. He like Hebb seems wholly unaware of the real value of his work which is that it combined with many other observations gives us some general relationship between the inscape and the outscape. I think this gives us a valuable clue as to why the psychological sciences are running into such difficulties. An inadequate conceptual framework is a good way to hamper perception.

My next interesting visit was to a Dr Chang<sup>105</sup> whom Gerald knows. Chang, whom I thought would be an old and bearded sage, is between 35–40 or possibly less. Married with a little daughter. He has spent many years in Tibet studying the Tibetan methods which are not studied much in China.

I found him very sympathetic and we found that we spoke very much the same language. Briefly what I gained from this was, i) that the Tibetan work on psychology has never been translated and that it contains a great deal of information that may be very useful to us. ii) That real masters of their methods are found far more rarely than travelers' tales suggest. But since records have been kept for at least 2,000 years a great volume of information is available. iii) The Tibetans seem to have been very keen on developing techniques, both for experiencing the other, and also for examining it once it has been experienced. Further they seem to have developed methods for controlling the experience of the "other" and these will I think be very useful to us. They use methods very similar to those which AI has been using. I hope that Dr Chang will be translating some of these learned books. It is strange to think of this vast unknown literature which has accumulated for centuries.

I saw Eileen and talked with her about our experiment. She was deeply interested and agrees that it is along these lines that we may expect psychological research to develop. This is far more exciting than the old card tricks which have taken up so much time in recent years.

Shortly after this I was on my way East for Zurich on that long hop of about 5,000 miles. I arrived in Zurich in the early afternoon and nearly lost my first appointment with him [Jung] due to an error in postage services. Luckily, however, I rang up and dashed down to Küsnacht to see him. Finding that the Swiss taxis have a curious habit of charging you to your destination and then charging for the journey back. Before seeing the master I had been reading about the great battles of 1908–1913 when Freud and Jung clashed, as it is so clear that they were bound to clash. For by race, temperament and training they were so wholly different. I don't think the matter of *training* has ever been given enough attention. Freud was a neurologist and Jung a psychiatrist, in fact these are almost polar opposites in medicine, attracting people of wholly different temperament and outlook.

He is a broad shouldered, russet cheeked, finely built old man. He has white woolly hair, bright blue eyes, and gives the impression of robustness, liveliness and interest in everything. He wears tweeds, smokes a pleasant smelling tobacco, and gives one a feeling of alert gusto. I carried with me Sheldon's *Atlas of Men* as an offering from an old pupil. Jung was greatly pleased. "I have always said that we must give the body its due – did not

your Shakespeare say?” He was much intrigued by our approach to schizophrenia. You may not know that this seems to be one of the main areas of disagreement between Jung and Freud. Freud had made his system and was not disposed at that time to have it modified by someone else’s ideas. Jung told me that Freud on one occasion said to him “We must have a dogma, like the Roman church.” Jung pointed out that this would not avail them if their ideas were not true, but Freud hurried on, “a dogma to hold in check the black tide.” Jung did not follow what he meant and called for explanations, receiving the reply “The black tide of mysticism.”

My belief is that Jung has used a very tricky method (dream analysis) with extraordinary skill, and that from this he has been able to make some remarkable maps of the psyche. But his method has two great snags, i) Is it transmissible? I am not at all sure that it is. ii) Is the dream the best method of observation? I very much doubt it. I think the various distortions which are always experienced in one’s return from the “other” are greatly exaggerated in the dream. The process of waking and the psychological mechanisms which operate on waking to filter out the “other” can not possibly be circumvented as they can with mescaline, LSD etc. Incidentally it seems quite clear why these dream experiences are repressed or suppressed. One does not have to suppose that they are unacceptable to the waking mind. Far more likely that they are too seductive to be allowed into the world of a creature that has to survive in a place of perils. It has been by excluding the “other” much of the time that we have mastered nature. Concentration on the other for much of human history would have been fatal. However it may now be that failure to concentrate on it will be equally fatal. I left the old master convinced of his genius and vast knowledge, certain that he has played a vital part in opposing the reductive methods of the analysts, uncertain whether his own methods will long survive him. I think that much more direct enquiry will be needed.

I spent a little more than two weeks in England – mostly at my home in Surrey, near Godalming overlooking Crooksbury and the Hog’s Back. During that time I did a good deal. Apart from finding some doctors for Saskatchewan I helped plan a mental health number of *The Twentieth Century*, for which, as *The Nineteenth Century*, your grandfather used to write. Incidentally the editor asked me to ask you whether you might contribute an article to a number on parapsychology? It is a good and

widely read periodical and if it were possible for you to make such a contribution I am sure it would be appreciated, for it would make the number. The editor Eirene Skilbeck<sup>106</sup> is a granddaughter of the founder of *The Nineteenth Century* and has played a great part in revitalizing it.

I spent a fascinating half day with the RAF<sup>107</sup> medical research unit discussing some of the problems of high flying. John Smythies had introduced me to one of their Researchers. John is at Cambridge with Zangwill<sup>108</sup> and asked after you. My impression is that he is growing up (slowly) and that he will be an invaluable member of our team: provided we recognise that he is not the most tactful person in the world either intellectually or emotionally. I had great pleasure in talking with him. He is hard at work proving that the stroboscopic phenomena are *not* retinal. From there he is going to get television engineers to tell us what sort of cybernetic system would be required to produce these patterns from flashes.

To return to the RAF. Faced with over 100 jet crashes in 1955 many of which are not it seems wholly explicable they are now trying to find out what is happening. What is clearly possible is that the space suits plus the cockpit represent one of these highly specialized environments, which may produce very strange perceptual and affective disturbances in those who are not trained to avoid them. Obviously the intrusion of the “other” in this way can be very inconvenient and dangerous. It seems a very pleasant paradox that our interest in the other is being forced on us from work on brain chemistry, neurophysiology, and pharmacology, and from our explorations of the depths of the seas and the cloudless heights of the stratosphere. There is something superb about the other, excluded by our concentration on the here and now, coming back at us through our concentration with the here and now. I looked at space suits (could you tell me about William Seabrooke’s<sup>109</sup> (?) leather suits for his girlfriends and let me have any details of them?). They are very odd and are made, appropriately, by Frankenstein’s of Manchester. They were much excited by Captain’s CO<sub>2</sub> method of detensioning pilots.

My next series of activities were with my friend Christopher Mayhew, who is an MP and a well known television commentator. He did an excellent series called *Men Seeking God*, in which he presented the great religions through their representatives. He was much interested in *The Doors*, and we

had a long discussion about it in the Members' lounge in the House. He thought th[at] he would like to carry out an experiment and use it in a television program. I felt that we could not lose because we both had vetoes on the program if it were not satisfactory. So I gave him mescaline in his home with a television camera in attendance. The result was remarkable. He had an experience in which there was a minimal visual change and a very large change in time perception. So that he felt that he was *out* of our time and in another time which apparently overlaps our time. This was very hard to discuss. What we filmed and record[ed] proved, contrary to expectation, highly interesting. What we are now planning is a program in a series called the Frontiers of Science. They hope to get Bertrand Russell to comment on the work. Mayhew and I will introduce it. I believe that this will be a very useful and important advertisement (in the good sense of the word) for our work. It will allow people to hear that the psychology of the Freudians is no longer adequate and that new psychologies will have to be developed.

I saw a man called Calvocoressi,<sup>110</sup> a partner of Chatto's, who offered me a contract for a book which I evaded because I don't want to be tied down yet. I also saw Butterworths who are greatly interested in a major book on schizophrenia. So before long we should be getting our ideas across in a popular and professional way.

On my way back I fell in with a French priest (? Jesuit), who is also a mathematician and philosopher. He is working in Canada and I shall keep close contact with him. We discussed multiple dimensional systems and he assures me that we now have the mathematics ready for studying these things. So far there have never been any N-Dimensional system[s] which they could actually examine. Now I think that we have them. We discussed the question of symbolising God which is one [of] the great difficulties in religion. Clearly any attempt to symbolize an N-dimension system in terms of an X-dimensional system where  $N - X = 2$  or more runs into grave difficulties. Now it is possible that the huge usefulness of *Love* arises from the fact that these are nondimensional entities. I am sure that we must get specialists of this sort to combine together and Father Vincent seems a distinct possibility.

I am keenly looking forward to news of your joint experiment, especially as to how you solved the problem of entering the highest levels. I do hope that before long we shall be able to plan other joint expeditions.

Meanwhile evidence is accumulating about M-substance, Toxine X, etc. The Tulane group tells us that when adrenalin is added to schizophrenic blood an adrenochrome like substance is apparently formed – not in normal blood. We think we have found an indolic substance in schizophrenic urine which we can pick up on charcoal. Work in Chicago has shown that there is something queer about schizophrenic red cells and their phosphorus metabolism. This can be reversed with insulin. Adrenochrome is *known* to affect phosphorylation and insulin is known to affect schizophrenia. None of these is proof positive but the whole picture is very encouraging, and we may see great progress in 1956.

How is the play going? Please give Gerald and Al all good wishes for the season. We are having bitter cold here, a great blizzard has just passed.

Jane and I send you our warmest greetings and the Poetess may write one of these days.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
23 December 1955*

My dear Humphry,

I was very glad to get your long, good, most interesting letter. You certainly succeeded in doing an astonishing number of things in a very short time.

We had our LSD experiment last week, with Al, Gerald and myself taking 75 micrograms and Gallienne<sup>111</sup> taking about thirty. I found the stuff more potent from a physical point of view than mescaline – e.g., it produced the feelings of intense cold, as though one were in shock, which Maria had with the full dose of mescaline. The psychological effects, in my case, were identical with those of mescaline, and I had the same kind of experience as I had on the previous occasion – transfiguration of the external world, and the understanding, through a realization involving the whole man, that Love is the One, and that this is why Atman is identical with Brahman, and why, in

spite of everything, the universe is all right. I had no visions with my eyes shut – even less than I had on the first occasion with mescaline, when the moving geometries were highly organized and, at moments, very beautiful and significant (though at others, very trivial). This time even the patterns were poorly organized, and there was nothing corresponding to what Al and Gallienne and his pilot friend Fraser<sup>112</sup> (isn't that the name?) have described. Evidently, if you are not a congenital or habitual visualizer, you do not get internal visions under mescaline or LSD – only external transfiguration. (Gerald had no visions either. I have not had an opportunity to discuss with him in detail the nature of his experience; but certainly visions with the eyes closed were not part of it.) Time was very different.

We played the Bach B-minor suite and the “Musical Offering,” and the experience was overpowering. Other music (e.g. Palestrina<sup>113</sup> and Byrd<sup>114</sup>) seemed unsatisfactory by comparison. Bach was a revelation. The tempo of the pieces did not change; nevertheless they went on for centuries, and they were a manifestation, on the plane of art, of perpetual creation, a demonstration of the necessity of death and the self-evidence of immortality, an expression of the essential all-rightness of the universe – for the music was far beyond tragedy, but included death and suffering with everything else in the divine impartiality which is the One, which is Love, which is Being or *Istigkeit*. Who on earth was John Sebastian? Certainly not the old gent with sixteen children in a stuffy Protestant environment. Rather, an enormous manifestation of the Other – but the Other canalized, controlled, made available through the intervention of the intellect and the senses and the emotions. All of us, I think, experienced Bach in the same way. One can imagine a ritual of initiation, in which a whole group of people transported to the Other World by one of the elixirs, would sit together listening to, say, the B-minor Suite and so being brought to a direct, unmediated understanding of the divine nature. (One of the other records we tried was one of traditional Byzantine music – the Greek version of Gregorian. To me at least, this seemed merely grotesque. The single voice bawling away its Alleluias and Kyries seemed like the voice of a gigantic flunkey kowtowing before a considerably magnified Louis XIV. Only polyphony, and only the highly organized polyphony (structurally organized and not merely texturally organized, as with Palestrina) can convey the nature of reality, which is multiplicity in unity, the reconciliation



of opposites, the not-twoness of diversity, the Nirvana-nature of Samsara, the Love which is the bridge between objective and subjective, good and evil, death and life.) On this occasion I did not have any spontaneous *psi* awarenesses, and our attempt to induce *psi* deliberately seemed after a few minutes so artificial and bogus that we gave it up. Al reported *psi* awareness of the others in the group, and Gerald exhibited the same kind of prophetic discernment of spirits, which characterized his first mescaline experience. Whether I personally shall ever be able to do *psi* experiments under LSD or mescaline, I don't know. Certainly, if future experiments should turn out to be like these last two, I should feel that such experiments were merely childish and pointless. Which I suppose they are, for purposes of Understanding – though not at all so, for purposes of Knowledge. Meanwhile let me advise you, if ever you use mescaline or LSD in therapy, to try the effect of the B-minor suite. More than anything, I believe, it will serve to lead the patient's mind (wordlessly, without any suggestion or covert bullying by doctor or parson) to the central, primordial Fact, the understanding of which is perfect health during the time of the experience, and the memory of the understanding of which may serve as an antidote to mental sickness in the future. I feel sure, however, that it would be most unwise to subject a patient to sentimental religious music or even good religious music, if it were tragic (e.g., the Mozart or Verdi "Requiems," or Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis"). John Sebastian is safer because, ultimately, truer to reality.

To return to your letter. Of course the stroboscope effect is not retinal. One of the stroboscopic effects, as experienced by my friend Dr Cholden, was that the patterns he was seeing under LSD turned, when he sat under the stroboscope, into ineffably beautiful Japanese landscapes.

I wish old Jung were not so hipped on symbols. The trouble with Germans is that they always remember the silliest line in Goethe – "alles Vergaengliche ist nur ein Gleichnis."<sup>115</sup> A bigger lie was never uttered. All transiencies are timelessly themselves and, being themselves, are manifestations of the One, which is totally present in any particular – if we could only see it. The symbol business has been a very smelly red herring, leading him off the trail of Given Realities "out there" in the mind (just as they are out there in the material world, in spite of Berkeley etc.), and

leading it into the jungle, about which he and his followers write in that inimitably turgid and copious style, which is the Jungian hallmark.

The play seems to be in process of being postponed – the producer having made such a muddle that production at the date contracted for seems now out of the question. As the postponement will be to an election season, which is notoriously the worst possible theatrical season, I am not too happy. But this is what happens when one gets into the clutches of theatrical people. One asks for trouble and, by heaven, one gets what one asks for.

Give my love to Jane and the poetess. I hope the coming year will bring you all contentment, happiness, growth, understanding.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
28 December 1955*

My dear Aldous,

How very good to hear from you. I am sorry about the play, what a pity, but I hope that your worst fears will not materialize. Theatrical people are the devil, but I suppose they wouldn't be theatrical people if they weren't.

We are getting over a very cold Christmas. It is about 10° below zero today and has been so for many weeks except for a few brief chinooks, as the West winds that come over the mountains are called.

Jung's trouble is not so serious for him as it is and is going to be for his followers. He is a man of such gusto, such an omnivore of experience that he gulps down great fids<sup>116</sup> of it and flourishes hugely. He is deep in the other and in the here and now. He is a great enjoyer of life, and a great explorer who is prepared to jot down outlines of what he has found, yet is perfectly prepared to discard his ideas and to produce new and contradictory ideas. The snag about such men is that their pupils cannot possibly keep up with them and are almost forced into seizing upon some fragment of the great man's productions and announcing that this really is

the philosopher's stone. Jung would have benefitted greatly from a collaborator who would have insisted on condensation and correlation of his work. He and Freud have this huge fecundity of ideas in common and I suppose that this similarity in their way of thinking combined with differences in training (Freud was a neurologist and Jung a psychiatrist) and background (Viennese Jew and Swiss Pastor's son) made agreement for a long period of time impossible. They were both huge verbalisers. Jung is a very enjoyable person. As I told Gerald I think that both he and Freud placed far too much importance on the dream. It is of interest, and one which they both overlooked, that although in earlier times many attempts were made to use dreams as means of exploring the extraliminal, on the whole success was not large. Freud and possibly Jung won't say that this was because the wrong method was used, but it may equally be that the dream by its very nature is an unsound instrument for exploration. Freud felt that the function of dreams was to preserve sleep. Jung to put us into contact with the collective unconscious. It certainly plays an important part in allowing some form of detoxication to take place, for a recent study has shown that in soldiers deprived of sleep, hallucinations etc. become more frequent. But whatever the cause of our nightly plunge into the "other" it seems highly necessary that we should *recall* as little as possible when we wake. Freud feels that the reason for this is that it would yield so much "traumatic" material. Jung too would agree that we cannot stand the archetypal world direct. It seems far simpler to assume that our business in the here and now of our present life is important and that we are not expected to attempt to lead several or many lives simultaneously. Since we find a few LSD or mescaline experiences suffice for many months, clearly if every night we went into one and recalled it we would do very little to cope with our "outer" reality. So in general our dreams are not available to us and when we do pry into them we find either things we would rather not know about (Freud's gallery of the personal subconscious) or things we can't put into their context (Jung's collective, which seems to be another selection of things that seem to have a limited bearing on day to day life). We are very shrewdly fobbed off from viewing and experiencing what is there. It is of considerable significance that *sleep* itself has been used by very few people that I can find for systematic exploration of the other. Presumably because they long ago recognised the very great difficulties imposed by the shifting

symbolism and distortions in recall. This is very impressive. For if sleep is the royal road to the unconscious (personal or collective) why on earth hasn't it been used much more? Why have men bothered with dangerous drugs and difficult techniques? We can all of us sleep. Part of the answer is I am sure that our whole biological existence would be threatened. We would become lotus eaters, and indeed we would never have survived.

It happens now that our survival depends on a greatly and rapidly increased understanding of our place in nature. We just cannot depend on the highly imperfect instruments of dreams to do this. We just haven't got time to learn how to use them and we don't [want] to bog down in the psycho-electrophysiology of sleep, a very complex matter in its own right.

I was greatly interested in your report of the new experiment. What fascinating things they are. I wonder whether you and Gerald would develop visualizations with larger doses. 75 mcg is a minimal dose. But that is a matter for further experiment. You see my point, is non or low visualisation a relative or an absolute matter? It could be either, we just don't know. I am much interested in the business of Time and the Bach B minor suite and the musical offering. I shall have to get them and try. *Question*, would you say that LSD (and mescaline for that matter) increased the spread of your aesthetic appreciation? I mean by this that you became more aware of the superlative indeed supernal quality of the very best, and more aware of the short comings of the not quite best?

Your idea of a ritual of this sort is inspiring, because surely the next step will be a method by which using something that we may then call music but without LSD, this direct experience of the Divine Nature may be obtained.

I agree with your decision not to try and press *psi* stuff deliberately. We know far too little about these experiments at the moment to risk marring one for what is in some ways a parlor trick. I know that in our experiment here Al and I felt that there were far more important things to do than play around in this way. Yet we shall have to develop our precise knowledge but possibly that should wait until we have enlarged our understanding. *Indeed I think that between us we have made a profoundly important observation which is implicit in much that we have written but has never been made explicitly.* There are some fields where knowledge, at least in the sense of data collection, can long precede understanding, there are others and this is one of them where some degree of understanding is essential in order to see

the knowledge in its context.\* It is quite clear that much of the bungling that has accompanied the use of mescaline, LSD etc. in psychology etc. could have been avoided had the first essayers concentrated on developing understanding rather than increasing knowledge. As it is we are, so far as I can make out, the only group of people in the world doing this at present (apart from the Indians).

It seems to me that we *must* meet together before long and discuss some of the paths by which understanding may be properly used to further knowledge. You have raised a very important point. If I interpret you correctly the primacy of Understanding is that it gives on[e] the context in which both “in there” and “out here” have to be examined.

Christmas over and still very cold. The hospital changing at last and at good speed. Of course much of it is still murky, but the feeling of the place is getting less murky every day. We are gradually getting an attitude of respect towards our patients and the equipment to make their lives more human.

The Duck Poetess is just learning how to read. She has suddenly found out how you build words and is pushing ahead at great speed. Odd to think that 500 years ago this would have been thought quite remarkable. Or had literacy spread a little more by then?

I do hope that before too long we shall be able to do an experiment together. I am impatient to do so.

Last week, just before Christmas, our chemist Roy Mueller suicided using barbiturates. We found him in his chair sitting upright, his pen to paper, quite dead. I had talked to him the previous evening and would never have predicted this. How ignorant we are. He left papers showing that he believed he had schizophrenia and he was probably right. The sad thing is that we *are* in a position to help a little and may soon be able to help a lot. His father, a cold and fussy little man, came down and hoped to pin the blame on someone but was discouraged from doing this by our good Corporal Green of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Our poor friend had clearly been hobbling along in that appalling hinterland between here and there. With no attachments *here or there*, that is the tragedy of schizophrenia. Clearly the other is not a shadowy “place” at all, but this shadowland, hades, where there is neither human nor divine feeling, is very awful.

Jane sends Love. It is so good to hear from you again.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

\* Is not this also the source of the error in our current parapsychological work? They all seek knowledge, not understanding? And here they cannot be divorced?

1 Identified in Huxley's letter of 6 July 1958 as Elsa Hall.

2 Carlyle King (1907–88). Canadian academic and a leader in the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. His article "Aldous Huxley's Way to God" was published in the *Queen's Quarterly* 61 (Spring 1954): 80–100.

3 Probably referring to the Huxleys' cook, Marie LePut, and housekeeper, Onnie Wesley.

4 In his copy of this letter, Osmond wrote, "NB: The personal and the impersonal Gerald and Aldous less concerned about self, also dosage."

5 William H. Forthman (b. 1927). Then a student at the University of California, Los Angeles, and later a professor in the Department of Philosophy, California State University, Northridge. As a student in the 1950s at UCLA, he befriended Gerald Heard.

6 In his edition of Huxley's letters, Grover Smith identifies this person as Madame Steiner. See Huxley, *Letters*, 722.

7 Osmond's text reads "someone one" and has been edited for sense.

8 *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.

9 Philippe de Félice (1880–1964). French theologian and historian of psychology whose *Foules en délire, extases collectives: Essai sur quelques formes inférieures de la mystique* was published in 1947.

10 José Ortega y Gasset (1883–1955). Spanish philosopher and essayist whose *The Revolt of the Masses* was published in Spanish in 1930 and in English in 1932.

11 László Mátéfi (fl. 1930–78). Hungarian artist who described portraits he painted under the influence of LSD.

12 Felix Georgi (1893–1965). Swiss neurologist and psychiatrist.

13 Reference to a move in cricket that brings an element of surprise.

14 Hubert Benoit (1904–92). French psychotherapist and scholar of Zen Buddhism who wrote *Métaphysique et Psychanalyse* (1949) and *La Doctrine Suprême* (1951–52).

15 Otto Georg Wetterstrand (1845–1907). Swedish physician and psychotherapist.

16 Huxley typed the following on the date line of this letter: "Feb 8<sup>th</sup> 1955 (Thursday – I think my dates must be wrong)." Thursday was 10 February.

17 Huxley's letters to other friends and family indicate that the surgery actually took place in January 1952.

18 In her biography of Huxley, Sybille Bedford identifies this nurse as Helen Halsberg. See Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 567.

19 Huxley read from the Tibetan *Bardo Thodol* to Maria as she was dying.

20 Tom Tiddler's Ground is a children's game in which one player ("Tom") holds his ground and tries to fend off attackers. It is similar to the more modern Steal the Bacon.

- 21 T.S. Eliot (1888–1965). American-born British poet and critic whose poem “The Song of the Jellicles” was published in *Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats* (1939).
- 22 Huxley’s letter was written on 10 February.
- 23 Jay Michael Barrie (1912–2001). Heard’s personal secretary, long-time friend, and executor.
- 24 Bedford identifies this woman as Marianna Schauer. See Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 571.
- 25 This account is presented in full in [appendix 3](#).
- 26 One of the working titles for Huxley’s novel *The Genius and the Goddess* (1955). Others were “The Past Is Prelude” and “Through the Wrong End of the Opera Glasses.” The dramatic version of this short novel was eventually produced in 1957 after much difficult revision.
- 27 Reference to the 1954 film directed by Luis Buñuel.
- 28 Reference to English writer Lewis Carroll’s (1832–98) nonsense poem *The Hunting of the Snark*, written from 1874 to 1876.
- 29 Herbert Dingle (1890–1978). English physicist and natural philosopher.
- 30 Denis W. Brogan (1900–74). Scottish historian who wrote several books on American history and politics.
- 31 Harold L. Ickes (1874–1952). American administrator and politician who was the longest serving secretary of the interior (1933–46). His *The Secret Diary of Harold Ickes* was published in three volumes in 1953–54.
- 32 Alfred de Liagre (1904–87). Theatre producer and director.
- 33 John Van Druten (1901–57). English-American playwright and director best known for *I Remember Mama* (1944) and *I Am a Camera* (1951).
- 34 William G. Wilson (1895–1971). American spiritualist and a co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous who was instrumental in experiments using LSD as an alternative treatment for alcoholism. Although he became famously known as “Bill W.” we have retained his full name when it appears thus in the letters.
- 35 Hugh Llewellyn Keenleyside (1898–1992). Canadian university professor and diplomat.
- 36 Karl Menninger (1893–1990). American psychiatrist and one of the founders of the Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kansas.
- 37 Louis S. Cholden (1918–56). American psychiatrist known for his work with the blind.
- 38 George S. Kaufman (1889–1961), Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist who also wrote scripts for the Marx Brothers’ films. Huxley may have met him through Kaufman’s second wife, Leeuween MacGrath, who starred in an off-Broadway production of Huxley’s *The Gioconda Smile* (1948) in 1953, or possibly through Harpo Marx, a mutual friend. In 1957 Kaufman and MacGrath wrote the sketch *Amicable Parting*, which contains the following exchange: “Aldous Huxley! I suppose we’ll just have to divide him in half . . . He’ll never notice, with all that mescaline inside him” (9).
- 39 Charles S. McArthur (fl. 1908–83). Canadian biochemist who headed the Biochemistry Department at the University of Saskatchewan Medical School from 1949 to 1967.
- 40 Evelyn Underhill (1875–1941). English writer and mystic whose *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness* was published in 1911.
- 41 Humphry Osmond, “Inspiration and Method in Schizophrenia Research,” *Diseases of the Nervous System* 16, no. 4 (1955): 1–4.
- 42 Walter Terence Stace (1886–1967). British professor of philosophy at Princeton. His best known works are *Mysticism and Philosophy* (1960) and *Teachings of the Mystics* (1960).
- 43 Norbert Wiener (1894–1964). American mathematician and philosopher.
- 44 Reference to one of the quadrants used in the study of somatotyping. Northwesterns were thought to have a strong endomorphic and mesomorphic, with low ectomorphic, physical structure. In somatotyping terms, they were generally regarded as having a large frame and soft physique.

- 45 Reference to Sigmund Freud's "Project for a Scientific Psychology," a short-lived survey done in 1895. The project was published in German in 1950 and in English in 1954. See Lothane, "Freud's 1895 Project."
- 46 Frederick Grant Banting (1891–1941). Canadian medical scientist and winner of the 1923 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine who was the first person to use insulin on humans.
- 47 Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965). German philosopher and physician.
- 48 Book published in 1860 by French poet, essayist, and art critic Charles Baudelaire (1821–67) about being under the influence of opium and hashish.
- 49 Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–69). Dutch "Master" artist who painted the Polish Rider in 1655. Osmond would have seen it in the Frick Collection.
- 50 Théodore Géricault (1791–1824). French painter whose works Osmond could have seen in the Frick Collection or at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- 51 In a privately held letter to his wife, Jane, on 24 May 1955, Osmond admits some trepidation about meeting Aldous on this trip: "I was dreading seeing Aldous for the first time since Maria's death because this would be a final confirmation, as it were, that she has gone from us."
- 52 The protagonist of Huxley's novel *Point Counter Point* (1928), who is generally regarded as a self-portrait of Huxley.
- 53 Imperial Chemical Industries, a British chemical company that was acquired by AkzoNobel in 2008.
- 54 Ian L.W. Clancy (1916–92). Canadian psychiatrist who was clinical director of the Regina General Hospital.
- 55 John Carew Eccles (1903–97). Australian neurophysiologist and philosopher who won the Nobel Prize in 1963 for his work on synapses.
- 56 Reference to Huxley's novel *The Genius and the Goddess* (1955).
- 57 Bollingen Foundation, an educational foundation established in 1945 that became inactive in 1968. Gerald Heard had a two-year fellowship grant from Bollingen in 1955–56.
- 58 Heini Hediger (1908–92). Swiss biologist known for his work on describing standard distances for interaction between animals, which informed Osmond's concept of socio-architecture.
- 59 Clarence Ray Carpenter (1905–75). American primatologist known for his research on primate behaviour.
- 60 Visionary Experience and Visionary Art was a working title for *Heaven and Hell* (1956).
- 61 François Pierre Aimé Argand (1750–1803). Swiss chemist who invented an improved oil-burning lamp.
- 62 From English poet Alexander Pope's (1688–1744) *The Dunciad* (1728–43), book 1, 89–90: "Now Night descending, the proud scene was o'er, / But liv'd, in Settle's numbers, one day more." Elkanah Settle (1648–1724) was the poet to the City of London.
- 63 Athanasius Kircher, sj (1602–80). In his *Ars Magna Lucis et Umbrae* (1646), he describes a method of projecting images on the wall of a darkened room.
- 64 Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822). English Romantic poet.
- 65 Henry Fuseli (1741–1825). Swiss painter famous for his treatment of light.
- 66 John Martin (1789–1854). English painter and engraver.
- 67 Wilder Penfield (1891–1976). Eminent Canadian neurosurgeon.
- 68 Adapted from English poet John Milton's (1608–74) *Sonnet 7* (1632): "How soon hath time ... / Stol'n on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!"
- 69 Arthur Augustus Ford (1896–1971). American medium who gained fame for claiming communication with illusionist Harry Houdini (1874–1926) beyond the grave.
- 70 Huxley read from the Tibetan *Bardo Thodol* to Maria as she was dying.
- 71 Meister Eckhart (c. 1260–c. 1328). German theologian and mystic.



- 72 See Huxley, “Miracle in Lebanon.”
- 73 Anthony Ashley Cooper, 7th Earl of Shaftesbury (1801–85). English politician and social reformer noted for his work to reform England’s “Lunacy Laws.”
- 74 Aldous Huxley, “Voices,” *Atlantic Monthly* 196 (July 1955): 33–45.
- 75 John Rivers, protagonist in Huxley’s novel *The Genius and the Goddess* (1955), whose father is a Lutheran minister and whose mother is very protective.
- 76 Huxley’s *Heaven and Hell* was first published in 1956.
- 77 Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857–1939). French philosopher and sociologist famous for his study on primitive mentality.
- 78 Pseudonym of Anglo-Irish writer and politician George William Russell (1853–1919).
- 79 Alfred Einstein (1880–1952). German-born musicologist who moved to the United States in 1939. His *The Italian Madrigal* was published in 1949.
- 80 Torquato Tasso (1544–95). Italian Renaissance poet.
- 81 An outdated theory holding that phlogiston was an element contained in certain physical bodies and that its release was the cause of combustion.
- 82 Frances Payne Bolton (1885–1977). US representative from Ohio who was elected to Congress in a special election to fill the seat vacated by the death of her husband, Chester Bolton, in 1940. She served until January 1969.
- 83 Anthony the Great (fl. 251–356). Christian monk from Egypt who faced a series of temptations during his time in the desert in the late third century.
- 84 Blaise Pascal (1623–62). French mathematician and philosopher. Huxley refers to a passage in his *Pensées*, published posthumously in 1669.
- 85 François Boucher (1703–70). French Rococo artist.
- 86 Francis of Assisi (1182–1226). Catholic friar and founder of the Franciscan Order who famously kissed the hand of a leper as he placed a coin in it.
- 87 George Santayana (Jorge Agustín Nicolás Ruiz de Santayana y Borrás, 1863–1952). Spanish-born American philosopher.
- 88 François de Sales (1567–1622). French bishop and philosopher, canonized in 1865, who was known for mystical writings.
- 89 Jeanne-Françoise Frémiot, Baronne de Chantal (1572–1641). French widow of Baron de Chantal. In 1604 she met de Sales, who became her spiritual advisor. She was canonized in 1767.
- 90 Raoul Weston La Barre (1911–96). American anthropologist whose *The Peyote Cult* was published in 1938.
- 91 Reference to William Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, III.ii.
- 92 This statement is reproduced in full in [appendix 4](#).
- 93 Ernest Jones (1879–1958). Welsh physician and psychoanalyst who published a three-volume biography of Freud from 1953 to 1957.
- 94 George G. Coulton (1858–1947). British medieval historian whose two-volume *Medieval Panorama* was published in 1938.
- 95 William Langland (1332–86). Medieval English poet.
- 96 Reference to English poet and mystic Francis Thompson’s (1859–1907) poem “The Hound of Heaven” (1893). In this poem, God “pursues” the man although He would have it otherwise.
- 97 Henri Bergson’s last book was published in 1932 and appeared in English in 1935.
- 98 Both William Blake quotes are from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1793).
- 99 John Romano (1908–94). American psychiatrist who was the first chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Rochester.
- 100 John Cunningham Lilly (1915–2001). American physician and neuroscientist known for his work on consciousness and on psychedelic drugs, including research on dolphins and monkeys.

- 101 National Institute of Mental Health.
- 102 Richard E. Byrd (1888–1957). American naval officer and explorer.
- 103 Joshua Slocum (1844–1909). Canadian seaman and explorer who was the first to circumnavigate the world in 1898.
- 104 Alain Bombard (1924–2005). French biologist and physician who sailed across the Atlantic in a small boat in 1952.
- 105 Garma Chen-Chi Chang (1920–88). Chinese-born Buddhist scholar who translated several Tibetan works. His *The Practice of Zen* was published in 1971.
- 106 Eirene Beatrice Skilbeck (1902–69). English publisher and granddaughter of Sir James Knowles (1831–1908), English architect who founded the journal *The Nineteenth Century* in 1877.
- 107 Royal Air Force.
- 108 Oliver Zangwill (1913–87). British neuropsychologist and experimental psychologist.
- 109 William Seabrook (1884–1945). American occultist and author who describes in detail how to make leather gear in *Witchcraft: Its Power in the World Today* (1940).
- 110 Peter Calvocoressi (1912–2010). British historian and publisher.
- 111 William H. Gallienne (b. 1925). American psychologist who took part in LSD experiments in the 1950s.
- 112 Len Fraser (fl. 1912–60). Squadron leader in the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Second World War and later chief pilot for Queen Charlotte Airlines, a regional firm based in British Columbia.
- 113 Giovanni Palestrina (1525–94). Italian Renaissance composer.
- 114 William Byrd (fl. 1543–1623). English Renaissance composer.
- 115 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832). German writer and statesman. The quote “Everything transitory is only a parable” is from *Faust, Part Two*, which was published posthumously in 1832.
- 116 Pieces (archaic).

1956

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
21 January 1956

My dear Humphry,

Many thanks for your letter. I hope that the Saskatchewan winter is becoming slightly less bleak. Certainly it seems to be a pretty bad winter everywhere – intense drought here, disastrous rains in the Pacific Northwest, appalling cold in the Midwest and the eastern states, also in Europe. Perhaps our H-bomb fooleries have something to do with it – inopportune dust clouds triggering precipitation and cloud formation in unexpected ways. Most ignorant of what we are most assured (our glassy essence), like angry apes we play our fantastic tricks not only before high heaven, but *in* it.<sup>1</sup>

And talking of glassy essences, Gerald and I went through another mescaline experience last week. This time with Dr Howard Fabing<sup>2</sup> of Cincinnati – very nice, open-minded and intelligent man – together with another MD and a young woman pharmacologist, Dr Barbara Brown,<sup>3</sup> mainly responsible for developing Frenquel.<sup>4</sup> Fabing wanted to try the effect of Frenquel on us, so as to get our impressions of the cutting short of the mescaline experience by this new tranquilizer. He gave us 500 mgs of a particularly pure brand of mescaline, specially made up for him by a chemist at Antioch College. The effects were powerful. A good deal of vision with your eyes closed – though never consistent or long-drawn, just moving geometries modulating or on the verge of modulating into architectures. The time sense was altered most profoundly, and there was literally a long lifetime of experience of beauty, being and love. Fabing gave us a massive intravenous dose of Frenquel about two hours after the ingestion of the mescaline. The effects were noticeable within a quarter of an hour. It was a distressing experience, like that described by Emily Brontë:

O dreadful is the check – intense the agony –  
When the ear begins to hear and the eye begins to see,  
(to see and hear in the manner of a separate, encapsulated ego)  
When the pulse begins to throb, the brain to think again,  
(to think discursively and biologically, utilitarianly)  
The soul to feel the flesh, and the flesh to feel the chain.<sup>5</sup>

It was an experience of the Fall, made the more distressing by the fact that returning to selfhood was accompanied by dizziness and general physical derangement akin to those experienced when one is drunk. (How curious, it suddenly occurs to me, that Milton's Adam and Eve should feel tight after eating the fruit! I must look up the passage in *Paradise Lost*.)<sup>6</sup> This tipsy experience of the Fall lasted about 45 minutes, then we both returned to the mescaline condition. Evidently intravenous Frenquel is rapidly excreted. Once it is safely out of the way, the mescaline re-emerges from its hiding place in the liver. Fabing is now convinced that, to be effective, the Frenquel should be given in small doses repeated at short intervals, not in a single large dose. Both Gerald and I continued to feel the effects until far into the night (we took the thing at three in the afternoon). At about six or six-thirty I got up and walked out onto the veranda outside the front door. On the wall of the house, between the windows of the large living room, are two charcoal outlines, still faintly visible, made by my brother-in-law, Joep Nicolas, four or five years ago, of Maria's and my profile – outlines traced round the shadows cast by the setting sun. I did not actually see these outlines, as there was very little light. But suddenly I thought of them and was overwhelmed by intense grief. I don't know how long the weeping lasted, but I must have discharged a great accumulation of unshed tears. It was something very painful but very necessary. I am enclosing the copy of a letter I am sending to Fabing on the subject of possible experiments with hypnosis, before, during and after the administration of mescaline. I hope he will try them – and I hope you will do so too; for there may be significant possibilities along this line.

My love to Jane.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
2 January 1956

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. I entirely agree with you, those cheery fellows who assure us that H-bombs etc. can do no harm are cracked. And we are cracked for accepting their half baked statements with such equanimity. The truth is that no one can possibly know. This sort of explosion has, so far as we know, never occurred on earth before. It is futile comparing it with volcanic eruptions, rather like saying that because typhoid fever does some things therefore bubonic plague must behave the same way.

I am deeply interested in your experiment with Howard Fabing and have written to him. I wonder what difference different doses make to the experiences. Can you think back and give me any idea? With me those moving geometries are the prelude to inner vision of a highly organised sort. This change in time is very strange and seems very characteristic.

Your account of the Frenquel effects is very similar to that of niacin (nicotinic acid), as it is excreted the mescaline (in that case LSD) phenomena returns. Sugar I believe has much the same effect. I don't think this can work the same way so that we must be dealing with a process which can be attacked from various directions. To be really effective I believe that we will have to attack with a great variety of weapons (in schizophrenia) until we know exactly what we are up against, when we should be able to discard the shot gun for the rifle. The Fall experience is deeply interesting. I suppose that it was the *speed* of descent which accentuated the return to earth which is usually masked partly by the gradualness and partly by amnesia.

I agree about the possibility of mescaline etc. making the other more accessible and the hypnosis idea is excellent. I wonder whether eventually we should not hope for some sort of autohypnosis? Perhaps *under mescaline* one could make a recording for putting one back into the mescalinated state? It should be an interesting possibility. The other question is that of

*directing* the experience combined with preparation for it as you have already suggested. Of course with two subjects could they have a shared veridical hallucination? I think it should be possible. The implications are impressive. On second thoughts it obviously is possible because the census of hallucinations was full of such happenings. Great areas of psychological exploration are opening up.

I was very touch[ed] by your grief on the verandah, but am sure that it was as necessary as it was painful. Such feeling needs to be expressed and not to be held stored precariously and perilously.

I am intending to discuss some of these problems in my address to the U.S. Academy of Sciences when I tell them of our work in Saskatchewan. I shall divide it into two main fields, the hunt for M-substance and the exploration of mind, complementary modes of attack. Eileen seems keen for something for *Tomorrow*<sup>7</sup> on this. I hope before long to have a paper ready on the psychotherapeutic possibilities of LSD etc. They are wider but more complex than hypnosis and barbiturates. More hopeful and more dangerous. Like really sharp tools they need an expert and also an experienced therapist both psychiatrically and experientially. My little experience therapeutically is promising but much more needs to be done. Therapists fall into three main groups.

- i) Psychiatrically trained people with wide personal and experimental experience with elixirs (I know of none for certain)
- ii) Psychiatrically trained without personal experience of elixirs (I know of several)
- iii) Not psychiatrically trained but with wide elixiral experience like Captain Al, you, Gerald and a few others.

I think I am the only person in Group i) though Cholden may be too. John Smythies is very uncertain therapeutically being more of a diagnostician and anatomist, so don't feel that he should be included. Further it is essential for the group i) people to have worked through fears, not only personal ones, but ones that may spring unexpectedly from their own and other people's depths. I have not counted Jung in because he uses the dream, a very different sort of instrument.

I did tell you of my experience of the dog world using LSD didn't I? In my lone experiment this summer I spent some time in the rich smell world of the dog. There are wonderful explorations to be made once we have mastered the technique. The dog world is very different from ours and wholly different from our construction of it. Very purposive, active, and beautiful. No wonder dogs smell each other – they are so richly odoriferous to each other, so aromatic, that in our smell-poor language only color has a wide enough range to express what they smell. No wonder they can make do with monochromatic vision.

It seems quite unnecessary and slightly silly to insist that telepathy etc. is a *primitive* method of communication as Freud and others have done. It seems more useful to suppose that it is an *alternative* means of communication. It has been more useful for us to develop the auditory and visual symbols of language, presumably because it is more precise in the formation of concepts. In the last few centuries we have almost lost the art of using this alternative method of communication. The trouble with our excessive preoccupation with concepts is that there are large areas of experience which are impossible to conceptualise, and when you conceptualise them you destroy them. The time is coming to open up this new means of communication.

Did I tell you about the very curious sequel to my visit to Maria's witch? If you should see her do tell her because it is one of the more extraordinary happenings and well documented. You may remember that she told me a number of things which turned out either to have happened or were going to happen. She said for instance that I would be writing a book, a handbook, and she described it as being a black book of a certain size. She emphasized that it was not a textbook or a novel. The Macy Foundation proceedings of which I contributed 25% seems to fill the bill fairly exactly. However this was not the main point. She "saw" in the tea leaves a whale – I think I told you that my maternal grandfather was a whaler and many of my other forbears. The chances of spotting this by chance seems small. When I was in England I was met by my cousin, a soldier now in the travel business. We see each other from time to time. He told me, in the presence of witnesses, that he had recently been to [a] fortune teller. The fortune teller a man, who like Maria's little witch had no information about him asked for something of his to hold. My cousin gave him a gold hunter

watch. The man held it and said does *wales* mean anything to you? My cousin demurred but he said he did not wish to know what it meant but only whether it meant anything. (Some sort of tuning device which we must investigate.) So my cousin asked if he meant wales or whales and the man said "I don't see them I only hear them so I can't tell." The watch belonged to my maternal grandfather the whaler. Now of course one can pass this off as a coincidence, but it is a very curious one. There must be few cousins who are grandsons of whalers. It is odd that using different methods, one visual and the other auditory, they should have been picked up 8,000 miles apart. Why also this particular bit of information? My cousin had the watch it is true, but all I had was my grandfather's chromosomes. This information could be pried out of our subconscious but why? I don't suppose we thought of our whaling forbears more than a few times a year, I had once visited Peterhead and found it awful, a cold east wind drove the stink of kippers up from the granite quays and the fish yards. Inland it was high summer but the nearest Peterhead got to that was the chill of a blighted unpromising spring. The graveyard had a splendid hedge of fuchsias.

I notice that Frenquel seems to work much less quickly than intravenous nicotinic acid which brings you back in a minute or two. The combination should be interesting.

I heard from Captain tonight on the phone. And hope to see him soon. He says that the unhappy peyotist did not go to Alcatraz or wherever they had him booked. Good.

Do hope to see you soon. Can you urge Gerald to come up this way somehow? I may be ensconced in my academic hideout in six months and shall give much more time to writing and experimenting. Abram Hoffer is hot in pursuit of M-substance and we may soon have it by the fall. We have our \$1,500 machine which breaks down liquid into 100 different fractions and does this automatically. A technical advance which will save dozens of hours work (it works all night).

Any news of the play? I have not done anything with mine yet – the pressure of planning mental hospitals, but one day – I hope. Good wishes to Gerald. Jane sends her love.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry



---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
10 February 1956*

My Dear Aldous,

How are you? I have just had an excellent letter from Fabing. He sounds amiable and I hope to visit him in my New York trip. I have been busy one way or another. My budget is now almost through. I have lost heavily on new positions, getting only \$15,000 worth instead of about \$115,000, but in most other directions have held my own against the treasury. So that our \$2½ million budget should carry us through another year of change. A year which will probably end without me. And in a way I don't want to leave this scene of so much trouble and struggle where I have learnt so much. Yet having learnt this I must I feel make the best use of it. I cannot do my research work here because of my administrative load and it is becoming harder and harder to fit everything in. Yet in a way it is hard to leave when change is at last running well, but clearly that is the right time to go. When what one came to do has been done or mostly done. And of course the research tugs, beckons and lures. I must get back into the middle again.

Our Ford has not yet coughed up, though prospects are felt to be good. "A New Approach" is becoming almost the accepted view on schizophrenia in psycho-pharmacology. It is a bit frightening at times to see one's idle chatter of five years ago becoming research programs for universities up and down two continents. Suppose it all turns out a wonderful hoax? But then of course it will have still been immensely valuable simply because it has got many people to work! More seriously much of it is reaching a phase which is quite beyond my wholly inadequate knowledge of biochemistry etc.

Papers in support of us and our work are churning out. The only "refutation" has, unluckily been done too badly to be a serious criticism. A bad thing because a skilled criticism would be most helpful but a ham handed one which is distinguished by elementary errors of logic is not much help. In the meanwhile we are getting some interesting information.

Adrenolutin is fairly quickly destroyed in acid solution, and this is useful from two viewpoints, turning into black melanin. When we take adrenolutin by mouth how much escapes the stomach acid? Precious little I should think for at pH 2 the acid completely destroys it at body heat. Then schizophrenic urine is commonly acid and this again would destroy traces of it in the urine. So we plan to try adrenolutin as snuff. Cohoba (which is alleged to contain bufotenin – that eye of newt and toe of frog business may have something in it for bufotenin was originally isolated from frog's skin or rather toad) was taken as a snuff in Haiti. It is possible that its use in this way was because it was much more effective. So adrenolutin may be much more powerful than it seems at present. You may remember that when I first took it we believed that it worked in doses of 5–15 milligrams by mouth while now we need 50. The original work was done on Abram and me with very little notice – no elaborate psychological work up to enhance anxiety. Still we shall soon know.

There is something magnificent about a poison covering its own tracks so successfully in the body, so well that it is impossible to find unless you know just what you are looking for.

I believe, still that before long we shall be resuscitating my lost iachimochrome, this destruction by acid was not, so far as I recall, characteristic of the original batch. I think we have been dealing with two closely allied substances which are not quite the same.

So the chemists are in hot pursuit of madness and I do not doubt that very soon they will have much to tell us. Their costly machinery is being assembled and the hunt for the needle in the hay stack begins, but what an advance on the hunt for a needle in a needle stack.

In the meanwhile I have just finished Myers' *Human Personality and Its Survival*.<sup>8</sup> What an astounding book? How tragic that it did not exert the influence that it might have done. If only William James had not developed the katzenjammers with peyote. There were those few years before Freudianity crystallised when Myers, Freud, James and Jung could have coalesced into a sane psychology. But soon it was too late. The analysts shattered because Freud was too rigid, did not know how to accept criticism, and was always on the hunt for a dogma. Jung was on his search for symbols. Myers just slipped into obscurity and with his departure a vast body of marvelously marshalled knowledge almost disappeared.

Reading Myers it is plain that in mescaline, LSD etc. we penetrate that extraordinary world. It may take time to direct and understand our findings and as you point out we must not become the slaves of detailed findings. I think that we must learn how to communicate them so that our fellows can understand what they are up against.

Am in a writing doldrum – does it even happen to you sometimes Aldous? I have much to write about but don't somehow have the concerted energy to write. So am reading hard and working until the pen can be held again.

Reading Eileen Garrett's autobiography I was struck by the time that mediumistic powers take to develop. It seems that it took her many years to get them to full development.

The law is queer. One of my doctors, a French Canadian [is] accused of sodomy by three young toughs (one married). Even if their allegations were true it would seem to be of the smallest importance whether three young men do or do not commit this act with an older man. It is very improbable. But days of work have been expended in securing statements on this wholly trivial matter. No harm has been done yet the police are only stopped from prosecuting by their recognition that our doctor's position is highly defensible. Any good advocate would win a jury's sympathy by contrasting the blackmailing young thugs with the accused professional man.

Did I tell you of the plastic skinned greenhouse we are planning? Far less costly than glass – about about  $\frac{1}{20}$ – $\frac{1}{50}$  of the price and a better insulator. I suspect that a new agriculture may one day develop via these plastic sheets. I have just got a nylon syringe, boilable and unbreakable. It should save us about \$1,000 worth of syringe breakages a year. The trouble is that we are still slow in using these technical marvels. I have no doubt that one purely *custodial* aspect of psychiatric nursing will soon be done by well placed television “eyes”: the nurses will be freed for therapy.

I have had vivid dreams for the last few nights and going over them and free associating has made me realize how inadequate the Freudian schema is. Yet effective in the hands of the analysts because it does supply what the nervous person so often seeks, a certain answer, and supplies this answer with what seems to be little interference by the analyst. This is, of course, nonsense. The analyst in effect selects what the dreamer dreams and

implicitly or explicitly decides how it shall be interpreted. Since any dream worth its salt can be interpreted at many levels and may even be an excursion into another person's existence, a dead person's existence or even one's own past or future existence, there is scope for numerous interpretations. None of these is "the answer."

Our wretched Anglicans have been making unpleasant noises at the peyotist Indians. So I am arming myself with some Slotkin and will upbraid them. I also hope to contact the Native American Church in Canada. I have a play on that subject ready to write.

To return to dreams – they are much less useful tools than LSD-mescal experiences, the barrier of sleep prevents on[e] getting down notes or a record. If Freud is in part right about the censor<sup>9</sup> etc. it is surely naïve to suppose that the censor does not sooner or later become aware that he is being decoded and change his cypher?

A year ago Maria left us.

Jane sends her love, the duck poetess much enjoys "The Dong." When will you be in New York?

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
4 March 1956*

My Dear Aldous,

How are you and how are things with you? I have not had news for some time.

*First* however I have been asked by my friend Eirene Skilbeck of *The Twentieth Century*, London if you would write an article for them in the next few weeks on "Magic, Mysticism and Psychotherapy," or something of that sort. Naturally I told her for she is an old friend, that I would ask. They are doing a Mental Health number which I have helped plan. I know this is not quite fair, but I am fond of *The Twentieth Century* (it used to be *The*

*Nineteenth Century*). My aunt sub-edited it for years. Eirene Skilbeck's father was an editor, your grandfather T.H. Huxley was one of its earliest scientific contributors. I see that the suggested title is "Mental Health, Mysticism and Witchcraft." The address is Eirene Skilbeck, *The Twentieth Century*, 1 Orsett Terrace, London W.2. I do hope that you will be able to do this but know that you are in great demand.

I am hard at work on my contribution to the American Academy of Science meeting on the psychotomimetic<sup>10</sup> drugs. After a long period of indecision "it" is now working. I know what I want to say and how to say it. Do you have these same odd blocks in which ideas are there but somehow do not gel and then suddenly "it" works.

I have just read Slotkin's *Menomini Peyotism*<sup>11</sup> and found it touching and valuable. I obtained this at the time that our local Anglicans have been critical of the Native Church of North America, Canadian branch. I am in touch with a Canadian branch of the church in Red Pheasant, Saskatchewan and hope to meet some of its members. It seems that the Indians have made one of the very few religious inventions of the last few thousand years. Of course I suspect that this happened before, but do you know of any religion which combines, i) small group activity, ii) the use of an elixir, iii) no formal priesthood, iv) a sharing of the experience by the whole congregation? I believe that this is a new invention and would be glad of your critical appraisal of this. I feel that it is astonishing that the Indians achieved this at the very lowest ebb of their affairs. As I hope to touch on this in New York I am keen for you and Gerald to warn me off if I am mistaken.

I hope to see Al soon, possibly in the next couple of weeks. We will try some further expeditions of a group sort. The Indians using peyote clearly experienced telepathic and empathic phenomena, but we will need a good deal of time and research to discover means of directing these. I found an excellent quotation in Ernest Wood's<sup>12</sup> commentary on the *Gita* which I feel should be framed for workers in this field. "Reverence also is required for gaining knowledge. That is what people often forget. Without respect for the object of enquiry we shall not be fully open to it. We must believe at the beginning and every bit of the time that the object can enrich us." This I am sure explains much of the clumsy and inadequate work with peyote, mescaline, LSD etc. It was not approached with reverence.

Ololiuqui is booming. I know of four groups of researchers attacking it. Smith Kline and French<sup>13</sup> have bought a great deal of seed, NIMH at Washington are also interested. The pursuit of M-substance continues and is spreading over the world. It looks as if there is a specific abnormality in the schizophrenic urine detectable by the paper chromatograph. If there is it will be only a matter of time before it is identified. The evidence for something abnormal in the blood remains pretty good. We have new and purer supplies of adrenolutin on the way. It looks as if iachimochrome exists as well as adrenolutin. Our original iachimochrome was different in several ways from adrenolutin. We are now hunting down the original. I have obstinately contended this for a year or more and refused to believe that something which differed so much in appearance, solubility and stability could be the same. I think that the psychological effects are different. We have now found that our adrenolutin is quickly destroyed in an acid medium while the original, its maker said, could be boiled.

So while the chemical battle of attrition continues I am using my energies in two directions.

i) *The reorganisation of this hospital:*

- a) Finding out the general principles that underlie such a reorganization
- b) Formulating these
- c) Applying them here
- d) Using them for the design and organisation of the mental hospital of the future.

It is a fascinating field and a wholly new concept of mental hospital architecture is emerging combined with a new medico-nursing apparatus.

Interesting, from this we have arrived at some general principles of architectural design which may have much bearing on old folks' homes, prisons etc.

These are briefly that the function of a building can be usefully described in terms of *sociofugality* or *sociopetality*.<sup>14</sup> The classical socio-fugal building is a railway station which is designed to move people about and to prevent the agglomeration of large groups. An hotel is highly sociofugal. The predominating relationships implied by the building are shoulder to shoulder ones.

The *sociopetal* building is designed to encourage and enforce group formation. The size of a group is limited by the human incapacity to incur and sustain more than a certain number of interpersonal relationships at a time. A home or a tipi or an igloo are highly sociopetal. We are accumulating much fascinating data on the variations on this theme. Churches for instance appear to be sociopetal, but because they are too big for face to face relationships they have attempted a compromise. I don't know how successfully.

In the meanwhile as the theory is elucidated the hospital changes in a very practical way. More people are active, very few under restraint, many going home, destruction much less. New equipment coming in and new clothing of synthetics being developed. These places can be hugely changed.

ii) *The Sociological Implications of the Elixirs:*

Only a dullard can fail to see the extraordinary possibilities which these strange substances present. Great opportunities; great dangers. I suppose there is never one without the other. What would be the effect of a religion like the Native American Church, but lacking its sectarianism? A religion of mystical participation by everyone of its members, usually in small groups (as most religions started as small groups and most of the great changes in religion have come about this way it seems most promising). The communist cell would come up against something equally obdurate and more pervasive. Also more true. It is interesting that the North American Indians were one of the great developers of the small group, their whole culture(s) seems to have been based on it.

This *may* be construed as a check on the development of the individual, but this need not be so. The group could be designed and motivated to expand and enhance individual development. Our mass disindividualised society is surely as pathological as the Italian society of the 16<sup>th</sup> [*sic*] century which spawned its own vivid monsters such as Sigismondo Malatesta.<sup>15</sup> There are monstrous societies of every shape and color in every age. I believe we shall soon have the tools for developing a truly remarkable and beautiful society, a great social work of art. At least it will be worth trying for the Glory of God. Can you sketch the bones of such a

society? Why not let them see what could be done? You are the only person who could do it.

Jane sends love. The Duck poetess has a cold. I much want to see you. Good wishes to Gerald.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
14 March 1956*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your good and most interesting letter. I think you are right about the Indians. Soma,<sup>16</sup> in India, was taken only by the priests – and it was a dangerous drug, from which many people died. The votaries of Dionysus got drunk together – but alcohol is hardly an elixir, just booze. I dare say some of the tropical takers of mind-changing stuff may have hit upon the Indian device independently – but where can one find out? And anyhow they are too remote and too primitive to be of much significance to us. Gordon Wasson's<sup>17</sup> mushroom eaters in southern Mexico evidently used an elixir in small groups, directed by a priest or priestess. His account of his own experience with the mushrooms in such a group is very interesting. The symptoms seem to have been almost identical with those of peyote – including the vomiting. He was immensely impressed by the whole procedure – and when a partner in J.P. Morgan is impressed by this sort of thing, it must be pretty impressive! I hope you will find out more about your Native American Church in Saskatchewan. I have a standing invitation from some Indian peyotists in Ponca City, Oklahoma, to attend one of their meetings, but have been unable to accept so far owing to the tyranny of space and time.

I have done three articles for the *Sunday Times* on “Brave New World Revisited” – one on the future from the demographer's point of view, one on the relevance of the *BNW* political set-up to the immediate future, and the



third on soma (*BNW* variety), its relevance to the present mass consumption of “Happy Pills” (Miltown-Equanil), and its social, ethical and psychological significance. I hope to go further into this problem when I embark on my projected phantasy about an imaginary society, whose purpose is to get its members to realize their highest potentialities. I shall place the fable, not in the future, but on an island, hypothetical, in the Indian ocean, not far from the Andamans, and inhabited by people who are descended from Buddhist colonists from the mainland, and so know all about Tantra<sup>18</sup> (which is more than I do – but one can do some learning and some pretending!). To build a bridge between them and us, I postulate an Englishman who made a fortune in the most cynical way in the later days of the East India Company, who came to explore the island and stayed because he saw, in a kind of psychological conversion, that its people knew most of the answers. He stays, organizes a kind of East-West school of wisdom and is on hand, as an old man, when another Englishman comes ashore. His history is that of a youth brought up in an Evangelical household, breaking down into madness as a consequence, going to an asylum (I have been reading Zilboorg<sup>19</sup> and other books to get the full flavour of the horror of Early Victorian madhouses), gets cured owing to the arrival at the asylum of a reasonable and human superintendent, like Dr Conolly,<sup>20</sup> is sent on a voyage for his health and winds up on the island, where the older man takes him in hand, re-educates him to a sacramental view of sex and other natural functions, puts him through an initiation, with a local elixir playing an important part in the proceedings etc. etc. When he finally returns to England, he is a really sane and fully developed human being – so much so that he very soon finds himself confined, once again, to an asylum by his undeveloped and deranged relatives. Meanwhile of course, the island gets overrun by one of the colonial powers, and all its wisdom is systematically stamped out – as was the case, on a lower level of achievement, when Britain ruined the traditional social order in Burma – largely by introducing, with the best possible intentions, a coherent system of law in place of the logically indefensible, but psychologically successful, no-system of local arbitration by headmen-without-authority. This framework should permit a full exposition of what ought to be, what could be perhaps, and what has been and what actually is.<sup>21</sup> I have not yet started on the book, but keep the idea simmering on the mental hob, while I do other things. I hope to get

down to serious work quite soon – which is why I really cannot undertake the article for *The Twentieth Century*. These things take me a long time, and I am already far behind-hand owing to my *Esquire* articles and these pieces for the *Sunday Times*. I'm sorry, but there it is.

When do you propose to be in New York? I shall be in the East in the second half of April and early May – lecturing first at Lexington, Kentucky, then at Washington and Baltimore, then in New York, where I should be from April 29th onwards. It would be wonderful if our trajectories could intersect. Please give my love to Jane.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

p.s. I like my architecture to be moderately socio-fugal – not as in most contemporary Californian houses – with no dining room separate from living room, the kitchen absolutely central, the wc and bedrooms hardly isolated. It was Le Corbusier, so far as I know, who started the current campaign against privacy.<sup>22</sup>

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
15 March 1956*

My Dear Aldous,

I have just heard from Gerald that you may be in New York from sometime in April. I will be there from about the 5<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> on and off. Is there any chance of us overlapping? I very much want to see you again. I am addressing the New York Academy of Science on 12th April. It would be fun if you could be there. I have almost finished my talk and am now polishing and balancing the medical against the wider aspects in the hope that I can get across some at least of the astonishing problems. I want to make plain that although the investigation of schizophrenia is vastly important even someone as heavily biased clinically as I am cannot but recognise that the problem of the nature of man and his mind is even

greater. We are self conscious creatures and the image that we have of ourselves is enormously effective in determining what we do. Because of our huge technical resources we have a choice of *many* possible courses of action. Whether we consider ourselves cybernetic machines, semantic conundrums, social cogs, the products of a rigidly determined hereditary schema, laboratory animals that can be endlessly conditioned, the victims of a capricious and tyrannous God, or the immanent expressions of a transcendent Godhead, are not academic matters, for we have the skill to make social systems which will express and perpetuate this particular philosophico-religious formulation. It is no good psychiatrists announcing that they are too busy to be concerned with these issues, because they cannot help themselves. In a self conscious, self changing society the psychological picture that man has of himself may play a major part in determining the nature and direction of change.

Al was over here for a couple of days and we carried out one deeply interesting experiment on which I am now chewing. One almost despairs of ever being able to communicate anything of those strange and various universes with which we are clearly more or less in contact.

Yet possibly we must take a hint from the peyotist Indians and attempt in the long run only to communicate by experience.

Do let me know if you will be in New York in the first half of April and if so where. I have much to tell you, and much to hear from you.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
24 March 1956*

My Dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. Of course I understand about *The Twentieth Century*. Any chance of seeing the *Brave New World* series? I like your new society of the expanding mind. Have you read Kathleen Jones' *Lunacy, Law*

*and Conscience 174[4]–184[5]?<sup>23</sup>* It gives some excellent background stuff on madhouses, including the famous bit about the enquiry into Bethlem<sup>24</sup> which was run by a dynasty of Scots called Munro. Henri Ellenberger<sup>25</sup> tells me that Zilboorg though readable is not accurate, he apparently lifted much of his stuff from a French history whose references are not too sound. His error lies in painting too black and white a picture. But I think that is more the specialist's interest. The three great influences in madhouses seem to have been the German which modelled them on gaols, and was quite open about this, the French which modelled them on monasteries, and the Moorish which modelled them on the palatial accommodation of the Bayazid emperors who care[d] for many mad people. The Germans won.

I rather agree with you about some sociofugality. The trouble is that most mental hospitals have been built not designed.

Captain and I went on another expedition with a first class psychologist as an observer. He was greatly fascinated and wants to join with us. No doubt he will too. We explored the archetypes, the strange game which we played, made an attempt to contact Eileen, and several other enquiries. It was a valuable though deliberately limited expedition and I have much for thought.

I think that we shall have to distinguish two sorts of expeditions. [First,] those which aim at achieving an experience of the highest levels available to the person or the group. Here recording, notetaking etc. is useless. What is being sought is the development of a special relationship by those taking part in the One. For some I think, this will seem the only worthwhile thing and for them they are probably right. This can only be experienced and the more successful it is the more incommunicable. The second sort deliberately limits the experience, focusses it and attempts to be both observer and participator. We are getting hints of how to limit and focus it. While it does not have the supreme qualities of the first sort of experience it will enlarge our understanding of the nature of mind and its relationship to mind. It may also prepare the way for full appreciation of the first sort of experience. It may sometimes be possible to combine the two, but I wonder whether it is desirable, for they are really different and should perhaps be recognised as different. It seems important to realise these differences before we get “experts” in telling people what is what. Many people will

not be able or willing to endure the One, but they may still benefit by enlargement, by burgeoning.

Naturally as a scientist I am greatly interested in the huge variety of phenomena and the splendid possibilities for therapeutic use, not simply to heal the sick but as a prophylaxis. But I am not blind to the fact that this pursuit, though admirable, if continued unthinkingly might obstruct even higher achievement. We must learn. It seems clear however that a society which could induce the higher levels of spiritual insight in say 0.01% of its population, plus some understanding and recognition of the nature of mind in many of the rest, would be very different from our hagridden, gadget bedevilled panicking world.

That world is turning on our peyotist Indians and trying to cut them off from their nauseous cactus. I am writing furiously to head this off. May I call on you if necessary for a strategically placed letter or two? I shan't do this wantonly, but it might make much difference at the right moment. I hear from Captain Al that the letter helped your man in California. I shall keep you posted.

I rather think that I won't go to Saskatoon this year. The hospital is making great progress. There is so much to be learnt and communicated. I have done the donkey work and would like to see where it leads for a year or two. In addition I shall be the fifth Professor in a small set up. Of course I shall find plenty to do, but I can do that here. Financially too I shall be worse off as I have only just reached a salary which allows some saving. I fear also there is some vanity in it. There are lots of professors but only one medical superintendent of an out of the way mental hospital who has been asked to address the New York Academy. It's hard not to be pleased. So for a little I think we shall propound the theory and practice of psychiatry from this old bin.

In the meanwhile I am negotiating with Nuffield Foundation to send people out from England. I believe we shall learn and teach. On my way East I hope to do at least one radio talk in Toronto, probably on peyote. I shall visit Eileen, hope to see Puharich, am lecturing in Washington, Bethesda, possibly in Philadelphia too. Seeing Klüver in Chicago and Fabing in Cincinnati. Quite a round.

The Academy paper is almost ready, 6,000 words of it, and it has been, at first, a sweat and toil job. After the expedition it began to write itself and

now it is almost complete. I feel that it is good. Unorthodox, wide ranging, well knit and lively. I am sending you a summary which Jane has typed and later will send you a copy. The summary does not quite bring out the full flavor. My thesis is that the psychotomimetics have a large place to play in psychiatry. Just to limber up I tell them about liver damage and high flying. But important as this is it is only a small part of their importance and this must be recognized. It is absurd then to label them generically psychotomimetics. I make several suggestions, have you any other ones? If you have please send by air express plus a copy to await arrival at the Berkeley Carteret Hotel, Asbury Park, New Jersey. The name should have a clear meaning, be reasonably easy to spell and pronounce and not be too like some other name. Psychophrenics had to be abandoned and so did psychoplastics. Psychorhexics and psychohormics are doubtful. So far psychodelics-mind manifestors seems the most promising, psycholytics-mind releasers is doubtful because *lysis* in medicine is now associated with dissolution rather than release. Euleutheropsychics, though accurate and euphonious is too much of a mouthful. Psychodelics seems unambiguous, not loaded with old associations and clear. We cannot use elixirs because these already have another meaning in pharmacy. Could you get Gerald's help? As you know I have no Greek and may have made a hash of it.

After renaming them I end by 500 words of shewing the part which they must play in changing our outlook on the world. I use here the idea that in a rapidly changing world the assumed perceptual framework may not be inconvenient, but actively dangerous. We dare not allow this fiction which is in part a social construct exert the tyranny which it has done in the past. We have got to develop a social psychology of change. It seems likely that love, charity, compassion are the only real transdimensional factors which will transcend sociological and dimensional barriers. It means in effect that we have to exalt the mystic's intuitions as being vitally necessary tools for our survival. So clearly have the[y] put these things that their instructions almost amount to blue prints. Blue prints in the hands of apes!

I end: "The psychodelics which we possess will one day seem as crude as our ways of using them yet even they can help us to extend our experience far beyond our present ability. Whether we use them for good or for ill, whether we use them with skill and deftness or with blundering ineptitude, depends not a little on the courage, intelligence and humanity of

many of us here today. Have we a chance to assist *homo faber*, the cunning, fool hardy tool maker, merge into that other creature whose presence we have so brashly presumed, *homo sapiens*, the wise, the understanding, the compassionate.”

Ever,  
Humphry

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
25 March 1956

My dear Humphry,

Having been simple-minded enough to suppose that the private affairs of even so modestly public a figure as myself could be conducted in privacy, I succeeded, by slipping off to the local Gretna Green<sup>26</sup> in Arizona, in surrounding my marriage, last Monday, with a glare of publicity which may have been visible even in your prairies. I regret my ingenuousness, but not the event; for Laura<sup>27</sup> is entirely all right. Italian, about forty, used to be a concert violinist, but gave up the career as being too devouring of life. She came to see us first more than ten years ago, when we were living in the mountains. Maria was fond of her, and we saw her at intervals either here or in Italy. She has known Gerald too for some time and is interested in the kind of things we are all interested in. I am sure you and Jane will like her.

Now for plans. In view of the fact that you will be leaving New York by the middle of April, I shall advance my departure by a week, fly directly to New York on the tenth or eleventh, listen, I hope, to your discourse on the twelfth, and have a day or two in which to talk over things before you return to Weyburn. Then I shall fly out to Lexington, Kentucky, where I have to talk on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, perhaps go to Cincinnati for a day to see Howard Fabing and Barbara Brown, who presided over Gerald's and my last mescaline binge; then fly to Washington for lectures there and at Baltimore. So please let me know where you will be staying in New York. We shall stay either at the Warwick or, near by, at the Buckingham, where

Laura's sister stayed last summer and got a large apartment with kitchen for less than one would pay for a kitchenless suite at the Warwick.

My love to you all.

Affectionately, Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
27 March 1956*

My Dear Aldous,

Jane and I are rejoiced at your good news. I hope that the ferocious news vultures didn't make it too upsetting. The glare of publicity has not yet reached us, but it may before long. I am keenly looking forward to seeing you and Laura in New York and I shall try the Buckingham as you suggest and hope that I shall meet you there. I expect to get to New York from Washington on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> ready for the 12<sup>th</sup>. I'm glad you will be there. I have worked very hard at this paper and think that it is as good as anything that I have done. But it has been hard, slow going and I am even now on the last or almost last draft. But I think that I have been right to make a better than average job of it because it is a survey and statement which must be made soon, and I am as well placed as most to make it.

On my way down I spend a day in Toronto to rally support for the Indians (CBC and *Maclean's Magazine*, also Canadian Mental Health Association); push for a mental hospital inspectorate for Canada (same again); do a broadcast on the debunking of Stalin.<sup>28</sup> I have made an analysis of this which is odd and interesting. It suggests that in fact the actions of the Russians in attacking their old chief are most economically explained in terms of a Russo-Chinese split. On then to Asbury Park, for GAP (Hospital administration and brain washing). Philadelphia to see Smith Kline and French over ololiuqui and the new Eastern Pennsylvania Centre. Washington to NIMH, where I shall see Lilly. Back to New York for the ordeal by academy greatly lightened by your presence.



Sunday Chicago and Klüver, Monday Fabing and Cincinnati, then home to sweat out a great list of references for the paper.

I have decided to stay in Weyburn another year or so. I can do so much. The place is changing at high speed. We are discovering so much about running mental hospitals that must be recorded. I now have a real researcher with me. Further I think that I can get Nuffield's to send us first class people over from England. The University has four professors of psychiatry for 40 beds. The hospital is crowded with professors. I have now learnt how to run and change a very big hospital, how to administer, how to put up with the immediate for the long haul. I don't think I need to be a professor. Indeed I am far more able to do what needs to be done in Weyburn now than in the University. In addition Jane and I are just creeping out of debt. I hope to get the little book for Chatto's done this year and creep out a little more.

I have an excellent new play plot ready. I think you will approve.

Jane sends love to you both, as do I.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
30 March 1956*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter, which I shall answer only briefly, since I look forward to talking to you at length in New York before very long. About a name for these drugs – what a problem! I have looked into Liddell and Scott<sup>29</sup> and find that there is a verb *phaneroein*, “to make visible or manifest,” and an adjective *phaneros*, meaning “manifest, open to sight, evident.” The word is used in botany – phanerogam as opposed to cryptogam. Psychodetic<sup>30</sup> is something I don't quite get the hang of. Is it an analogue of geodetic, geodesy? If so, it would mean mind-dividing, as geodesy means earth-dividing, from *ge* and *daiein*. Could you call these drugs psychophans? Or phaneropsychic drugs? Or what about

phanerothermes? *Thumos* means soul, in its primary usage, and is the equivalent of Latin *animus*. The word is euphonious and easy to pronounce; besides it has relatives in the jargon of psychology – e.g. cyclothyme. On the whole I think this is better than psychophan or phanero-psychic.

I expect to be flying east on the tenth, or eleventh, and will let you know before then where we shall be staying – possibly not in a hotel at all, but in a borrowed apartment.

Yours,  
Aldous

Phanerothyme – substantive  
Phanerothymic – adjective

To make this trivial world sublime,  
Take half a gramme of phanerothyme.<sup>31</sup>

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
30 March 1956*

Dear Humphry,

In case you didn't get my note to you at Weyburn, I send you this suggestion to Asbury. Psychodetic seems to me wrong, as it would mean mind-dividing (on the analogy of geodetic) rather than mind revealing. Revealing would be *phaneros*, *phaneroein*. So you get either phanero-psychic, or psychophan or (as I feel, much better) phanerothyme as a substantive and phanerothymic as the adjective. *Thumos* is the Greek equivalent of Latin *animus* and, in its primary sense, signifies soul. (*Phaneros* means evident, manifest, open to sight. *Phaneroein* means to make manifest, make visible.)

I will write to Asbury as soon as I know where we shall be staying in New York – quite possibly at a borrowed apartment.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
Early April 1956<sup>32</sup>*

My Dear Aldous,

To fathom Hell or go angelic  
Just take a pinch of PSYCHEDELIC.  
(Delos, to manifest)

I like phanerothymes. I suggest we discuss which to push for before the engagement. I have booked at the Buckingham, I trust successfully, and should see you on the night of Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>. I shall call you provided I don't get in too late. We might decide to turn my whole address into rhyming couplets. It would be arresting.

I hope to get another cotton and dacron suit, the one we bought together was a great success. Very useful in hot weather.

The paper is completed and I think that it is a decent job. I wonder how the pearls will be received? Still we can only see. I have also finished my prologue and epilogue to *The Twentieth Century* Mental Health number and my talk on Kruschen and Company which I'm giving in Toronto on the CBC. Jane has typed nobly and tomorrow night I start East on a series of fairly improbable adventures.

Keenly looking forward to seeing you and Laura. Give my love to Gerald. I shall send copies of the paper to you both if I can get enough typed (not by Jane). Our research secretary is gifted, but not in typing. I think she once worked for the F.B.I. which may account for some of the oddities of that organisation.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
30 April 1956

My Dear Aldous and Laura,

I was so sorry not to see you on that Sunday night, but I was a bit later than I expected from my Foundation Lady who proved nice and will I hope be useful one day.

It was so good to see you both and I feel this made a notable trip even more so.<sup>33</sup> I hope that the rest of your trip went well and that you reached Howard F. and Cincinnati in good order. I had a delightful 24 hours with him and found him most congenial. I only wished that I had had longer there. He will have told you of the fascinating news from Sherwood at Stanford about another psychotomimetic found it seems in some marine plants. It is most exciting and should give us some news about our lurking enemy. The picture is gradually becoming clearer and we only need the finger prints to be able to pick up the adversary.

From Cincinnati I flew north to Chicago and met once more the great scientist's scientist, who is I suppose better esteemed by his compeers than almost any living scientist. He has been a constant inspiration in our work and is much interested in the way which it is going. He has some very curious information about the relationship of brain damage and cancer in monkeys. This and work on cockroaches which shows that they develop sarcomas only when one of their head ganglia is damaged makes the whole psychosomatics of cancer even odder. Klüver works alone, his partners and associates visit him from all over the world and drink Japanese tea in his lab while he passes on the news.

In the evening I met Slotkin (*Menomini Peyotism*) who was very genial. He is coming to Saskatchewan with a band of Indians during the summer for a peyotist meeting in Red Pheasant. It should be a remarkable experience. He tells me that the peyotists now carry their peyote amulet in a small perspex<sup>34</sup> box which preserves it better than deerskin.

Abram Hoffer and I are hard at work on two new papers. The third "Schizophrenia: A New Approach" and one on niacin therapy in early schizophrenia. Of 98 *controls* who did not have niacin 48 have been in mental hospital and 4 suicided. Of 75 who had niacin 5 have been in mental hospital and 0 suicided. This seems to us *very* significant. It only seems to work in early schizophrenia. But *if* we are right it could hugely reduce the load on mental hospitals as well as provide us with some important clues on the nature of chronicity.

Since I have been back I have been a couple of days in bed which allowed me to catch up on some of my correspondence and to tick off a psychoanalyst in Montreal<sup>35</sup> who was talking more nonsense than usual about the *prenatal nirvana*. How does he know? All the evidence is exactly to the contrary. All but one sperm dies wretchedly. 25% of embryos at least die before they mature. Many children give unmistakable evidence of wanting to be out before their time. Prenatal life is noteworthy for extremely rapid, dangerous change. The security of the womb is just another analytical phantasy. It sounds fine, so long as you don't think.

Psychiatric research costs are illuminating. U.S. 12.5 cents per citizen per year. Canada 5 cents per Canadian per year.

Just reading Arieti's *Interpretation of Schizophrenia*.<sup>36</sup> I think this is one of the most slovenly books I have ever read. Highly recommended by eminent analysts, but for inspissated slack thinking bunkum it is about the limit. Arieti is much concerned not to forward pessimistic biological views and naturally produces a sort of horrific psychological purposiveness.

[Missing page or pages]

---

740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
8 June 1956

Dear Humphry,

I have the impression that there are now less than 24 hours in the day. Hence arrears of work and backslidings in correspondence. Forgive, but

don't forget me. I hope to see you here around the 25th. You will be welcome to stay at this house if you prefer – or at Gerald's, for I understand he has asked you to Santa Monica – or at both on alternate nights.

Mr Ronald Kelly<sup>37</sup> writes me about a TV film on mescaline etc., in which you would participate some time this summer. I have said provisionally yes, and we can agree on a date convenient to all concerned when we meet.

In haste but affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
12 June 1956*

My dear Aldous and Laura,

I certainly have not forgotten you, but my silence arose from my unsureness regarding the trip to California. What has happened has been a series of unpredictable changes in our medical staff which, I fear, makes it impossible for me to be away. Summer holidays and changes have whittled us away so that I dare not leave. I have written to Gerald and Al rang me up this morning. Micawberishly I had been hoping that something would turn up, but it won't because I know exactly when the new doctors are due.

Please apologise all round. It is one of the inescapable difficulties of my position. I suppose the answer is, then why didn't you go up to the University? But although my position is responsible, sometimes very trying, and not wholly conducive to academic work it has some enormous advantages. I am right in and among the great problems of a great series of illnesses. No aspect of these problems need escape me if I am reasonably vigilant. The very badness of the hospital in the recent past is at last becoming an advantage. We can contrast and compare, we can make use of our past errors and see that because of them a very different future emerges. The principles behind these changes are becoming clear, how psychological and technological are closely interwoven. How there are nearly always many ways of attacking a problem and usually a general assault is best.

I have told Gerald that my most immediate concern is for you all to evaluate Puharich's work. You see if he is right we are on the road to doing without the psychedelics which will put this whole work into a very different category. (Incidentally I have news of a color organ which seems to be a sort of giant projecting kaleidoscope which acts to some extent at least phanerothymically). The whole point is, how correct is Puharich in his estimation of the action of his cages?<sup>38</sup> If he is right then it should be possible to intensify these effects by various devices (adding suitably sound and color until we have a thorough going psychedelics produced without chemical psychedelics). Is Puharich steady, sensible and sufficiently unpreoccupied with sex and fortune hunting to get down to proving his case beyond reasonable doubt? He may have done so already, but it is vitally important that he should do so without delay. You, Gerald and Al must give this your most serious attention. For my part I think Puharich is brilliant and imaginative, and also attached to science, but one of those who are dogged by circumstances in part at least of their own making which make it very hard for them to employ their gifts usefully. I may be mistaken and hope you will correct me if I am.

The next step is to decide whether we can have a conference of say two weeks to get down to the problem of the long term use of psychedelics or phanerothymes. This amounts to expanding the last third of my paper. If we can get money for this we should invite to it a very small and well selected group of fund givers to endow a long term research, which will explore and *simultaneously* devise methods for recording, comparing and classifying experience. I do not think that our emphasis should now be on mental illness, those aspects of the problem will be worked out. Many of them only await the development of techniques *already started in the laboratories*. I am not anxious for Schizophrenia: A New Approach. It is not very important now whether it is "right" or "wrong," what is important is that it is a new approach. It has been enormously fruitful as a working hypothesis and is becoming more so. I am very anxious that the work which we have started should be firmly jointed into natural science and philosophy. This is, I believe, one of our Commission's prime tasks and the ways and means for doing this require considerable thought. It may be that after this thought we will decide that this realm is essentially incommunicable and we should be content to know a little more or less about it and leave it at that. At the

moment I don't think I believe that, but it is a valid point of view. We may feel that it can so easily be turned to bad ends that like the H-bomb it should be left to slumber. Is this now possible?

If we take the other view that these are the telescopes of the mind then we must surely learn how to use them as speedily and wisely as possible? To do this careful, prolonged, systematic studies are needed by people who know what they are about. There is no doubt that this work can change the whole future of man on our planet, but we cannot tell whether it will be for better or worse at the moment. I think that we can be fairly sure that unless those who [do it] have some inkling of the possibilities it will probably be for worse. I'm afraid it is a bit pretentious when written down, but I'm sure that unless we guess intelligently we shall get nowhere.

Once we have decided on the end then the means is the next step. The first objective should be the small sum for our conference. I suppose that it would be \$10–25,000. This is nothing to a Foundation or to a really rich man, once they have decided on backing us. The conference as I see it should aim at assembling ideas on the next set of means. Should we concentrate on a single university or a series? On a static scheme or a peripatetic one? One getting high level support in governments? Or scientific recognition or both? Should we encourage church support or at least friendly neutrality or be unconcerned with churches? Once the grand strategy has been made then we reach the tactical level. It too is very important yet calls for different skills and attainments. If I were going to be with you and I wish I were, this then is how I would attack the problem. Let me know how it goes.

Jane and I plan to be in Vancouver with Al in July. I hope, but don't know whether I shall be asked to appear with Aldous on TV. I shall fly across the mountains in August. It only takes four hours in a Viscount.

I have been busy getting the New York paper out with its 76 references. Planning the new sorts of hospitals and a new roof for my old one. Helping to push through a new training scheme for our psychiatric nurses. Planning a new way to teach general nurses psychiatry, and ending it seems by a new sort of curriculum for nurses as a whole. Developing a new skin test for schizophrenia. Telling the public that they spend five cents per Canadian per year on their brains which use 160 times as much energy as the average tissue. Watching our local provincial elections and wondering what will



come of them. Our old governor back I hope. The evil that we know (and that is hardly fair on people who have treated us well) is much better than the evil we don't know. We don't want to have to train a new lot of politicians. Finding better sorts of clothing for the patients – we have a dacron 65% cotton 35% which should be just the job. It has the ideal qualities of strength and beauty, plus comfort. Today we opened a new 40 bed TB Block. We need hundreds more beds for the mentally sick in the province. Tomorrow there is a quarrel between cook and dietician to settle. Papers too are being got ready for publication – five or six of them. I think you and Laura must come and visit this odd province. If the governor gets back I'm sure they will take you to their Owenite experiment. Jane sends good wishes. Helen and Chihuahuas (three) asleep.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
29 June 1956*

Dear Humphry,

We missed you very much at our little conference, and on your side I think, if you had been there, you would have been greatly stimulated and interested by Puharich's report on the effects of the cages and of the release into their atmosphere of positively or negatively charged ions. If his work is confirmed, there will be from now on a method by which (so far only in sensitives) *psi* faculties can be turned on to their most improbable maximum by the simple pressing of a switch. Having established a standard electronic environment, Puharich is now going to try, systematically, the effect upon *psi* of various drugs, odours, sound stimuli and the like. It should be a most profitable exploration.

Al Hubbard too was in great form. His methods of exposition are a bit muddled; but I suppose he and his group have by now a mass of written material on their cases – material which will show how the other line of

experimentation works. For obviously one must proceed on both lines – the pure-scientific, analytical line of Puharich, trying out factor after factor in a standardized environment, and the line of the naturalist, psychologist and therapist, who uses the drug for healing and enlightening, and in the process, if he is a good observer and clear thinker, discovers new facts about the psycho-physical organism.

Here, in Los Angeles, neither line of research is now being pursued. We have one or two doctors giving the stuff and compiling case histories of particular experiments, one or two working with neurotics or psychotics with the aid of the drug, and no analytical researchers. Moreover I hardly see the possibility of setting up such a group as Al now has in Vancouver<sup>39</sup> – because we have no Al, nobody, that is to say, with the necessary business standing (the business man, by definition, can do nothing un-American), the necessary contacts with church and state, and the relationship with a sensitive area of science that permits him to command supplies of the drug. Again, neither Gerald nor I can claim to be a good experimental subject. For we don't have visions with the eyes closed, show no signs of *psi* and seem to be too much interested in the “obscure knowledge” of Suchness to want to be bothered with anything else. So it looks as though the scientific work and the therapeutic work will have to be carried on elsewhere.

Now, as to times and seasons. When does it suit you to come to Vancouver during the month of August? I can conform my plans to yours. So please let me know which date suits you best, and I will aim for that. I don't exactly know what my role in this performance will be – presumably the more or less intelligent questioner, asking the expert what it is all about.

Affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
1 July 1956*

My dear Aldous and Laura,

Entering my 40<sup>th</sup> year today (39<sup>th</sup> Birthday). I suppose as one gets older one wonders more and more whether one has made the best of the past year and looks warily at what torrent of time lies ahead. How odd to think that to Helen (six) I am an elderly gent, to many of my staff perceived as a good deal older than I am, to my Aunts (in their 70's) still a small and fractious boy, to my sister (almost my age) the eternal contemporary. Jane sees me differently again and how do I see myself? A bit of all these I suppose, fluctuating uneasily among the various possible me's, some of which have never and from what I know of them I trust will not surface in this particular life anyway.

Am reading Cantril's *The Why of Man's Experience*.<sup>40</sup> Cantril, Ames<sup>41</sup> and Ittelson<sup>42</sup> are the leading explorers of perception and I find them most congenial (in print). They call themselves transactionists and are I suppose a sort of super gestaltist! But they are a very wholesome contrast to the earnest ink blotters and rat runners (necessary though these undoubtedly are). He brings out via a remark of Whitehead's<sup>43</sup> the extraordinary importance of the psychedelics or phanerothymes. Whitehead stated "as a general principle low-grade characteristics are better studied first in connection with correspondingly low-grade organisms, in which those characteristics are not obscured by more developed types of functioning. Conversely, high-grade characters should be studied first in connection with those organisms in which they first come to full perfection."

Following this principle it is quite evident why John Smythies and I were and are correct in our original hunch that the most gifted should be studied first. To study psychedelics on immature, inadequate or sick people is to lose most if not all of their great and indeed extraordinary possibilities. Of course we had recognised this intuitively but Whitehead's phrase shows us that our hunch was in keeping with a general principle.

To continue thinking along these lines it is surely deeply interesting that at the level of the perennial philosophy pre-literate and literate people are often almost equally sophisticated. The North American Indians without writing had an elaborate and well developed appreciation of the nature of the one, at least in some of their cultures. This strongly suggests that these insights are in many ways non-evolutionary and super cultural. Now it seems to me that these are the essential human aspects of humanity – the things which we hold in common at the highest level of achievement. Since

what Cantril calls our “value attribute” is one of our more essentially human characteristics, if we follow Whitehead’s rule we would study the Highest Common Factor of human achievement to understand humans better. I wonder if we have been working the wrong way around by using these reductive methods before we have studied “first in connection with those organisms in which they first come to full perfection.”

I have heard from Kelly, have replied saying that I would naturally be highly complimented to appear in your company on the screen. I am much interested in this question of communication – apparently the only way we are likely to reach a large section of the public is through television, radio, etc. Briefly that given money and effort we may with a great deal of luck be able to suggest ways by which all of us can avoid both destruction and degradation. Mind you it is a slim chance, but man seems to live by slim chances. His survival is highly improbable so we should not be too concerned about slim chances, though when one thinks about them it is a bit vertiginous.

Interrupted by the arrival of a brace of doctors from Germany, plus a blonde boy and a plump brunette little girl. These are going to relieve us considerably, but on a Sunday afternoon unexpectedly they mean quite a bit of organizing because they have brought inflatable air mattresses, camping kit and a tent. Adaptable people made so I suppose by the harshness of their lives. However they seem jolly though still somewhat deficient in English, but they should learn fairly quickly. We have one more doctor in transit and another by September when we shall once more be fully equipped (15 counting our research doctor). This sounds imposing, but they serve 1,660 people and by the standards of Dr Kirkbride<sup>44</sup> and the Asylum Officers’ Association of c. 1850, we should have 18–21 doctors. So in the last century standards have fallen perceptibly, a point not widely recognized.

I am keenly looking forward to news of the meeting and to your views on what exactly Puharich has caught. In talking with him I could not decide whether he really understood the extraordinary importance of this contribution, or whether he is aware but now bored with it, or preoccupied with other things. People are so hard to understand unless you know them well that it is hard to judge. There are always variables which reduce predictability except I suppose in saints and psychopaths who are wholly predictable at their own very different levels.

Has Aldous washed his suit yet? I washed mine and it was a great success. Had to do it again yesterday because I was heavily splashed with mud by passing car. Two things stand out – first the amount of dirt that came away – impressive – second the speed at which it dried without any need for ironing. My father when he was at sea used to bring back 15 or 20 dozen soiled shirts for washing and now we could get by with a couple of dacron and cotton ones. It is indeed a scarcely noted social revolution and one whose full extent is still not clear. It looks as if non-woven fabrics which are porous, absorbent and beautiful will soon be with us. Aldous is one of the few who have emphasized and understood the great and remarkable changes that are going ahead. It may be true that only Satanic duncishness prevents us from knowing the garment from the man, but in the past one suspects that the garment may have played quite a part in changing Kate into Nan.<sup>45</sup> This has certainly been the experience of mental hospitals, gaols and concentration camps. Certainly when I first wore my naval uniform I felt very different and stayed so until I met my first sailor. I prepared myself to receive his salute, up came his hand, up came mine to the position laid down in King's regulations and Admiralty instructions, the palm turned  $\frac{3}{4}$  inwards, thumb close against the fingers. His hand stopped short at his nose which he then took between thumb and forefinger and blew neatly in the old style. I was myself again.

So I hope that we will soon be meeting. I am fairly busy. "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III" has to be written, also my annual report and a budget deposition. We are doing much on our training methods – so out of date and clumsy.

Jane sends her good wishes.

Love,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
14 July 1956*

My dear Aldous and Laura,

I have been neglectful, but very busy. This is the time of my annual report in which I put in front of my employers what has been done in this \$2½ million industry and what remains to be done. We have achieved much and now like climbers who have surmounted a great shoulder have some idea of the massifs which lie beyond. Weyburn is coming out of the snake pit category, but we still have a long way to go to reach the excellence of the Philadelphia hospitals of the 1850s which Dr Thomas Kirkbride describes. Not simply *relatively* but *absolutely* our standards of building, furnishing and staffing are still below those of the 1850s. It is an appalling and almost incredible thought, but it is true. The condition of the mentally ill fell steadily from about 1880 onwards. This seems to have coincided with two things in psychiatry, Kraepelinian classification<sup>46</sup> and Freudian psychodynamics. Both these schemes were rigid and lacked kindness. I wonder if this gives us a clue. Dr Kirkbride, probably a Quaker and certainly influenced by the Quakers, possessed kindness and commonsense. These qualities were less esteemed in the ensuing 50 years.

The switch over to synthetics in clothing is speeding up. We have 400 pairs of men's 65% dacron 35% viscose trousers coming in. The men can wash these, hang them up and the creases come back. Fine feathers may not make fine birds but drooped and soiled feathers go a long way to making very dejected birds as the Quakers fully recognized. Nylon, dacron and the numerous blends now possible are ideal because of their strength and beauty. The mental hospitals have been very slow at making use of them. Somehow they regard them as luxury fabrics and naturally no one wants to do anything luxurious for the mentally ill!

I am keenly looking forward to seeing you about 10<sup>th</sup> August in Vancouver. It will be a treat. I wish Jane could be with me. It sounds very unlikely that anyone should not only pay my way to have a few days with you both but should pay us to talk together. We must see whether we can't arrange to do this at intervals. It would make visits to Los Angeles cheap and feasible.

Next week we are on our way to Vancouver to stay on Captain's island. I feel that it may be an excellent setting for a play. Once the paper on Group Size is out and also "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III" I hope to get

down to some writing. The Macy Foundation *Proceedings* is out. I wish I could send you a copy, but the minging brutes only sent me two copies and I have had to send one to John. I couldn't get any reprints of my section. It is called *Neuropharmacology: Transactions of the Second Conference*, Editor Harold Abramson,<sup>47</sup> The Josiah Macy Jr Foundation. Never having appeared in a book before I am much intrigued and fondle and smell the book with maternal pride. My section is only a fifth of the book, but it is better than nothing. I was annoyed that the editing cut out some of the better remarks but I suppose that such things must be endured.

Aldous I wonder whether you could scour your thinking about the *size* of effective human groups. Most teams for games, Indian War parties, military basic units (army sections and naval messes), communist cells, platonic symposia, managerial responsibility spans, run from 7–12. These numbers have remained steady for centuries. I think we have some clues why this is so, and it may be important. How many disciples did St Francis have? If he was wise or lucky at least two or three less than Jesus. Buddha?

Look forward to seeing you both.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. I find that I have answered yours of the 29<sup>th</sup> very inadequately.

The Puharich work is exciting and important. I do hope that he will persist with it and not be diverted by astoric<sup>48</sup> influences. I wonder what it means.

I wholly agree with you, both lines of approach are valid and must be accepted and studied. They are both in the scientific tradition. What AI sometimes, but not always, finds it hard to recognise is that not everyone may be able to use his method because not everyone is AI.

I am much interested in this business of visions. What I suppose this means is that the *other* being in another dimensional series from ours which however includes ours can be “observed” from our vantage point (which may be a disadvantage point) by any of our sensory modalities. It may be observed by, i) Pure love without any other sensory addition – unusual but perfectly possible. ii) I suppose pure hate. iii) By means of thought using known or unknown symbols (thought could [be] accompanied by other

sensory modalities, but this is not necessary). iv) By means of a single sensory modality, vision, sound, smell, taste, proprioceptive, tactile. iv) a) Synaesthetically multisensory modalities, v) By the parasensory modalities (ESP etc.).

Just how it is observed depends upon, i) Cultural conditioning, ii) Family conditioning, iii) The biological inheritance. These factors interact in a very complicated manner. Consequently for any particular person observations of the “other” may vary enormously. Luckily many observers have rather similar experiences which are recognisable and classifiable.

At the moment our methods are so crude that we can only make provisional classifications. It would be remarkable if high ectomorphs like you and Gerald were low in visual experiences. But we are still far too ignorant to do more than hint at a few of the vast possibilities which confront us.

We know far too little about the psychedelics to suppose that they will show great promise in psychotherapy – yet. It may be that the therapeutic method favored simply counteracts their main effects.

I look forward keenly to *10<sup>th</sup> August* which is apparently the date.

I see that Wystan Auden is duly installed as poetry professor.<sup>49</sup> A picture of him very battered appeared in the *Observer*. What an odd life. But I suppose all lives are odd once you really look at them.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*16 July 1956*

Dear Aldous,

Just a line. I have seen WHO report on *Drugs Liable to Produce Addiction*.<sup>50</sup> It says that in Japan there are believed to be *1½ million* amphetamine (benzedrine, dexedrine, etc.) addicts. Many of these develop frankly psychotic symptoms. This bears out some of your remarks on man's



addictive nature. Benzedrine is not a good euphoriant or a reliable psychedelic or phanerothyme. It seems that we get the worst of all worlds by our present sentimental approach to the bruised and blunted by alcohol, dulled by barbiturates, doped by opium derivatives, jerked up by amphetamines or jangled by cocaine. We wend our way through this mazy world. It would be far better and simpler if instead of staggering across into the other at the end of a binge of some sort we made properly prepared expeditions with suitable precautions. But we are determined not to run risks of that sort! So down goes the rye and in goes the benzedrine and we keep ourselves thoroughly respectable with lashings of black coffee. It is all very odd.

The report is *Number 102* by WHO and should be worth seeing.

Ever – love to Laura,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
17 July 1956*

Dear Humphry,

Above is our new address, to which we moved yesterday. It is a house high up in the Hollywood hills, and yet only five or six minutes from the thick of things – with virtually no smog and an incredible view over the city to the south and over completely savage hills in every other direction, hills which remind me a little of Greece by their barrenness, their steep-sided narrow valleys and the unsullied sky overhead. Moving has been a job, and it will be a while before things are in order. Meanwhile we are keeping on the other house for a month or two, so that Ellen and the children will have somewhere to live when they come out for a few weeks' stay – which they do tomorrow. Matthew, poor wretch, has to remain in New Haven, where his boss's unexpected retirement leaves him in charge of the office.

I had a wire yesterday from the Vancouver TV man asking if I could come on the 27th of this month, while you are staying with Al. But, alas, I

can't; for I have commitments here during the last days of the month. Moreover, I was on the point of writing to him and you that I shall have to call the whole thing off. *Esquire* requires three long articles within a month – owing to editorial problems connected with deadlines for the Christmas number. And there is more to be done on the play, plus the book, which is falling behind hand and will require undistracted attention as soon as I can get down to it. All of which adds up to only one thing – that I simply cannot get away, not merely this month, but next and for some time thereafter. Moreover, the more I think about the project – I really hadn't given it any thought at all when I light-heartedly said yes to Kelly's invitation – the less I like it. I have no idea what we are supposed to say, or how it should be said, or by what miracle we can improvise a half-hour scenario for a movie, as well as perform in the same, within three days. The same problem has come up recently in relation to CBS, which asked me to participate in a series of half-hour shows where we would talk about anything. But when one came to look into the problem of constructing a scenario for even the most spontaneous chat, it became clear that each programme would require days of preliminary work, plus a full day of rehearsal and performance. And when it's done, the thing may be entirely unsatisfactory and there is no chance, because of the expense, of revising or re-doing. And, to add injury to artistic insult, one gets a great deal of most unwelcome publicity, with people stopping one in the street, to say how much they liked, or disliked, what you said. This unwelcome publicity would be particularly annoying after a TV show on mescaline. Even if I had boundless leisure, I would be inclined, on second and maturer thought, to give up the project. Mescaline, it seems to me, and the odder aspects of mind are matters to be written about for a small public, not discussed on TV in the presence of a vast audience of baptists, methodists and nothing-but men plus an immense lunatic fringe, eager to tell you about *my* revelation and to get hold of the dope on its own account. One gets plenty of lunatic fringe even after the publication of a two and a half dollar book; after a gratuitous broadcast, it would be overwhelming.

Meanwhile I'm sorry indeed that I shall miss you. I hope our trajectories may intersect at some later date, either here or in the East. My love to Jane.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
22 July 1956*

Dear Humphry,

Our letters crossed, yours being delayed at this end by the fact that we were between two houses, living in one and getting mail at the other. I wish that our leisures might have coincided. I have none at the moment, and along with no leisure a very bad feeling about TV, particularly in relation to this field. My lunatic-fringe mail is already much more copious than I like – I had a letter a few days ago from Mauritius, from a gentleman who went out there twenty years ago to achieve enlightenment and, according to himself, has now written the most extraordinary book in the world's history, and will I please write an introduction and secure him a fellowship at the Ford Foundation's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, or failing that a job on an American newspaper! And I say nothing of the gentleman in Chicago who has discovered the Absolute Truth and sends letters and telegrams about it to President Eisenhower and Bertrand Russell; nor the Mexican dermatologist who thinks that mescaline may be good for eczema, and will I tell him where he can procure the drug, nor the young man from Yorkshire who ate a peyote button supplied by a cactus-growing friend and for three days heard all music one tone higher than it should have been (quite an interesting phenomenon, incidentally, and one which might be worth testing with musical subjects. Laura thinks that it doesn't actually raise the pitch so far as she is concerned; merely makes it sound like music played with more than ordinary verve and perfection and energy – something which tends to make one think that the piece is being played a little sharp).

As you say in your letter, we still know very little about the psychedelics, and, until we know a good deal more, I think the matter

should be discussed, and the investigations described, in the relative privacy of learned journals, the decent obscurity of moderately high-brow books and articles. Whatever one says on the air is bound to be misunderstood; for people take from the heard or printed discourse that which they are predisposed to hear or read, not what is there. All that TV can do is to increase the number of misunderstanders by many thousandfold – and at the same time to increase the range of misunderstanding by providing no objective text to which the voluntarily ignorant can be made to refer. *Littera scripta manet, volat irrevocabile verbum.*<sup>51</sup>

In the intervals of writing articles for *Esquire* and making corrections in the play, I am doing a little work on my phantasy – writing the first chapters of the hero's childhood in an earliest Victorian setting, and ruminating the problems that will arise when he gets out to the hypothetical island in the Indian ocean, where his uncle has gone as surgeon to the local rajah (I shall make him emulate Dr James Esdaile and cut off elephantiasis tumours in the mesmeric trance) and has taken to a kind of tantric philosophy and praxis, aimed at helping people to realize their potential capacities and at giving them a certain control of their destiny, primarily through control of the autonomic nervous system and the vegetative soul, plus access to the Atman-Brahman. I do hope I can bring this off with some measure of success.

Give my love to Jane and the Hubbards.

Ever yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
9 August 1956*

My dear Aldous and Laura,

I hope you have settled into the New Establishment. It sounds very well placed and I do indeed hope that my trajectory will reach that way (whatever trajectories do!). My delay in writing has been due to a

memorable two weeks which minus four days in the train was spent either on Al's island or in Vancouver.

The train journey is astounding after one has got over a most uncomfortable first 70 miles, it is cool, comfortable, slowish and through some of the most splendid mountains in the world. On a clear day and after a year on the prairies one becomes almost glugged by mountains. The way is precipitous and full of what the 18<sup>th</sup> century traveler would have called noble prospects. In places the track almost winds double and alongside it goes the new Trans-Canada highway which, in a few years, should provide access to this wonderful region which is not too dangerous.

Our compartment, 45 square feet in all, was marvelously compact and comfortable, I hope to use it as a model for our new patients' bedroom. It would give ample space, privacy, hanging space, and wash basin and w.c. at half the price of the present single rooms.

Al and Rita<sup>52</sup> met us, and after half a day seeing the sights of Vancouver and drinking some formidable lumber kings gin we set out for the Island, Dayman Island,<sup>53</sup> four miles off Chemainus in Vancouver Island. We approached the island by motor boat. Its shores are a honey colored rock with a few small sandy beaches. It is covered with pine and a juniper like tree. It must be 15½ acres with a shoreline of ¾ of a mile. It is sheltered from the full blast of most storms. Al's eyrie is a white and blue house on a little headland, a green lawn in front, and three canoes filled with petunias, snapdragons, nasturtiums and pansies. All very shipshape as a sailor's home should be! You land on a jetty and then there is a 40 foot gap to the shore bridged by a great plank two feet wide and five inches thick. This Al cut on his own saw mill. So we carried up our bags and the inevitable CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder.

The island has all the virtues of solitude, seclusion etc. and none of disadvantages of primitive life. It has running water, from its own well, refrigeration, w.c., electric light, hot water. Al has his workshop about 50 yards from the house. It has an air compressor, electric welding, all sorts of gear, and in the middle his Cessna Seaplane sitting on a carriage which is pulled by an electric winch. Next to this he has his electronics lab, full of all sorts of apparatus, X-ray generators, and all sorts of high tension apparatus, a psychometer (a souped-up lie detector), lots of CO<sub>2</sub>, a radio, telephony equipment. It is all wholly improbable. In this building he also keeps a

power boat and a canoe. So Al is Prospero in his Calibanless island and every so often he darts out in his sea plane, over to Vancouver, down to Seattle, or to visit friends on various islands. We flew over his friend Captain Louis' Island,<sup>54</sup> but the old gent nearing 90 was not at home. He, you may remember, after retiring as a coastal skipper with \$90,000 some 25 years or so ago, ventured it all in a Los Angeles oil field. The people were known crooks. Captain Louis made \$15,000,000. A few years later he did exactly the same thing in Texas. It made \$150,000,000. We flew round the island with its sea wall, its farm, its several houses and gardens. I wonder what the moral of the story should be?

The island has its own oysters, clams and crabs. In its waters are fish including fine salmon. I caught one. On its surface a tailless cat, a white rabbit, a bitch great Dane (not Captain's for he is not a dog lover) deer and mink which we did not see. You must visit it if only because it is made to be written about with its background of mountains and its foreground of ever changing sea, for it was never the same. We did no experiments but talked, lazed, enjoyed the sun and were idle. I was glad to idle. I do not do it so often that it palls. There is no better place for idling with its aromatic trees, sunshine and breezes whiffing off the sea. Rita cared for our bellies very well.

Now and again someone would come in, to bring a case of Bulmers cider – I had almost forgotten how good dry cider can be. To trade some wood for a tarpaulin. Al is a good bargainer. Or a yacht calls in – nothing like so many as in the old days when six or seven big yachts would come in for two days. All would be drinks and jollity. This finally sickened Al so much that he beached some of his raft pontoon jetties and started him on this work.

We talked much. I told Al that we must recognise that our brains can only apprehend other realities in terms of those with which they are familiar. To some the other will come as sound, to others as color, to others as a strange body feeling, to others as smell, and to others still as unspecialised thought. The visualizer may prefer seeing the other to smelling it, but if he were a dog smelling would be much more meaningful. There seems to be some sort of hierarchy of senses, but does it lead to pure thought or synaesthesia? I am not sure.

I also feel that we are in the position to refer to higher or lower levels of experience. This preoccupation with our own three- or four-dimensional space-time is likely to be most misleading and to make wholly unnecessary semantic difficulties and we shall have enough unavoidable ones before we are through without adding others. What I suspect we are dealing with is other dimensions of experience filtered through a three- or four-dimensional apparatus. We are still far too ignorant to know how to transpose one set of dimensions into another *typology*, I believe is the proper name for it, and much experimental work will have to be done. Presumably, however much is done preferences will remain, but these must surely be recognized for what they are and not given honorific highers and lowers.

Al and I have discussed ways and means of getting money. It is clear that we need much money. Millions rather than hundreds of thousands. This looks grandiose and unlikely but there is no point in balking it. The establishment of what will doubtless branch into many specialized branches of science is impossible on a shoe string. We have several plans. The boldest and most direct has already gone into action. If we fail I shall let you know full details and of course if we succeed. Meanwhile I consider that I am well employed making us a good base inside science. This is important. We need an established scientific jumping off place which will give the whole enterprise an odor of scientific sanctity. An attack, especially a successful attack on a great illness, isn't a bad base to move from especially when it is highly relevant to our work. In addition we are joining in on the crashes of high speed planes – another way of getting some needed protective coloring. So I hope that we shall have news for you before long. It will if it comes off make a hilarious chapter in the official history. We considered kidnapping a friend of Al's, a multimillionaire Canadian who is a convicted felon in the U.S. Deliberate and aggravate[d] income tax fraud \$13 million, and an accumulating debt of \$600,000 annually (6% interest). However we could not be sure how much the U.S. government would offer and it seemed an unsound start. I think we can work out something better than that. Also the fraud was more for fun than for gain. Al's friend outwitted the U.S. government in a game of chance and I would feel badly at his going inadvertently to Alcatraz even for the best of ends. I have also the guts of a good play worked out dealing with it and hope to get going on it before long.

Al took me down to Seattle to see his psychologist friend Van Wyke, a rash, active likeable man who seems honest and nice. An explorer and recorder, not a scientist, too haphazard, not methodical enough, but then much good work has been done by just such men. He tells me that he is on to a glass which is said to show up the human aura – can you send me details of that chap at Barts or Thomas who used to diagnose by special screens which did the same thing? You told me about him, he was a very respectable radiologist of the old school before they became technicians. This glass cuts out all light except a very limited frequency band and they say there is your aura. So hold tight to your halo. The odd thing is I suppose that about 1900 no one thought anything of diagnoses of this sort because the old school didn't believe in those damn X-rays anyway. I also met Dr Dille,<sup>55</sup> a pharmacologist who is working with LSM, a close relative of LSD-25 but which is said to act much more quickly. I hope we shall soon have some to try.

I rather agree with you about the TV. At least for the present. We shall be doing an hour's program on psychiatry and psychiatric research. Most of it will be film and I shall speak a commentary. My program went well and I have I think learnt quite a bit.

I have a paper almost ready on groups which I think will interest you. It deals with the size of groups and makes some interesting suggestions for groups and group formation. I believe this may be very important in later experiments. However I shall send it on when I have got it typed.

Have been reading an account of Karl Barth,<sup>56</sup> the fashionable Swiss theologian. What fashions we get up to. His view is that man has made an irreparable rift with God. So that God is unforgivingly angered. Could there be more pernicious and silly nonsense? Or anything more derogatory to God? Can one imagine the creator of the expanding universe, billions of light years across, being vexed with an electron because it behaves like an electron? He is now writing the eleventh volume of his dogmatics monumentalizing this profound nit-wittery. The only lucky thing is that few will have the time or energy to read it. But I suppose the Barth receiving apparatus sees the universe that way! Good wishes to you both.

Let me hear from you.



Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
13 August 1956*

Dear Humphry,

I presume you are back now in the prairies and hard at work. Here too hard work is the order of the day. I have finished my three articles for *Esquire* – including one which I think will interest you, on the history of hypnotism; an article based on two texts, one a paper by a local anesthesiologist, Dr Marmer,<sup>57</sup> who says that every anesthetist should be a hypnotist; the other, Esdaile's *Mesmerism in India* (1846), with reference to Neilson's *Mesmerism* in relation to medical practice (1855).<sup>58</sup> How odd that it should have taken 110 years for the medical profession (or at least one small segment of it) to reach the position occupied by Esdaile in '46 and by Dr Elliotson<sup>59</sup> ten or fifteen years earlier! Incidentally, Neilson's book contains some exceedingly significant statistics. Did you know that, before the introduction of chloroform, the average mortality after surgery was 29 per cent, with peaks, during epidemics of streps and staphs, of over 50 per cent? That between chloroform in 1847 and Lister<sup>60</sup> in the sixties, the mortality was still 23 per cent? And that Esdaile's mortality, under even more septic conditions in India, but with the "magnetic sleep" for anesthetic, was five per cent? Which shows what can be done by psychological means to minimize shock and increase resistance to infection. These facts have been known for more than a century. But nobody seems to have drawn the obvious conclusions or done anything about them either in the field of prevention or in that of cure. And all because "scientific" people find it so hard to believe in the reality of the mind, or to regard belief in the mind as anything more than a low piece of superstition.

I am now starting work on the play revisions as well as on my phantasy, which begins, as I make notes, to take the rudiments of shape. I can't decide

whether to go on with it, full blast, or to go back to a problem, thrown into my lap by the man<sup>61</sup> who made a dramatic version of *Brave New World* many years ago, and who still (thanks to the idiocy of my then agent<sup>62</sup>) still controls the dramatic rights – the problem of doing something for the stage with *BNW*. It might be very profitable. Or it might not. It might be done quickly, or it might take a long time. Maybe I had better make the plunge and see how the thing works out. But then I shall probably be sorry I didn't get on with the phantasy!

Gerald has been away, lecturing to seminars, and I have spoken to him only on the phone, between two absences. He told me that he thought I had been wise to think twice about talking on TV about mescaline.<sup>63</sup> His own experience, as a lecturer, of the almost infinite capacity of audiences to misunderstand what is said, especially if what is said is novel or outside the customary pale, makes him very chary of using one of the mass media for the exposition of unfamiliar ideas or the tentative discussion of odd, anomalous phenomena.

Ellen and the children have been here for a month, but return to New Hampshire the day after tomorrow. Which is sad. But she has to move house before the beginning of September, and Matthew is impatient to see his family again.

Love to you all,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
16 September 1956*

My dear Aldous,

I hope all goes well with you both. I expect that you are hurrying ahead on your play and other stints. I am just coming to the end of our budgeting.

I have written to Gerald saying that I might be able to get to California in about the second week of November. I'm not yet sure but I am going to do my very best to make the distance. I have got a lecture in Boston after

GAP which should provide the funds to get across the continent. I may have another lecture in Pittsburgh before this. Abe Hoffer and I are planning a short tour including a descent on the Rockefeller Foundation, one of our sponsors from whom we want continued support. Not that I feel we should be begging from them because on a measly \$115,000 we have done far more than many researches into which they have pumped ten times as much, but I suppose we shall have to be tactful for a bit, anyway.

The position regarding M-substance continues to be encouraging. We are now tracking it down and trying to isolate it. This means sending up some litres of blood packed in ice in two pale blue plastic pails, from time to time. So far we have usually found a car which is going the full 250 miles. But we plan a relay system should the chase get really hot and we have to send up many samples of blood. Our poor patients are very forbearing. They are quite possibly benefited by the blood letting. I have calculated, though I may be wrong, that it reduces the circulating toxin 25% for at least a brief period. You may remember bleeding and vomits and purges were one of the old sovereign remedies. It is likely that they work to some extent, but are dangerous.

I am curious to see what our psychoanalysts will do if schizophrenia suddenly emerges as a rather special form of that old dead beat autointoxication. It will all be very embarrassing, particularly as this was the main reason for the schism with Jung. Jung who had worked with psychotic people was sure they were suffering from a physical illness which interfered with their thinking, feeling and perceiving.

I am keen to do much of our work from *inside* medicine and psychology. I think it will have its effect more quickly than if we try to come too much from outside as the parapsychologists did. Obviously if we are right and lucky about schizophrenia this will present us with huge opportunities to build a new sort of psychiatry. That is one in which the psychiatrist goes inside, instead of looking in from outside. This was the good idea, perhaps the best idea in analysis. Oddly enough it sprang from Carl Jung. He was the first to suggest a training analysis. What he did not foresee was that it would become a sort of specialized brain washing which rather than broaden the mind would narrow it and cramp it. Freud cast too long a shadow. It is odd that Kraepelin celebrates his centenary this year, an exact contemporary of Freud's. Yet the analysts still talk of their father

figure as if he were modern. Odd how few people realise the huge contribution of Myers etc. Have you written anything for *Esquire* on some of the oddities of 20<sup>th</sup> century psychology? I am reviewing an infuriating book by a well known and widely praised man, Arieti. Writing on schizophrenia he does not even mention that all the evidence suggests this illness has an important inherited component – a padded book of over 500 pages. Yet this is one of the most clearly substantiated findings in a very serious illness. Are psychiatrists insane? By refusing to recognise this they have, I suspect held back schizophrenia research almost a generation. However I shall be writing about that later on. It should be quite lively.

Good wishes to Laura. Don't forget us.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. I suppose that only a genius of Freud's caliber could have disregarded and discredited a theory which was as sensible, coherent and likely as Jung's and substituted for it something vague, unprovable, and unlikely and get away with it. I suppose I should be grateful to Freud, without his information I suspect schizophrenia would have been solved 25 years ago! Where would we be then!

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
23 September 1956*

My dear Humphry,

Your good letter of two days ago heaped coals of fire on my head; for I have been gravely neglectful in the matter of writing. My brother has just left, after having been here, with his wife, for a fortnight; and doing things with him, along with a mass of work, kept me exceedingly busy, so that correspondence has banked up to an alarming height and threatens to engulf me completely.

While Julian was here we went to see, at UCLA, the rats and cats and monkeys with electrodes stuck into various areas of their brains. They press a little lever which gives them a short, mild electric shock – and the experience, in certain positions of the electrode, is evidently so ecstatically wonderful, that they will go on at the rate of 8,000 self-stimuli per hour until they collapse from exhaustion, lack of food and sleep. We are obviously getting very close to reproducing the Moslem paradise, where every orgasm lasts 600 years.

Our last experiment with LSD in conjunction with hypnosis – the idea being to hypnotize the participants and give them post-hypnotic suggestions to the effect that they would be able to reproduce the LSD experience at a given word of command – was not very successful, so far as the hypnotic procedure was concerned. It may be that the suggestions, in order to be successful, have to be repeated on several occasions. Or it may be, of course, that the effects of the chemical are not reproducible by psychological means, at any rate in the majority of cases. What was interesting to me in the experiment was the fact that 50 gamma of LSD were sufficient to produce in me virtually the full effect of the standard dose, while with Laura 25 gamma proved to be very efficacious. It may be that preliminary hypnotism was a help in maximizing the effect of the chemical.

I had an interesting communication a few days ago from a man<sup>64</sup> who used to be a trader in the jungles of the upper Amazon, at the foot of the Andes, and is now teaching art in a Californian high school. He gave a full account of a drug which the Indians call Ayahuasca, derived from a mixture of local plants and effective only in large doses – you have to swallow a quart of an ill-tasting liquid. The result is something quite close to the peyote experience, with the visions taking predominantly vegetable, or vegetable-like forms, so that the natives use it in a kind of nature worship, combined with paranormal diagnosis and insight into curative simples. The man has asked for his paper to be returned; but I have asked him to send a copy to you, along with any botanical information he may have.

It is good news that you may be coming to California later this autumn. Laura and I will be in New York from about October 16<sup>th</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup> (with possible absences for two or three days). I have to give a talk at the banquet of the NY Academy of Sciences, who are having a meeting about tranquillizers. I shall chat about the history of tension and the methods of

release devised by different cultures in the past. Is there any chance that you may be in NY at that time?

The play situation is still in statu quo – de Liagre, the producer, waiting to hear from Deborah Kerr.<sup>65</sup> (Personally I find the lady pretty dull; but she is said to be good box-office.) Meanwhile I have postponed work on my phantasy to embark upon an adaptation for musical comedy of *Brave New World*. The first act is finished and seems to be very lively. After I have finished with my NY Academy of Science thing, I will move on to the Savage Reservation. If all goes well and I can get somebody good to do the music – such as Leonard Bernstein – the results might be remarkable.

Love to you both.

Affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
27 September 1956  
Postcard<sup>66</sup>*

I have just come across a possible interesting reference in a French book to pharmacodynamic treatment of schizophrenia by Dr C. Pascal,<sup>67</sup> “Le Dynamisme de la Démence Précoce” (*Presse Medicale*, No. 50, August 1932, p. 568). You probably know this – but I pass on the word in case it should be of interest. A propos of Ayahuasca, I now find that it is *Bannisteria Caapi*.<sup>68</sup>

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.*

3–8 October 1956

My dear Aldous,

How very good to hear from you. If all goes well I should get across and see you in November, arriving about 13<sup>th</sup>. Can you and Laura find room for me? If not I have had a most kind invitation from Margaret Gage.<sup>69</sup> I think our meeting should be a very valuable one for I hope Al will be down too and we can get down to considering a series of really tricky problems. Matters of tactics and strategy which I do think need very serious and hard thought.

Al for instance wrote the other day suggesting (you may have heard from Gerald about it) some sort of newspaper release backed by “business men, lawyers, ministers and doctors.” I wrote by return urging an immediate postponement of any such plan. For it is Al at his most unbusinesslike and unworldly, or perhaps businessmen are essentially cynically innocent, unaware that everyone is as unbelieving about the newspapers as they are. Of course there is more to it than that. I have been pushing Al in a certain way and he wants to show me another way. This however is useless to us and would be bound to harm our work.

As things stand at *this moment* our best strategy is inside science, orthodox science, cutting out even fringe orthodoxies such as Rhine’s parapsychology. I don’t want you to think that I have abandoned my larger views. I have not. But John, Abram Hoffer and I have built a very well held bridgehead inside orthodoxy. Cholden was doing the same and so is Sidney Cohen.<sup>70</sup> This is solid work backed by data of a repeatable (in many instances) sort which will challenge and intrigue official science. LSD, mescaline, etc. as therapeutic tools are *presently* limited greatly by our lack of knowledge, their tenuous relationship to current psychopathologies, and by the fact that skillful use of them will be an art for some time to come. To change this much directed and concerted research is needed and to do that money, a lot of money is necessary. Al’s work is enormously useful in showing what can be done and on it much will be built, but as it stands now it tells very little except to the discerning observer. Al, like Freud, is a conquistador not a scientist. I know how he feels. I’m a bit of one myself. I’m also a bit of a scientist. I don’t think we should expect that LSD and

mescaline will *in our present psychological setting* be more successful than many other psychotherapeutic methods, say 80–85% – considerable improvement. One day as socio-psychological tools they may do something very different, an enlarging not merely of men, but of mankind. For the moment we would be wise only to hint at this. We may soon have some other tools to help us.

Meanwhile in our bridgehead we think that we have a means of establishing this work in official science and possibly doing it quickly. If we can change our ideas on schizophrenia we can probably undermine Freudian psychology so seriously that a general overhaul of psychology will be necessary. It is necessary now, but the logic tight system of psychoanalysis stands so long as the attacks of its opponents can be repulsed. If we show that Freud has been wholly wrong in his theory of the psychoses, though the elect will not alter, everyone else will. In that change of a scientific climate the new ideas on mind will take root. A new vocabulary will be made – and LSD etc. will become a standard means of enquiry just as the couch is for the analysts.

My point is that I think we would be wiser to attack from inside science than from outside. Newspaper releases are outside science, and however much they may excite the public they are likely to excite scientists in an equal and opposite direction.

I am keen not to try to raise illegitimate publicity at present because in the next year we shall have enough perhaps too much legitimately. Money is another matter. We can do with \$10,000's and \$100,000's. We could also do with millions, but we would do better to be patient than to try to raise it by stunts. However we can talk this over I hope. AI is right when he recognises the “very big thing” that this is, but I think he is wrong when he believes that telling people can possibly convey to businessmen, lawyers, ministers and doctors what it is all about. The only way is by experience. With money we could build up a group who have experienced and will be able to use each other's experience.

I am sure that AI has no conception of the great technical difficulties in communicating experience. He is an impatient man, a doer. His experience must he feels be universal – it feels universal. The levels and dimensions are “real,” the universe is mathematical, scientific. Through the instrument which he uses looking in the direction he is looking in, this is doubtless so,



but there are other instruments and other directions. The simple physical universe has taken us a long time to get a slight glimpse of it. I don't think this one will be any easier. We may be able to wander into at least parts of one another's universes, but we have to find ways of showing that this has happened. It will take time, money, work and much patience. It also take[s] a passionate detachment. The scientist must test his hypotheses to distraction if need be. Science is a harsh taskmistress.

Meanwhile our work here is at a critical and exciting stage. If we are lucky we have in the last two weeks done the thinking which will break open schizophrenia. We have now to see whether we are right. That agonizing testing of the hypothesis which is like shooting an apple off one's child's head. It may so easily end with a dead child. I know why Newton<sup>71</sup> and Galileo<sup>72</sup> hated it. Also why Bacon<sup>73</sup> was so emphatic about it, for apart from his experiment on refrigerating a chicken he had no testable hypotheses. His only one killed him. The new hypothesis is brilliant – so the idea of shooting at it is the more distressing. Yet it must be done. Briefly it is this. Where, with our knowledge of adrenochrome and adrenolutin and with all our assembled information about schizophrenia, could M-substance hide? It has never been seen, yet there should be 5, 50 even 500 mmg of it in a schizophrenic person. We think there is one place where due to its color and its chemistry it could hide with impunity, on the red blood cells. There is some evidence already to support this. Not only would it be invisible but no one would look there. Of course this is not true, people *have* looked there and *have* found something queer, but as they had no hypothesis it made no sort of sense. In a month we may know.

8:10:56<sup>74</sup>

Just returned from an expedition to a ceremony of the Native American Church of Canada with the President (equivalent of Archbishop) as leader. Mr Takes Gun, a Crow Indian, is the president. He drove up 900 miles from Montana to help his Canadian Brothers. Four of us went up, Abram Hoffer, two others and me. We tape recorded much of the ceremony and took many observations. I was a participant observer taking peyote (four buttons which are not as bad as ololiuqui if mashed up a bit). I shall write the whole matter up at length. It was one of the strongest and most moving experiences and

predominantly auditory and empathic. The Indians have clearly made a great religious discovery – a means of making an upward transcendence for a group which is reliable. Previous methods appear to have been largely unreliable.

The meeting started about 8 p.m. with 20 of us in a canvas tipi. In the middle was a wood fire whose ashes were progressively accumulated and made into a half moon inside a low crescent moon raised out of the dust. Everything was very simple. Apart from the observers and two press men (Mr Takes Gun is fighting the Canadian customs who want to ban peyote) there were 13 other Indians mostly from the local reserve Red Pheasant. They are very poor people on a reserve with no resources. They have been tricked and betrayed by the white men with the usual skill which he employs against others and feels it is unfair when practiced on him. Nasser<sup>75</sup> is saintly compared with our treatment of the Indians who were systematically robbed of their hunting grounds and are now reproached for not being agriculturists, though they have had only less than a century to repair traditions which are at least 3–4,000 years old.

The Indians were poor and not too happy at our presence – not that the[y] showed this openly, they are too courteous. Mr Takes Gun is a Crow Indian, his fellows Crees and Stoneys (Assiniboines). They have no common tongue except English. English does not express their thoughts and feelings.

The service starts with an exposition by the leader. Then a ceremonial cigarette (hand rolled) is smoked – to show that peace is with us. Then the peyote is eaten. The ceremony after this consists of each pair of Indians drumming and singing with intervals of prayer and special ceremony. At first I found the drumming disturbing, almost hurtful and when the peyote began to work the Indians seemed hostile and menacing. But gradually the atmosphere changed. At first they had been unhappy and wretched at their lot, hating the white man but seeing no way out. Then about midnight, after the water ceremony, I was left alone in the tipi with the Indians for 15–20 minutes. In the course of that time our relationship changed. I began to understand that in the drumming, the rattle and the song they were telling me of themselves and as I understood so they became more able to tell. They told of the prairie, the buffalo herds, hunting, the heroic sagas of their small and stylized wars, the excitement of the chase, the pleasure of running

with a faithful dog. But my insight was hardly visual at all. If I closed my eyes I saw only trivial designs, open I saw very few changes in the tipi. My sense of rhythm (never strong) was wholly altered. It seemed that by the subtle use of a few very simple instruments, drum, rattle and the strange voices, which can be a hawk's cry at one moment, the howling of a coyote the next, and the whine of a dog next, they had created an art form wholly suitable to their needs. So the[y] bound themselves together and explored life in their songs. And each song revealed them, or so it seemed, not as shabby Indians, but as hunters and heroes, but above all as men and women, part of the main. The gap of language and culture melted away and sometimes was not there at all. The[y] were more hurt, more anguished at their immediate misfortunes than I was, but that was accidental. What was true was that life and death, new birth and the weakening of age, were in some strange way meaningful and that nothing could alter the fact that each one of us was part of a great creation. The singing and the ceremony continued until the dawn. Before dawn a woman sat across the fire from me representing the mother. She was short and thickset with a truly red skin and braided blue-black hair, a red tartan shawl round her shoulders. The effect was extraordinary – all femaleness was there. Between us stood a white enameled bucket with a cheap design on it (a swan) and the swirling smoke going up to the vent in the tipi 15–20 feet above us. The ash moon between the tips of the crescent was now filled in. The great ceremony had reached reconciliation.

After this the singing and drumming went on, but it was relaxed and light hearted. The long night's vigil was over. Something had been achieved. Something had been born. A little later we left. We had been there 10½ hours and felt that the Indians would not be sorry if we let them breakfast without our presence.

What then did I learn? What I had suspected, here is an instrument for group integration at a higher level which may be *the* instrument for group psychotherapy if we can but refine it a little. Apart from psychotherapy it raises the possibility of exploration by groups which can be directed in many different ways, and which can, it seems, dispense largely with verbal communication. We know that small children have some peculiar *lingua franca* before the cultural word curtain descends. I don't think there is any qualitative difference between mescaline and peyote. Peyote because of its

fibrous structure must result in slower absorption. Mescaline has, so far as I know, never been taken in the reverent ritualistic way that peyote is taken in.

I don't know of any current religion that has a chance against the Native American Church and variations on this theme once we get over our fear of psychedelics. Conducted in small groups in the right conditions it would have a profound influence on any society. While most religions are like ill-manned sailing ships this is like a modern atomic-powered craft. It has far greater potentials. Naturally the older religions won't relish it, but provided we can keep them from destroying it in the next 10–15 years there should be little they can do about it. Here I suppose is the key to the open society and the dynamic religion. I wonder whether we shall have the sense and courage to use it?

The Indians are not sin-preoccupied. They are pitiful, weak and unhappy, but they don't ascribe this to their sinfulness. It is a bit of the design they don't understand, they are too ignorant. They are not egoistic enough to suppose that Chamin Too-Manitou, the Great Spirit,<sup>76</sup> would punish poor Indians. They hope he may help them.

I shall tell you more of it later.<sup>77</sup>

Affectionately, good wishes to Laura,  
Ever,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
20 October 1956*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your most interesting letter about the Native American churchmen. I hope the poor devils will be left in peace to worship God in their own, unusually sensible way. But I suppose a combination of Protestant puritanism, hatred of pleasure, dread of ecstasy, and of Catholic disapproval of direct communication with the Transcendent, unmediated by

priests, will be too much for them. Why do people have to be so damned stupid and so diabolically bossy and interfering? And (this is a more searching question) could societies retain their stability without a lot of prejudice and stupidity, or their energy without a lot of bumptiousness and bullying? Can we, in a word, make the best of both worlds – of all the worlds?

Our time in New York was a bit strenuous. The NY Academy, for which I was talking, have a publicity man so marvelously active that, on my arrival, I found no less than seven radio and TV appearances lined up for me, at hours ranging from six thirty in the morning to eleven fifteen at night. The conference on meprobamate was quite interesting and I made some pleasant acquaintances – Dr Berger, the inventor of Miltown,<sup>78</sup> and Dr James Miller,<sup>79</sup> who heads an inter-disciplinary group at Ann Arbor, investigating human behaviour and trying to establish some sort of common language among psychologists, chemists, economists, sociologists and ministers. A commendable project. And the man (do you know him?) is obviously very intelligent – though somehow a bit disquieting, if only because of his astounding physical type. He has a jaw and a bull neck at least three times as large as Mussolini's,<sup>80</sup> and must occupy some dangerously distant outpost in Sheldon's map, far, far out in the North-Northwest.

We saw Eileen several times. Lazarus-like, she has popped up from the grave and seems to be more alive, if possible, than ever. I had hoped to see Puharich but he had gone to pick up his ... wife in the Middle West. The whole situation there seems, since Alice Bouverie's death (and before it), both sad and bad – with the Round Table Foundation padlocked by the Treasury Department for back taxes, a first-rate internecine quarrel going on between Puharich and his Dutch medium<sup>81</sup> and one of his financial backers, fantastic tales (apparently true) of wills destroyed and lawyers double-crossing. In a word, we are such stuff as messes are made on – and in the biggest way.

I leave for St Louis on Wednesday, to attend a kind of seminar on human potentialities. Back here on Saturday, to do a TV show with Gerald on Sunday. In the intervals I am working on the script for my musical version of *Brave New World*. So far, so good. But the most difficult part, I fear, is yet to come.

This house is still in the making, and I think it would be best if you were to go, this time, to Margaret Gage's. But we will have plenty of opportunity, I hope, for talking and planning.

My love to Jane.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
31 October 1956*

My dear Aldous,

Poised for flight will be on my way in 24 hours. Winnipeg, Chicago, New York, Woodbridge, Princeton, Asbury Park, Boston, Los Angeles, and then Vancouver and home over the mountains. It costs five cents a mile, far cheaper than walking, yet the idiot air companies never use this in advertising.

Preoccupied with the Egypt business. Fear British Tories and frustrated Frenchmen have gone mad. Can see no long term gain but hatred and even short term gain seems very uncertain. Oddly H-bomb etc. seems to have made little wars more possible for a little while (until tactical atomic weapons are marketed by free enterprise). One interesting thing is that it looks as if the two great monolithic powers (Russia and U.S.) may have had their day – coming up against that irrational but potent European invention which has done so much harm and good, national pride. The Polish, British, Hungarian, Egyptian, French and Jugoslavian refusal to be reasonable – whether for better or for worse arises from this. What queer creatures we are.

I know of James Miller but have never met him. He sounds worth meeting. I suppose the somatonia gives him the great drive and the viscerotonia the wish to warmly incorporate other people. I shall look out for him. He is probably a member of GAP.

I hope we shall be able to help the Indians. There is a sporting chance and we shall do all we can to force the opponents into the open and make them publish their falsehoods. We are also getting the Indians a good young lawyer who likes fighting – very important.

Your special point about the relationship between stability-prejudice-stupidity, energy-bumptious-bullying is a good one. I hope (and also believe) that the answer is that these are the crude stone age tools of social interaction. Like some stone age tools, they have been very effective in their way and better than no social cohesion and change. They are wholly unsuitable for an age in which the sort of social stability of paleotechnic cultures, which change perceptibly over a span of two or three generations, has been replaced by neotechnic, which change quickly in spans of decades or less. We have to produce a society which can accept and welcome change while maintaining liveable with human interaction. No small order. I think that the psychedelics are our slender chance to make the best of all worlds. They combined with an adequate supply of energy could do it. I wonder whether they will? It will be a damned close run thing, as Wellington<sup>82</sup> said.

I shall see Eileen. It is sad and irritating about Puharich – able, brilliant in many ways. A sincere scientist too, but somehow accident prone and liable to be distracted from his work by bad luck, bad judgement and sheer thoughtlessness. I suppose we must recognise that he is like a man working with radioactive isotopes who runs and must run certain sorts of risks. It is maddening to think of the work which he is not doing.

This is why I am so very keen to get Al to use his knowledge of garburator<sup>83</sup> to good advantage. The world needs his knowledge and it could be used to finance the other thing the world needs – very vigorous and determined exploration of human potentials to see how we can live together without cutting each other's throats, vaporizing each other, or giving ourselves beastly psychosomatic ills. We must talk much about it.

Meanwhile the schizophrenia research goes ahead faster than ever. Briefly this is what has happened in the last month.

- i) Abram Hoffer has shown that adrenolutin inhaled is about 20–100 times more active than by vein. This suggests that the highly oxygenated lung blood either does something to adrenolutin or

probably fails to do anything to it so that it reaches the brain direct. Our present hunch is that adrenolutin latches on the deoxygenated venous blood but can't do this to the lung blood. Experiment can decide. Abram has found that red blood cells seem to take up adrenolutin in large quantities but we shall have to check this. This may be one of the reasons why schizophrenia has been so impossible to trace. Yellow adrenolutin and purple adrenochrome are not in the serum except in minute quantities but on the red cells where they are wholly invisible. A lovely idea which should be true!

- ii) Swedes have found a chemical test, very simple.
- iii) We have a skin test which suggests very strongly that chronic and acute schizophrenia are part of a continuum (developed at Weyburn).
- iv) Heath<sup>84</sup> in Tulane has shown that if adrenalin is added to schizophrenic serum (as opposed to normal) a new substance not adrenalin or adrenochrome appears. Abram has taken absorption spectra readings with adrenolutin in human serum and finds these the same as those reported by Heath. This strongly suggests that schizophrenic people may be able to make adrenolutin in their blood which then goes into the red cells. Some of it then leaks out and gets fixed somewhere in the deep centres of the brain. Very little of it, but enough. It only seems to need between 1 mmg and 1/10 of a mmg to put the brain into poor shape for some hours.  
Naturally we are pushing ahead as fast as possible.
- v) Meanwhile two weeks ago, after some kitchen chemistry using a saucepan, some adrenalin solution, a \$2 nose sprayer and a little bottle of HCl and some hydrogen peroxide, I found how to discolor commercial adrenalin solutions and make my own. I have colors from pale salmony rose to deep purple, from golden yellow to mahogany. The salmony rose mixture inhaled by mouth (a total of 7 mmg of adrenalin byproducts of which at most 3.5 mmg reached the lung and so about .8 mmg (at most) the brain) produced no adrenalin like effects at all. I was on the lookout for these. There were some changes in visual perception. Things were sharper and brighter and sounds more distinct. I was inclined to put this down to



apprehension. Not that I felt much for I had no adrenalin response. In half an hour I had definite visual and spatial distortion and a feeling that I had been kicked hard and repeatedly in the solar plexus. I had three bowel movements, could hardly move, extreme lethargy, anergia and apathy. I thought I might die, but was not anxious. I very prudently did not call Jane (this was from midnight to 04:30) because I feared anxious colleagues might give me morphine or something and kill me. Not a paranoid idea but a wise move. I would have been tempted to intervene and we have no idea what might have happened. I did not sleep but lay in inert discomfort. At 04:30 I vomited and feeling better went to sleep. Awakening at 07:30 I could hardly move but once I did strength quickly returned. I felt well and worked all day. I only dared tell Jane the other night! Sunday I tried the same amount swallowed. I had very transient minor gut disturbance. Inhalation seems to be the important factor. This means that aberrant adrenalin is wholly unlike adrenalin or adrenochrome, etc. A new outlook in psychosomatics. You can guess that we are greatly cheered. What other monsters are lurking in our refrigerator?

Love to Laura. Look forward to seeing you on 13<sup>th</sup>.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
25 November 1956*

My dear Aldous,

How good it was to see you and Laura again and to visit your beautiful eagles' eyrie (is that the spelling?). You will be glad to hear that our shopping expedition has been very much approved of. Jane is wearing the blue and gold house coat at this moment. The blouse has also been voted a

good choice so that I have strict instructions for a further Ohrbach when next in Los Angeles.<sup>85</sup>

On my way back I saw Al and had a long talk with him. I hope you will discuss things with him when you next see him. I think he is much more inclined to think and less to act. He realises that the garburator project is of vital importance. However it is equally clear that it is not as easy as I thought. Al has had 30 years trying to get support, interest and help so that it is not really surprising if he is a bit uncertain now. He recognises that he has a responsibility in this matter that he cannot shelve and that we have a responsibility to see that he doesn't do so.

While I was with him I saw him, Len Fraser (the great pilot) and [—] (an ex-alcoholic) give mescaline to a curious man called Rolf Loehrer (?). Loehrer is one of those indefinable Germans who practises psychotherapy, writes philosophy, is an occultist. He seems a likeable man, wary, shrewd, self-seeking but not more than most men. He refers to himself as an outlaw. But this seems a bit of an exaggeration, rather I feel that he seeks respectable recognition, feels rebuffed at not having got it and is now doing a slight sour grapes act. In some way not quite clear to me he has become well to do enough for academic recognition to mean little: but to a German it is never unimportant. His most tiresome quality is talkativeness and a tendency to have to elaborate on the obvious.

Al had worked Rolf up carefully starting him with CO<sub>2</sub>, to which he reacted vigorously. They had clearly established a good relationship with him. Rolf had done his bit by his years of psycho-analytical-philosophical activity. He apparently has a special interpretation of Freud's views on the anal phase of development. I can understand this in view of his obsessional and compulsive preoccupation with exactness etc. But I wonder how much Freud tells us. He gives us some new ways of talking about meticulous preoccupation, but I wonder how true this is? It would be hard work to design an experiment which would tell us. The psychoanalyst naturally finds what he is looking for – even if the telepathic factors which Ehrenwald<sup>86</sup> claims exist are not operative. Ehrenwald told Abram Hoffer and me about this at Eileen's and seemed oblivious of the fact that if generally accepted this would be the end of psychoanalysis as a form of "objective scientific enquiry" which is what the Freudians would have it to

be. The only reasonable explanation of the generally similar success of most sorts of psychotherapy would seem to be that when one is unhappy any rational explanation for experience which does not seem rational, provided it comes from a source made acceptable either by authority or love, will often serve to allay and even dissipate fear. However to come back to Rolf after my long parenthesis.

During the course of the work up Al commonly picks on certain key points (I have found this valuable too) and uses them in the session. With Rolf Al felt that his “magician” persona might be something worth looking into. We started early being on the job by 8:30 a.m. It will be interesting one day to see what effect the different hours of starting have – when should one use all night and when all day sessions?

Before starting we sat in a ring holding hands and wished Rolf well. This was a moving little ritual. Then he had the mescaline. I understand he was prepared for all sorts of things and what turned up was just what he had not expected. A profound change in interpersonal relationships: a realization that other relationships than dog eating dog are possible, and this astonished him more than the expected marvels. He had his Tarot pack over and told me about the extreme power of these ancient symbols, which he felt were representations of other realities. It seems however that he much over-estimates the accuracy and efficacy of these ancient symbols, which don't seem to have any special virtue because they have been so long in use.

So we discussed his strange old cards saturated with the hope and speculations of many centuries.

I was much surprised to find that in this setting I felt distinctly as if I had taken say 100 mg of mescaline. I had an increased sense of visual acuity and everything seemed bright and significant. I was peculiarly alert and keen. This may have been simply the result of my arduous two weeks travelling and numerous delights. But whatever the cause it was marked and unusual. It bears out your hunch that we will one day be able to dispense with these psychedelics, at least to a large extent.

When I left the magician gave me his cards which I felt was a handsome gesture and now I have them and I wonder just how good they were as symbols. Presumably not enormously potent or else they would have caught on more. It is astonishing how hard it is for even intelligent people to

recognise that *if* the other exists outside (inside would be as good I suppose) our present dimensional system, then we in our three-or four-dimensional system will always be hard put to symbolize the other. We have a vast range of symbols which we can use, smell, taste, vibration, hot and cold, visual, auditory symbols, and anyone can pick a sensory modality and use it to symbolize the other. We have so far used visual and auditory symbols rather more than others, but this is simply a cultural and species parochialism. We have no reason to suppose that the other bears any special relationship to our particular sensory system. I suspect we will always be hard put to symbolize it. We have to guard highly against becoming bemused by our own symbols.

I was greatly delighted by *Adonis and the Alphabet*<sup>87</sup> – a splendid selection. I suppose I enjoyed “The Education of an Amphibian” most, but many others ran close behind, “Hyperion to a Satyr,” “Ozymandias,” “Gesualdo.” I have only one minor criticism, in one essay you say that those who threaten or hint suicide usually won’t do it. We suspect that this is not so. Many suicides talk about it for a good time before as many doctors have discovered to their chagrin. You are quite right in supposing that this was until a few years ago the generally accepted view point.

Jane sends love. Helen is full of somatonic energy. It was good to see you again. Love to Laura.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
19 December 1956*

My dear Aldous,

Christmas, well commercialized, draws in on us. The credit stores are now urging those who have over spent to open a special account. However one thing is real enough here, snow and cold. This week it was down to 35°

below zero some nights, though it is much warmer now, the temperature climbing from 30° below zero to 35° above in 24 hours.

Jane and I are nursing common colds. Do you know the epidemiology of the common cold? Does it occur in Los Angeles? Or India? Or at the South Pole? Or where doesn't it occur? Perhaps when I have had my fill of schizophrenia I shall hunt the common cold.

The research presses ahead and is most encouraging. Briefly Abram thinks he has found a way of measuring adrenolutin in the blood. It is, at present, complicated (chemically) but quick, easy and apparently accurate. When I last heard from him he had done seven schizophrenic and seven nonschizophrenic people and had an accurate and clear cut difference. The chances of this happening by chance are about 100,000–1,000,000 against. However we shall do many more to see. What is very odd is that at the height of the LSD experience this 420 factor which we use to measure adrenolutin is present. We are trying mescaline. If it holds up the link between mescaline, LSD-25 and schizophrenia will have been established, but we have not quite linked everything together yet. If we are lucky a month should tell us whether our present line of attack will succeed. If it does it opens up a whole vista of new therapeutic moves.

What is so interesting is that I have just got the first English translation of *The Schreber Case*,<sup>88</sup> on which Freud founded his psychoanalytic theory of the psychoses (schizophrenia particularly). It is a remarkable book, very well written, and is clearly a continuous, prolonged, severe and generally negative LSD or mescaline experience. It is quite astounding that this book has been studied for all these years without drawing this perfectly obvious parallel. Most schizophrenic people don't go out as far as Judge Schreber, but just get stuck in the area of flattened affect, disturbed thinking and occasional oddities of perception.

Clearly this means that everyone of us has a built in potential for observing the other which we use very seldom. One is much tempted to feel that here is a teleological aspect of evolution, an aspect of mind and body which we are only just starting to understand and to get in a position to use.

However for the moment I must be content with medical matters. Until the hundreds of thousands of hospitalized schizophrenics and the even larger number outside hospital can get some help and relief, we cannot turn too much of our resources over to these other hugely important matters. In

addition, of course, if we can smash schizophrenia we should get the sort of funds we need.

We have had another remarkable development from our work which opens up another huge field. A couple of years ago Dr Rudolf Altschul, the professor of neuroanatomy at Saskatoon, wanted to do some research on the effect of ultraviolet light on the cholesterol levels in the blood. He did this work here. In the course of it Abram Hoffer suggested to him that he might try niacin (nicotinic acid). The[y] did some cases and found that those with high blood cholesterols dropped. Sometimes remarkably. Dr Altschul then tried this on rabbits which he fed with a special rich egg cake made by Mrs A. Most of the rabbits have high blood cholesterols and then develop hardening of the arteries. He has shown that if they are fed much niacin most don't get hardening of the arteries and their blood cholesterol drops. The Mayo clinic have confirmed the cholesterol level aspect of this work in humans.

You might suppose that with niacin in schizophrenia and blood cholesterol, the discovery of adrenolutin and adrenochrome etc., that we would have no worries about funds or support. But you would be wrong. We are even now struggling to ensure that we get enough money for next year! This is how these idiots reward research. They quibble and haggle and want to be sure that our statistical techniques are right, or suggest other ways to designing experiments which they don't understand. Mind you I think we shall get our money, but not without having to use up time and energy which should go on our work on wondering and worrying about funds. What is so irritating is that when we have become respectable and passed our creative peak we shall, I don't doubt, be loaded with cash. Ford's have given Linus Pauling<sup>89</sup> \$500,000 to research into mental illness. I met one of his chaps at K. Ditman's<sup>90</sup> and he seemed to be wholly vague as to what they should do. Pauling is a good man, but he has got his Nobel prize and the chances are against his having that sort of inspiration twice.

Anyway if we can scrounge enough cash to keep going for a year or two I think we shall have changed psychiatry for good. The good old Freudian fairy tale will never be quite the same again. Oddly enough Emil Kraepelin the great German who put dementia praecox on the map was a keen supporter of the autointoxication theory, as of course was Jung.

Hope all goes well with *Brave New World* and *The Goddess*. I have two or three papers and then hope to try a play again.

Love to Laura for Christmas and New Year from us all. Albert the Good<sup>91</sup> certainly made a real commercial success of Christmas, the stores should have him as their patron saint. What business would have been lost if he had not introduced those German customs to the dear Queen.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
25 December 1956<sup>92</sup>

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter and good wishes, which we return to all of you. May 1957 be as happy as the lunatics in the world's chanceries will permit, and as fruitful as the fund-giving idiots in the Foundations will allow. What a shame that Ford should have dumped all that dough into Pauling's lap! Julian saw him when he was here this summer and came back from the interview appalled by the woolliness of the great man's biological thinking. And talking of woolly thinking – have you read this book by Dr Ira Progoff,<sup>93</sup> called *The Death and Rebirth of Psychology*? It is actually a history of the ideas of Freud, Adler, Jung and Otto Rank.<sup>94</sup> And, heavens, how odd these ideas look, when set forth clearly! I was so exasperated by the solemn nonsense that I used the book as a peg to hang one of my *Esquire* articles on.<sup>95</sup> I enclose a copy of it, in the hope that it may amuse you. I look forward to the time when you and Hoffer and the rest can implement the criticism of the current nonsense by means of a brand new psycho-pharmaco-spiritual approach to the problem of man's activities, in health and in sickness. The transcendental operationally verified and pragmatically confirmed, because it works in the field of therapy, as in the field of normal behaviour.

Are there any published papers on the use of niacin in the treatment of high cholesterol conditions? If so, I would be grateful if you would give me the references. I know a number of people, lay and medical, who would be interested to read about the matter in detail. Also, did you try LSD through the lungs? And, if so, what happened?

Not much news here. I stupidly went and got a virus two weeks ago, was in bed for four or five days with a temperature. (I made an interesting observation on mental imagery. Some kind of vague imagery starts, with me, at about 102. This was as high as I went on this occasion; but I remember from past experiences that the images become progressively more vivid as the fever mounts above that point. I was put on to acromycin, after terramycin had failed to do much good, and the fever dropped rapidly from 102 to 101 within an hour. My first intimation that it was going down came from the almost abrupt passage from mental imagery to my normal state of no mental imagery.)

One feels a bit low and mouldy after these bouts of flu, and I am only just beginning to re-emerge. Meanwhile I have finished *Brave New World* and am awaiting advice from expert friends in New York on what step to take next. People who have read the script all seem to find it amusing, and I hope that, sooner or later, it may find its way on to the stage.

I have just heard from Matthew that he has a new job, to start some time this spring, with the Milbank Foundation,<sup>96</sup> mainly, I gather, in the field of mental health studies. He is pleased about this – though sorry to have to move away from the house at Woodbridge, the job being in New York.

My love to Jane and the poetess.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
30 December 1956*

My dear Aldous,



Your excellent letter of Christmas Day to hand. You are right. The Lunatics at large give much more cause to go in fear of our lives than the unlucky ones cooped up in the Weyburns of the World. And this is not simply rhetorical. Kremlins, Parliaments and White Houses are snug little roosts in which battered brains can get by with less difficulty than in many less exacting occupations. One day I hope to have leisure to hunt up some of the impact of frank madness on world history. It has been enormous and dangerous. It might make a good essay for you.

Oddly enough it looks as if Pauling may be very useful in schizophrenia research. We have evidence accumulating that something odd happens in the red cells. We can't be sure yet what it is but a possibility is that schizophrenic people have a peculiar haemoglobin which has a higher or a different affinity for adrenolutin than normal. Aberrant haemoglobin is Pauling's field I believe!

And that brings me to your splendid essay. Can you get *Esquire* to run some off prints for you? It should be circulated. It is one of your best which is saying a good deal. I was particularly glad that you gave Myers et al. the recognition which they have been so improperly denied. What strikes one reading Myers *vis-a-vis* the analysts generally is that he was so much more of a scientist than any of them. He knew how to marshal data and having done this how to draw reasoned inferences. Much of the psychoanalytic obscurity arose from Freud's ineptitude in this direction. When he and many of his followers got into difficulties they ma[d]e references to data which they could publish if they wished.

I think you are a trifle hard on Jung, but then the old boy has just published an article saying that schizophrenia is a toxic disease. But he has the same urge to vast generalizations which afflicted them all. Much of the alchemy business seems to have been largely a waste of time. Indeed Jung suggested as much to me when I met him, for he said "Do you think I'd have wasted my time with all this if the chemical methods that are available now had existed?" He was unlucky. He put forward his toxic theory in 1906, the year Dale<sup>97</sup> discovered adrenalin (I think that is right). The structural formula of mescaline must have been found at that time, but 2 + 2 were not put together.

The almost total disregard by the analysts of quantitative studies is impressive. As you point out they selected what suited them and

generalised from it, but made no attempt to discover whether there were any grounds for making such generalizations. The Schreber autobiography on which the psychoanalytic theory of paranoid illnesses was based is an excellent example. Freud selected from the story the homosexual content and gives it causative value. It is however only a tiny fraction of the rich Schreber material. The book as a whole is like a continuous mescaline or LSD experience mostly of a negative sort. It is quite unclear that much of the “homosexual” content is homosexual at all. It seems to spring from disturbances in the perceived body.

I suppose the answer is that Freud and company were not in the modern scientific tradition and that their success was achieved in a backward branch of science where they could make headway. Yet this is not true either. Psychology was one of the earlier sciences to apply rigid statistical methods and was far ahead of many, indeed most others. It would be nice to have Julian’s view on this.

I think your point that Freud and his friends were not nearly “materialistic” enough is very well made. And the corollary that the most spiritual religions give most thought to the material aspects of man is well taken. I suppose the whole point is that they do not divide things into material or non-material but recognise that there is a great continuum of experience which can sometimes be designated as mind, matter, energy, etc., but when one has said this one has not said much. What we want to know is how to expand and enrich our experience. Whether we do this with an electron microscope or a yogistic exercise is far less important than whether we succeed or not.

It’s obvious that if we could measure interstellar space telepathically this would be much better than to do it by the Palomar telescope. Similarly if we can devise a chemical or electrical way of observing the other and participating in it this would be preferable to the prayer and fasting techniques which usually don’t work. It is interesting that in theoretical physics it seems, so far as I can judge, that “free inspiration” is very highly esteemed.

I found it odd that Ehrenwald should feel that it was relevant that LSD-25 might be “easier” than other methods and that this was somehow objectionable.

Yes, I hope that we shall be able to make a more sensible and less lopsided series [of] generalizations about man and his mind than those in use now.

I am sending you the information that I have about the use of niacin in raised blood cholesterol. It is encouraging and important, not simply for its immediate clinical possibilities but because we may learn something more about the mechanism involved in the hardening of the arteries from it. I would be glad to get Abram to send details to any medical friends so that it can be put to use.

Hope your virus is now in retreat – the brute. I notice an increase in imagery at 102–103 and begin to notice changes in the outside world at about 104. Hope *Brave New World* is soon launched – how about *The Genius and the Goddess*? If Wendy Hillier<sup>98</sup> can't be Goddess what about Eileen Hierle<sup>99</sup> (I think that is her name), she was Gertrude in Olivier's<sup>100</sup> *Hamlet* and has enough guts to carry the part which is not for juveniles!

We have not tried LSD through lungs yet. We are waiting a new sort of inhaler, but have also been preoccupied with the pursuit of adrenolutin. Hope to try soon.

Am going to Philadelphia soon (I think) to help plan a new sort of psychiatric ward. The plans were in the bag which did not reach L.A.

Glad Matthew will be in Mental Health. Sorry they are leaving the Barn.

Jane and the poetess send Love to you and Laura, as of course do I.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

<sup>1</sup> See William Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, II.ii, 118–24. Huxley had used this speech as a source for the title of his dystopian novel *Ape and Essence* (1948).

<sup>2</sup> Howard Douglas Fabing (1907–70). American neurologist and psychiatrist and early researcher on LSD.

<sup>3</sup> Barbara B. Brown (1921–99). American pharmacologist and research psychologist.

<sup>4</sup> See Fabing, "Experimental Compound MER-17 (Frenquel)," 140.

<sup>5</sup> From English novelist and poet Emily Brontë's (1818–48) poem "The Prisoner" (1846), with Huxley's parenthetical additions.

<sup>6</sup> John Milton's *Paradise Lost* was published in 1667.

<sup>7</sup> *Tomorrow* was a magazine edited by Eileen Garrett and published in New York from 1942 to 1962. It specialized in parapsychology and mysticism.

- 8 Frederic W.H. Myers's *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* was first published in 1903. Huxley wrote the foreword to the edition published in 1961.
- 9 The repressive tendency in the mind to keep uncomfortable/unwanted thoughts hidden.
- 10 These drugs mimic the symptoms of psychosis, including delusions and/or delirium, not just the hallucinations.
- 11 James Sydney Slotkin's *Menomini Peyotism: A Study of Individual Variation in a Primary Group with a Homogeneous Culture* was published in 1952.
- 12 Ernest Egerton Wood (1883–1965). English yogi, theosophist, and Sanskrit scholar whose *The Bhagavad Gita Explained with a New and Literal Translation* was published in 1954.
- 13 Smith, Kline & French was an American pharmaceutical company that later became part of GlaxoSmithKline.
- 14 Osmond coined these terms and others in his work on the redesign of mental hospitals. See Osmond, "Function as the Basis."
- 15 Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta (1417–68). Fifteenth-century Italian nobleman, poet, and military leader.
- 16 An intoxicating drug of ancient India. Huxley assigned the name soma to the universally available drug in *Brave New World* (1932).
- 17 R. Gordon Wasson (1898–1986). American author and vice-president of J.P. Morgan & Co. who was an expert on the psychoactive properties of mushrooms.
- 18 An early reference to what later became Huxley's last novel, *Island* (1962).
- 19 Gregory Zilboorg (1890–1959). Born in Kiev, Ukraine, he was a noted historian of psychiatry. His translation of E. Zamyatin's dystopian novel *We* was published in 1924.
- 20 John Conolly (1794–1866). English psychiatrist who, as resident physician to the Middlesex County Asylum at Hanwell, pioneered nonrestraint methods in the treatment of the insane.
- 21 Huxley's typescript reads, "WHAT OUGHT TO BE, WHAT COULD BE PERHAPS, AND WHAT HAS BEEN AND WHAT ACTUALLY IS. (The capitals are an error [of typewriting], not a literary device.)"
- 22 Huxley was an early critic of Le Corbusier. He observes in "The New Romantics," an essay included in *Music at Night and Other Essays* (1931), "The ambition of advanced architects is to make dwelling-houses indistinguishable from factories; in Le Corbusier's phrase, a house is a 'machine for living in'" (217).
- 23 Kathleen Jones (1922–2010). British academic who studied mental health and social policy. Her *Lunacy, Law and Conscience, 1744–1845* was published in 1955. Osmond wrote the dates in this title as "1745–1844."
- 24 Bethlem Royal Hospital, also known as St Mary Bethlehem, Bethlehem Hospital, and Bedlam, is a psychiatric hospital in London.
- 25 Henri Ellenberger (1905–93). Canadian psychiatrist, medical historian, and criminologist who is sometimes considered the founding historiographer of psychiatry.
- 26 Gretna Green is a village in the south of Scotland where, from the eighteenth century, underage English elopers could marry without parental consent. Huxley's second wedding took place at a drive-through wedding chapel in Yuma, Arizona.
- 27 Laura Archera Huxley (1911–2007). Huxley's second wife.
- 28 Joseph Stalin (1878–1953). Soviet revolutionary and premier of the Soviet Union from 1941 to 1953.
- 29 *A Greek-English Lexicon*, by Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones, and Roderick McKenzie, was a standard reference book first published by Oxford University Press in 1843.

30 Osmond suggested “psychodelics” as the name for mind-changing drugs, which Huxley apparently misread as “psychodetics” – “hence his mystification,” according to Grover Smith in his edition of Huxley, *Letters*, 795n.

31 Immediately beneath Huxley’s versicle, Osmond wrote his first version of this now famous line: “To plumb the depths or soar angelic, / Just take a pinch of psychedelic.” See the reproduction of this letter on page xx.

32 The letter is not dated but was clearly written after 30 March and shortly before Osmond left Weyburn on 9 or 10 April.

33 In a privately held letter to his wife, Jane, on 13 April 1956, Osmond provided the following first impression of Laura: “Laura had a very beautiful grey seal coat of handsome cut. She is good looking. Aquiline features and hair of darkish gold either very well concocted or au naturel. I’m not sophisticated enough to be sure. Good eyes widely set. She is alert and responsive. A trim figure and shapely ankles. Height 5ft 7ish. It is very curious suddenly realizing that she is now Aldous’ wife, yet so powerful is this role business that in a very short time I can perceive her in that way which is just as well. Poor dear she must be having a rough time being scrutinized by Aldous’ many devoted friends, many of whom were passionately fond of Maria. However, my feeling is that she is making the grade and that this [is] very lucky for Aldous. For if she is as kind as she is decorative then he is indeed lucky.” In another privately held letter to Jane, on 4 April 1959, Osmond added a later impression: “Laura is very much like a large and self-contained cat in human form: decorative and Aldous likes having her around. She does not devote herself to Aldous as Maria did, but this may perhaps be just as well. If anything she errs in the other direction.”

34 Acrylic, similar to plexiglass.

35 Miguel Prados Such (1899–1970). Spanish-born psychoanalyst based at McGill University. Osmond refers to his letter “Mental Health” in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 74, no. 11 (1956): 936–7.

36 Silvano Arieti (1914–81). Italian psychiatrist who wrote extensively on schizophrenia and creativity. The first edition of his *Interpretation of Schizophrenia* was published in 1955.

37 Ronald Kelly (b. 1929). Vancouver-based producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). He had contacted Osmond and Huxley in regard to a possible CBC television documentary on psychedelics. Huxley later cancelled his tentative acceptance to appear.

38 Reference to Henry Puharich’s experiments placing people in modified Faraday cages, which he argued increased their psychic ability.

39 Hubbard was actively involved in the Hollywood Hospital, a private clinic in New Westminster, BC, near Vancouver (named for a stand of holly bushes on the grounds). The staff used LSD for the treatment of schizophrenics and alcoholics. Allegedly, a number of Hollywood film personalities were treated there.

40 Hadley Cantril (1906–69). American psychologist who specialized in public opinion research. His *The Why of Man’s Experience* was published in 1950.

41 Adelbert Ames Jr (1880–1955). American scientist and leading figure in the transactionalist school of psychology who was known for his work in visual perception.

42 William H. Ittelson (1920–2017). American psychologist who specialized in environmental psychology.

43 Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947). English mathematician and philosopher. The passage Osmond quotes here comes from Whitehead’s *Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect*, the Barbour-Page Lecture given at the University of Virginia in 1927.

44 Thomas Kirkbride (1809–83). American psychiatrist known for his pioneering work on establishing standards for mental hospitals.

- 45 Reference to William Blake's poem "To the Accuser Who Is the God of This World," from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1793): "Truly, My Satan, thou art but a Dunce, / And dost not know the Garment from the Man. / Every Harlot was a Virgin once, / Nor canst thou ever change Kate into Nan."
- 46 Emil Kraepelin (1856–1926). German psychiatrist and proponent of eugenics who believed the chief causes of psychiatric disease to be biological or genetic. He developed several classification systems for studying various types of mental illness.
- 47 Harold Abramson (1899–1980). American physician and early researcher and proponent of LSD.
- 48 Also known as nomothetic, the type of science that generalizes by studying classes or types of individuals rather than specific individuals. Osmond here seems to be concerned that Henry Puharich might be distracted from his work with individuals by a different type of research.
- 49 W.H. Auden was a professor of poetry at Oxford from 1956 to 1961.
- 50 World Health Organization, *Expert Committee on Drugs Liable to Produce Addiction: Report on the Second Session* (1950).
- 51 Latin proverb: "The written word remains; what is spoken flees forever."
- 52 Rita Hubbard (1907–2000). Al Hubbard's wife.
- 53 Dayman is a privately owned island off the coast of British Columbia that Hubbard owned from the 1950s until 1968.
- 54 Coal Island, near Sidney Island in British Columbia, which Captain Fred Lewis (fl. 1870–1962) bought in 1932.
- 55 James M. Dille (1907–87). American pharmacologist who did early research on hallucinogenics.
- 56 Karl Barth (1886–1968). Swiss Protestant theologian.
- 57 Milton J. Marmer (fl. 1916–69). American physician whose research focused on hypnosis and anesthesiology.
- 58 William Neilson. Scottish attorney and mesmerist whose *Mesmerism in its Relation to Health and Disease and the Present State of Medicine* was published in 1855.
- 59 John Elliotson (1791–1868). British physician and professor of medicine who, according to Huxley, was the first British doctor to use the stethoscope. See Huxley, "Morals, 1837." He also advocated medical applications of mesmerism.
- 60 Joseph Lister (1827–1912). British physician and pioneer in antiseptic surgical practices.
- 61 Louis Walinsky (1908–2001). His stage adaptation of *Brave New World* was banned in London but was mounted by the English Players in Paris in September 1938.
- 62 The agent Huxley refers to here is Eric S. Pinker (1891–1973), who ran the New York office of the literary agency James B. Pinker and Sons. He was sent to Sing Sing in 1939 for appropriating more than \$100,000 of his clients' funds, including money owed to Huxley.
- 63 In the margin of this letter Osmond wrote, "Yes – tell him the story of the Limberg cheese!" See Osmond's letter to Matthew and Ellen Huxley, 16 August 1956, in [appendix 2](#).
- 64 Heinz Kusel (1916–2005). American painter and art teacher at Madera Union High School, California, who was born in Peru, where he spent seven years among various Peruvian Indian tribes. His article "Ayahuasca Drinkers among the Chama Indians of Northeast Peru" was published in *Psychedelic Review* 6 (1965): 58–66.
- 65 Deborah Kerr (1921–2007). Scottish stage and film actress who eventually turned down the role in Huxley's stage adaptation of his novel *The Genius and the Goddess* (1955).
- 66 This postcard had no written greeting or date, but the postmark indicates the date it was sent.
- 67 Constance Pascal (1877–1937). Romanian-born physician who became the first female psychiatrist in France.
- 68 *Banisteriopsis caapi*. A root vine used to prepare ayahuasca.
- 69 Margaret M. Gage (fl. 1897–1972). Santa Monica socialite and close friend of Gerald Heard.

- 70 Sidney Cohen (1910–87). American psychiatrist and early LSD researcher.
- 71 Isaac Newton (1642–1727). English mathematician and physicist noted for his laws of motion and universal gravity.
- 72 Galileo Galilei (1564–1642). Italian philosopher and scientist known for his work in astronomy.
- 73 Francis Bacon (1561–1626). English philosopher, scientist, writer, and statesman who is often regarded as the father of the scientific method. Bacon died after contracting pneumonia, reportedly from going out in cold weather to get snow, which he stuffed into a chicken while conducting an experiment to see whether snow could be used to preserve meat.
- 74 This letter was started on 3 October and finished on 8 October 1956.
- 75 Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918–70). Second president of Egypt and a staunch nationalist who led the overthrow of the monarchy in 1952.
- 76 Manitou, the Great Spirit, is the primary spiritual force of the Algonquin and Cree, often occurring in a combined form (e.g., Aashaa Manitou and Gitche Manitou). “Chamin Too-Manitou” seems to be one of these forms, indicating the spirit of the local tribe.
- 77 See Kahan, *Culture’s Catalyst*.
- 78 Frank Milan Berger (1913–2008). Czech-born pharmacologist who invented Miltown, the first blockbuster antidepressant in America.
- 79 James G. Miller (1916–2002). American psychologist credited with coining the term “behavioral science.” He founded and directed the Mental Health Research Institute at the University of Michigan in 1955.
- 80 Benito Mussolini (1883–1945). Italian politician and leader of the National Fascist Party who was prime minister of Italy from 1922 to 1945.
- 81 Peter Hurkos (Pieter van de Hirk, 1911–88). Dutch psychic associated with Henry Puharich, who brought him to the United States in 1956. He performed psychic feats on stage and television.
- 82 Reference to a comment about the Battle of Waterloo made by Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington (1769–1852).
- 83 Reference to Hubbard’s “atmospheric power generator,” a device he worked on over several decades. Osmond may be playfully confounding “carburetor” with “garburator,” the term for an electric garbage disposal.
- 84 Robert Galbraith Heath (1915–99). American psychiatrist who specialized in biological psychiatry.
- 85 In a privately held letter to his wife, Jane, on 16 November 1956, Osmond remarked, “It is curious comparing Laura with Maria whose white marble statue adorns the dining room. Yet such comparisons are not fair or very useful. Aldous is, I think, happy, probably as happy as he has ever been. Oddly, I think that Maria’s death has contributed towards his happiness, he has come through the ordeal and is now more flexible, gentler and more interested in life than ever before.”
- 86 Jan Ehrenwald (1900–88). Czech-born psychiatrist known for his work in parapsychology.
- 87 Huxley’s *Adonis and the Alphabet and Other Essays* was published in 1956.
- 88 Freud first published *The Schreber Case* in 1911. It was based on the memoirs of Daniel Paul Schreber (1842–1911), a German judge who suffered from schizophrenia.
- 89 Linus Carl Pauling (1901–94). American chemist and peace activist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1954 and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1962.
- 90 Keith Ditman (1921–81). American psychiatrist and psychopharmacologist who was an early proponent of LSD.
- 91 Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha (1819–61). Husband of Queen Victoria. He is credited with popularizing the Christmas tree in Great Britain.
- 92 The letter is dated “Christmas Day” with no year, but the opening good wishes for 1957 clarify the year.

93 Ira Progoff (1921–98). His *American Psychotherapist: The Death and Rebirth of Psychology* was published in 1956.

94 Otto Rank (1884–1939). Austrian psychologist and colleague of Freud. He wrote prolifically on various approaches to psychoanalysis.

95 Huxley's "The Oddest Science" was published in *Esquire* in March 1957 and reprinted in Huxley, *Complete Essays of Aldous Huxley*, vol. 6, 1956–1963 (2002), 76–82.

96 The Milbank Memorial Fund was founded in 1905 and is dedicated to improving "the health of populations by connecting leaders and decision makers with the best available evidence and experience." See <https://www.milbank.org/about/history>.

97 Henry Hallet Dale (1875–1968). English pharmacologist and physiologist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1936, shared with Otto Loewi.

98 Wendy Hiller (1912–2003). English actress with a long list of credits in stage, film, and television.

99 Eileen Herlie (nee Herlihy, 1918–2008). Scottish-American actress with credits primarily in stage and television.

100 Laurence Olivier (1907–89). Prolific English actor and director.



1957

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
4 February 1957*

My dear Aldous,

No news of you for some time. But I expect you have, like me been hard pressed, by your stage friends, I hope. I have had sporadic and sketchy news from Al who seems to be busy. I am not sure where his particular lead will take him, but the most promising news is Sidney Cohen's interest. I have some good news in psychedelics too – John Langdon-Davies<sup>1</sup> a friend of Eileen is starting a research on them in England. He sounds nice, sensible and wise. I have suggested body typing to him because I feel the omission of this has been a grave error. *Weight for weight* I suspect that it\* is most effective on those who have fairly high components in all three. (It\* should read they and mean psychedelics). Langdon-Davies is of course interested in ESP-LSD but also in a wider and more general exploration of mind. I envy him, but for the moment I can't use *much* of my time that way though I'm determined to use some. It is very hard to know how one should allocate one's time. The exploration of mind is hugely important. Yet the plight of the mentally ill is appalling and it is shameful that we make such poor use of our extensive knowledge.

So what with Weyburn, the schizophrenia research, the garburator business, which is bubbling, and now the launching of the sociopetal wards I am kept busy. Too busy I fear to revise my plays and write more.

I don't think I've told you the latest about the wards. Izumi,<sup>2</sup> our gifted MIT trained Japanese Canadian architect and I have been working for nearly two years developing the *principles* of modern psychiatric ward design. I suppose that \$100,000,000 worth of mental hospital beds are being built yearly on this continent and no principles for their design exist. (\$100,000,000 sounds a lot but with 700,000 people in mental hospitals it only means 10,000 beds a year and half of the current buildings are

obsolete.) Almost more important *I think* we now have the principles for converting buildings.

I have been discussing our ideas for a year and quite suddenly Dr Paul Haun, who knows more about building mental hospitals than anyone alive because he was the psychiatric adviser on mental hospital design to the VA,<sup>3</sup> became interested. He got the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania interested. Last month Jane, I and Joe Izumi flew down for three days and told them about our new ideas (I shall send you a copy of the paper). They are now building a round dozen of the new buildings. Which is a good start. They are important because not only are they cheap (as these buildings go) but they are hard to overcrowd or turn into slums. They also provide excellent accommodation. We believe they can be widely applied. It is remarkable how primitive the sociology of architecture is. But this is understandable when an avant garde like Frank Lloyd Wright tells his clients how they should live which seems to me making function ludicrously subservient to structure. Anyway this has allowed me to do some thinking in the context of Joe Izumi's great knowledge of architecture on the implied interpersonal relationships in buildings and this will wake up architects to a matter about which they have been sluggish.

It has been quite a sociological new year for this last ten days. I have been writing a paper on the sociologist in the mental hospital and redrafting another on the principles of psychiatric administration. The former came about in an odd way. Nearly three years ago we had a sociologically trained psychiatrist and his sociologist wife here. We had high hopes of them. They had been two years at Harvard, half at the Province's expense on the strength of a research they did here. Before they came back I had some unease – there were rumors of the most disquieting sort about the research. The only really worrying rumor for methodology, and all the rest can be forgiven. Data cooking cannot. However I did not wish to believe such news and did not listen.

They soon became mischievous here and after I did not respond to a hint that the wife should become the hospital administrator (for which she was in no way qualified) they got more disgruntled and left after doing as much damage as they could, but less than they would have liked to do. Indeed they overdid things a bit, openly predicting the ruin of the state on

their departure and when nothing of the sort happened people began to wonder.

Then papers started to come out. The most recent is very high flown on the locus of power in a mental hospital.<sup>4</sup> It is one of those papers which seeks to prove in short compass something which any sensible person would see immediately is almost impossible to *prove*. At least three quarters of the paper is high flown speculation on the theme that in a deprived bureaucracy power gravitates to those who hold the purse strings. Unluckily they took Weber's<sup>5</sup> definition of power as being the ability to make people do things they do not wish to do. To prove this they have a dozen brief diary extracts, the result of one questionnaire given to 20 people, and one other equivocal experiment. Then once more weighty generalizations and advice. At first I considered ignoring it but the diary included false stories about the hospital, and as my permission was acknowledged, although the authors were informed in writing that they must submit any publications to our head office, I decided I must reply to the paper. I have learnt much in doing so. It is clear that technically it is a difficult subject. Not at all susceptible to get rich quick methods.

Meanwhile I have been on another LSD expedition with three chihuahuas – very good companions. It has been a fruitful one. I may have got some useful information for telepathic and similar work. I think telepathy consists of three phases (concertinaed in the spontaneous variety we don't know how), i) *Translocation*: extending consciousness into a dimensional system outside our own. ii) Reaching the same “place” as another mind (we don't know what this means but I suspect Puharich's cages work by focusing the translocated mind somehow). iii) Exchanging the information: to exchange specific information requires concentration which in spontaneous cases is produced by extreme emotional pressure (death, danger, etc.). LSD etc. are obviously excellent translocators but we don't know how to use them. I *think* I have a simple way of “focusing” the translocated mind. If I am right it should allow us to clear up many mysterious matters quite quickly. It may also provide a means for focusing minds together under LSD. However that all remains to be seen. I think these psychedelics are extraordinary instruments which properly used can transform us. We have got to learn how to use them properly. We also need techniques for using them and some knowledge of their different effects on different people.

I hear Al is thinking about a variation on the Tibetan death customs. This sounds rather an admirable development. I would much rather die after LSD exploration than doped, drugged and muzzy, if that is possible. The Tibetan idea of clairvoyant lamas “homing” the soul is remarkable.

Love to Laura.

Ever,  
Humphry

P.S. Did you hear from the Sanitoi<sup>6</sup> people? I thought you would be interested it may be a very important water conserving development.

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
22 February 1957*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your good letter and for the paper, which I found extremely interesting and enlightening. How fantastic it is that the problem of building a hospital that shall do no harm to the patients should not even have been envisaged in recent years, much less tackled and solved! And yet most people have had experience of the unpleasantness of living under the conditions prevalent in hospitals – at school, in barracks. But this has not prevented the architects and psychiatrists from reproducing for others the very state of things which they themselves have found disagreeable. One wonders whether there may not be in this strange behaviour something of that attitude described by Sydney Smith<sup>7</sup> in his essay on English Public Schools. Why did fathers persist in sending their sons to the same, unregenerate schools from which they themselves suffered? And why didn't these fathers do anything to get the schools reformed? Because what was good enough for me is good enough for Johnny, and it's salutary for the boy to undergo a little hardship.

Piranesi's<sup>8</sup> etchings of *The Prisons* give one a very vivid idea of what an institution looks like to a schizophrenic – enormous, inhuman, full of

vaguely sinister and perfectly incomprehensible features. It might be useful, if you have to convince legislators and suchlike, of the soundness of your views, to have photographs taken of your hospital – or, better, of some brand-new monstrosity – but taken with a distorting lens, or as mirrored in a curved surface, so that distances would seem exaggerated, surfaces unflat, right angles obtuse or acute. Better still, do this on a motion picture film, so that the viewer would experience the horror of actually living and moving through such a world. Ellen has a friend, Francis Thompson,<sup>9</sup> who has made a fascinating film of New York, as seen in the backs of spoons and through funny lenses. He could make an absolutely hair-raising documentary of an asylum, as it must appear to its schizophrenic inmates.

Have you read Krishnamurti's<sup>10</sup> new book, *Commentaries on Living*? Together with the previous volume of selections from his talks, *The First and Last Freedom*, it offers an amazingly subtle diagnosis of our psychological delinquencies and an amazingly practical, though difficult, self-treatment. My own feeling is that, if we could combine Krishnamurti with old Dr Vittoz's<sup>11</sup> brand of psychotherapy and F.M. Alexander's method of "creative conscious control" of posture and bodily function, with a bit of general semantics thrown in to help us steer clear of verbal and conceptual pitfalls, and a sensible diet, we would have solved the problem of preventive medicine and, along with it, at least half the problem of education. But, needless to say, people will prefer to go in for vaccines, popery and meproamate.

To my great regret, my essays in *Esquire*<sup>12</sup> are to come to an end. The magazine is about to change its format. No article may go over into the back of the book and every page is to consist of text and pictures in a fifty-fifty ratio. Evidently the majority of the public don't want to read, and now that so many cents in the advertising dollar go to TV, the magazine publishers (with the resounding crash of *Collier's* and *Ladies' [i.e. Woman's] Home Companion* still ringing in their ears) must do everything in their power to increase circulation and please potential advertisers. It is a pity; for I don't imagine I shall ever have such a convenient or well paying pulpit again. Meanwhile I have been busy making what I hope are final revisions on *The Genius and the Goddess*, and rewriting a version which somebody did, three years ago, of *After Many a Summer*.<sup>13</sup> With time out to

work in the UPA studios<sup>14</sup> on an outline for an animated cartoon of Don Quixote, to be played by the engaging UPA character, Mr Magoo.

Laura sends her love, as do I. I hope all goes well with Jane and the little girl.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
26 February 1957*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you.

It is strange to think that the principles involved in social buildings have not merely not been solved, they have hardly been thought about. However I believe that we have made some important new steps and that before long we should get some hard thinking and discussion about this. I like your idea of the distorting camera but it is scarcely necessary – the camera by *not* distorting space gives us a picture of schizophrenic space. Our brains turn this “pure” Euclidean space into something very different. We have to remember that time too is changed and almost certainly everything else too, though we still don’t know much about measuring many of these subtle changes. I like the idea of a camera drifting through a new chrome and vinyl monster peering down its great corridors and seeing space and color through the vision of the old folk for whom it was intended.

I am sorry about the *Esquire* business. Bill Sheldon agreed with me that your this-month’s essay<sup>15</sup> is the best ever. I am looking forward to getting my copy. I do hope you will publish it soon. I think it is an astonishing effort and will make it obligatory reading for my colleagues. I suppose that if they carry this logically soon *Esquire* will be television size pictures and a record plus captions. I suppose that writing may become as uncommon as it was in say years 2–500. An efficient small taping device plus an electronic sorter would I suppose do this.

We are putting the hospital in for the American Psychiatric Association Award. I don't suppose we shall get it. But we are having a very good try. Our claim is that we have applied modern psycho-social principles all over the hospital. That we have not only greatly changed its working, but have developed from our experience certain generalizations of great importance to others. I think that we have too. We are now able to show why a certain sort of administrative structure is needed to care for the mentally ill people and indeed for the alienated generally. Oddly this is exactly the opposite from the authoritarian sort favored, which means that architectural and social structure have both been extremely ill suited to the needs of mentally ill people. Of course once one has discovered the method, all aspects of the mental hospital (gaol or old folks home) can be examined and pretty horrible they look after such scrutiny.

Can you tell me where I can get Krishnamurti's books and who publishes them?

It looks to me as if you will have to give your sermons on television – what about getting one of the detergent people to sponsor a talk on soap and cleanliness like your splendid essay. I can see great possibilities. Sandoz would naturally sponsor one on LSD.

Did you get the Sanitoid advert? I was much impressed with it. This may be the start of efficient decentralized sewage disposal, and with nuclear power and the new resins, may be opening the decentralized society which is so necessary for man with his capacity for small group relationships.

Love to Laura. Jane and little H. [are] well. The latter much concerned about poor Moby Dick in the excellent film. Are Matthew and Ellen back in New York? If so where?

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
8 April 1957*

Dear Humphry,

I have been, I fear, very remiss in the matter of writing. It has been a case of deadlines – working to finish off a completely new version of a play which a man<sup>16</sup> did, two or three years ago, from my novel, *After Many a Summer*. He made two versions, the first fair, the second less good. So I decided to start from scratch, and have just finished what I hope may turn out to be quite a good, if very disquieting, horror-comedy-parable. Now I can get back to my neglected correspondence.

I hope all goes well with you and the family. Will there be any chance of seeing you in New York in early May? I go east to give a lecture at the University of New Hampshire, see Matthew and Ellen and talk about my play with the new producer, Courtney Burr,<sup>17</sup> who seems really determined to do the thing this autumn. (But I shan't believe it until it actually happens.) I shall also try to see some people in various Foundations, in the hope of getting someone to sponsor a documentary film for TV on population. (We have a little Foundation of our own, called Population Limited, rich in talent – my brother Julian, Harrison Brown,<sup>18</sup> Kingsley Davis,<sup>19</sup> the sociologist, Fred Zinneman,<sup>20</sup> the film director, and Bill Kiskadden, the surgeon – but poor in money.) I hope we may finally persuade someone to put up the necessary funds for doing a film to educate the American public – after which we shall try to see what can be done in such areas of dire need as India. I have written a synopsis of a film on Egypt<sup>21</sup> – because it is better to attack the general through the particular, and because Egypt is a particularly painful case of overpopulation, and is in a position to make the economic, sociological and political consequences of overpopulation extremely unpleasant to the rest of the world. Whether anyone will put up the money, I don't know. Everyone agrees that the population problem is the most important problem of the present century; but nobody wants to get in trouble with the Papists. Well, as I say, I shall be in New York during the first week in May and perhaps again after the tenth, the day when I am to lecture in New Hampshire. So let me know if you will be in that part of the world.

I have just read a very remarkable book, which was sent me by the publishers. It is Dr William Sargant's<sup>22</sup> *[Battle] for the Mind*, which explains the relevance of Pavlov's findings to religious and political



conversion, brain washing, confession-extraction and indoctrination. Now that the dictators are equipped with systematic knowledge of the ways in which brain functions can be disturbed, so as to facilitate deconditioning and reconditioning, I really see very little hope for our unfortunate species. And now there is a new horror, just developed by a man called Eagle<sup>23</sup> at New York University. It makes use of the tachystoscope in a most ingenious way.<sup>24</sup> For example, the image of a perfectly commonplace, neutral man or woman on the screen is preceded by a tachystoscopic flash of a thousandth of a second's duration. This flash is of some strongly charged image – something good or delightful (Abraham Lincoln or Marilyn Monroe) or something horrible (Stalin or Jack the Ripper). The viewer does not consciously see the image flashed before his eyes; but his optic nerves and unconscious mind have taken it in. (This is a familiar feature of the Bates Method – unconscious seeing of things which one has not had the time or the eyesight to see consciously.) The result of this unconscious seeing of the emotionally charged flash is that the consciously seen image of the neutral person, which follows it, becomes charged with the emotion appropriate to the flashed image – admirable if the flashed image is of Lincoln or Monroe, loathsome if of Stalin or Jack the Ripper. I understand from Robert Hutchins that the advertising boys are already on Dr Eagle's trail. Given a skillful use of this technique, it will become impossible *not* to buy Camel Cigarettes or Coca Cola, or to vote Republican. The trouble will come, of course, when *every* brand of cigarettes and *every* political candidate is given the flash treatment. Confronted by equal and opposite categorical imperatives, the victim will break down, like a Pavlovian dog in an ambiguous situation. But what an appallingly effective tool for the dictators! Combined with drugs, brainwashing and straight conditioning, it will rob the individual of the last shred of free will. The ultimate revolution – the physiological and psychological revolution – which, in *Brave New World*, I envisaged as taking place six hundred years hence, is here on our doorstep, and I see no way in which it can be arrested.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
13 April 1957

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you.

I have just got back from my trip to Megapolis. I spent a night with Matthew and Ellen. Matthew seems to be enjoying his new Foundation job. I had a morning with Commonwealth.<sup>25</sup> The trouble is that the foundations are getting so very respectable these days. They want everything cut and dried, absolutely safe and secure. I am hopeful Commonwealth will give us monies for an architectural-anthropological study of psychiatric wards, and that I may possibly be able to interest Matthew<sup>26</sup> in coming up, at least for a bit.

You seem to have been very busy. I hope that I shall have a chance to see some of the last month's work in New York soon.

The population film sounds most interesting and vital. I see that the Chinese are now recognising that this is something which Malthusism may explain better than Marxism. The Papists are very odd, especially when (I believe) the evidence suggests that their flocks use contraceptives extensively. I fear I won't be in New York in mid May, but if by some good fortune I am you may be sure I shall hunt you down.

I shall certainly get hold of William Sargant's book. There is an excellent and very sound long article by Wolfe<sup>27</sup> and a colleague in the October or November *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* on forcible indoctrination which I commend to you. This suggests that *so far* the evidence suggests that the available methods are costly, inefficient and that minimal use has been made of more sophisticated techniques. The forcible indoctrinators derive their methods far more from the police than Pavlov, and they are not well disposed towards scientific amateurs. They worry little about drugs when confinement, starvation and sleep deprivation plus fear and a modicum of torture can do so much. In brief they are conservatives.

However this does not mean that they will forever remain unaware of scientific advance. This rather nightmarish work by Eagle has a sinister

sound. Can you possibly send me a reference? Your picture is a horrible one and clearly we shall have to think fairly quickly to see how we can counteract this. So far the advertisers are blissfully innocent about these matters. Ford Theatre gave us a pleasant little show about a con man alongside fulsome blurbs about their latest and wholly fraudulent advertising drive for the 1957 models. I have just returned from Detroit with first hand accounts about these vulgar and petrol hogging monsters. Burns sausages always tell us about their mouthwatering properties against a background of Alfred Hitchcock's<sup>28</sup> macaberie. The associations of murder morgues and sausage meat is not wholly encouraging.

I am now on my fourth Sheldon, *The Varieties of Delinquent Youth*.<sup>29</sup> It is splendid stuff. How odd and blind we are not to have recognised the caliber of this great work immediately. Yet apart from the intellectual climate there is Bill Sheldon's mordant and biting wit. It is not really necessary to emphasize that a mental defective could not even become a sociologist! I agree with his sentiment often but I suspect that many have been too stung by the whiplash to react otherwise than the manner determined by their somatotype. This is a great pity. My guess is that we shall find that the three polar types respond very differently to adrenalin, its derivatives and precursors. Further they may make different sorts of derivatives. William Sheldon should have someone to sell his splendid work, and water his potent thoughts down to the mild brew which his more extroverted colleagues now require. However I suppose that in five years or so his work should start to get its due, by that time the psychoanalytic theory of the psychoses will be untenable. A complete rethinking will be necessary and William Sheldon's work should be necessary and recognised.

Meanwhile I am trying to get Al to see that his commission should either meet or be dissolved. In addition I am pushing him on the garburator business. I *think* that he realises that I am both disinterested (though not of course uninterested) and also determined.

On my way back I spent a remarkable 48 hours in Detroit with Stanford Ovshinsky<sup>30</sup> – our astounding automation expert who inadvertently inhaled adrenochrome-adrenolutin for nearly a month and so carried out a natural and incredibly valuable experiment which I suppose will never be repeated. Naturally we were inclined to think this was too good to be true. But he is exactly what he claims – one of the leading men in automation in the U.S.

at 35, having worked his way up from the capstan lathe. He has done original research on cerebellar mechanisms based on his knowledge of servo mechanisms. But what makes him really unusual is that he is turning back his increasing understanding of neuronal mechanisms into the design of machines. I think you would find him very good company and I shall ask him (if you would care to meet him) to visit you in New York.

He knows as much about automation as anyone and is appalled by the immense social upheavals which it implies. He took me all round the outside of the Ford River Rouge plant – about ten miles driving. Then we went to the Ford Rotunda where the shoddy, vulgar and costly new crop of cars were displayed. Among other exhibits was a plastic press turning out blue acrylic medallions 600 years ahead of time. I enclose one. Our Ford in his three incarnations, Henry I, Edsel and Henry II. I think you must include them in *Brave New World* – medallion so blue, so blue, so blue – I'm fording of you, of you of you.

We visited the Ford Museum at Dearborn, 14½ acres of machines – very interesting and wonderful relics to see through the eyes of a maker of the wholly new sort of machines *which have no handles* because they adjust themselves and must not be touched by hand. But the highlight was the seven rooms of Fordiana. That strange face of the great American myth. They have tried hard to turn the big bad wolf into Red Ridinghood's Granny, but Henry Ford, one cannot disguise his vulpine and fanatic heart. Even aged three his asymmetrical face holds the eye. Half the face is ascetic and even gentle, but the other half is demonic. I'd like to see two faces made from the different halves, as they can now. He is a subject for somatotyping.

Men were murdered, colleagues ruined and double crossed, promises whether to hired assassins or workmen broken simply to market automobiles. He seems to have been single minded and ruthless. In the end, shortly before he died in 194[7], Fords were almost bankrupt due to a wholly outdated management – losing a million dollars a day. So in the end General Motors' lawyers and accountants took Fords over. No one could allow the great American myth to die on its feet in 194[7]!

It's not the big things which impress – but little ones – a letter from Edison<sup>31</sup> saying how he always dismissed employees who smoked because it was bad for their health! Or Stan Ovshinsky's story of a lathe operator

from Fords who worked with him. Stan noticed that he always stood to work – most people of ordinary height sit. The man explained that it was a habit he had contracted at Fords. His first day there he had been sitting at his lathe when suddenly his stool gave way. He found himself on the floor with Henry Ford who was in a genial mood standing over him, having kicked the stool out from under him. He never sat at work again.

The River Rouge plant is becoming obsolete. Salesmen, advertisers, public relations men, accountants have replaced the old peace crusading wolf and his gangster henchmen. Automation is around the corner, but the organisation men won't listen, they feel the advertising men will find a way out. It was strange passing that vast stage of fraud, violence and delusion with one of the new breed of engineers as foreign to Henry Ford I as to those who are ruling in his place in Detroit.

Stan Ovshinsky's new ideas in switches, developed as models for nerve conduction, are most ingenious.

I have been thinking that Eagle's work should be applied to ESP experiments – it has remarkable possibilities there. Meanwhile we have got to see what we can do to prevent ourselves being wrecked by our greed, folly and the queer properties of our psychophysiological apparatus. Do send me the reference to Eagle's work. I should like to try it with LSD and ESP.

Love to Laura,

Ever your affectionate,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
21 April 1957*

Dear Humphry,

I returned yesterday from a week at Stanford and San Francisco, to find your letter awaiting me. I fear I can give you no reference to Eagle, since I had the information by word of mouth from Robert Hutchins, who had had

it, I think, by word of mouth straight from the Eagle's bill. I will try to find out from Hutchins, when I see him in New York, if the stuff has been published. If the method really works, our only hope under capitalism will lie in multiple and mutually incompatible conditionings by stroboscope, resulting in nervous collapse, in the manner of Pavlov's dogs. Under the totalitarians – as under cartellized business – the conditioning will all be of one kind and there won't be disturbing inconsistencies – so another nail will be hammered into the coffin of free will and individualism.

I should very much like to meet your automation-expert friend. I expect to fly east on the second or third of May, spend a weekend with Matthew and Ellen, then go down to Washington for a lecture on the night of the sixth, stay there a couple of days, then fly up to New Hampshire to lecture there on the ninth, or is it perhaps the tenth? After which I expect to be in New York for a few days, seeing friends and, I trust, influencing people in regard to the play. So far as I know, I shall be staying at the Warwick Hotel, Sixth Avenue and 54th Street.

I had a pleasant time at Stanford – though they kept me talking for more time and to more different kinds of people – members of the “creative writing” classes, of the Comparative Religion class, of the post-graduate English classes and even of the Ford Foundation's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences – than I had bargained for. However the young people were nice and some of their elders were very interesting – e.g. Spiegelberg,<sup>32</sup> the expert on Indian religions, who has a magnificent Tibetan ghost-trap hanging in his office. (This is a contraption made of wood and taut strings, which outline the form of a rather complicated crystal. The ghosts get entangled in the strings and can't get out. The machine is equipped with numerous balls of wool, which become wet when a ghost is caught – for ghosts are somewhat liquid. After giving the captured ghost a stern lecture, one throws the whole contraption down a precipice.) I also saw Gregory Bateson,<sup>33</sup> who does psychiatry from the point of view of an anthropologist at the local Veterans' Hospital. Also Alan Watts,<sup>34</sup> the Zen man, who is dean of the Academy of Asian Studies. In San Francisco we became involved, for some reason, with the Rich. They are apt, I find, to be a bit depressing.

Love to Jane.

Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
26 April 1957*

My dear Aldous,

Most interested to hear about your stay at Stanford. I gather you didn't see Sherwood's<sup>35</sup> blue green indole. Did you run across Al's tracks? I gather from him that he has been very busy there.

I have had a long letter from Al which is more sensible and coherent than any I have had for weeks. Luckily perhaps one of my letters went astray and gave Al time to think a bit.

If I follow him he became concerned that Ditman and Bercel<sup>36</sup> wished to show that the LSD-25 experience etc. is "purely psychotic" and felt that he must head this off. I don't know Ditman very well – but he is a far less empathic person than Sidney Cohen and doubtless ambitious to make his mark in a fashionable field. Bercel is not really likeable at all and it would not surprise me if he had horrid mescaline experiences. So I would be tentatively in agreement with Al's diagnosis, but then one of the sufis<sup>37</sup> long ago observed that when the sage and the camel driver take hashish the results are different.

Al's "treatment" seems far more questionable. Anyone who has read any of the many papers on LSD, mescaline, etc. can show that there are very close resemblances to psychotic illnesses, and if they like to consider that this "discredits" other aspects of the LSD phenomena, there is nothing which can stop them. The Galilean telescope can be used equally for voyeurism and astronomy, while another Galilean instrument could be made the vehicle of mysticism or witch burning. If Bercel and Ditman were or are naïve enough to suppose that what they did or could do would in some way "discredit" something Gerald was saying, does it matter to anyone except Ditman and Bercel? Must we be driven into a frenzy of activity every time someone disagrees with us? Of course this is what eases Al's tension best

because of his somatonia, but it doesn't mean that it is the only or even the most appropriate course.

If Bercel and Ditman were giving Gerald doses which were too high the best course would have been to write and let me know. If Gerald is taking LSD-25 too often, if Al had let me know I should have written to Sidney and got details from him. But all these matters can be settled by collecting and scrutinizing the facts.

Abram feels as I do that we should continue urging Al to establish the commission as a going concern and to consult his colleagues on it. We are not contemplating immediate withdrawal. But I shall be making clear to Al that he must behave more like a grown up and less like a business man. I shall keep you posted.

I shall get my automation friend to contact you in New York. I find him an admirable and very interesting chap and he knows what *homo faber* has in store for *homo sapiens*. His name is Stan Ovshinsky of General Automation, Detroit.

I hope you influence people successfully regarding the play.

The Eagle's story is a very worrying one, I look forward to more details. So far propaganda, though pervasive, has been crude and a fairly alert person could become aware of it. It could be very very different. We had a talk on forcible indoctrination at GAP last November. So far the Russians and Chinese have used crude, expensive and moderately ineffective methods. The Chinese, as one would expect, seem to have had more success than the Russians. The indoctrination and inquisitorial experts pay little attention to psychiatry and continue on their costly, cruel and not too successful ways. But they need not to do this always. So far psychological warfare and oppression ha[ve] been conducted in a haphazard way by cranks. I wonder whether it will continue that way.

Meanwhile we are having agriculturally welcome rain here. The place is filthily muddy.

Jane has her mother out for 6/12.<sup>38</sup> As they have not been together for any length of time for about 14 years it is by no means easy for either of them.

The schizophrenia research continues most exciting. I was to have taken 20 bloods (10–15 ccs of venous blood from schizophrenics) to Abram today, but our machine broke down – a quartz bulb burnt out. So far it looks



as if we have M-substance by the tail, but we want to have caught him before we shout. We are now looking in the red cell and the evidence points to these cells being loaded with an adrenalin derivative in schizophrenics which does not seem to be present in normals. We can't be certain yet but even the possibility is hugely exciting. The years, almost two generations of searching in blood serum, CSF<sup>39</sup> and urine have failed for the best reason – the hunters were looking in the wrong place. It makes failure wholly unmysterious. It also shows the weakness of the method employed.

Psychiatrists have been much hampered by a penchant for a sort of bogus holism which you commented on. The fact is that science depends on formulating hypotheses which can be tested and that these should be testable in the foreseeable future with methods which might be available. Untestable hypotheses should be treated with suspicion, for whatever their virtues science can't do much about them. I suspect that the Freudian hypothesis is essentially untestable. I have yet to find anyone who has suggested how it could be tested. It has as Sheldon emphasizes been one of those burgeoning Northwestern over growths which mean little or nothing. It is immensely lacking in humor. Jung you may remember shocked the psychoanalysts by joking about sex. How wonderfully heavy handed Freud is in his essays on wit!

Freud was a determined doctrinaire who founded a new religion, but one wonders what he contributed to psychology. It is odd that at the moment when psychiatrists are thinking again very seriously, churchmen are beginning to take him very much to their hearts. I suppose they know a really good or promising orthodoxy when they smell one.

If we can break through schizophrenia I think we shall force some overdue rethinking. I suspect the smarter Freudians realise this already, but the rank and file find the feeding grounds too rich to worry about. I am looking forward to seeing what happens when we can extract a gram or two of M-substance from the blood of schizophrenic people and exhibit it as a malformed super-ego or what have you.

Of course to solve the mental hospital problem a combined biological and social approach is essential. I suspect that at least 80% of the long stay inhabitants of these scandalous places are the result of wholly improper care. I don't mean that they would be well, but like many arthritics, heart conditions, ulcers, etc., they could live with their illnesses. It is the bad

organization and harmful conditions of mental hospitals which stops them. But that still leaves us with ill or very precariously adjusted people. It is this that the biological attack can remedy – and by biological I include of course the Sheldonian data. How can one be true to one's own self if one doesn't know what one has to be true to? Love to Laura and to Ellen, Matthew, Francis,<sup>40</sup> Trevor and Tess when you see them. Jane sends love.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. Many thanks for the Krishnamurti books. Remarkable. They hit the nail on the head pretty often, though sometimes I feel he skates over real problems as if they weren't there. Perhaps he can. Did you get the medal of our Ford? Already a trinity has been formed.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
24 May 1957*

My dear Aldous,

News from Ellen of your Woodbridge visit which seems to have been most successful. Eileen told me that you were at her office and saw my letter about our LSD-25 experience here. I wonder whether we can now develop a fairly reliable and easily applied technique for use with human groups. If we can we may be able to enlarge human experience and the capacity for communicating that experience. Somehow we have got to balance the needs of scientific enquiry and the needs of those who take part for something beyond science. I think that it can be done but I don't suppose that it will be easy.

Going over our own and our observer's record it looks as if we sent across non-verbally a variety of highly complicated concepts. Unluckily this shook our observer so much that his records are most unsatisfactory. But we got quite a bit down. We also hope to develop some guide posts for this group work. The Indians use ritual and a fairly inefficient and mildly

nauseous psychedelic. Naturally those who chew peyote want to emphasize its special nature just as Mr Wasson<sup>41</sup> feels his interesting mushrooms are something special. There is some truth in this. It is likely that peyote, the mushroom, and all the rest are different substances, but they probably effect a final common mechanism. Some are more and some less efficient. Some have unpleasant side effects and some don't.

I can't see any point in considering an experience of the other derived from epilepsy, schizophrenia, starvation, flagellation, vitamin deficiency, the reduced environment, dervish dancing, yogistic practices, more or less valuable than one derived from hashish, soma, peyote, cohoba, ololiuqui, harmola, ayahuesca, cohoba, amanita muscaria, Wasson's new ones, or for that matter mescaline, LSD-25, TAM,<sup>42</sup> LSM, adrenochrome, adrenolutin, Alles' compounds,<sup>43</sup> or Szára's<sup>44</sup> DMT<sup>45</sup> and T-9 which are derivatives of the amino acid tryptophan. It is all one to me. The whole point is whether the experience justifies the risk, discomfort or time involved and whether its fruits are good or evil.

John Smythies tells me that Zaehner,<sup>46</sup> an Oxford professor of Eastern mysticism, after one mescaline experience with John has written a two-guinea tome. With chapters on "mescaline explained" and emphasizing how wrong you were in *The Doors*. He manages to be marvelously uncharitable to lunatics – and has obviously not bothered to acquaint himself with the literature. What he has proved beyond doubt is that, as the Sufis emphasize, the effect of hashish on the dervish and the camel driver is not the same. A baboon and an astrophysicist see the same light pattern on the mirror of the Mount Palomar telescope – they make something rather different of those patterns.

I have read Michaux's *Miracle Miserable*.<sup>47</sup> It is well written. Perhaps I am being pedantic but it seems to me that what happened was not the effect of an overdose of mescaline at all. He had previously taken minimal quantities of mescaline (100 mg, a fourth of your first dose which is hardly enough to do more than push one into the psychotic fringe). Then for reasons that are unclear he took 600 mg "in error." He then became very much afraid and not surprisingly had a most unpleasant experience. Oddly he makes almost no direct reference to this. I have seen no discussion of the technical problems involved in making use of psychedelics.

Meanwhile work here continues. We won the American Psychiatric Association's Mental Hospital Merit Award for 1957. I didn't go to Chicago, but my colleagues who did were greatly surprised by the announcement. Everyone wanted to know where Weyburn was. An Irish doctor who had been here sometime made a satisfactory number of free drinks from curious Americans. The academic lecture (you remember the deplorable affair in L.A. in 1953 which you attended?) was as bad as ever. One of my friends, an ex-French resistance officer, had great fun spotting the various psychiatric circuses with their chieftains. The most spectacular is of course the Menninger three ringer which was there in great strength.

Grif Mackerracher, who came to dinner with you in L.A. at Kings Road, is on the APA Council and gave me some delightful insights into the inner workings of the U.S. psychiatric machine. De Tocqueville<sup>48</sup> long ago emphasized the immense political preoccupation of citizens of the new Republic and it seems to have continued. The trouble is that the political circuses don't have much to do with scientific advancement – the politicians win out over the scientists any day. The result has been a psychiatry which has had hardly a new idea in 40 years. It is perhaps their suspicion of adequate theoretical formulation and their emphasis on the “practical and common sense,” which means the prejudices of the moment, which sterilize their research.

Abram has good news to report and we are moving on at high speed. Heath's work on the enzyme systems and our own work on adrenalin derivatives from which his springs, is being very productive. Our new machine, which does a week's work in an hour or less, has meant that the drudgery and time wasting aspect of the research has been cut greatly. This is how things stand. Our hypothesis you remember is that psychotomimetic adrenalin metabolites occur in certain people due to enzymic oddities and leave them liable to schizophrenia. It is an excellent hypothesis, but it must be proved. So far we have been producing much supporting evidence but we haven't proved our case. Looking in the blood serum has been uncertain. In the last two months we have been looking at the red cells and the picture becomes much clearer. It seems that normal people turn adrenalin into leuoadrenochrome (or something like it) while schizophrenics turn adrenalin into adrenochrome (or something like it). When the red cells are loaded the adrenochrome leaks out and turns into adrenolutin (or something

like it). We are fitting the pieces together. Heath has shown that the suitable enzymes are probably there. Abram has begun to find the adrenalin byproducts. The number of adrenalin derivatives is surprising. We now have evidence of five close in and many on the periphery.

One of the most interesting things is that the adrenochrome which we first used was far purer than any we got hold of subsequently. We fared even worse with our adrenolutin. The first lot was probably about 90% pure – but may have been three pure substances. The later stuff has been from 40–90% impure. Our chemical experts had made an appalling error. We have *three* adrenolutins – one of which must be iachimochrome! We have also signs of a violet purple compound which has never been described before, porphurochrome.<sup>49</sup>

It looks promising and I hope that it will hold up – one can never be absolutely sure until one's work has been repeated *in extenso*. But almost every week something to support our New Approach pops up. Our vast luck has been that we found people who could work together and share ideas. It is less usual than we suppose. Good wishes to Laura – let me know how the plays go.

Affectionately,  
Ever,  
Humphry

P.S. Jane sends love. The poetess having recovered from chicken pox is very lively. She has huge reserves of energy. I hope to have a somatotyping unit going before too long. Wonderful how Sheldon's splendid discovery is ignored while drivel receives all sorts of adulation. But it will pass.

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
1 June 1957*

Dear Humphry,

I was on the point of writing, when your letter, with the good news of your award, arrived and spurred me into instant action. I am delighted that you should have won recognition, and hope that one thing may lead to another – the hospital award to a bigger grant for research.

Meanwhile what do you say to Eileen's plan (about which she said she was writing to you) for a quiet series of experiments in Mrs Bolton's house in Florida next winter? It sounds to me very good, and if you could get away for at least some of the duration of the experiments, it should be possible to achieve something significant. Using the same subjects in a regular series of tests should make possible a really systematic exploration of their other world. It will also be possible to see what can be done by combining hypnosis with LSD or mescaline. Dr L.J. West,<sup>50</sup> of the Medical School of the University of Oklahoma, was here a few weeks ago – an extremely able young man, I think. His findings are that mescalinated subjects are almost un hypnotizable. I suggested to him that he should hypnotize his people before they took LSD and should give them post-hypnotic suggestions aimed at orientating the drug-induced experience in some desired direction, and also at the very desirable goal of enabling subjects to recapture the LSD experience by purely psychological means, after their return to normal consciousness, and whenever they so desired. The fact that this kind of experience occurs in some persons spontaneously indicates that chemicals are not indispensable, and it may be that the unconscious can be persuaded, by means of post-hypnotic suggestions, repeated if necessary again and again, to open the door without the aid of chemical keys. Such a set-up as Eileen envisages would be ideal for this kind of experiment. It would be a great thing if you could get down to Florida to supervise at least the initial phases of the work.

I had a letter a few days since from another doctor in Oklahoma, Dr Philip Smith,<sup>51</sup> who has been experimenting with anaesthetics such as ether, laughing gas, etc. – testing the psychological effects of light doses. He has evidently had good results himself and he wrote to me asking if I knew any literary references to the matter. I know very few, and he said there were remarkably few in the medical literature. It is evident from the little there is that here is yet another key to the door into the other world.

While I was in New York, I lunched with Wasson at his Temple of Mammon. What an odd man! So solemn and humourless! But he has put an

immense amount of work into his subject, and the material brought together in his vast tomes is very curious and suggestive. However, he does, as you say, like to think that his mushrooms are somehow unique and infinitely superior to everything else. I tried to disabuse him. But he likes to feel that he had got hold of the One and Only psychedelic – accept no substitutes, none genuine unless sold with the signature of the inventor.

I also saw dear old Suzuki in New York. What a really wonderful old man! Have you read his most recent book on *Mysticism, Christian and Buddhist?*<sup>52</sup> It is very good. And even better is a little pamphlet published by the London Buddhist Society, called *The Essence of Buddhism*. This last is really admirable. It makes one realize how much subtler these Far Eastern Buddhists were, in matters of psychology, than anyone in the West. They know all about “existential experiences” and the horrors of the human situation as described by Sartre, Camus and the rest – and they know how to come through to the other side, where every relative manifests absolute Suchness, and where Suchness is identical with *maha-karuna*, the Great Compassion.

The play seems to be going forward satisfactorily. We have an excellent leading lady, Nancy Kelly, but not yet a leading man – though there are several good possibilities. In New York I listened to a number of young girls reading for the part of Ruth, and think we have a good one. Also I saw and heard several very capable young men for the part of young Rivers. The director is to be Cedric Hardwicke<sup>53</sup> and I expect to spend a good deal of time in the next few weeks discussing things with him and Miss Kelly, and making final (but they are never final) cuts and little alterations.

Meanwhile there has been some interest in the musical version of *Brave New World* – but nothing as yet is definite; and in any case nothing can possibly be done about it for another year.

Our love to you all.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
8 June 1957

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. I am glad that the play is now under way and keenly look forward to seeing it before long. I feel about *The Goddess* like some honorary uncle who has watched a child grow up – how tall you've grown. Such uncles are inclined to become Chankley bores.<sup>54</sup>

It was good luck about the award. Oddly enough in retrospect our tactics were brilliant. They were Zen-like. There were no tactics. The article on mental hospital design combined with our submission must have seemed like a superb piece of planning. In fact no such thing happened. The article reached the APA people by chance and our submission went in at the last moment. We had forgotten that it was due. No one, of course, would credit that such haphazardness could achieve success. Our chaps at the APA meeting in Chicago were asked several times "what strings did you pull?" I did pull one. I am on a committee of GAP with the Secretary of the APA Daniel Blain.<sup>55</sup> I took great care *not* to discuss our submission with him at all. I wonder whether I should divulge this?

I shall do my very best to get to Florida. How it will be managed I'm not yet sure. I like the idea of using a chemical key at first and then a post-hypnotic one. However be sure to remind Dr West to include in the post hypnotic arousal a very complete capacity for *shutting off* the experience. This would seem essential and if it were omitted the results might be disturbing. I can see no *prima facie* reason why a post hypnotic suggestion should not work either directly on the brain centres controlling perception or equally on hypothetical ones controlling M-substance production. I believe you met Stan Ovshinsky, the automatist. He is going to attack the problem electromagnetically working from Puharich's data. What a pity that Puharich did not have more luck. Yet I suppose that would be asking him to be someone else and then he would not have done what he has done. Odd, isn't it?

I must see Suzuki again. Yes we are primitives psycho-spiritually and usually unwilling to admit our primitiveness. I suppose most primitives are,



especially those who have learnt some horrid war dances and other clever tricks. I shall get the essence of Buddhism.

I agree about Wasson, there is no point in trying to advise or disabuse him. Anyway it is wonderful that he has found something that is more fun than Wall Street. Perhaps his chemists will take my hint and look up Szára's work. In this way they may perhaps save a lot of time and money. Our most recent findings suggest *very strongly* that LSD works by greatly increasing the enzyme which converts adrenalin into adrenochrome, adrenolutin, etc. LSD-25 is nearly all excreted in one hour. The LSD experience comes on at one to four hours. The peak coincides with the enzyme peak. Further in an alcoholic who was given 300 mmg of LSD without any perceptual changes there was no evidence of any increase in these enzymes. The alcoholic became extremely anxious and this in itself may give us some valuable information about some sorts of alcoholics. Further it throws doubt on those who have claimed that hallucinations etc. are an "escape" from anxiety. What they have observed is that these changes in perception may be preceded by anxiety, but it seems rather headstrong to describe these as escapes from it. Tuberculosis may be followed by death, but I wonder whether looking upon it as an escape from tuberculosis would help therapeutic endeavor?

About Dr Smith – there is of course William James' observations and probably a considerable literature surrounding early anaesthesia. Perhaps he should look up von Meduna's<sup>56</sup> work which might have some references to nitrous oxide. William Sargant and Shorvon<sup>57</sup> wrote some papers on ether in about 1947. I think the only objection to the anaesthetic key to the door is that you can only open it for a brief period, but possibly with oxygen this can be modified or some other way. We must pursue every lead until we get a safe, handy and easily controlled instrument.

Last week I was up with Abram. The hunt is up. We have already caught pure adrenochrome. Needle shaped, ruby red crystals, which are highly stable (as opposed to all previous preparations). We are now getting ready to produce pure adrenolutin and once we have the pure substances will start work. I suspect that we may have the ideal psychedelic when given by inhalation, but we shall have to see. We are sending some to James Olds<sup>58</sup> at UCLA. A funny story about him. He seemed wholly unimpressed about adrenochrome effecting humans, but as soon as he heard that it

caused abnormal sexuality in cats he was all agog for it! Like one of his rats in the Skinner<sup>59</sup> box (modified) the right button had been pressed.

Getting ready for budgeting, annual reporting and then Zurich. Meanwhile a lovely story – an English doctor MP (he wasn't one then) was certified insane in 1950. He and his wife suddenly went mad one weekend. He was certified and she wasn't. He recovered (though was not released for six weeks) in eight to ten days, she in six to eight. He claimed they had been poisoned. The doctors did not agree. For two years (he is a persistent man) he tried to get some sort of enquiry. The Ministry was “fully satisfied with the account of its professional advisers.” Johnson<sup>60</sup> (that is his name) became an MP two years ago and has interested himself vigorously in mental illness. He is also a publisher. I think the evidence which I have seen strongly supports the view that he and his wife were poisoned, probably accidentally and probably in food. In 1950 almost nothing was known of the great swash of psychedelics, psychotomimetics and other choice ones now emerging. I suspect a tryptophan derivative from some mushroom, though shellfish are possible. Brief acute schizophrenia lasting a week in two people is extremely unlikely especially if it has not occurred before or since.

Love to Laura. I shall do my best about Florida. It won't be for want of trying. Jane sends love.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
17 June 1957*

My dear Aldous,

News from Ellen which sounds very encouraging about *The Genius*. Abram Hoffer and I should be passing through New York en route for Zurich in late August and so hope to see you then. Meanwhile I am hunting for money to bring Francis up here and have an uncommonly good feeler from

Commonwealth. Mind you they can't lose. Francis is no outsider and neither are we, but they are all so cautious.

When you are next at the Museum of Modern Art do look at the Van Gogh of the mental hospital corridor at Saint-Rémy<sup>61</sup> painted in his last year or so. It brings out the perspectives of endless corridors magnificently. The man seen in them is dwarfed, a beetle, scarcely more.

John Smythies was having great difficulties in getting to the U.S. because his father was born in India. John was classified as an Indian. I don't know what Tiger Lady (his mama) would think. Luckily I remembered the Hon. Frances Bolton and wrote to her begging for aid. John was sure that nothing could be done but I had faith in the Hon. F. I could not see any official of any department resisting her. My faith has been justified. The battle, Hon. Frances v. U.S. Immigration, lasted one week or less. John is getting over months ahead of time.

The niacin blood cholesterol work is holding up very well. We have some astonishing cases. People who have been wholly unaffected by stringent and depressing diets coming down to normal levels or nearly so in a few weeks. It is very encouraging especially as the original work with massive niacin was done here five years ago. We have not done much on the cholesterol work. Oddly it sprang from other cholesterol work here. So I have a sort of proprietorial interest in it.

Meanwhile Abram and his boys are pushing ahead in Saskatoon with the synthesis of pure adrenochrome and adrenolutin. These look as if they will be of increasing interest. We now have strongly suggestive evidence that the effect of LSD-25 may be produced by its effect on adrenalin oxidase, an enzyme. LSD doubles or trebles the output of this enzyme and it converts adrenalin to adrenochrome and adrenolutin. LSD seems to be *excreted from the body before* its psychological effects develop and the[y] continue long after it has gone.

Abram will be in Vancouver tomorrow and he is going to see Al. The captain has been a bit *piano* lately, recovering from his buccaneering during the winter. The results have been remarkable but like much buccaneering not without difficulties. The most recent being a product of his success in Stanford where he made a splendid impression. Unluckily instead of using his nautical moniker he chose his beastly fireman's hat<sup>62</sup> and paraded himself as Doctor Hubbard. I feared that he would do this. The result is that

his considerable success may be the source of an even greater embarrassment. They wanted to start a sort of LSD research unit and were about to approach the University for some cash. Professor Kumler<sup>63</sup> of the School of Pharmacy looked up Dr H. in U.S. Men of Science and he was not there. Very reasonably he feels that it is better for Al's friends to know how much false rigging he is wearing rather than the University Council should discover and brand him an imposter. I have pointed out that he is not a fraud, but an innocent.

He is proud of his horrid fireman's hat. The fact that he did not have to attend a University for it makes it the more precious. In Al's world wise men buy cheap and sell, well a trifle less cheaply. As he sees it the acquisition of the fireman's hat is just a transaction of that sort. Only stuffed shirts would see anything wrong about this. Al believes that little difficulties of this sort can always be fixed with a bit of dexterity. And so they sometimes can when the business man bears rich enough gifts to seduce the academic strumpet. But she is a bit choosy these days and Al has not equipped himself with enough cash for the job. So Al has now got to recognise that the scientific and business worlds have their rules and customs, and that one would be well advised to enquire how one differs from the other before jumping out of one into the other. If Al had heeded the advice which others gave him or sought for their suggestions he might well be far along the road to obtaining the doctorate which he wanted so much in an honorific way. As it is by his bull-headedness many people will be asking themselves whether he is a fraud when in fact he is no such thing. It is odd, sad and yet funny too. So much of Al's life has been spent in acquiring junk which he did not really need. The fireman's hat was just another bit of this junk. And we all do it, though it is easier to see with Al because he is so inherently honest. I wonder whether he will learn from this or has he got beyond the point where one can learn and must wander in a morass of business customs, popish dogma, and LSD-25 illusion? I hope he will find a way out and will do what I can to help. Not much because Al is not someone who ranks high among the helpable. It irks him to be beholden to anyone. A rather hard position because being members one of another we have to see that "mutual forgiveness of each vice, such are the gates of paradise."<sup>64</sup> Al will forgive others most generously but I'm not sure that he could endure forgiveness from others. Maybe I am wrong. Hope so.

Love to Laura. The poetess is now a bicyclist and a collector of wounded birds, stray cats and winged moths.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
28–29 July 1957*

My dear Aldous,

I suppose you are hard at work on *The Goddess* in humid, mid-summer New York. I hope to see you at the end of next month on my way to Zurich.

Meanwhile I have been batching (to use the expressive prairie term) for three weeks with Jane, Helen and her Granny away. In their absence my viscerotonia began to reassert itself and I shall be joyful to have them back again. I think I even write better papers when they are around.

Ellen will have told you that so far it looks as if adrenochrome inhaled is very powerful which raises all sort of fascinating and unexpected points. It is a great relief to have the pure chemical. I have hopes that we may eventually find that it or adrenolutin inhaled in the right way are better psychedelics than LSD. They may well prove to be so because so far as we can see LSD works by increasing the enzyme which turns adrenalin to adrenochrome, etc.

I am hoping that the Commonwealth Fund will put up money for Francis to start the world's first essay in a socio-architecture. One is dubious of these firsts, doubtless some learned German has a huge tome on it, but it is interesting how little architects concern themselves with the requirements and interactions of the humans for whom they design space. However I hope that Francis and our Japanese Canadian architect Kyo Izumi will be working on that this winter.

I am in the middle of our budgeting. It should reach \$3 million this year. I have to get more money from them as our numbers drop – an interesting question of interpretation. We are now in the 1,560s and I see no reason

why we should not go on dropping. My thesis now is that so long as the mental [hospital] has standards of behaviour which differ markedly from those “outside,” so long must the emphasis be on return to the community. For clearly every extra month in the hospital reduces the chances of getting out at all because the patient becomes acculturated to the queer customs of the subsociety. Only when our standards of decency and good behaviour are above those in the community can we risk very long stays here. I do not think this has ever been formulated as an essential strategy in running mental hospitals. I don’t of course suggest that dangerous or suicidal people should be just shoved out. We have so very few of these (and they are often the result of improper care) that they don’t change the argument.

If this strategy were widely employed with boldness and determination I believe that mental hospital populations would drop about 5% per annum for the next five, possibly ten years. The result w[ould] be that for those remaining a far better standard of care would become possible.

So many simple things have not been found out and used. We suspect that one social worker costing \$5,000 yearly can save four times his annual salary by the monies patients can earn on getting out of hospital. Many mental hospitals have about one social worker per thousand patients. Is it surprising they accumulate in hospital? It seems obvious to see where and how the overcrowding can be most easily and quickly relieved – but it has not been done yet.

One might suppose that we would know what keeps some patients in hospital while others who seem equally odd go out and stay out. We don’t know. I hope we’ll find out. It may turn out that quite small behavioural differences determine whether someone gets out or stays in and that some would get out if we knew what to look for. The weird esotericism of the analysts has obscured these simple, but very important matters. So much was known in the 1850s and then mysteriously forgotten.

It looks as if our idea for dividing space on the lines suggested by Hediger of the Zurich Zoo will work. Man being a predominantly visual and highly symbolising creature is even more ready than Hediger’s wild creatures to make use of symbolic divisions of the vast wards and these can be used to reduce the unlimited interaction of our overconcentrated wards.

If this works it may be a major discovery because it will mean that with a few hundred specially devised screens costing say \$100 each you can

undo a fair amount of the harm done by ill devised buildings without waiting for builders, architects, etc. What I like about it is that it derives from the application of simple psychobiological principles which can be easily understood. Such ideas can be learnt so that the same cruel and costly errors should not be made again. They are still being repeated.

Good wishes to Laura. I do hope I'll see you both in New York.

29:7:57<sup>65</sup>

Reaching the end of our budget – we should be through in a couple of days. It is, I suppose the second most important function of a superintendent. The budget is his instrument of policy. His central function being the formation and execution of policy, though obviously no money means no policy. Medical gents are not taught about these matters and usually never learn. It has been part of my education here to learn about them. With a good accounting system, such as we now have, one can be remarkably accurate. What made me really understand the enormous importance of proper administration was the excellent life of Florence Nightingale by Mrs Cecil Woodham Smith.<sup>66</sup> After reading it I saw that our main trouble lay in having the sort of administration which general hospitals had 100 years ago. Grossly inefficient. Without clear cut goals and policies to achieve them mental hospitals have floundered for the last 75 years. The fact is that any policy, however mean and incomplete, is better than none. A bad policy can always be corrected. Indeed it asks to be corrected. No policy puts the critic at a grave disadvantage – he has nothing to bite on. Northrop Frye puts the matter well in his book on Blake, “It is the business of imagination to force all falsehood into a denial of truth, to show error as error and to clarify it by reducing the neutral ground.”<sup>67</sup> I hope that we shall reduce some of that miasmatic neutral ground which has been a barrier between the mental hospitals and the public, far more effective than high walls or iron bars.

I suppose that the sovereign virtue of this distant, dismal and often unpleasant place is that one is forced to think. There are many more attractive places, but here one can think and very often act too. I suppose that geographical sacrifices are worthwhile – though I sometimes wish one could eat one's cake and have it.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*The Shoreham Hotel*  
*New York, N.Y.*  
*17 August 1957*

My dear Humphry,

I should have answered your letter before, but have been kept too frantically busy revising the play – which has had to be practically reconstructed to meet the demands of backers who don't want to invest in anything experimental, of scene designers who don't want to undertake a difficult job and of producers who pine for economy and a small cast. Now at last the job is finished – at least for the time being, and it remains to be seen if the producer and his associates can achieve what they have always said they wanted to achieve – rehearsals beginning on the tenth of September. It will be a bit of a miracle if that deadline is met. But perhaps the depths of confusion and muddle which characterize the theatre may sometimes be compensated for by heights of one-pointed efficiency. In any case I look forward to seeing you while you are in the East. Let me know exactly when you are coming, where staying, etc.

New York is not too bad. I have had only four or five days of really equatorial heat in the four weeks I have been here. And there is always air conditioning even on the worst days. There has been little time to see things or people – most of whom are on holiday anyhow – and my extra-curricular activities have included only the big Picasso<sup>68</sup> show at the Modern Museum (what a lot of slapdash shoddy stuff surrounding the twenty or thirty masterpieces!), the Metropolitan, where there is a beautiful loan exhibition of French 19th century painting, an evening with Joseph Campbell,<sup>69</sup> (the man who edited and in part rewrote Heinrich Zimmer's<sup>70</sup> posthumous books and who is very knowledgeable in oriental matters and comparative mythology) and a morning with Dr Osis<sup>71</sup> (who has come from Duke to



Eileen's parapsychology foundation and is working on the problem of survival).

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
19 August 1957*

My dear Aldous,

Abram and I shall be in New York early next week, Tuesday or Wednesday. It will be good to see you and let you know our news and hear how things go with you. I can imagine few more vexing things than rewrites – and am especially sympathetic because I have just finished the 90 references of the Zurich paper. I have veered between feeling that it was excellent and a stinker. I think it is good enough, which means that my sense of criticism has been dulled or that it really is.

We shall be around the corner at the Buckingham. I wish we had picked on your hotel but it's not far away. We have had Al here and I think that we have straightened things out a good deal. What an affair must have gone on in California! However the results seem to have been good. Betty Eisner's<sup>72</sup> work sounds most promising and I am gradually pushing Al towards using his organizing gifts at a slightly lower level of the higher thought.

We have got money to bring Francis here in the fall to work with Kyo Izumi our architect on people and space. I am hoping Matthew will squeeze money from the Milbank for an organizational research: of which I shall tell you.

The budgeting is done and I am working out a grand strategy for mental hospitals which I believe might change th[ese] places quickly if applied. Presently there is no grand strategy, only a host of busy tacticians keen on their patent remedies. See you soon.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
27 August 1957*

My dear Aldous,

I hope Abram Hoffer will have told you before you get this that I have been delayed a day because our dear Poetess developed a retrocaecal perforated appendix late last night after some days of misleading “gastric flu.” Doctors’ daughters never get nice easy straightforward ailments – always something really odd. This one was a stinker. Luckily we had a shrewd and knowledgeable colleague with a good surgical partner so that our Helen is now sitting up with her red head towzled but within 12 hours of operation as imperious as ever. “Send for the doctor *now*. I don’t want this thing (drip) in my nose.” The drips have gone – not because she pulled them out, but because she is drinking well and holding it down. I shall start on my way *tomorrow* night instead of tonight.

It is strange how small a sick child becomes – as if a field of force had withdrawn to a sort of keep – perhaps it has. But she is becoming bigger again every minute.

It is a disappointment, I was much hoping to see you and tell you of our doings. We are now getting going on psycho-social research. There are huge opportunities here and so little being done. The possibilities of Sheldon’s work applied to interpersonal relationships – it seems likely that his three temperamental components have three social-response patterns. So much to do and so much dull, boring or downright nonsensical work being done.

Have just sent in the specifications for what may one day be a notable best seller. This is a compendium of emergency treatments designed for *real* emergencies – not for those events which are often called emergency. What should a non-surgeon do about an appendix to be really pointed? What is

the best way to operate in bad conditions? Is operation the best way? What other possibilities are there? Surgical books are written by surgeons for non-surgeons. The assumption will be that the doctor is not really competent in the field being discussed, but for some reason he is the only person available. I believe it would be a chronic best seller and I have volunteered to be the general editor for Butterworths who are one of the biggest medical and legal publishers in the world. I hope they will one day take my book on psychiatry in courts – a handbook. Meanwhile I think they would like a schizophrenia book from us and as they seldom publish in editions of less than 50,000 this should be worthwhile.

The pictures which helped to win us the American Psychiatric Association award nearly didn't get there. They were held up by the U.S. Customs as being pornographic! These were the before series (1954). I think it is one of the best stories about mental hospitals I know. They were released because one of the customs officers had been in Saint Elizabeth's hospital in Washington and assured them that these were not in any way salacious – just natural conditions! We were not polluting American morals – I am now an honorary pornographer as well as a dope peddler!

I hope to be in New York early November to see *The Goddess*. You have been having a rough time. Would like to see the Picasso – very unkind he is on those who can't draw, makes them think they don't need to learn. Love to Laura.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 October 1957*

My dear Aldous,

How and where are you? I still have small hopes that you may be in New York when I get down early next month. It was a pity not seeing you on my way to Switzerland. However the poetess made a splendid recovery and

apart from the influen[za] which has attacked her in the last day or two she is on excellent form.

Abram and I made a great sweep, Philadelphia, Zurich, Stockholm, London, finding much of interest in each. Briefly on the schizophrenia front things have rarely looked better. The development of pure adrenochrome and a purer but not yet wholly satisfactory adrenolutin is quickly changing the picture. Chemists now feel they have something to bite on, and so do many other scientists who were previously not very interested. We suspect that a whole new development in pharmacology will start with the metabolites of adrenalin because it looks as if it is they which control many aspects of autonomic nervous system functioning.

Meanwhile the evidence of a toxin X, an M-substance, increases steadily. We *may* already have measured it chemically but several new biological measures have been developed. The rat climbing test at Merck's<sup>73</sup> in Philadelphia, Bercel's extension of Witt's<sup>74</sup> work, and Schwarzenbach's<sup>75</sup> fungus spore germination test. I don't doubt more will follow.

Adrenochrome and adrenolutin have been proved to be psychologically active in cats, rats and humans (spiders also). We met the group of Swedes in Zurich who have taken up our work and they entertained us and Heath from Tulane. Heath and his chemist colleague Leach<sup>76</sup> found a protein substance in schizophrenic blood which made normal men and monkeys temporarily mad and found that schizophrenic blood turned adrenalin to something that was not adrenalin which Abram found was adrenolutin. For this very important piece of work he has been publicly pilloried by his kind colleagues. They seem to be too ignorant to realise that our work and Heath's buttress each other and are simply different ways of looking at the same thing. This has had its funny side for our support against Heath has even been solicited. The psychoanalysts in particular are worried because they feel that many of their crows are coming home to roost. This has been a special feature of the U.S. analysts who are much more salesmen than their European counterparts, many of whom are clearly school men.

In the hospital changes continue. The dome, a symbol of sham, has been removed. We have Tom Paterson<sup>77</sup> working on our organization. He is an ex-Fellow of Trinity – one of Bartlett's<sup>78</sup> boys who has been studying organisation and human relationships for the last 15 years. He is developing a theory of *relationships* which are independent of personality. The

immense advantage of this over the American “psychoanalytically oriented” interaction theories is obvious for armies, business, hospitals, etc. The psychoanalytic method seems unworkable because you always end up with a squabble about who should be analyzed. Further the more people think about interpersonal relationships rather than the relationships between roles the worse they do their job. There is even experimental evidence of this.

People are very ready to examine and discuss the relationship between roles, not at all ready to introspect. And rightly so when for many it is acutely difficult if not impossible. Paterson is a man you must meet. We are giving him LSD-25 on Sunday.

One of his most important discoveries has been to show that authority consists of at least five very different varieties which have in most books on organization all been subsumed under one word. The resulting chaos has not been surprising but it has made it almost impossible to discuss authority since everyone means something different. In a complex society such as ours this has been very damaging.

Francis will, I hope be here soon. We have a winter’s work for him and six inches of first snow has fallen. So perhaps he will be coming into winter quarters. I think he will teach us a lot about the way the hospital ticks. What is surprising is that we have managed to avoid so many great dangers. Not least being our over ambitious Harvard trained sociologists who tried to establish themselves as the sole source of authority. They failed and left two years ago. We have at last unraveled what happened. It has been instructive, but not comfortable.

We have the American Psychiatric Association silver plaque safely (I hope) in the hospital. It is a handsome piece and has done us all good to carry away the spoils. For the Americans, who never really accept losing and have no “good loser” tradition, were obliging enough to resent our success fairly openly. This naturally made our triumph all the sweeter.

I have not had much news from Al lately. He was trying to team up with a psychiatrist to do some LSD work on alcoholics. Al seemed openly contemptuous of his “helper” and this is very bad for both of them. Luckily the man, who sounded timid and must have been weak to put up with Al *on those terms*, saw an article written about me, and his wife took fright. Al was narked. But I have refused to be sympathetic. Al did not try to get a

colleague but a fool. This work can't be done with people who are considered as fools. They must be colleagues, or nothing. Al's notion that he can work with people of whom he is openly contemptuous is a grave error of judgement. This last fellow he referred to as "a funny little chap but loveable." It sounds like a minor rodent, a hamster. Last year Al found another amiable fool who was more adroit than he supposed and double crossed Al with alacrity when a convenient opportunity arose. I suppose that this is why he is seeking the wholly innocuous! We hope to have him here during the winter and will see whether we can teach him that this is more than an occasion for showing off.

Al has to learn that professional relationships are in some ways quite different from business ones. He has learnt one set of relationships and just doesn't bother to discover that they are inappropriate. Even the dullest dog of a scientist can out manoeuvre Al by forcing him to behave in a way which other scientists immediately find intolerable.

Al can be a patron of science, but it is an expensive business. He cannot be half way patron, half way co-worker, half way magician. It is this extreme ambiguity of his position which so puzzles those who work with him and produces most of the mysterious disappointments and setbacks which Al finds so surprizing.

Do get Betty Eisner to let you have a copy of "Dream Theory in Malaya" by Kilton Stewart<sup>79</sup> if she has not done so already. The Senoi have learnt how to expand their limens and so avoid the development of those submerged chunks of battened down explosive feeling which endanger so many human societies.

How has the play gone? What news of *Brave New World* and the new novel?

I don't know if you have seen *Drugs and the Mind*, a good book. Patchy especially on the clinical side but the best substitute for an up to date *Phantastica*. De Ropp<sup>80</sup> who wrote it is a biochemist. He quotes extensively from *The Doors* and from "New Approach" I and II. He does not deal well with Heath's work – but is very good on addictions.

Give my love to Laura and Gerald when you see him.

Do let me know how you are and everything.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*The Shoreham Hotel*  
*New York, N.Y.*  
*28 October 1957*

Dear Humphry,

I hear from Ellen that you have got back to Weyburn without stopping here – but that you will be back in New York about November 5<sup>th</sup>. This is good news. I expect to be here, rehearsing *The Genius and the Goddess*, until November 10, when we all go to New Haven – then Philadelphia, then Boston. Let me know your exact dates and whereabouts.

Things are going, at last, fairly well. Good actors, good director, revisions that have improved the theatricality of the play (I hope). But what a mess the whole thing is! I hope you had a pleasant and profitable trip.

My love to Jane.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*7 December 1957*

My dear Aldous,

It was good to see you again, even though the time was short and you were pressed by Goddess or Genius. I do hope that it has gone well and that you will now reap the reward of the months of labour. I have had news from a friend in Boston who saw it there and seems to have enjoyed it greatly. So much indeed that Jane wonders whether he has fallen in love with the wife

of one of the divinity professors there. He is studying at the Harvard Divinity School. I hope to be in New York in the second half of January with Jane and will do my best to see it.

I liked your idea for a discussion on the use of psychedelics with suggested halting points along the way marked by readings, music, etc. I am sure some structure is required for most of us most of the time. At least explorers in the past have always found this necessary and we should be guided by them until we know better, which we certainly don't at present.

After leaving you I went on to GAP where we continued our study of administrative practise. I think that we are at last on the track of a workable theory of administration. If this is so it is clearly a great advance. So far administrative theory has been notable for its paucity – a vast amount has been written regarding practise but this is based on a pin point of useful theory. Indeed I'm told that there are some administrative theorists who maintain that there cannot be a useful and cohering theory of administration!

T.T. Paterson a Scotsman from Glasgow has spent the last 15 years developing a theory which seems to be a useful basis for practise.

From GAP I went on to Detroit and spent a day with Stan Ovshinsky the automationist, who you may remember took discolored adrenalin inadvertently for a few weeks and provided us with an excellent natural experiment. He introduced me to some of the staff planners of the Union of Automobile Workers (Walter Reuther).<sup>81</sup> Stan moves easily between labor and management, for being an inventor he does not feel subservient to either. What struck me was how very out of date most of their views were. I mean by this that they have no idea how great the changes which Stan's Pandora's boxes will surely bring really are. They cheer themselves with parallels with the Industrial Revolution and do not see that there is no parallel at all. However for the moment the parrot cries are reassuring to some. The UAW have an office which would not shame a corporation. One of the vice presidents had a sumptuous suite, but rather oddly had many models of IBM's and other symbols of workers' unity decorating it. They are mostly 19<sup>th</sup> century or more accurately turn of the century men and are I suppose a trifle behind their management counterparts. In union affairs as in business, somatotonics predominate and they tend to stick to things as they are, acting inside a tradition. At a time when change is rapid this makes



them rather unsuitable for leadership, yet they are in many ways “natural leaders.” The organisation of the UAW is immense and firmly gripped by an able and apparently (unlike the teamsters) financially honest and well intentioned, but powerful bureaucracy. This has paradoxical results. Management, in order to disguise the effects of automation, are setting up many small plants in areas where the union tradition is weak. The union bureaucracy do not seem concerned about this. But their unconcern is not based on any real understanding but because these rural factories are easier to control from a union organiser’s view point.

From Detroit I went on to Chicago and spent 36 hours with Heinrich Klüver. Aldous you must meet him. He is so congenial and knows so much. He told me that the 36 toothed Cebus monkey has some odd characteristics. Unlike the old world monkeys with which us primates are, seemingly, associated, when faced with a problem it does not give way to random activity, irritation or rage. It sits and thinks. Then it acts. If you strike it, it turns the other cheek. Klüver feels, I think, that we were a premature development. The self-conscious creature would have better been associated with the Cebus monkeys. However by study we may be able to discover our differences, which I suspect would lie, among other things, in a different adrenalin metabolism.

The research makes encouraging progress. We have learnt how to measure adrenochrome in blood and other body fluids. It is there. It looks as if *much* more of it is present in schizophrenics than non-schizophrenics. We have taken blood from people undergoing surgery and obviously anxious people but they have no increased adrenochrome. In other words this looks like a specific difference in schizophrenia and not a non-specific manifestation of stress. We have not yet got a test for adrenolutin, but that should come. Our current thinking is that acute schizophrenia is mostly the effect of high adrenochrome levels and chronic adrenolutin. But we are still ignorant. LSD-25 pushes up the adrenochrome levels greatly, three or four times at least. The highest level of adrenochrome corresponds with the height of the model psychosis. We shall try mescaline soon. This strongly suggests that we may have found a final common path. Anyhow we shall see.

Francis has been with us and will I hope be back again in 10–14 days. He is studying the social implications of our work, especially as they touch

on the design of wards for the long stay patients. We hope to branch out from there to a more general study of people and the quality and quantity of the space which they inhabit. We found Francis very admirable and also very intelligent and sensitive.

Helen has had flu and recently sinusitis. However she now seems lively and active again. She has been doing experiments with surface tension (floating a needle on water) and she seems to enjoy this. We shall be glad when she can work some of her energy off outside. Jane sends love. She has not been too well lately. I hope to bring her down to New York in January if the Duck poetess is fully recovered.

The hospital changes rapidly. Its roof coming off and much decorating, new lighting, etc. being done. What is so odd is that the very simple needs of the alienated have been met so poorly. It is a great misfortune that they were not classified as brain rather than emotionally damaged people. No one objects to heavy spending to put the brain “right” however dubious the results may be. The emotions, however, are something we didn’t ought to have.

Good wishes to Laura and to Matthew and Ellen. Survive the festivities.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

1 John Langdon-Davies (1897–1971). British author and journalist who was a war correspondent and popular science writer.

2 Kiyoshi (Joe) Izumi (1921–96). Canadian architect who revolutionized the design of mental institutions in Canada.

3 United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

4 Elaine Cumming and John Cumming, “The Locus of Power in a Large Mental Hospital,” *Psychiatry: Interpersonal and Biological Processes* 19, no. 4 (1956): 361–9.

5 Max Weber (1864–1920). German sociologist and philosopher.

6 Sanitoid was the brand name given to a self-contained waste disposal system developed in Indiana in the 1950s.

7 Sydney Smith (1771–1845). British writer and cleric whose essay “Public Schools of England” appeared in *Edinburgh Review*, no. 32 (1810): 326–34.

8 Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–78). Italian artist and printmaker. *The Prisons* is a series of sixteen prints that were published in 1750.

9 Francis Thompson (1908–2003). American filmmaker. His fifteen-minute documentary is called *NY, NY* (1957).

10 Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895–1986). As a young man, Krishnamurti was groomed by the Theosophical Society as the next “World Teacher.” He later left the movement but continued to write

and to speak publicly. After their first meeting in 1938, he and Huxley became longtime friends. Huxley served as a member of the board of directors of Krishnamurti's Happy Valley School in Ojai, California. Krishnamurti's three-volume *Commentaries on Living: From the Notebooks of J. Krishnamurti* was published in 1956, 1958, and 1960. His *The First and Last Freedom* was published in 1954 with a foreword by Huxley.

11 Roger Vittoz (1863–1925). Swiss psychiatrist known for his system of mental and manual exercises similar to Frederick Matthias Alexander's "conscious creative control of the body."

12 The editor of *Esquire*, Arnold Gingrich (1903–76), notes in his autobiography that of all *Esquire's* celebrated authors, Huxley published the most contributions: twenty-six. See Gingrich, *Nothing but People*, 309.

13 Huxley's novel *After Many a Summer* was published in 1939.

14 United Pictures of America. Ironically, the nearly blind Huxley was hired to write a script about the nearly blind cartoon character Mr Magoo. "The UPA artists couldn't bear to offend him by explaining that Mr Magoo couldn't see, according to the account given by former UPA writer Dun Roman. So they allowed the British literary giant to deliver a script devoid of Mr Magoo's basic premise. It was never used." See Bannon, "Vision Thing."

15 The essay was Huxley's "Mother," *Esquire* 45 (February 1956), 31–2.

16 Identified through Huxley's other letters as Ralph Asher Rose (1911–84). American writer and actor.

17 Courtney Burr (1890–1961). Broadway producer who produced Huxley's *The Genius and the Goddess* for a very short run in 1957.

18 Harrison Brown (1917–86). American nuclear chemist and activist whose books deal with the problems of hunger and population growth.

19 Kingsley Davis (1908–97). American sociologist who coined the terms "population explosion" and "zero population growth."

20 Fred Zinnemann (1907–97). Austro-American film director and winner of four Academy Awards, including for *High Noon* (1952). According to the typed sheet which accompanied Huxley's outline, Zinnemann had suggested that the Ford Omnibus Television Committee might be interested in Huxley's script on problems of population.

21 Huxley's unpublished single-spaced, six-page typed manuscript resides in the Library of the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Science. On page 6 is the inscription "Above Outline by Mr Aldous Huxley. March 15, 1957."

22 William Sargant (1907–88). Controversial British psychiatrist who advocated treatments such as insulin shock therapy and electroconvulsive therapy. His *Battle for the Mind: A Physiology of Conversion and Brain-Washing* was first published in 1957. Osmond's letter has "Struggle" as the first word in the title.

23 Morris N. Eagle (b. 1928). American professor of psychology and early researcher into subliminal images.

24 In the margin of this letter, Osmond wrote, "relevance to ESP." He follows up on this in his response of 13 April 1957.

25 The Commonwealth Fund, established in 1918, was dedicated to the improvement of health care systems.

26 Osmond may have slipped here, writing "Matthew" when he meant "Francis," who was an anthropologist and with whom he had been discussing the possibility of coming to Weyburn.

27 Harold G. Wolff (1898–1962). American neurologist specializing in psychosomatic illnesses. Reference to Lawrence E. Hinkle Jr and Harold G. Wolff, "Communist Interrogation and Indoctrination of 'Enemies of the States': Analysis of Methods Used by the Communist State Police (A Special Report)," *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 76, no. 2 (August 1956), 115–74.

- 28 Alfred Hitchcock (1899–1980). English film director best known for his thrillers.
- 29 *Varieties of Delinquent Youth: An Introduction to Constitutional Psychiatry* was published in 1949.
- 30 Stanford R. Ovshinsky (1922–2012). American inventor and scientist who was granted over 400 patents, many in the field of energy.
- 31 Thomas A. Edison (1847–1931). Prolific American inventor and businessman.
- 32 Frederic Spiegelberg (1897–1994). Professor of Asian religions. He was one of the founders of the Esalen Institute.
- 33 Gregory Bateson (1904–80). English anthropologist who linked schizophrenia to “double bind” situations.
- 34 Alan Watts (1915–73). British philosopher, theologian, and author who moved to California in 1950 and later experimented with psychedelics. His *The Way of Zen* was published in 1957.
- 35 William Kneedler Sherwood (1916–57). American biochemist who studied schizophrenia in relation to other diseases. He committed suicide after being subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities Committee.
- 36 Nicholas A. Bercel (1911–2009). Hungarian-born physician and neurophysiologist who moved to the United States in 1940. He published extensively on schizophrenia and epilepsy. Osmond regularly spelled the name “Burcell.”
- 37 Muslim mystics.
- 38 Notation indicating that Jane Osmond’s mother was visiting for six months out of twelve.
- 39 Cerebrospinal fluid. A clear, colourless body fluid found in the brain and spine.
- 40 Francis Huxley (1923–2016). Prominent British anthropologist who was the son of Aldous’s brother Julian.
- 41 Robert Gordon Wasson (1898–1986). American banker and ethnomycologist who discovered the psychoactive properties of certain mushrooms. His “Seeking the Magic Mushroom” was published in *Life* in May 1957.
- 42 Tryptamine.
- 43 Gordon A. Alles (1901–63). American pharmacologist who studied the psychological effects of amphetamines.
- 44 Stephen Szára (b. 1923). Hungarian-born chemist and psychiatrist who researched the psychotropic effects of tryptamines.
- 45 Dimethyltryptamine.
- 46 Robert Charles Zaehner (1913–74). British academic who specialized in Eastern religions.
- 47 Henri Michaux (1899–1984). Belgian artist and author whose *Misérable Miracle* (1956) described his experiments with hallucinogenic drugs.
- 48 Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–59). French diplomat and historian whose two-volume *Democracy in America* was published in 1835 and 1840.
- 49 Perhaps a compound of “porphyro” and “chrome,” indicating a purple-coloured agent.
- 50 Louis Jolyon “Jolly” West (1924–99). American psychiatrist who conducted early LSD research.
- 51 Philip B. Smith (1922–2004). American psychiatrist whose *Chemical Glimpses of Paradise* was published in 1972.
- 52 Suzuki’s *Mysticism, Christian and Buddhist* was published in 1957. His *The Essence of Buddhism* was published in 1946.
- 53 Cedric Hardwicke (1893–1964). English stage and film actor, director, and producer.
- 54 Chankly Bore is a nonsensical place name in Edward Lear’s poem “The Jumblies,” in *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets* (1871). Osmond’s pun suggests that the people in this place are themselves “bores.”

- 55 Daniel Blain (1898–1981). American physician and first medical director of the American Psychiatric Association.
- 56 Ladislav J. von Meduna (1896–1964). Hungarian psychiatrist and neuropathologist known for chemically inducing grand mal seizures as a means of treating schizophrenia.
- 57 H.J. Shorvon (1906–61). British psychiatrist known for his work in drug abreactive treatments.
- 58 James Olds (1922–76). American psychologist who, with Peter Milner, discovered the pleasure centre of the brain.
- 59 B.F. Skinner (1904–90). Prominent American psychologist and behaviourist.
- 60 Donald Johnson (1903–78). British physician and politician who served in Parliament for nine years.
- 61 Post-Impressionist painter Vincent van Gogh's (1853–90) *A Corridor in the Asylum* (1889) was part of a bequest of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1948.
- 62 Slang expression for a graduation cap.
- 63 Warren D. Kumler (1905–80). American professor of pharmacology at the University of California, San Francisco.
- 64 From William Blake's "Prologue" to *The Gates of Paradise* (1793).
- 65 This letter was started on 28 July and finished on 29 July 1957.
- 66 Cecil Woodham-Smith (1896–1977). British historian and biographer whose *Florence Nightingale* was published in 1950.
- 67 Northrop Frye (1912–91). Canadian literary critic and theorist of literary criticism whose *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake* was published in 1947.
- 68 Pablo Picasso (1881–1973). Spanish artist who worked in many media and spent most of his adult life in France.
- 69 Joseph John Campbell (1904–87). American mythologist and scholar of comparative religion.
- 70 Heinrich Zimmer (1890–1943). German scholar specializing in Indian philology and South Asian art.
- 71 Karlis Osis (1917–97). Latvian-born parapsychologist who specialized in exploring deathbed phenomena and life after death.
- 72 Betty Grover Eisner (1915–2004). American psychologist known for using psychedelic drugs in connection with psychotherapy.
- 73 American pharmaceutical company established as a subsidiary of its German parent company in 1891.
- 74 Peter N. Witt (1918–98). German-born physician and pharmacologist who moved to America in 1956. He conducted research on the effects of psychoactive drugs on brain function, much of it through the study of spiders and their webs.
- 75 Fritz Hans Schwarzenbach (b. 1925). Austrian botanist, geophysicist, and explorer.
- 76 Byron E. Leach (1915–78). American psychiatrist and biochemist who conducted extensive research on schizophrenia.
- 77 Thomas Thomson Paterson (1909–94). Scottish archaeologist, paleontologist, geologist, anthropologist, sociologist, and world authority on administration whose *Morale in War and Work: An Experiment in the Management of Men* was published in 1955.
- 78 Frederic Bartlett (1886–1969). British experimental psychologist who specialized in cognitive psychology.
- 79 Kilton Stewart (1902–65). American psychologist and anthropologist whose "Dream Theory in Malaya" was published in *Complex*, no. 6 (1951): 21–33.
- 80 Robert S. de Ropp (1913–87). British biochemist who also published extensively on spiritual enlightenment. His *Drugs and the Mind* was published in 1957.

81 Walter Philip Reuther (1907–70). American labour leader who was president of the United Automobile Workers from 1946 until his accidental death in 1970.

1958

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
4 January 1958*

My dear Aldous,

I am sorry to hear that after your months of efforts *The Goddess* foundered. I suppose one must expect this in play writing but it can't make it any less painful when it happens. Anyway I hope you are getting the weariness and disappointment out of you in the sunshine.

A happy New Year to you and Laura.

I have been looking back over '57 which has been, for us, a wonderful year. Not I fear reflected in larger affairs, but since we cannot much influence larger affairs we must do what we can. And there is a chance, a small one only, that what we are doing may later influence these larger matters both directly and indirectly. Anyway sufficient unto the day. If one spends too much time gazing ahead one may break one's neck on a banana skin.

The great advances are on a surprisingly broad front and they look as if they may link up more quickly than we had ever thought likely. On the biochemical front the great triumph has been the making of synthetic adrenochrome, pure. From this has developed (and is developing very quickly) a vast new area for work. It is just what we have been predicting from the hints which we have had, but of course facts are much better than hints!

Adrenochrome is a stable chemical substance present in the normal body. Enough of it is present to suggest that it has some function, we don't *know* what that is. It is probably connected with allergy prevention. In acute schizophrenic people *much* more of it is present than in normals. In chronics not very much more. However, we suppose that the crucial process is adrenochrome → adrenolutin. We aren't yet able to measure adrenolutin. Clearly the conversion to adrenolutin should be rapid enough to keep the

level of adrenochrome low although its rate of production might be high. It seems that worry and anxiety does not raise the level of adrenochrome.

LSD-25 in doses of 100 mmg or so pushes up the adrenochrome levels to the schizophrenic. Oddly enough mescaline does not seem to do this and may work by some very different mechanism. But we shall have to see. We are still only exploring. One very odd finding is that LSD-25 greatly potentiates adrenochrome. If one gives enough LSD-25 (about 30–35 mmg) to produce no very marked effect and little or no rise in adrenochrome levels, and then puts in 10 mmg of adrenochrome by vein, there is a marked and prolonged adrenochrome response of a schizophrenic type. It seems that LSD-25 blocks an enzyme which breaks adrenochrome down and so the added adrenochrome cannot be dealt with this way and is turned into adrenolutin. Anyway you can see what is now opening up.

In the hospital we have been scrutinizing our organisation using T.T. Paterson's ideas which spring from the concept that authority is not homogeneous. It is quite obvious that the authority of a judge, a soldier, a doctor and a seer are not the same, though all are authorities. Paterson is one of the first men to examine this carefully. The results are remarkable and show, I think, quite clearly how complex organisations fail. Our organisations are growing increasingly complex because we do complex things. The old "do it because I say so" just doesn't work. Paterson shows how it doesn't work and what we might do about it. A mental hospital with its special and often obscure goals is a good plan for such a study.

Then we are looking at the space in which people live and the use they make of it. This springs from the psychotomimetic work and looks like [it's] becoming a major field on its own. Francis as you know is attacking from the anthropology direction, our architect Kyo Izumi from the architectural and other colleagues from the psychological and psychiatric. What emerges is fairly clear. The schizophrenic (and doubtless other mentally ill people such as the demented old) lives in a space that is differently shaped from others, and almost certainly a different sort of time too. His behavior, thought to be odd, bizarre and mysterious can be nothing more than a perfectly understandable response to a very disturbing situation. For all social relations depend upon a commonly held space-time and without that they become more or less impossible. The regression etc., which has been made so much of, [i]s a general response to an



overwhelming situation. The less overwhelming the situation the less regression. This does not necessarily effect the perceptual changes. These changes effect every aspect of perception to a greater or lesser degree. It seems that architecturally the problem is to avoid very large and “uncontrolled” space, particularly in the vertical plane because we are far less able to maintain perceptual constancy in the vertical than in the horizontal plane. This is not surprizing because we have been terrestrials for some time. Very high buildings make us uneasy and insignificant. This may be valuable in places of worship or in great palaces, but it is out of place in mental hospitals. Of course visual perception is only one aspect of it, but it is one that we can measure and which plays a large part in architecture.

We are also enquiring into the distances at which normal people relate to each other. Social distance, used in this sense, which is different from the way it is sometimes used, has been marvelously unexplored. You would think that we would know pretty accurately at what distance one can carry on a conversation and how this is effected by the position of the person you are speaking to. Obviously one cannot talk very well to someone sitting behind you. Yet no work that we can find has been done on this. The size and shape of rooms and the disposition of furniture depends on such matters. We should be opening our perception gallery in the near future and should be able to get to work very soon.

The psychedelic work continues. It is not easy. Al at the moment is with Abram in Saskatoon and I hope to see him next weekend. We shall do our best to get him going on something constructive and which is less dilettante than much of his present activities. Though how much we will succeed remains to be seen. Al, of course, has one enormous temptation to be a dilettante – he can afford it. Being less exposed to this temptation myself it is easy to sit on my high horse. I suppose if I were as rich as Al I might be just as inclined to it. Indeed I suspect I would be much lazier than he!

The difficulty with most of our psychedelic work so far has been that it has been rushed and done under a variety of pressures. We need time to prepare, to explore, to record and then to sift out our findings. Of course at the start of any science things are make shift and that is how we are now. I shall look forward to news of the “guide line” which you are developing for psychedelic experiment and exploration. We need some set schema from which we can work.

Washington, Toronto and New York in a couple of weeks' time. I must push on with my papers. They mean such hard work if they are to be any good. I get rather fed up when told "how easy it must be for you to write." It may be easier than some, but much of the difference comes from working harder and longer per paragraph. Many people don't seem to realise that what reads so easily may have been written many times. I suppose you have the same lack of understanding on a bigger scale. We have a psychologist (PhD) here at present who cannot see that he may have to re-write totally flatulent paragraphs which I can cut by  $\frac{2}{3}$  on a single run through.

Dewey's<sup>1</sup> influence on American education has been very unfortunate – though I suppose that he is simply an expression of the empiricism which De Tocqueville noted among the republicans long ago. Anyway we are encouraging the Canadians to develop their own psychiatric research and reduce the constant leaching away of talent to the U.S. The trouble is that the U.S. does not know how to use the talent which they buy so riotously. John Smythies was at Anne Arbor and saw Ralph Gerard's<sup>2</sup> set up. Twenty scientists, 180 technicians. They were setting out on a purely, empirical research into schizophrenia to measure everything that can be measured. Clumsy, self-defeating and above all unscientific. The Russians will outstrip the Americans. They can hardly avoid doing so. I don't think it is the virtue of the Russian scientific education, but much more the strange unwillingness to think which has infected the Americans and has become deeply embedded in their culture. The Anne Arbor set up is under Gerard who is one of the most eminent men in his field in the U.S. He spent a year (I believe) at the Palo Alto place of Ford's – the cross fertilization of disciplines. If they would only give money to go away on an island for a year with a few friends. Where two or three are gathered together. However there is not much that we can do about it for the moment except push ahead and try to show them by example. It is no coincidence that we are turning out more ideas in a month than most of our colleagues do in a year or even ten. We are thinking and observing instead of listening to other people quoting someone else's opinions.

In psychiatry our patients are submerged in the verbiage of three generations of psychiatrists. They are almost invisible, indeed I often suspect that no one has *looked* at them for years for had they done so most of our current psychiatric preachings and practises would be unthinkable.

Book after book carries Bleuler's erroneous remark about psychotic people not having perceptual disturbances – yet they obviously do. Book after book refers to psychotic people escaping into a world of their own from a reality which they cannot face. Yet a few minutes' observation in any mental hospital would convince anyone who watched and felt that while they are in a world of their own, this in no way implies that they have got there because they want to be there or because it is more pleasant. I know of no evidence to support these latter propositions and much to confute them. However this does not stop our dope peddlers from handing out this nonsense.

The works of the 1850s are so very refreshing – no self congratulations about deeper insights and the ways of the unconscious, only a stubborn but kindly determination to help those they clearly recognised as the “most helpless if not the most afflicted portions of the human race.”<sup>3</sup> It is marvelous how we can bemuse and diddle ourselves with words. I think I told you about the psychiatrist who solemnly called schizophrenia “a way of life” and surmised that this was in some way useful or illuminating. But I suppose that medicine has always been afflicted in this way because the sick and those who cared for them have usually preferred a platitude given with conviction, to an honest statement that we don't know.

Jane and I are thinking of spending part of the summer near Glacier in Northern Montana – is there any chance that you and Laura might venture up there? Jane tells me that it is very beautiful there.

Must push on with my papers. They have to be typed next week. I know what I want to get across and rather wish that the effort of getting it down could be avoided somehow. But it can't.

Francis tells me that Julian has been knighted and Francis sent a cable starting “Dear Sir.” I do hope I shall see you again before long. Give Gerald my warmest greetings – he is several letters in arrears!

Winter has been well behaved here. No really cold weather – the lowest yet -15° F which is mild.

We have a new Chihuahua in the family less than a day old and very small, though sleek. Helen much interested. This one is bespoke by someone in Vancouver who is apparently going to fly here to pick it up. They are amiable little creatures. Hope to see Matthew and Ellen in New York soon.

Jane sends love.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28,  
Cal. 4 January 1958*

Dear Humphry,

I should have answered your good letter long since, but have been horribly busy with accumulations of mail and a series of articles which I have engaged to do. The original idea was to write a series on the newer methods of mind control – through drugs, sleep teaching, Pavlovian brain washing and subliminal projection. But this seems too narrow, and I am reviewing all the methods of mind-changing and mind-moulding, including the conventional techniques of propaganda. Only in this way can one intelligently assess the potential dangers to individual liberty. I shall begin by discussing the impersonal forces pushing us towards increasing central control – the rise in population which renders the economic life of so many nations insecure and calls for increasing centralization and governmental interference, the elaboration of technology that calls for ever more elaborate organization and ever completer subordination of the individual to the group, the chronic threat of war that results in increasing regimentation. After which I shall discuss the available methods for influencing people, for “engineering their consent,”<sup>4</sup> which might be used by rulers for keeping their subjects in order and even loving their servitude. If you have any ideas on this theme, I shall be grateful for comments and suggestions. Meanwhile I have been reading a number of interesting, but depressing books – *The Hidden Persuaders*,<sup>5</sup> *The Organisation Man*,<sup>6</sup> various accounts of Hitler’s propaganda methods, Sargant on brainwashing and the summary of the Army’s report on the indoctrination of American prisoners in Korea, etc. etc. If we refrain from blowing ourselves up, I suspect that these developments in chemical and psychological control of minds will turn out

to be more important than techniques for harnessing atomic energy. Similarly, from the point of view of human well being, the so-called “conquest of space” will mean much less to mankind than what may be termed its “conquest by numbers.” By the time your Helen is fifty there will be five and a half billions of us.

I was recently looking through a new edition of Milne Bramwell’s<sup>7</sup> big book on hypnosis, just published by the Julian Press. Very interesting – particularly the descriptions of Wetterstrand’s and Voisin’s<sup>8</sup> techniques of “prolonged sleep.” These men would keep patients suffering from various kinds of mental and physical illnesses in hypnotic trance for days and even weeks at a time – feeding them while in trance and having them excrete at regular intervals under hypnotic suggestion. They obtained in this way some very remarkable cures. If you don’t know the book or have not read Wetterstrand’s original publications (of which I had only vaguely heard), do look into Bramwell’s. The references to the subject in question can easily be found by consulting the index under “Sleep, prolonged.” You might find useful hints for the treatment of some of your patients. My strange oriental friend, Tahra Bey, used essentially similar methods; for he would put people with various types of mental trouble into his own kind of hypnotic sleep, induced by pressing on hypnogenic points, and leave them in that state for a day or two at a time. Meanwhile I saw in Philadelphia a young doctor, whom I had met two or three years ago in California. He has been experimenting with what in his hospital is called “The French Cocktail” – a mixture of aspirin, chlorpromazine and phenergen compounded a year or so ago by some French physicians and used for producing a form of hibernation. Administered in large doses, the French cocktail reduces temperature to 92 and lowers metabolism. People are not unconscious, but very remote and unconcerned. Dr Lynch<sup>9</sup> (that is my young friend’s name) had himself dosed with French cocktail during an attack of polio a year ago, and came out with flying colours. On Laura’s and my suggestion he is trying the cocktail on a young doctor friend of his who has a horrible case of cancer of the lymphatic system and was given only six months to live by the experts. I argued that, since the cocktail greatly reduces the metabolic rate and since cancer cells require a great deal of nourishment and probably don’t like cold, there might be a chance of the malignant cells dying or being checked in their growth, while the healthy cells survived the

hibernation process. We also suggested that then he might try the effect of accompanying the chemical hibernation by constant hypnotic suggestions and sleep-teaching. It is all very unorthodox; but conceivably it might work. I heard from Lynch a week or two ago, and he was encouraged by the results obtained in the first two weeks of treatment. I shall be interested to hear how things go on. Meanwhile I wonder very much what effects the hibernation process would have on mental cases. I asked Lynch if there were any French reports on such cases, but he said he thought not. It might well be worth trying.

Love to Jane and the poetess, and all good wishes for 1958.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
11 January 1958*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your long and very interesting letter – written, too, in the most wonderfully black ink, for which I was particularly thankful. Keep it up! What you say of Paterson's work on different kinds of authority interests me very much – more especially in relation to the articles I am now writing about the Enemies of Freedom.<sup>10</sup> One of those enemies, quite clearly, is the over-organization made inevitable and indeed necessary by the complexities of modern production and modern government in very large societies, whose numbers are rapidly growing (with the result that conditions are never stable and that all plans have to be overhauled and replaced by other plans as the population rises). Is it possible to make the best of both worlds – the world of individual freedom and the world of high organization? Under existing conditions, it would seem to be impossible. But perhaps these more realistic conceptions of the nature of authority might somehow permit us to make the best of both worlds. If Paterson has published papers or books, I would be grateful to learn their titles. I can get

the books – but the papers are harder to track down, so I'd be very grateful for copies, if he has any spares.

Your letter arrived almost simultaneously with one from D. Blewett<sup>11</sup> of Regina, written on Commission for [the] Study of Creative Imagination<sup>12</sup> paper, and stating that Drs Osmond, Hubbard, and Hoffer had suggested a meeting of the Commission in Los Angeles at some time in late February. Gerald had a duplicate of the same letter. This has taken both of us by surprise. Who is D. Blewett and what relation has he to the Commission? And, secondly, is the Commission still in existence? I thought it had been decided last summer to dissolve the thing, as being practically non-existent, or existent only in a Pickwickian sense. And finally what about Al? When you last wrote to me about him, you seemed to think he was a liability rather than an asset, and that it would be a good thing to dissolve the Commission if only to free the more serious researchers from the embarrassment of his carryings on. (I know that Sidney Cohen feels this embarrassment very strongly.) A week or two ago, Al sent a report on an attempted anti-alcoholism project to be set up under RC<sup>13</sup> auspices, together with notes on a session with an RC psychiatrist, who had reluctantly submitted to taking LSD-25. Both of them seemed to me to be distressingly absurd, and the report on the session with the psychiatrist was uninhibitedly sectarian. Would it not be best to let Al go his way within the Church? It is evidently there that he feels increasingly at home. It is evident, too, that his loyalty to the Church makes him increasingly anxious to use LSD-25 as an instrument for validating Catholic doctrines and for giving new life to Catholic symbols. Of such, perhaps, is the Kingdom of Heaven – but of such is *not* the kingdom of Scientific Research. My own feeling – and I think it is shared by Gerald – is that the Commission in its present form should be allowed to die officially – it has been unofficially dead ever since its birth. Those of its members who are interested in scientific research, rather than in the validation of dogma, should try to meet from time to time and, in the intervals, should exchange information and views by letter. I will not answer Mr Blewett's letter until I hear your views on the subject. In any case I know that Gerald will be away from home in the month of February, so won't be able to attend any projected meetings.

Now, to return to your letter. Our summer plans call for an expedition far removed from Glacier National Park; for we have been invited by the

Brazilian Government to spend some weeks down under. After which we might go on to Europe via Africa. I do hope that there will be a chance of seeing you before then. We expect to leave in May or June. Everything is still very vague.

As for the guide line for persons taking mescaline or LSD-25 – I have been too busy to work this out, but will try to do so before too long. I think the best way of doing the job would be to ask a series of questions. For example, “Do you now understand what Blake meant when he said, ‘Gratitude is heaven itself’?”, “Eckhart defined God in operational terms as, ‘The denial of all denials.’ What is your feeling about this?”, “What does the word “isness” mean to you as you look at the world around you?”, “Samsara and Nirvana are one – the Absolute is present in every relative and particular event. Eternity manifests itself in every moment of time. How do you feel about these paradoxes?”, “In spite of all appearances to the contrary, God is love and things are somehow all right. What about it?”, “Cleave the wood and you will find me, lift the stone and I am there.”, “What a miracle this is! Drawing water and chopping wood.”, “The meanest flea as it is in God is superior to the highest angel as he is in himself.”

It would be possible to put together several dozens of such short questions and statements, to be submitted to the subject in the course of his experience. If he set his mind to them, they might act as Zen koans and cause sudden openings into hitherto unglimped regions. It is certainly worth trying. If you think this approach is sound, I will go ahead with the plan.

Let me hear what you feel about the Commission and the advisability of a change in the present set up.

Yours,  
Aldous

p.s. How well I understand what you say about writing! It seems so easy and it is so difficult. And, over and above the normal difficulties, I have to wrestle with the problem of not seeing properly – which makes all research and consulting of notes an enormous burden. Which is all, no doubt, ultimately All Right – but proximately pretty fatiguing!



---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
31 January 1958*

My dear Aldous,

Just back from Washington, New York, Toronto, New York again and then back through bad weather on one of those exhausting broken up flights which proved to be slower than the train. I am glad that the black ink is successful and I shall continue to use it.

First about Dr Blewett, he is our consulting psychologist and a most able and excellent man. What we have been hoping is that we could get the Commission together and see where we are going, and if necessary end the affair. We ha[d] Al here for three weeks and we feel that in spite of his frequent oddities in emphasis he has got something. He does seem able to facilitate some sort of conversion experience in alcoholics and as Tiebout<sup>14</sup> points out this plays a big part in their stopping drinking. The trouble is that, as you say, that all the time Al's religious preoccupations keep obtruding.

We hoped that the Commission would have one meeting and would either quietly wither away or rise phoenix like. There are, however two difficulties – first the date does not seem specially propitious. Gerald can't come and I am very doubtful. I am painfully busy and may be losing my most valued colleague Ian Clancy to a damned professorship: in addition I have been travelling too much and am very tired. Second there is the small, but quite important matter of financing the commissioners. John Smythies wonders whether the Commission has any funds. I expect the date may be fixed later than February but we shall see.

The trouble is that this meeting is rather late in the day. Two or three years ago it would have had real impetus, but now we are settling down to the exploration of psychedelics and psychotomimetics. It is quite obvious what is needed – time, money and a suitable place to work in. The needs can be put on a post card.

After meeting Al I am always hopeful that he has at last grasped what is required, but since he has now been away from us three weeks these hopes have receded somewhat. He has a remarkable capacity for picking up people who are on the make in some field or other and expending much energy in discovering what is self evident. My suggestion will be to see whether we can raise funds to allow a meeting in the fall. If we can't then we must suppose that the time is not ripe and the Commission should dissolve on the lines you suggest.

I find Al's outlook deeply interesting. I think that what has happened is that he has become aware of experiences which were quite foreign to him and has made a mixture of papist and engineering ideas. The trouble is that he now takes this not as a useful construct for further exploration but as a self-evident truth. So far as I can make out he is not aware that other people may either have different experiences from him, or may interpret the same experiences differently and may believe that their interpretation is as valid as his! Yet there is so much real goodness in Al! I don't think he realises that one may be fond of a person yet be apprehensive about their actions. Have I made my rather mixed feelings clear?

Paterson's book is *Morale in War and Work* published by Parrish, London 1955. I am sending a mimeo of a recent paper. He is hard at work on a book. I think his contribution is enormously important because if we recognise the nature and complexity of authority we may learn how to use it to further decent goals. I shall ask him to send you spares of his papers. My guess is that much of our misfortune comes from our failure to recognise that a complicated society requires a very different organisation from a simple one. As you suggest there is a chance that we might make the best of both worlds. Paterson points out that most theories of administration consist of remarks to the effect that there is no theory of administration. Which may be true but does not get us very far!

I hope that the Brazil visit goes well and look forward to hearing of your travels there. I do hope we shall meet before long.

Francis is at work on our long stay wards. He is very alert, intelligent and amiable. He meets regularly with our gifted Japanese Canadian architect Kyo Izumi and they both seem to be seeing things from slightly different view points. Added to this we have our studies in perception which are adding to our knowledge of the schizophrenic world. It looks as

if the current mental hospitals are the worst possible for schizophrenic people. They are unsuitable for human habitation and are especially bad for sick humans, particularly those with perceptual disorders. Sometimes I wilt beneath the follies which are turning up. Look at the Rorschach inkblot tests which are ways of studying perception: arbitrary and not very satisfactory ways on which prodigious effort has been expended. A great tribe of Rorschach testers has grown up in an elaborate vocabulary and mystique. Everyone has joined in – but to what end? Almost none, the most elaborate statistical techniques have failed to make the test much more than a “useful adjunctive.” Yet it is pretty obvious that the test is an index of perceptual differences. While the Rorschach was becoming an industry a mirror test of a crude sort was devised. It was said that schizophrenic people gaze longer in a mirror than others. However no one asked why and it was soon lost. The reason why is becoming at least fairly clear and is grandly obvious. They are surprized, puzzled and perhaps horrified by what they see. A tailor’s mirror plus 20 schizophrenics makes it pretty clear that one only has to investigate their perceptual world to realise that it is very odd indeed.

Yet all this could have been done 60 years ago if people had only had the sense to take the rather odd schizophrenic utterances seriously. Once again we have been far too clever, but not quite clever enough. But we should not have been such mugs. Judge Schreber’s hallucinatory grand piano (walnut, I think) should have made even the cleverest think for a few minutes. So we are plugging away and are not loaded down with papers, books, etc. to write.

Meanwhile the adrenochrome research pushes on. Some Germans say that they are on the track of a very powerful green chrome indole which is at least as strong as lysergic acid. This would not surprise me. I expect we shall have a tribe of them before we are through. Adrenochrome seems to be a natural body product, it is usually harmless and may play an important part in the pharmacology of mood.

I like the idea of your koans. I think they would penetrate deeper than longer poems. It seems important to pick them from those who knew. I have found Al’s horrid shroud of Saint Something simply distasteful. I suppose it is true that everything can act as a mirror of the other, but some things seem more efficient. There are interesting possibilities – one might record such

statements on tape and play them over rather like a refined prayer wheel. I look forward to seeing how the project develops.

Meanwhile I have found something which seems exciting. I expect you read Jessie L. Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*<sup>15</sup> long ago. It was the book Eliot used as the basis of his *Waste Land*,<sup>16</sup> I believe. Anyway I had never read it. The [chapter VIII](#) on the Medicine Man is fascinating. The Medicine Man restores the sick king whose illness had withered the land. Miss Weston suggests that it is the king's loss of potency which has withered the land. She quotes references to the Rig Veda<sup>17</sup> telling of his restoration with Soma. Now Soma may have been a restorer of life and sexual potency, but it was above all a producer of vision. I wonder whether it was not loss of sexual potency which led to the killing of the sacred king, but what may have been far more important, loss of vision? Of course there are a few substances like hashish and yohimbi which are said to effect both. I suppose one may object that Miss Weston, who is a pupil of Sir James Frazer,<sup>18</sup> makes no reference to vision and was concerned only with fertility rites. However, whatever Victorian pruriency may have done about focusing attention on sex, in spite of the efforts of Myers and James, it hardly got off the ground about vision. Very odd when one reads the *Census of Hallucinations*,<sup>19</sup> though they were pretty pedestrian. So I suppose that no one felt that it was possible to suggest that in the Grail story what might be at issue was not the priest-kings sexuality as much as his capacity for fecund prophecy. If one supposes that such kings were picked because of this ability then its disappearance or weakening would be a matter for grave concern. We know that the Tibetans still do select people on this basis and train them. The trouble is that with age, eidetic and presumably other visioning becomes less. Soma might be the herb which would restore vision of the inner and so would justly be considered king of the herbs. This would put psychedelics among the earliest pieces of pharmacological equipment and mean that medicine has been deeply concerned with them from its inception.

While in New York I saw Matthew, Ellen and the children. Matthew was recovering from flu. The house is now in much better shape and I think Ellen is missing Woodbridge less. It is very convenient and quiet.

I expect you have read de Rougemont's *Love in the Western World*.<sup>20</sup> Francis introduced me to it and I am much impressed. It deals with the

Cathars<sup>21</sup> and their relationship to the Troubadours.<sup>22</sup> De Rougemont suggests that the Cathars, who were part of a widely spread Manicheism<sup>23</sup> which invaded both Islam and Christianity, infected the Roman church very gravely. The inquisition's brutal efforts to stamp out the Cathars resulted in some aspects of the heresy becoming official dogma and much more seeping in. He suggests that the rise of passionate love in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century, which is exemplified by the Tristan and Isolde myth, where the aim of passion is death of the lovers, is the lay equivalent of Catharism. Shortly after the Catharistic heresy was stamped out the Church began to insist on celibacy of the clergy. The perfect of the Cathars were celibate.

It seems that Catharism with its emphasis on death and oblivion and Communism with its emphasis on the people's paradise a few generations ahead are both examples of heresies which quickly infect those who would destroy them most vigorously. Communism has been enormously benefitted by its bitterest opponents who have by their opposition stimulated it and often prevented it from disintegrating. A Manichean lurks in each of us who longs to have a black and white world with clear cut divisions into cops and robbers, without the true shading of a variety of very similar greys. Both heresies, it seems to me emphasize that the Kingdom of God is *somewhere else*. It is not within and around us here and now but the other side of death or somewhere ahead in time. That errors are made is not surprising – what is sad is that these errors are so quickly assimilated by their opponents.

Wracked by administrative difficulties. Those lunatics who placed this vast hospital far away from everything should have been shot. We can keep our doctors by a vigorous and active program but not their wives. I don't see anyway around this. In the long run our biochemical discoveries will doubtless cope and bring the hospitalized psychotics down to quite small numbers, but while we have thousands of long stay patients we need able men and cannot hold them in these great fortresses dumped in tiny places. It is all so obvious but beyond the wit of most politicians. Jane is very weary of the prairies and I know what she means, 6½ years is a long time. Yet in that time we have accomplished such a vast amount. Good wishes to Laura.

Ever,  
Humphry

P.S. Much enjoyed “Variations on a Philosopher”<sup>24</sup> – a brilliant essay – one of your finest.

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
2 February 1958*

Dear Humphry,<sup>25</sup>

We had dinner yesterday evening with Al, and I found him, I must say, extremely genial and less extravagant than formerly; so please ignore what I wrote in my last letter about him. At the same time I still have doubts about the general validity of his methods. The specifically ritual approach may be all right in some cases, but it certainly won't do in all cases. Moreover both Laura and I felt, while we listened to Al's account of what he does, that he gives, knowingly or unknowingly, altogether too much suggestion. Again, this may be all right in some cases – but decidedly not in all. Something more permissive should be the general rule, I feel. As for the projected meeting – Al tells me that he doesn't see much point in it. Gerald won't be available during February. Sidney Cohen doesn't object, but feels no very great enthusiasm. As for myself, I don't really know. I am anyhow merely a spectator, not a worker in the field, and can only make suggestions from the outside and on theoretical grounds – as I did in regard to giving posthypnotic suggestions to the effect that LSD experiences be revived by purely psychological means and at will (a suggestion, incidentally, which I have been making to all and sundry for the last three years, and which nobody, to my knowledge, has yet acted upon – though everyone says, “How interesting!”). If we have a meeting of this highly Pickwickian organization, what (outside the pleasure and interest of meeting a number of intelligent people interested in the same sort of thing) will be gained? Probably it would be worth meeting for the meeting's sake. Would there be ulterior advantages? Al tells me you think of setting up a headquarters somewhere. But this means money, a secretary, a director. Couldn't the same results be attained more simply and cheaply by discussing matters at a

meeting, or by correspondence, and dividing up the work among the various experimenters? Sid Cohen has an interesting project which he hopes to get financed – a project that would test the efficacy of graded doses of LSD in affecting the performance of a group of professional artists. Another important project would be to give the drug to a group carefully selected to include representatives of the Sheldonian extremes and of the commoner specimens in the middle. Yet another project should be to find out whether people belonging to Galton's non-visualizing variety of human beings ever see visions under average doses of LSD, whether they can be made to see visions by large doses, and whether (as AI insists they can) be made to see visions by suitable suggestions. Yet another project – the administration of LSD to terminal cancer cases, in the hope that it would make dying a more spiritual, less strictly physiological process. I have been asked by the *Saturday Evening Post* to do a piece on the ethical, religious and social implications of psychopharmacology and I shall certainly make these suggestions in the article, and any others you and anyone else in the field think should be made. If you decide to come here, we can talk about this. Otherwise I'd be grateful for any epistolary suggestions.

Let me know what you and Abe think about the advisability of a meeting. I have no strong feelings one way or another – except that I should certainly like to see you.

Meanwhile I am very busy on my articles on the fate of liberty in the modern world. The problem is to keep it snappy, but not to oversimplify or leave out too much.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
10 February 1958*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you again. I think that we are all in pretty general agreement. No immediate meeting but I do think that one later on would be very valuable. I feel that you and Gerald have much to contribute and that this could be most effective in a relaxed and easy discussion for which even the best letters are a poor substitute. And some of our members don't relish letter writing too much.

Regarding Al's technique – I am in agreement with you. I don't think it should be accepted *uncritically* as a model, but I believe he has done some wonderfully useful explorations if we only look at them in this light and not as manifestations of the only way to set about it. I am just back from a research meeting where we discussed Al's efforts here. And I think you might pass on to him how warmly he is appreciated. With some people it is brilliantly successful and provides sign posts to the other which they greatly need. My strong suspicion is that these people are usually among Sheldon's Northwesterns, and nearly always high in somatonia and viscerotonia but low in cerebrotonia. People who have been extraverted and for whom the inner is mysterious, frightening and alien.

Furthermore it seems no coincidence that Al himself is a Northwestern. Jane to whom he gave mescaline feels that he is usually quite out of his depth with the cerebrotonic creatures and in this he is in good company for most psycho-analysts bog down badly in cerebrotonia. They are meeting another sort of animal.

Let us keep the Pickwickian organization going. It may prove effective and we can always have a meeting in the back of our minds. Abram and I will club Al via Duncan Blewett if he gets up to mischief. I don't think Al's methods are *generally* valid but since alcoholics for instance lie in the Northwesterns and centrotypes of that group it may still be of great value. You are clearly right that systemic exploration is needed. We hope to start before long, but our resources are still small and we are urging Al to help us increase them. I shall be cataloguing your suggestions and we shall attach them. The terminal cancer one seems especially useful and humane.

My own belief, following my explorations in a two group with Al and Duncan Blewett and a four group with the Huxleys, is that the possibility of exploring group relationships is one of the most exciting. We are very ignorant. Many multiple experiments have *not* involved the group but only separate mescaline or LSD universes existing side by side. But much more



can be done. It is difficult, possibly dangerous, but I believe that in this manner we will move slowly towards an understanding of 777.<sup>26</sup> I wonder whether 666<sup>27</sup> was such a silly idea after all? Surely that would be the level *below* understanding at which superman exhilaration would be likely to obscure any further understanding. I think we may learn to move towards God through the great variety of his creatures and so avoid the notion that it is by denying creature, rather than fulfilling him that the other can be reached.

The grave danger is that people of differing temperament will assume that their particular type of experience is the only meaningful one. I believe that we can explore through each other and so develop greater tolerance, understanding and love. Certainly my peyote experience had this effect regarding the Indians. I believe, perhaps erroneously, that in a few hours I learnt to feel as they feel about the great tragedy which enveloped them when the buffalo were slaughtered. Some people could do this without LSD or peyote. Others might not do it even with them, but I think it requires much exploration. My experience in our research has been that ideas will only run freely and fruitfully between people who have a high regard and respect for each other. This is not the only requirement, but it is one which proves the most insuperable obstacle. Researches rarely break down through lack of knowledge, but far more often hatred and envy prevents knowledge being put to use. Surely this must apply in many other human activities where words become ways of parrying and goading rather than communicating?

Meanwhile back to mundane matters. The research continues to gain momentum. We keep feeling that it *must* slow down but it shows no sign of doing so. A group of Germans have confirmed that adrenochrome is psychotomimetic and have found that it can be given sublingually. We have checked on this and find that they are right. However they have given us an even more valuable clue which I would be glad if you would keep to yourself for a little because it is so surprising. They showed that some samples of adrenochrome are far more active than others. Abram spotted what this might mean and we are pursuing it. Briefly it seems that there are two adrenochromes, just as there are two adrenalins, dextro- and laevoisomers with differing optical activities. D-adrenalin seems to be far less physiologically active than L-adrenalin which normally occurs in the

body. Oddly enough L-adrenalin turns into D-adrenochrome and this seems to be much less active than the L variety. Suppose, due to some enzymic oddity, you get L-adrenochrome being formed, either from D-adrenalin or even from L-adrenalin. Then you would have schizophrenia. A very small change could have a disastrous result.

Four years ago Abram and I were urging this on our chemists and were firmly and politely told to be less insistent. I think that we can now explain why there has been so much difficulty in reproducing our work. i) It has been far from easy to make pure adrenochrome, ii) When it has been made it is as likely as not the inactive isomer. Down from adreno-chrome is a very powerful compound of a green hue whose composition is not yet certain.

So we are driving our chemists furiously and they are making prodigious efforts, because they now feel as we have done, that this is a once in a lifetime chance. Very rarely can one take part in a deliberate and planned assault on a very great illness, and be so well ahead of others that almost every week another bit of the jigsaw falls in place.

From a purely personal point of view I am glad that Abram and I did not deceive ourselves about our early experiments in 1952. I suppose that in our original sample there was a fair amount of the active preparation. Although I would be glad to think that God had cheated slightly on our behalf and given us transient psychotic episodes at a convenient time (i.e. after taking inactive adrenochrome), it seems more modest to suppose that we luckily got enough of the active isomer. Anyway the hunt is now up.

Very cold weather now – 20° below zero, but until this last week we seem to have been enjoying better weather than in Florida where it was very cold.

Have you read Edith Bone's *Seven Years Solitary*?<sup>28</sup> It is published in England by Hamish Hamilton and tells of an elderly communist lady who was imprisoned by Hungarian communists. A wonderful story and one which may be useful to you. I think you should also read the GAP Symposia 2, 3, and 4 which deal extensively with forcible indoctrination.

One point that we forget is the great decrease in darkness in our lives: electricity in one form or another is usually at hand. If the other should obtrude we can very quickly drive it away. I think we need psychedelics as never before.

Good wishes to Laura and to Al and Rita when you next see them. Let Al know how much his visit has been appreciated. We must try to keep him away from crooks and sycophants and from ignoring or being huffed with those who may honestly and properly differ with him.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

p.s. Jane sends love and hopes to see you again before too long. Be sure to let me know if I can supply information ... [missing line].

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
16 February 1958*

Dear Humphry,

Many thanks for your letter. We have not heard from Al again, after our one meeting, and I don't know how to contact him – for he gave no address or phone number in Long Beach. Perhaps he has now vanished. Who knows?

What you say about the applicability of his method to Northwesterners is, I am sure, correct. I am just reaching the point in my articles, where I have to write about what might be done on behalf of liberty by educational methods – and I start with the need for telling people that every human individual is biologically unique and unlike all other individuals, and by pointing out that this fact has been systematically denied by many behaviourists, sociologists, etc. There are preposterous utterances in J.B. Watson's<sup>29</sup> earlier writings, and even today you will find eminent psychologists, like B.F. Skinner of Harvard, solemnly coming out with statements that “modern science” makes it clear that the achievement of the individual (as opposed to the group and the culture) approximates zero. How can people talk such rot? The reason, I suppose, is that they are inspired by a Will to Order, an urge for tidiness, which revolts against the wild and maddening diversity of men and likes to concentrate instead on the uniformities of culture. But the result, of course, is fatal – for it justifies the

Organization Men and the dictators in satisfying their urge for tidiness by means of regimentation. (Regimentation in society is the equivalent of logic in a scientific paper or composition in a work of art. The Will to Order is admirable in matters involving the handling of symbols; in dealing with human beings, it can, when pushed too far, become tyranny. As usual, we have to find the happy mean, and as usual this is much easier said than done.)

One of the things that should be read to a person under LSD is Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, including the extraordinary "Memorable Fancies" that precede and follow the "Proverbs of Hell." Read the thing through and see if you don't agree. I'm sure that if this were put on a tape it would be found extremely enlightening by the subject. Incidentally, I found on one of the occasions I took LSD that listening to records of poetry or of religious utterances is valuable in many ways. There is first of all the same strange experience which one gets from listening to music – the sense that, though the tempo remains unaltered, the piece endures for ages. The poetry or the religious utterances take on this same quasi-eternal quality. Another interesting point – one seems to penetrate the inner significance of what is being read, the meaning for oneself, more completely than in ordinary circumstances. Thus, the cultured melancholy resignation of Matthew Arnold,<sup>30</sup> which I ordinarily like and feel at home with, is felt under LSD to be far too negative – unrealistically so.

I have just had a letter from Blewett suggesting a date in early May for a meeting. Alternately one in October. I don't expect to be here in October, but shall almost certainly be here in May.

My love to the family.

Yours,  
Aldous

P.S. You mention GAP reports on indoctrination. Could you lend me these for a week or two – or tell me where to get them and their exact titles.

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 February 1958

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. Just back from a quick dash up to Saskatoon for a special meeting and the chance to try some sub-lingual adrenochrome. I don't doubt the stuff works. Five mmg under the tongue is enough to produce subtle but very damaging changes in perception. I estimated 16 yards as 30 even though I knew that something was wrong and 30 seconds as 88 which is grossly out for me even when I am preoccupied (usually get in the 25–40 second range). It was very difficult to show disorder of thought because this is so hard to demonstrate. We now have evidence of several powerful relatives of adrenochrome (it is red) and there are yellow, green, and blue ones reported. Some are very powerful. I suspect we are on the right track now. It would be very odd if, although the body can produce psychotomimetics on its own and although we have an illness which resembles the effect of those agents in normals, yet the illness and the agents weren't connected. Indeed so odd that I would feel justified in using Einstein's observation "Der Herr Gott ist raffiniert, aber boschaft ist Er nicht."<sup>31</sup> I hope that makes some sort of sense, my German is negligible.

I have sent on GAP Symposia 2 and 3 (3 is the first one on forcible indoctrination) and have given you the reference for 4 and the Hinkel-Wolff paper<sup>32</sup> which should bring you up to date on the modern knowledge of forcible indoctrination. What is so interesting is that so far the police have made very little use of psychopharmacology – long may they remain satisfied with their own beastly methods which are efficient enough for their purposes. They are not at all interested in these new developments on the whole because I suppose they feel that the "old is better." Policemen are always essentially conservative people who believe strongly in "law and order." Edith Bone's book *Seven Years Solitary* makes it clear that they have changed very little in 40 years. They still use it seems, the Okhrana<sup>33</sup> text book on police methods. Cruelty is not very ingenious. It has no need to be. However this does not mean that we should be unworried by these immensely powerful methods and substances now available. Even

policemen must have their geniuses. What is really to be feared is a one-shot tasteless drug of addiction which would produce in its victim an intense degree of craving which he would never be able to rationalize. A wordless pleasure or lack of it for which there was no social explanation. Like Lilly's monkeys. I can see no reason why such a substance should not exist. The use of heroin by the Japanese in China would simply be a clumsy precursor of the new monster.

I am glad you are taking a smack at the organization men. A much need[ed] one! As a part time one myself I know how easily one can delude oneself in these matters. The closer you look into these matters the clearer it becomes that Kate will not be turned into Nan; however much the professors allege that they are interchangeable, it seems they aren't! The facts are not the sort of neat formulas which the professors think they should be. But that does not alter the facts. This has always been the great temptation of schoolmen through the ages, to save the system at the expense of the facts. Deplorable, but very understandable if only things were neat and tidy, logical. The trouble is they ain't.

John Smythies tells me that a new flock of chrome indoles is being mustered in Chicago, including a blue one. The Germans have a green one and we red and yellow. A regular rainbow of them! It is unlikely, but amusing.

Perhaps we shall be able to meet in May. There are so many things that can be done with LSD-25 etc. that I'm sure a meeting would be valuable. Anyway we shall see.

I agree with you about the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. I have found that these things acquire an extraordinary significance which, somehow carries over into the everyday world.

The perception work continues to be wholly fascinating, we are accumulating evidence that schizophrenic people inhabit a world which is measurably different from other people's. Yet for some unexplained reason this has been largely ignored for the last 50 years or so, mainly it seems because Kraepelin and Bleuler said that there was no perceptual disturbance. All the evidence is against this but the dogma holds against the evidence! Just so does Bleuler minor<sup>34</sup> repeat that LSD-25 and mescaline produce deliria or similar states, although there is ample evidence that they usually don't! Even the littlest great man will get a following of sheep's

heads provided he makes his opinion solemn enough and long winded enough. Bleuler minor is quite a small great man.

M[a]n's inability to recognise that there is a difference between opinion and fact and unwillingness to admit that one might sometimes be ignorant is amazing. But what to me is even more amazing is that vast numbers seem wholly satisfied with second hand opinions of no particular worth. I suppose it is the old longing for a nice, secure and settled order where there will be no uncomfortable questions. Good wishes to Laura.

Jane sends love as do I.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

p.s. Hope I shall be able to see the new articles – where are they coming out?

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
11 April 1958*

My dear Aldous,

Be sure to let me know whether this special black ball point is as legible as my black ink – if not I shall return to the black ink.

Jane and I are back after our dash East and South and are sorting out our feelings and my color transparencies. The plane dislocates one and yet it would be horrid to be deprived of it now.

The journey had three main aspects. My lecture at Columbia on architecture and psychiatric hospitals – which cleared up a number of points for me. Jane's stay with Matthew and Ellen when I was at GAP – we both saw Francis Thompson's wonderful New York, New York<sup>35</sup> there – and an astonishing three days in Florida with Eileen at Mrs Bolton's Casa Apava. After the Columbia lecture Jane and I spent a very interesting couple of hours with Bill Wilson discussing LSD-25 and its ramifications. Wilson is a remarkable chap, immense potential which even his alcoholic restlessness

has not been able to destroy. Our work is pointing to some anomaly of adrenalin metabolism in at least some alcoholics. They *almost* have to drink, and naturally when the “medicine” is to be got anywhere at any time (almost) they rush to it. I think Bill W. is getting a bit fed up with AA, it is becoming so very respectable and respected. It makes him feel uneasy.

Casa Apava must be visited to be believed, even now looking at my excellent pictures I can't quite believe it. The plushy lawns, the pool cleaned every morning, the big house like a deserted film set in a state of miraculous preservation, and at the bottom of the lawn the great expanse of pale sands and thundering ocean. Waiting for the miracle to end and the day when the waves will sweep over the Casa – only a little change in the ice caps would ensure this.

On about a mile and a half of enchanting beach the Casa and four other encampments of Mrs Bolton's relatives abut. Each of the five houses is set in great lawns and surrounded by gardens ranging from the unspectacular Casa to that of Mrs Blossom (Mrs Bolton's sister) which is superb. An old Scot from Aberdeenshire, probably a distant kinsman of mine, runs this estate and in 40 years has made its gardens famous all over the states. The owners enjoy and understand it so very little.

These two rich sisters are fascinating – I have suggested that Francis Huxley should make a study of these great heiresses. Hugely wealthy, very young – but unlike the male scions of great money families they have nothing to do – no businesses to run. They are not like great European heiresses trained to unite great houses, fortunes or estates, a far more dreadful fate is theirs, they are in the perfect rat trap – they are dedicated to romantic love and the belief that everyman is fair game and they are fair game to everyman. They want to be loved for themselves alone – yet are convinced that no one could or should love them except for their money. They have the worst of all worlds because they have been deprived of hope. There is nothing to hope for – one can always buy anything and find out that it isn't worth having. What they do about their awful fate is a matter of temperament and accidents of upbringing. Alice Bouverie drifts from man to man, being sucked dry by lovers or husbands. It seems to have made no difference – for she could never find the perfect man she was looking for. Mrs Bolton has gone into politics and her energies are absorbed in the huge labyrinth of American politics. Others take up bridge or anything. Have



women ever before been placed in positions of such huge wealth with almost no obligations? They have no role except perhaps conspicuous consumption and they aren't sure of that.

Eileen gave us several evidences of her extra-ordinary abilities. But I hope to write up the "reading" she did of two papers sealed in envelopes. I was the only one there who knew what was in the envelopes. Jane did not know. While in one, had someone read the papers they might have guessed, in the other there was no clue. She did better on the one with no clue.

I discussed this with her later and it seems that her experience closely resembles that found in some LSD-25 experiences. She follows clues which come to her in a dramatic "feeling" form – her great difficulty is not to elaborate them too much and not to get involved in them too much. Yet unless she is involved she can achieve little. It is a very delicate and peculiar balance of great interest. She says that none of the many who have investigated her have ever paid more than the most cursory attention to this experience. Most of them have considered her as an instrument or a half wit or a potential crook.

The relationship between the medium and the client, in this case the investigator, seems to have had little attention, though Eileen is sure that it [is] sometimes of predominant importance and must always be taken into account.

I have suggested to Eileen that what is needed is a very thorough scrutiny of parapsychological method. Too often it seems like a solvent which destroys what it is supposed to dissolve. This often happens in chemistry and is a well recognized hazard, but not it seems given much attention in parapsychology. Suppose that we assume that these odd things which we have all experienced happen! Then we have the task of finding out those conditions which are most and those that are least favorable. Much effort will have to be devoted to this, but it seems much more promising than these tedious and often silly games with statistics.

By the way do you know the name of Maria's red haired, brown-eyed Swedish hunch back witch who I visited in 1954? Eileen would like to put Karlis Osis in touch with her.

One of the odd things with these "really scientific" statisticians is that once the statistics convince them they become impervious to reason. Poor Soal<sup>36</sup> is being defrauded by two naughty Welsh boys but although they

have been caught cheating flagrantly he is sure that some of their efforts are genuine. They may be, but simple fellow that he is he does not see that work with them is now hopelessly contaminated.

I think LSD-25 may be very useful in examining these complex relationships.

We have T.T. Paterson from Glasgow with us examining our organization and the relationships on which it is built. It is a web of authority and responsibility of rights and duties. Many of them ill defined, ambiguous and improperly understood. It is not surprising that deep tensions and resentments often develop and are discharged through patients (low in the pecking order) to their great detriment. These big organizations are particularly prone to these illnesses and develop all sorts of secondary ailments in their attempt to heal themselves. These social ailments result in unresolved tensions which then begin to reverberate through the autonomic nervous systems of the people who work in the factory, office, laboratory or hospital. Some people become so uncomfortable that they leave, others develop ways of protecting themselves which may be harmful to the organization as a whole. A smaller proportion become overtly neurotic, psycho-somatic or psychotic. Of course it is not only the work group which does this, there is the larger society and the family group, but the work group plays a large part in many people's lives and can disrupt them significantly. Our society – which changes so quickly – can not afford to depend upon the old ways of defining function and role but must devise means of doing this quickly and accurately. This is what Paterson does. Mental hospitals are very good laboratories for him because they are complex organisations with rather special sorts of goals which have been run on traditional “simple” organizational principles in a very disastrous manner. They are pathological specimens of great interest. Paterson may be in New York at the end of this month or the beginning of May – will you be there?

Eileen tells me that Puharich and a millionaire called Belk<sup>37</sup> are starting up a parapsychological Foundation to end all foundations. It should be a real stinker. Puharich is a strange fellow compounded almost equally of genuine scientist, comedian and something which seems, if reports be true, to resemble a crook. There is nothing unusual about this, but what is unusual is that his persona has not accepted anyone of these roles, but he

does a quick change act from one to the other. He either doesn't care or probably doesn't know how disconcerting this is for others. I don't mean that he is wholly unaware of his effect on others – he enjoys the fuss but he does not seem to be able to recognise the way many others feel about him. Or is it he does see but doesn't care?

Spring is coming to the prairies and rather exaggerates its huge bleakness and flatness. I wish we didn't have to work here, but for the moment nowhere else offers anything like the scope. Here we can and are doing things which the great U.S. research factories are too unwieldy to do. It is absurd that this tiny and remote province (I mean tiny in numbers of people for it has just over 900,000 – the size of Florence in Galileo's day) should be leading the world in psychopharmacology, mental hospital design and organization, perception work, and be developing new ideas about the way people occupy space. I don't think it is unfair to say that we can hold our own with advantage against 10–50 times our resources – which shows I suppose that we are still very ignorant about how to use resources.

The attack on schizophrenia goes very merrily. It is becoming clear that somewhere in the metabolic network connecting adrenalin, adrenochrome, adrenolutin and leucoadrenochrome and in the substances linked to these lie answers to many, if not most of our questions. With pure adrenochrome and pure adrenolutin we are now able to measure these strange substances. What is so odd to me is that the huge American research gangs could have scooped us at any time in the last five years. We gave them all the clues required to do so, but they are so sluggish and so sure that they know best that we will now, I think leave them far behind. While they are building their "research empires" we have got on and done the work. I do wish you would write one of your critical essays on this. The Americans are the Romans of our day, though not so well organized. But the Romans could depend upon exploiting the brains of Greece and other places. The Americans can't, at least not for long, because they are too badly organized. In 15–20 years scientists won't go and work in the U.S. because the opportunities will be better elsewhere. Or am I being provincial?

Love to Laura. How is the indoctrination paper going? Jane sends love.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
22 June 1958

My dear Humphry,

What a long time since I heard from you – or you, alas, from me! Time, as one advances in life, seems to become jet propelled and the number of things that have to be done in these abbreviated minutes and hours remains constant or even increases.

For the past weeks Laura has been engaged in producing my play, *The Gioconda Smile*<sup>38</sup> – producing it through thick and thin, and in spite of a succession of catastrophes. Like the Generals of earlier days who used to have horses shot under them in their decisive battles, she has had about six complete casts shot under her in the course of her campaign – only to come up with better replacements, so that now we have a first-rate collection of English actors, highly competent and thoroughly trained in provincial repertory, West End and Broadway productions and now in movies and TV. So that I hope and think we shall have an excellent performance when the play opens next Friday. I wish you could be here to see it.

Meanwhile I have been very busy. After finishing off the articles on the Enemies of Freedom (of which I am sending you, rather belatedly as I myself was very late in receiving the printed version, a copy), I have been working at my phantasy about a society in which serious efforts are made to realize human potentialities. I don't know yet if I have a satisfactory fable, or how much of a fable will be necessary, or, on the other hand, how reluctant people will be to read material which isn't straight story telling, but is yet (I hope) rather interesting. The locale of the story is a hypothetical island between Ceylon and Sumatra – independent in spite of colonialism, where the process of turning an old Shivaite-cum-Mahayana-Buddhist society into something combining the best features of East and West was inaugurated in the 1840s by a Scottish surgeon (modelled on James Esdaile), who operates on the then Raja under "magnetic anaesthesia," becomes his friend and acts as his collaborator in initiating the necessary

changes, which are carried on by successors of the Scotchman and the king, during the succeeding three generations. It is interesting to try to imagine what could be done to create a good society, dedicated to eliciting all the latent powers and gifts of individuals, by consciously and deliberately adopting and combining desirable features from different cultures, Indian, modern Western, Polynesian, Chinese – interesting but, as you can guess, exceedingly difficult.

We are supposed to leave for Brazil<sup>39</sup> on July 21<sup>st</sup>, and I shall really have to start thinking in a practical way about our plans. Hitherto neither of us has done anything – we merely wait for things to happen. And perhaps that is the best policy; for it generally seems to turn out (in Samuel Butler’s words) that “as luck would have it, Providence is on our side.”<sup>40</sup> I am writing to Francis<sup>41</sup> asking him to give me a few introductions.

I met an interesting young Texan MD the other day, who has been using hypnosis to supplement his conventional doctoring – with striking results, he told me, in many serious heart conditions, also in Berger’s Disease, in which hypnotic suggestion will often make possible a restoration of circulation to the blood-starved extremities. He has also used Wetterstrand’s technique of simply keeping people under hypnosis for considerable periods at a stretch, thus giving the *vis medicatrix naturae* a chance to do its work without interference from the agitated Ego. This same young man also described the results of having inadvertently taken nearly two grams of mescaline – inability to breathe, internal hemorrhages. A very unpleasant situation indeed. He is reading a paper on LSD at the AMA<sup>42</sup> meeting in San Francisco – his name, T.T. Peck.<sup>43</sup>

Our love to you both.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
25 June 1958*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. I have a started letter to you in my brief case which did not get finished. I too have been very busy in a variety of ways and this has hampered my writing. It is splendid to have your letter. Please thank Laura for the fine and impressive program of the *Smile*. The six casts is heroic.<sup>44</sup> I don't think George II, who lost two horses at Dettingen, I think, could have competed.

Our most important news is that Jane is going to have a baby in the late fall. We are glad – though at the moment worried for she is not very well. Helen says that she hopes it will be a horsey, a baby sister or a lamb in that order of preference. She seems fairly resigned to a baby sibling, but would doubtless be really pleased with a little centaur.

I shall look forward to the Enemies of Freedom – you are right it is hard pressed on every side. We must give it every inch of breathing space we can.

Abram Hoffer and I have just finished “Schizophrenia: A New Approach III.”<sup>45</sup> It brings the work up to May '58 and tells of the great advances of the last year, the syntheses of pure adrenochrome and adrenolutin and our assay method. We asked John Smythies to join us in the paper and he contributed a good section on method which was useful. We are now engaged in a long haggle with him about a man in Washington with the odd name of Axelrod.<sup>46</sup> Axelrod is at the huge Bethesda research plant and 47 is one of their biochemists. We gave them some of our adrenochrome last fall (they could not make it) and Axelrod claims that he *cannot* measure adrenochrome in the body. We claim we can. Now it is obvious that such a difference of opinion can only be settled by comparing the methods. These are not yet published since we know far more about adrenochrome than Axelrod (for he had the small supply with which he developed his method from us). We reasonably prefer our method to his. But John would have us engage in almost endless hedging and prevarication “to cover ourselves and gain a reputation for scientific caution.” This seems a bit late in the day. He does not seem to understand that if one is putting forward a new hypothesis there comes sooner or later (there must come if it is any good at all) a point where others challenge it. The clearer that challenge the better. It just is not true that major scientists hedge their bets.

They say, as an artist must say, “this is how it seems to me.” It is perhaps a nerve wracking procedure, but unless this is done scientific discovery would be impossible. Research is a game played to rules which assist one to find out whether an hypothesis is supported or not by evidence. It is obvious that the clearer the hypothesis the more useful it will be. Rightness and wrongness are far less important than clarity and testability. However I hope we’ll get our reluctant dragon into the fight. It is episodes like this which make me so glad that it was Abram who became my co-partner in the research. He has the nerve, the energy, what they called in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the bottom required for what is a quite murderously tough game in its quiet way! Abram can accept, without getting excited, the fact that our New Approach is the only major hypothesis in schizophrenia research. For this very reason every gun will be turned on it. This is perhaps uncomfortable, but it is also inevitable and a sure sign of its importance and usefulness. We can’t have our cake and eat it! If we want to put forward ideas of this sort we must be prepared for all sorts of ups and downs. John would put to sea, if one could guarantee the wind won’t blow!

However Schizophrenia III will soon go away and other papers are being prepared. There is a vast amount of work to be done on adrenalin derivatives which seem to have much to do with the bodily economy and are controlled by enzymes. Clearly a small change in these enzymes due to an hereditary disorder would leave a person very vulnerable to out pourings of adrenalin.

I expect you saw that Albert Hofmann<sup>47</sup> has isolated Wasson’s mushroom hallucinogen – psilocybin is an indole with a phosphorus atom in it. In the last five years about 15 hallucinogens have been added – all seem to be the sort of compounds which we predicted. Now this is encouraging and remarkable. Dr Abood<sup>48</sup> in Chicago has found a new family of atropine derivatives but they produce confusion. Up to now it was never possible to predict from a formula whether a substance was likely to be psychotomimetic or not.

I look forward to more news of the miraculous island. It sounds a fine idea. An imaginative history. Esdaile must have been working just at the start of modern medicine and so could have introduced public health measures, alongside a medicine and surgery which goes from psyche to soma rather than the convention which we use. It is obvious that if the

energy and effort which has gone into modern anaesthesia (say) had been devoted to developing hypnosis we might expect it to be far more efficient. Children could easily learn hypnosis while young. We have explored experience using a particular set of “lenses,” as it were, deriving from our culture and technology. Another culture and another technology would have resulted in a very different sort of exploration.

Talking about islands we hope to be on Al Hubbard’s in a couple of weeks’ time. I shall try to find out (with what chance of success I don’t know) what Al intends to do. I sometimes feel, perhaps unjustly that he likes being Father Christmas, but doesn’t feel that the children need presents! Of course if our schizophrenia work is successful we won’t need presents, but we cannot be absolutely certain and further we don’t know how long it will take for it to be recognized. What is needed with psychedelics is determined, well directed and really [thorough] research. We have enough clues for several lifetimes. That a variety of amiable people think LSD-25 worth while is now beside the point. It obviously is. But the microscope and the telescope required much more than the interest of polite society. They needed several generations of trained scientists before they became the superb tools which they now are. Tools are never any better than their users. The users of LSD-25 at the moment are like members of an 18<sup>th</sup> century drawing room who look down Mr So-and-So’s microscope at the vastly interesting specimens. A few like Mr So-and-So are keen amateurs of the new science. None of them has a fraction of the proficiency with a microscope of a modern lab technician, and their instrument compares poorly with our high school equipment!

Francis H. is a great help in these matters and sees as I do how much we have to do and how necessary it is to recognise the complexity of the problem. We have no way yet of standardising our equipment, for 100 mg of LSD-25 will have little or no effect on at least one person in ten. Al has called this resisting. Abram’s work suggests that some people do not have their enzyme system blocked while others do. Whether this correlates with wanting to have the “experience” remains to be seen. I doubt it! We are so ignorant! Few want to slog away at the really tough problems! Refined somatotyping will tell us a great deal.

I hope the Brazilian journey goes well. Let me know where I can reach you. Love to Laura. Dr Peck’s two grams of mescaline sounds too much! It



is liable to produce fits too – he was lucky to get away with it.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
1 July 1958*

My dear Aldous,

I saw your splendid *Enemies of Freedom* and have sent for ten copies. Splendid and very well done. I know of no one who could have handled such a tough subject so clearly and so concisely.

Before you leave could you possibly send me the name and address of the hump backed, red haired Swedish fortune teller whom Maria called her witch? Karlis Osis is very much interested in notable spontaneous performances and she is certainly one. I think it would be a great help to Osis.

Off at the end of the week to Al's heavenly island to eat clams with the old buccaneer in his hide out. There with plane, power boat, radio telephony, piped water, hot and cold, and water closet and electricity, he busies himself with an odd mixture of the cures of this world and the next but three. However it is a lovely island. Helen will bathe and look for gooey ducks. Jane will rest. I shall swim and drink long gins on the headland point and Al will try to persuade me that his transcendental Ramsey MacDonaldism<sup>49</sup> of up and up and up and on and on and on is an improvement on the political version. I shall have my Contaflex and should get some good pictures. It will be good fun and I may even get a plot for a play. (I have the bones of an excellent one using Al's island if you feel like one sometime. A real hard-centre play wrapped up in a goodish thriller.) But Al could have done so much more. Alas those great possessions get in the way and become a great barrier to his carrying out his good intentions.

Do let me have the witch's address and let me know where mail can reach you in Brazil.

Love to Laura.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
3 July 1958*

My dear Aldous,

Re: Sakel:<sup>50</sup> Your comment as usual highly apt. Why doesn't anyone know about Sakel's cure for schizophrenia? I fear that you have guessed why "nobody knows."

Sakel's treatment is an empirical method developed from a treatment for alcoholism and DTS about the same time as von Meduna brought in his convulsion treatment using camphor at first (Cerletti<sup>51</sup> later developed electric convulsion). Meduna introduced convulsions because he thought there was an "antagonism" between schizophrenia and epilepsy. He was wrong in his premise. ECT<sup>52</sup> is of transient help in schizophrenia but has been very useful in some depressions. To return to Sakel.

He found that some people with DTS originally (I think) benefitted from small doses of insulin – the then popular new hormone (1927 circa). Some people became sleepy and sweaty (sopor); some became unconscious to greater or lesser degrees (soma). Sakel thought this was beneficial. It was tried in a number of conditions and was eventually found by trial and error to be of most benefit in early schizophrenia.

Trials of new substances in the 1920's were very slipshod. Sakel was very enthusiastic, the treatment was dramatic (and dangerous – fatalities running at 1–3%), the illness a great and terrible one which the new psychoanalytical insights had done little to improve. Statistical refinements were rare in medicine and hardly existed in psychiatry. Biologically minded psychiatrists were aching for something better than bromides and hydrotherapy. They got three things, barbiturates, insulin coma and convulsion therapy. A decade later came leucotomy (lobotomy) here.

A mystique grew up around insulin – length of coma, depth of coma, how to interrupt it, and all sorts of investigations were made and elaborate rationalizations grew up. Should the patient have fits in coma or not? Did ECT help or not? (Sakel was not keen on ECT.) Should the coma be stopped by vein or by mouth glucose etc. etc.? But you are doubtless asking, did it work? Somehow that was never asked in a way that could be answered unequivocally. Here is the brilliantly critical Aubrey Lewis\* in the 1957 Bradshaw lecture, *Lancet* Jan. 25, 171–175 – a very fine piece of medical writing. He says of the insulin treatment, “Here is a method which has been before the world for over 20 years, widely employed in all civilized countries and the subject of hundreds of experiments and technical reports. Yet it is in such a dubious state that one can read responsible statements declaring on the one hand that it is ‘the only effective method of treating early schizophrenia’ and on the other that ‘there is no significant difference between the outcome of treatment [of schizophrenia] whether unconsciousness has been induced by insulin or barbiturates.’”<sup>53</sup>

Schizophrenia, particularly early schizophrenia is an illness which remits. Since the moral treatment of the 1850s, 70–80% of those with early schizophrenia have gone back to society given half a chance.

Joseph Zubin<sup>54</sup> of the New York Psychiatric Institute on 169<sup>th</sup> Street at the Columbia Medical Centre has been doing massive follow up studies. Of schizophrenics admitted to New York Mental Hospitals it seems that a third improve spontaneously, a third improved whatever treatment you use, but in five years a third are gravely incapacitated and either seriously crippled out of mental hospitals or in them. Deep insulin, psychoanalysis, barbiturates, lobotomy, tranquilizers, ECT or chemical convulsions make little or no difference to that fatal one third.

I don’t think Sakel and his supporters are dishonest – they are in the great tradition of medicine, believers in a remedy and doubtless this makes it all the more efficacious. There is no evidence which I have seen to suggest that the tens of thousands of schizophrenics now in mental hospitals would be benefitted by the wide use of Sakel’s insulin coma. Rather the reverse. It is a costly, time consuming method which seems less effective than our niacin (nicotinic acid) treatment. It is also dangerous. It is in my view less objectionable than lobotomy but it does not help very chronic patients. However its great fault has been that of all empirical remedies.

Effort has been diverted from enquiry into the cause of schizophrenia to exploring and perfecting the technique of an empirical “remedy” with[out] knowing how remedial it is. The history of medicine is littered with these idiocies: but we seem quite incapable of learning.

Our work suggests that insulin may very well have some effect on schizophrenia. Insulin is an antagonist of adrenalin (rather a violent one) and it undoubtedly has some unusual effects on adrenalin metabolism. However this suggests well planned work on adrenalin and its derivatives, rather than researches on insulin coma or endless discussions of the sort which the 18<sup>th</sup> century physicians had about the value of a particular purge or blistering substance.

It is just not true to say that insulin is a cure for schizophrenia or that [it] is generally accepted as being a cure. It is a treatment which had a vogue in common with many other treatments. It is still uncertain whether it helps more than other less dangerous treatments. It is empirical and irrational and while this has applied to much of medicine in the past and nearly all psychiatry now, unless some remarkable new hypothesis has been developed from the dubious insulin work, I would expect it to slowly die out.

Hope this is useful.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. I have given insulin coma treatment myself and we have used it here for years but do less and less of it.

\* Professor of Psychiatry, London University. See also Lionel Penrose's<sup>55</sup> very critical study in Eastern Canada and Bourne's paper.<sup>56</sup>

---

3276 Deronda  
Dr. Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
6 July 1958

Dear Humphry,

Many thanks for your note and earlier letter. I am glad you liked the articles – which will come out, with some additions and changes, in the autumn, in book form – and gladder still to learn that you are all glad about the blessed event on the horizon. It is sad that poor Helen will have to be disappointed about the horse; but no doubt she will be reconciled in due course to the biological facts, whatever they may be.

The hunch-backed witch's address is:

Elsa Hall  
1129½ N. Genesee  
Los Angeles  
Cal.

She was never much good for me; but perhaps I am a “bad station,” so far as mediums are concerned. I remember how well she did for you.

We have been seeing again a young MD whom we last met in Philadelphia in November 1957, when we urged him to try something wildly unorthodox on a fellow intern at the hospital who had been given three months to live, because of a cancer of the lymphatic system (resistant to radiation) which had grown to the size of a football in his chest. We suggested combining semi-hibernation (with the “French Cocktail” – chlorpromazine, phenacetin, aspirin and demerol) with intensive hypnosis, talking to the cells. The results have been extraordinary – complete disappearance of the tumour, acceptance of the young man as a full-time intern at the University of California hospital at Berkeley, complete recovery of weight, strength, vitality. Our young friend, Dr Lynch, has got a number of older MD's (*très sérieux*) at Columbia, Philadelphia and Rochester to take an interest and try to duplicate the procedure. I wonder very much if a similar combination of part-hibernation (the young man was alert enough to work during the treatment – albeit slowly, as though with thyroid deficiency) with intensive hypnosis might not be useful in certain mental diseases and also in infections, perhaps even in some chronic degenerative diseases.

My love to Jane and the poetess.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
July 22, 1958*

My dear Aldous,

Many thanks for the witch's address. I have written to Osis and sent it on. Your point about her different efficiencies with different people is well made. I wonder what it means. Miss Hall is quite aware that this is so and probably a little observation would give many valuable clues; my own guess would be that overlapping in physique and temperament would play a large part. I am trying to get Bill Sheldon to call in and see us so that we can get a somatotype unit going.

We have been out to the west coast and spent a week on Al's heavenly island. Hunted clams, Helen almost learned to swim. We saw a cormorantry at very close quarters. It was a success. Al seemed much more agreeable to the idea that sustained work and effort would be needed and to do this money was essential. Indeed I found that he had made a real and successful effort to get substantial funds for the committee (Commission beg its pardon). These were in the nature of several hundred thousand dollars. Unluckily these went into the General Fund of [the] University of British Columbia. The business men (and I talked to one very disgruntled one!) did not ear mark their money because the[y] felt academic gents would resent any implication of distrust. In the end *no* money seems to have gone into research, but it was syphoned into a general fund. The business men aren't happy, but they can't do anything.

Al has done some remarkable work – what we must know is, i) exactly how he has done it, ii) what exactly he has done. He is still loathe to consider that madness may be half way towards the beatific vision; but perhaps before long he may agree that hell might be, as many have believed, half way to heaven. I am now much more in favor of maintaining

the Commission because I think we may have funds before too long and further I don't think this latency does any harm. I was not too happy 18 months ago because I was uncertain what Al had in mind. In addition it was difficult to be sure what was happening.

I was much interested in your tumor history. Wholly remarkable. I hope Dr Lynch will publish and send me further details. I bet people were pretty shaken up! Yet there must be a system which has a central coordinating effect on cellular metabolism – indeed there is good evidence of this in cockroaches and some in humans. I hope to hear more.

The research presses on. “Schizophrenia: A New Approach III” is now going for publication. John Smythies opted out at the last moment. Got cold feet about a chemical assay of which he knows nothing. Abram was a bit vexed with him and I am irritated, though not surprized. John has done this before and will do it again. He considers this a politic move, but as in my view he is of a wholly impolitic bent, his politic moves are usually disastrous. Had we followed his politic advice I don't think we would have got anywhere. Briefly Abram and Payza<sup>57</sup> our Turkish medical biochemist have, i) made pure adrenochrome, ii) with Heacock<sup>58</sup> our English chemist made pure adrenolutin, iii) they have developed an assay for adrenochrome which is very effective. Using this assay (on which they worked for a year) they find adrenochrome in blood, CSF, and urine. They find LSD-25 pushes up the blood adrenochrome dramatically and that it prevents the disappearance of adrenochrome from the blood.

The Worcester Group<sup>59</sup> sent up a chemist to learn how to do this assay. He confirms two thirds of it but he can't get the blood levels right. He believes we are wrong. We consider that he has repeated one of the many errors we have made. John's view is that we must immediately be cautious. Ours is that a show down is certain, but that we don't particularly give ground to a man who is learning our method and who will we believe have to correct his error. I think that the truth is that John cannot accept the fact that he is not omniscient. He has got to bet, not on knowledge of chemistry but of character. He can't bear to do this. So he tries to be competent in a subject in which he has no competence. Anyway I don't suppose he'll come to much harm because if as we think all goes well we shall let him in on schizophrenia IV. But nevertheless it will be “we fought at Arles and you were not there!” John is not a betting man, but research is, when it's any

good, essentially a betting game – obviously no one bets on certainties, it is no longer betting! Meanwhile we are preparing to extract adrenochrome from urine and think that we have a method. If we are right this will settle a good many arguments finally. It is very odd because the presence of adrenochrome is inherently *likely*, indeed it would be quite queer if it wasn't there. Its precursor adrenalin is present in large quantities, and so is the enzyme which turns adrenalin to adrenochrome. It would be strange if there were no adrenochrome. However we shall see. It is exciting and entertaining that our little platoon can make the 60 big battalions from the U.S. give ground. They are learning, slowly, that when we report something we have grounds for doing so and that we mean what we say. This they find very surprising. They always feel there must be some “angle” on matters of this sort.

Meanwhile our administrative research is flourishing. We are planning a book on it this fall. Here again we shall be diametrically opposed to the “friendly, permissive, accepting approachable American dictators” as one of them rather wittily described their antics to me. We shall deal with authority and responsibility in the mental hospital setting and shall show that unless this is understood you cannot begin caring for the sick. More nonsense has been talked about authoritarianism in the last few years than bears thinking about. While arbitrary actions just don't work people don't like bogus relationships. People want their functions defined as clearly as possible – they want to *operate*, that is perform their function and so help towards the general goal. Where function is not defined people are unsure of their role and become very unhappy. We want to get away from the psychodynamic idea of everyone peering into everyone else's business and have instead a well constructed organization where people derive satisfaction from minding their own business. If we can get it to work in a mental hospital which is highly complicated, it will work anywhere else. I will tell you more later.

I heard from Eileen who was rather disheartened by parapsychologists. Old Soal sounds as if he is doting – he has found two cheating Welsh boys – everyone but he knows they are rogues but he will have none of it. He has become mesmerized by his statistics and can think of nothing else. I am suggesting to Eileen that the real issue is whether this application of statistically loaded experiments is not just bad and mechanical scientism



(using a scientific technique without a scientific approach). Lancelot Hogben<sup>60</sup> has recently suggested that many statistical methods carried over from agriculture and biology to social and psychological sciences are guilty of false analogies. I hope to persuade her to get a small conference to discuss not the old hash of the last 25 years but the new possibilities.

I look forward to the expanded version of your splendid paper. I hope we can somehow get around the fearfully dangerous corners ahead. We won't unless we realize how dangerous they are. Looking on the optimistic side of psychopharmacology there are splendid possibilities. True it may be used to dope and drug, but it may also be used psychedelically, further we may develop a way of reducing our slavery to our adrenalin secretion. Our suprarenals developed half a million years ago when we were wild animals. They haven't changed. When we should be thinking, deliberating, considering, if we aren't very careful and very lucky in our development we are flooded with adrenalin and its derivatives. We detoxicate or counteract these as best we can, but the biological way was by sustained violent action, i.e. fighting or fleeing. Since we are symbolising creatures we do this symbolically but it still interferes with our thinking. I believe we may be able to produce not soma, but what will amount to a mutation – people who don't devote  $\frac{4}{5}$  of their energy sublimating or somatizing their now surplus adrenalin. I think we make far too much of it for our present needs and our excellent diet churns out more and more of the stuff. Of course we have other difficulties, but this one should be solvable because we have discovered “natural” ways of coping. Unluckily the psychological ones have, so far, been slow and perhaps only accessible to specific somatotypes; the pharmacological ones have usually been ineffective but sometimes deadly. Alcohol is, I suppose, the most effective, but is crude and unsuitable for a mechanical age because it impairs skillful coordination quite apart from its addictive properties. We should be able to do a lot better without doping and drugging people.

Good hunting in South America. Love to Laura. Jane sends love. Helen asleep. 4/9's<sup>61</sup> state of awareness uncertain but in view of recent work we can't be dogmatic.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Rio de Janiero, Brazil*  
*12 August 1958*  
*Postcard*

[Addressed to Dr Humphry Osmond]

I think this town would repay a psychological study: for there seems to be less tension and frustration than in most places. Little smoking or drinking, but lots of bed, and the negroes go in for Macumba, a form of voodoo with endless dancing culminating in trances. We attended one such rite two nights ago and enjoyed it greatly. The town is wildly improbable in its picturesqueness. Love from us both.

Aldous

---

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*20 September 1958*

My dear Aldous,

I hope that your holiday in South America has gone and possibly is still going well. I have been reading Descola's<sup>62</sup> book on the Conquistadors – it was an extraordinary country then and must be even more so now. I shall look forward to news when you get back.

I have been in touch with Eileen who seems keen on the idea of a meeting to discuss psychedelics, mediumship and parapsychology. As you know she has been feeling increasingly gloomy about the card games with good reason. I am just completing an article for her which at least gives some rationale why she should feel this way. I suggest that the parapsychologists have been using an unsound model for ESP etc. and that this model has been implicit in their thinking for 50 years at least. When they began to use the model it was rather stylish and outré so that its defects

were hidden by its modernity. However now its defects are obvious. The model was radio, starting with radio telegraphy and now coming to television. With radio the simpler the signal the more likely it is to get through, the easier to decode and repeat. We *know* from the data available that paranormal experiences do not follow this pattern so that this model is, one would suppose, ruled out automatically. All of Rhine's work, Soal's and many others' is based on the assumption, never made outright, that simple experience (e.g. Zener cards) will be easier to transmit. (Or have they been too blinded by their techniques to worry about this and are they only concerned about ease of scoring?) The evidence from spontaneous happenings seems clear, that *complex* information is transmitted just as well and possibly better than simpler. What I am suggesting is that a model based on poetic inspiration would be more useful than one based on radio telegraphy because there is evidence that it is more appropriate. I don't know what they will make of this but I hope it will encourage them to think a bit more and do a bit less! In John Hunter's<sup>63</sup> day when speculation far out ran experiment it was sensible enough to say "why think, why not do the experiment?" But now we have no lack of experimenters but a great dearth of thinkers.

The research presses ahead with many exciting developments. We have increasing evidence that adrenochrome is present in the body, that it plays some vital part in not only physiology generally but in psychophysiology in particular. The Russians working from a very different direction seem to have found adrenochrome in muscle and brain. From our work it seems that normals, schizophrenics and alcoholics all handle adrenochrome rather differently. Schizophrenics process it in a different way from alcoholics generally, though some schizophrenics take to alcohol as a sedative. We<sup>64</sup> are developing an adrenalin derivative as an anti-depression and anti-tension substance and suspect that this may be the naturally occurring substance carrying out this function. If we are correct this will clearly be of some importance. I am testing it presently – a rather nerve wracking but interesting procedure.

People do such odd things. I don't know whether I told you that Abram, John Smythies and I were writing "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III." Most of the work has been done in Saskatchewan but we included John for old times' sake. When the paper was just finished he kept urging us to delay

it because he believed quite erroneously that some work in Washington contradicted ours. He felt it would be safer to wait until this was straightened out for there was “no hurry.” Abram and I didn’t see it that way. We don’t particularly want to avoid trouble when the whol[e] idea of a scientific theory is to court proof or disproof. Anyway John withdrew from the paper which I suspect he will much regret. It is one of those heads I lose, tails you win propositions. He will be associated with the adrenochrome work close enough to obtain the dislike of those who oppose it, but not close enough to get the support of those who like it. Furthermore he is being scared away at a time when it looks far more promising than ever before. John believes in a science where truth is self evident and welcomed by academic gents who only have to hear the gospel to be converted. It is a pity that he has never, it seems, digested what really happens. I am still trying to inject a little guts into him, but at present he is bleating pitifully like the poem about Wordsworth:

Two voices there are, one is of the deep  
The other like an old half witted sheep  
And both art thine, oh Wordsworth.<sup>65</sup>

I suppose we all have our two voices, but John’s old half witted sheep is peculiarly irritating because the time is past for bleating.

Jane is on good form,  $\frac{2}{3}$  flourishing and kicking around with vigour. Jane feels extremely well when pregnant and is a source of pleasure to her obstetricians many of whose mothers don’t feel at all well. In pregnancy adrenalin and adrenalin derivatives build up. Jane never feels really uncomfortable under stress, rather the reverse. All these clues and many others point towards adrenalin metabolism as the clue to the psychophysiology of mood and much else beside. I hope to let you know more about this later.

The American research set ups are dottily unimaginative. Ralph Gerard’s new one at Ann Arbor is aiming at *repeating* all known tests. One could hardly believe anything so stupid, but our psychologist has been asked to do 50 Rorschachs for them. We have had poor Rorschach’s blots for nearly 40 years and they have told us little enough. This venture will gobble up \$1 million a year – to what purpose?

Poor Slotkin suicided not long ago – an imaginative and sensitive man, but not pushful or organizing I fear. So he didn't get on at University of Chicago and it broke his heart. The fact that he had done first class work made no difference. Klüver commenting on this said the way of a researcher in our universities is hard. I am hoping to write about U.S. research and the uncertain and inimical climate which is provided for it in spite of great and ostentatious expenditure. Scientific discovery and enquiry is a lonely business. One is unusually lucky to have even a small band of friends and coworkers. The more original the discovery the fewer companions there will be. This does not appeal to the American ethos. Science is a matter of solitary cooperators. The U.S. business believes in gregarious competitiveness. Perhaps the great gap cannot be crossed. The unlucky Americans peering under the bed for communist spies have forgotten that the real traitor may be inside their own heads. Scientific and artistic discovery is not a particularly egalitarian occupation. Did I tell you Tom Paterson's delicious illustration of this – a Monsanto film illustrating research in their labs. It shows all sorts of glass apparatus and then three crew cut young men browsing among the glassware accompanied by the trendy voice of the commentator, "No genius here. Just three regular American guys." One is ready to believe them. If this was an isolated happening one might laugh it off but it isn't. All through U.S. research we find the big clumsy set up bogging down in vast planless activity. Run by warm, active, busy Northwesterns! Data piles up, but they don't know what to [do] with it.

We are about to engage in an interesting controversy with the Menninger people on administration. Their view is that administration deals with a sort of clandestine psychotherapy, which they observe is far from easy. We suggest that this is a ruinous notion, due to a complete failure in conceptualization. For administration is the ordering and coordination of functions aimed at fulfilling a certain enterprize. We believe that the administrator's real task is to so order and coordinate functions that everyone in the organization knows what he is obliged to do and what is expected of him. If he succeeds in doing this, ensuring that orders, advice and information flow where they are needed, we doubt whether amateur psychotherapy will be much needed and whether the administrator will have much time for it anyway.

Love to Laura from us both.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
30 November 1958*

My dear Aldous,

I hope that the trip has gone successfully. I have heard from time to time news that you are brains trusting in Britain, lecturing in Italy, so you must be having a heavy time.

We missed you at the psychedelics and mediumship conference a couple of weeks ago. I wish you had been there because I think you would have enjoyed it. We demonstrated pretty clearly that when a medium comes as a participant and not as an experimental “subject” (which really I fear very often means object) a wholly different relationship develops. The mediums behave differently and further they enjoy such a conference. It is different from their devotees and though perhaps there is less adulation, it is more prestigious. The conference did not break up into squabbles – in part at least because four out of five of its members had taken LSD-25 etc. and were not at all disposed to wasting a golden opportunity on trivia. It was not as if [the] occasion was lacking for squabbles but we all felt that our goal was more important than trifling animosities. It was interesting and I think a little hopeful.

You will be interested to hear that we did a height-weight ratio of sensitives versus non-sensitives. The sensitives were the shortest and heaviest group. You may remember that you suggested this a fair time ago. The sensitives agreed that *most* of them were substantially built. I think that this is understandable enough. You need plenty of endo- and mesomorphic extroversion to cope with the surges of anxiety, pity, terror, etc. which invade the central nervous system of the sensitive. The[y] said that they had

known ectomorphic sensitives, but they were either sparing in the use of their gift or had had various breakdowns.

I saw William Sheldon who told me that he has an objective method of somatotyping, which is encouraging. We have made suggestions to Karlis Osis that parapsychological research might be expedited by, 1) Picking people who were good imagers (there are many fairly effective tests), 2) Combining this with extraversion and the most suitable constitution, 3) Having a suitable psychedelic, 4) Developing the best relationship for this type of experience on lines such as T.T. Paterson, who was at the meeting, can devise, 5) Using a system of training deriving i) from the above and ii) making use of known systems of training such as that of the Jesuits. Francis Huxley could help greatly here to help us decide on the common properties of Zen, Yogistic and other systems.

We gave Karlis Osis LSD-25 (Francis and me) and he had a valuable and positive experience. Francis and our psychologist colleague Duncan Blewett gave Eileen 75 mmg and this too was notably successful. Eileen was delighted to feel that her mediumistic experiences tied into the LSD so well. I think we all came away pretty clear that what the sensitive does is to get into the LSD-25 worlds and to be able to direct their experience. The question is how do they achieve this direction? It seems to be largely a matter of practise. Eileen herself who is one of the most versatile spent many years in training.

What impressed me was how stereotyped parapsychological research has become in the last 30 years. J.B. Rhine and the Rorschach between them have been a procrustean bed. Very few of the right questions have been asked. The mediums all agreed that they disliked card tests and it is clear that this is two fold, i) They don't like the symbols, ii) They don't like the way they are given. It seems likely that they are correct on both counts. The symbols are of the wrong sort and so is the relationship. I think that we shall have got something done if this sinks in.

The schizophrenia research seems very encouraging. Abram who has been in New York tells me that our hypothesis is now about the only one left in the field. We have found chemical evidence that LSD-25, injected adrenochrome and acute schizophrenia have much in common. Facts are piling up to support us.

It is therefore rather sad to report that we have severed our connection with John Smythies. But his behavior has been so erratic and in my view stupid that I saw no point in continuing a partnership which was only nominal. We could not trust John with new developments because under pressure he might divulge information to one of the big U.S. research mills. True this would be under a bond of secrecy, but John is so poor a judge of character that I would not be sure of his choice. John does not understand that partners in science share risks, or so he says. He rushes round to “experts” to get their opinions. He is too naïve to see that these men are in no position to help. To push through a new idea in science you must have a “gude conceit o’ yoursel,” that “self esteem founded on just and right.”<sup>66</sup> You must also recognise that you may well be mistaken, yet act as if you are right, for only so can error be detected and truth served – it can be a very painful job, but if you are not prepared to take the rough with the smooth there is no point in going in for it. So far as I can make out John is determined never to risk being wrong. He has forgotten that this is one of the prerequisites for being correct.

There is a curious irony about it all. We have been trying to get across to him that we have much accumulating evidence which suggests that he would be taking a *very small risk*, but he does not seem able to listen. He has developed a notion of himself as the toti-competent philosopher-scientist-critic – which is, I fear going to prevent him from making use of his very real gifts. We have worked together (on and off) for eight years and I am sorry to break up, but I cannot compel John and have far less trust in his views on these matters than I have in Abram’s.

Our new adrenalin derivatives still look promising – we are hard at work testing them. I sent Sir Julian a small quantity and hope he has no occasion to use them, but if he does I hope he will give them a try. They do not, so far as we can discover have any objectionable effects. We suspect they are a replacement therapy.

Jane is on fine form. Helen preparing for her sorority and 8/9 seems to be in excellent shape. Very vigorous and lively.

We have had some really cold weather, but it has gone off a bit now. The long winter is ahead and this is a dreary place. Yet I can work here as in few other places and can help others to work. It is hard on Jane and I must find some other answer to this problem.



Let me have news of you when you are back, though I suppose you will be very busy. Give Laura my love. She must have been glad to have been in Italy again.

Must get on with our trade union negotiations.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
16 December 1958*

Dear Humphry,

Many thanks for your good letter. I wish I had been able to be present at the parapsychology conference; but unfortunately I had to give four lectures in Italy in the last ten days of November and couldn't get away in time. The lectures were preceded and interrupted by two attacks of flu, the first of which kept me in bed for a week in Venice and the second, which came on after my third lecture, kept me in bed for four days in Rome – after which I had to creep down to Naples and there, hardly able to stand, deliver my final lecture – in Italian, to make matters a little worse. We got back here ten days ago, much delayed by head winds over the Atlantic and the U.S., and I am only now beginning to emerge from my state of weakness. In the meanwhile I spent three days in hospital having tests and X-rays to determine whether the diagnosis made in London by Julian's pet German doctor, Leo Rau,<sup>67</sup> to the effect that I had a large stone in the bile duct, was correct. Careful examination, I'm glad to say, revealed that it was not and that the shadow interpreted by Rau as a stone was in fact a calcified cyst in the liver itself, of no consequence. If there are stones, they are small ones in the gall bladder which is still (as it was ten years ago when I had the region X-rayed) non-visualizing, inasmuch as it refuses to admit any dye. However one can get on pretty well with little stones in the gall bladder, and the risks of taking out the bladder are probably greater than those involved in leaving

it where it is. So let us imitate the great Lord Salisbury<sup>68</sup> and pursue a policy of masterly inactivity.

It is pleasant to be back here in the sun, able to do some honest work for a change, and free from the swarms of interviewers who plagued me during all our journey, both in South America and Europe. I was simultaneously touched and appalled to discover that I am now, as the result of having been around for so many years, a kind of historical monument, which sightseers will come quite a long way to inspect, and which radio and press reporters find newsworthy. In Brazil it was as though the Leaning Tower of Pisa had just come to town, wherever I blew in; and even in Italy I found myself talking to full houses in large theatres. It was really very odd and embarrassing.

London was very agreeable, and I saw vast numbers of people from Bertie Russell to Rose Macaulay<sup>69</sup> (who expired two days later, poor thing), and from Tom Eliot (who is now curiously dull – as a result, perhaps, of being, at last, happy in his second marriage) to Grey Walter, who told of fascinating experiments with hopeless lunatics, in whose brains electrodes had been stuck, and who can turn on the battery in their pocket and pass, in the twinkling of an eye, from deepest depression to a broad grin. How unimaginative I was in *Brave New World!*

I'm glad to hear that your schizophrenia research goes forward satisfactorily. How widely is it being accepted now? I was disturbed to hear our curious friend, Dr Barbara Brown, the pharmacologist, airily tell us that the whole adrenolutin-adrenochrome idea had been disproved two years ago and that some group at the National Institute of Health had now disposed of all the claims that schizophrenia might have a chemical factor in it.

There is to be a psycho-pharmacological meeting at San Francisco from January 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>, and they have asked me to speak at the dinner meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The programme sounds as though it might be interesting. Will you be there? I hope so. It would be good to have a glimpse of you. Meanwhile I hope all goes well with Jane, in spite of the prairie winter.

Best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 December 1958

My dear Aldous,

How good to have news of you and to hear that you have evaded the surgeons. I am sure that you are well advised not to have anything done unless the need is unequivocal.

I think that the Brazilians and Italians etc. showed excellent taste in coming to your lectures and wishing to see you. I think you are more of a rather civilized prophet than a monument. It is of course a rather dangerous profession but you carry it well. You don't make people feel that you are glad you have been pretty right. That is very endearing.

I was much interested by your account of Grey Walter's deep planted electrodes which are presumably somewhere in the brain stem and work on the arousal mechanism. This is a way of dealing with what we think is a biochemical block, but how practical, permanent and certain is it? It is obviously very interesting.

The schizophrenia research goes very well. It has never been more widely accepted, but your friend Dr B. Brown is correct when she says it is not universally accepted. She is not correct when she says it was disproved two years ago, that was impossible then. I suppose that the only people who are technically able to *disprove* it are us! We have not so far been able to do so. The National Institute of Health are blundering about in this field like a gadarene herd. Like many matters in the great Republic their behaviour is not at all comprehensible unless you understand the background of politics. The NIH has been riven by interdepartmental struggles at the same time that it has been laying claim to some special authority in U.S. psychiatric research. This authority to which they lay claim is that of a sort of "court of appeal." Naturally no one acknowledges such a claim easily. They are most unlikely to do so after some of the idiotic statements which have been coming out of NIH. It is obviously impossible for the most competent chemists in the world to say that schizophrenia does not have a chemical

factor. All they or anyone else can possibly say is that they can't find it (or them).

As a matter of fact we are rather grateful to NIH, they have by their very silliness and ineptitude made the issues plain. In our view they suffer from being poorly organized, having too much money, too few ideas and an extreme paucity of clinical knowledge and acumen. It seems unlikely that they will prove or disprove anything much in so complicated a game as schizophrenia research.

To be more positive our work gives growing evidence of a specific substance in schizophrenic urine closely related to adrenochrome. We are now trying to isolate this. At the moment it looks as if this should be possible in the next few months. We are now pretty confident that our hypothesis is a good one, and support for our views is growing among clinicians. Indeed lately William Malamud, American Psychiatric Association President-elect has blessed us. We are almost respectable. But we are beginning to get used to respectability for our work on niacin and blood cholesterol levels has been respectable enough to be ascribed to the Mayo Clinic – could one ask for more?

So briefly we expect, with their cooperation to cook the NIH goose before too long. It is one of those duties which are not without some compensations.

Jane is in very good form. We expect the new arrival in the first two weeks of January and are getting all prepared. It has been a cold and fairly snowy winter though it has let up for the last day or two. I won't be travelling much next month, so hope you will tell me about the psychopharmacology meeting. My only criticism is that there are too many of them so that much repetitive stuff appears at each meeting, but only regulars notice this. So far then the demise of adrenochrome etc. has been greatly exaggerated! We have the only widely tested assay – NIH have one they allege works using adrenochrome borrowed from us. We don't think their method works at all. This is a tough game and only very good chemists can make the running. We have been lucky, but also we have a good hypothesis. Anyway by the end of 1959 we should know!

Jane sends love – affectionate good wishes to you and Laura.

- 1 John Dewey (1859–1952). American philosopher, educational reformer, and significant figure in the pragmatism school of philosophy.
- 2 Ralph Gerard (1900–74). American neurophysiologist known for his wide-ranging work on schizophrenia.
- 3 Osmond again quotes Lord Shaftesbury; see his letter of 28 July 1955.
- 4 Reference to Edward Bernays (1891–1995). Nephew of Sigmund Freud. His *The Engineering of Consent*, based on a 1947 essay, was published in 1955.
- 5 *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957) was written by American journalist Vance Packard (1914–96).
- 6 *The Organization Man* (1956) was written by American journalist and urban planner William H. Whyte (1917–99).
- 7 John Milne Bramwell (1852–1925). Scottish physician and hypnotist whose *Hypnotism: Its History, Practice and Theory* was first published in 1903.
- 8 Auguste Voisin (1829–98). French physician and psychiatrist who specialized in hysteria and hypnotism.
- 9 Robert Lynch (1932–2010). American psychiatrist who conducted research experiments that combined medicine and spirituality.
- 10 “Enemies of Freedom” was a working title for the collection of essays that became Huxley’s *Brave New World Revisited* (1958).
- 11 Duncan Blewett (1920–2007). Canadian psychologist and founding head of the psychology department at the University of Saskatchewan (Regina campus) who was one of the earliest Western scientists to study the effects and therapeutic applications of psychedelics. He was recruited to work at the Weyburn Mental Hospital by Osmond in the early 1950s, where they conducted a wide variety of patient studies and observations. He had been acting consulting psychologist to the commission.
- 12 The Commission for the Study of Creative Imagination was founded in Vancouver in 1955, with Al Hubbard at its head. The letter discussed here was apparently written on the commission’s letterhead stationery.
- 13 Roman Catholic.
- 14 Harry M. Tiebout (1896–1966). American psychiatrist and researcher on alcoholism who was an early proponent of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- 15 Jessie L. Weston (1850–1928). British medievalist and folklorist whose *From Ritual to Romance* was published in 1920.
- 16 T.S. Eliot’s long poem *The Waste Land* was published in 1922.
- 17 The Rigveda is a collection of Indian hymns and one of the four sacred texts of Hinduism, which are called the Vedas.
- 18 James George Frazer (1854–1941). Scottish anthropologist whose *The Golden Bough* was published in 1890.
- 19 *Census of Hallucinations* was compiled by Frederic Myers, Edmund Gurney, and William James under the auspices of the Society for Psychical Research during the 1880s and 1890s.
- 20 Denis de Rougemont (1906–85). Swiss-born French writer whose *L’Amour et l’Occident* was published in 1939 and revised in 1956; both versions were translated into English.
- 21 Catharism was a loosely formed offshoot of Christianity that professed belief in two gods, one representing good and the other evil. The dualist faction was established in southern France in the

mid-twelfth century, and its faithful were persecuted by the mainstream Catholic Church throughout its tenure. The last Cathars were eliminated through the Inquisition in the early fourteenth century.

22 Troubadours were poet-musicians whose origins date to the twelfth century. During the Crusades, they found themselves in conflict with the Cathars, many of whom were their patrons.

23 Manichaeism is a dualistic religion of Iranian origin that was founded in the third century by the Prophet Mani and that survived into the fourteenth century.

24 “Variations on a Philosopher” was published in Huxley’s *Themes and Variations* (1950).

25 In the top margin of this letter, Osmond wrote, “Abram, Duncan: This and my reply is I think self-explanatory. Aldous raises some points of the greatest importance. H.O.”

26 The number 777 is about both creative expression and introspection, especially creativity related to perfection, spirituality, and analyzation.

27 Reference to *Revelation* 13: 18: “Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.”

28 Edith Bone (1889–1975). Hungarian journalist who was arrested as an alleged spy for Great Britain. Her *Seven Years Solitary*, which chronicles her time in prison, was published in 1957.

29 John Broadus Watson (1878–1958). American psychologist and pioneer of behaviourism. As early as 1932, Huxley satirized aspects of his research in the second chapter of *Brave New World*.

30 Matthew Arnold (1822–88). Eminent Victorian poet and Huxley’s great-uncle.

31 “God is clever, but He is not mischievous.”

32 Lawrence E. Hinkle and Harold G. Wolff, “The Methods of Interrogation and Indoctrination Used by the Communist State Police,” *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 33, no. 9 (September 1957): 600–15.

33 Okhrana was the secret police force in Russia in the late nineteenth century.

34 Manfred Bleuler (1903–94). Swiss physician and psychiatrist whose research was focused on schizophrenia. He was the son of Paul Eugen Bleuler.

35 Reference to Thompson’s documentary *NY, NY* (1957).

36 Samuel George Soal (1889–1975). British mathematician and parapsychologist who was charged with fraudulent production of data in his work in parapsychology.

37 William Henry Belk Jr (1916–2001). Son of the founder of Belk department stores and a student of parapsychology and religion.

38 Huxley included a partial copy of this production’s program with his letter.

39 The Huxleys spent from 5–27 August 1958 in Brazil as guests of President Juscelino Kubitschek.

40 Samuel Butler (1835–1902). English novelist. The quote is from his *Erewhon* (1872).

41 Francis Huxley wrote about his time in the Brazilian Jungle in *Affable Savages: Among the Urubu Indians of Brazil* (1956).

42 American Medical Association.

43 T.T. Peck (1923–74). American physician who became interested in LSD after learning about the positive effects of peyote.

44 See Huxley’s letter of 22 June 1958.

45 Humphry Osmond and Abram Hoffer, “Schizophrenia: A New Approach (Continued),” *British Journal of Psychiatry* 105, no. 440 (July 1959): 653–73.

46 Julius Axelrod (1912–2004). American biochemist and co-recipient in 1970 of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work in neurotransmitters.

47 Albert Hofmann (1906–2008). Swiss scientist known for seminal work on LSD and hallucinogenics.

48 Leo G. Abood (1922–98). American pharmacologist, biochemist, and neurophysiologist known for his extensive brain research.

- 49 Ramsay MacDonald (1866–1937). British member of Parliament and first prime minister of the Labour Party.
- 50 Manfred Sakel (1900–57). Austrian psychiatrist and neurophysiologist who developed insulin shock therapy.
- 51 Ugo Cerletti (1877–1963). Italian neurologist who introduced electroconvulsive therapy.
- 52 Electroconvulsive therapy.
- 53 Aubrey Lewis (1900–75). British psychiatrist. The quote is from his “Between Guesswork and Certainty in Psychiatry,” *Lancet* 271, no. 7014 (January 1958): 173.
- 54 Joseph Zubin (1900–90). Lithuanian-born American educational psychologist who became an expert on schizophrenia.
- 55 Lionel Penrose (1898–1972). English psychiatrist who studied schizophrenia and other mental disorders and served as director of psychiatric research for the Province of Ontario. Osmond is probably referring to his *Survey of Patients Treated with Shock Therapy in the Ontario Hospitals, 1938–1941* (1942).
- 56 Wesley Bourne (1886–1965). Canadian anaesthetist who founded the first independent Department of Anaesthesiology at McGill University and published numerous scholarly articles on anaesthesia.
- 57 A.N. Payza (1920–96). Biochemist and artist known for plasma and tissue research who worked with Abram Hoffer.
- 58 Ronald A. Heacock (b. 1928). British chemist who worked in the Psychiatric Research Unit at the University Hospital in Saskatoon.
- 59 The Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology was founded in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, in 1944.
- 60 Lancelot Thomas Hogben (1895–1975). British zoologist and medical statistician whose *Statistical Theory: The Relationship of Probability, Credibility and Error* was published in 1957.
- 61 Reference to Jane Osmond’s unborn child, who was in the fourth month of gestation.
- 62 Jean Descola (1909–81). French journalist and scholar of Spain and Latin America. His *Les conquistadors: La découverte et la conquête de l’Amérique Latine* was published in French in 1954 and in English in 1957.
- 63 John Hunter (1728–93). Scottish surgeon who was an early advocate of investigation and experimentation.
- 64 Osmond added a marginal note at this point: “This looks very promising. So I am on tenterhooks. Unattached action easier said than done: much!”
- 65 Excerpt of a William Wordsworth sonnet as paraphrased by English poet J.K. Stephen (1859–92).
- 66 References to poems of Robert Burns (1759–96) and John Milton (1608–74) respectively.
- 67 Leo Rau (fl. 1905–64). German-born physician whose patients included Julian Huxley and English essayist Max Beerbohm (1872–1956), among others.
- 68 Robert Gascoyne Cecil, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury (1830–1903). British Conservative politician who served three times as prime minister.
- 69 Rose Macaulay (1881–1958). English novelist and travel writer who, like Huxley, was a member of the Peace-Pledge Union in the 1930s.

1959

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
2 February 1959

My dear Aldous,

I hope that all goes well with you and that you are now well rested after your globe trotting. You seem to have covered much ground and done a great deal.

We are just settling our new member of the family in. She, Euphemia Janet, is a very engaging little creature and will be two weeks old by this evening. She is extremely like Helen at that age. This is not only the generic similarity of all babies – at least I think not – we have comparable pictures which are very striking. Like Helen she is a very active child. Watching her I have an odd feeling that an already existing intelligence is trying to “fit itself into” a brain and body which is not familiar. The enormous number of attempts that are made to master the new “machine” is impressive. She feeds well and sleeps (usually for last night was an exception) pretty well. Jane is in excellent for[m], pregnancy and mothering make her feel in fine fettle. I hope that we shall soon have some clues which will allow us to make much more sense of this. It *looks* at the moment as if each of us maintains an elaborate system of adrenalin derived checks and balances. These determine to a large degree our view of the world and our capacity to make sense of and act on that view. They shift as the occasion demands. Such a system obviously is a biological inheritance and as obviously may become decreasingly appropriate when we depend less on biological change and more on social and latterly scientific change.

The present Cuban business shows how easily our emotional apparatus is at odds with our social requirements. The storm of feeling which Castro has evoked swept him into power, but his *auto da fě* – however “morally” justified, and morality can justify almost anything, is in fact likely to force him into increasingly tyrannous behavior. What is needed is a cool down



period before the trials and reworkings. The chemical aspects of mood are becoming a good deal clearer and we hope to be exploring them this year. It is remarkable how many facts about mood have been neglected for lack of an adequate hypothesis. We have found this is the same in our schizophrenia research. There is no shortage of *facts* – they are littered all over the thousands of papers on schizophrenia. There is an absence of any unifying theory which allows one to see the facts. In our opinion the Europeans have been bogged down in hypothesis with inadequate or untestable experimental techniques. The Americans are devoid of theory making capacity – to such an extent as to be almost a disease. Further they see no need for what they lack.

In psychiatry the combination of Freudian metaphysics and Meyerian holism with the huge monies available for research produces an impossible situation. Huge set ups of active and moderately clever men get together with great sums of money and hardly any idea of the scientific method, though enormously shrewd about technique.

It is only recently that Abram and I have realized why, with a very few exceptions, we make little sense to U.S. researchers. It is simply that we are discussing quite different things. We believe that the supreme effort goes in developing a hypothesis which is testable, i.e. refutable. Once that has been done a quite different sort of effort is needed to test it. Each is important, but unless you have your hypothesis nothing that comes later can compensate for this. The U.S. psychiatric researchers (and many others I suspect) do not believe in thinking. It is a lonely and unconfirming activity. Thinking puts you apart from people. And you “aren’t doing anything.” This lonely thinking can, they are sure, be better done by a group in a “brain storming” session. Once they get hold of an idea they work on it ruthlessly but they have very few ideas. One can easily be deceived when you go to a place like NIH in Washington and see much going on. You suspect and you are rarely likely to question that what you see is original work. But hardly any of it is. The U.S. granting bodies do not like giving money for original work. It is too risky. If this pertains in other aspects of U.S. science one can see why they are in trouble. The odd thing is that the more money they spend on research the less they are likely to get in the way of original ideas. It is very curious.

Helen is on good form. Her choice was a little sister and she has got one! She is learning to dandle the tiny creature and rock her in her cradle. We have a rocking cradle which is very soothing. Babies obviously enjoy a rocking motion. I can[not] think why someone hasn't made a cradle with a rhythmical rocking motion driven by a small engine. I suppose one could make a few million dollars that way.

You will be interested to know that the evidence of disturbed perception in schizophrenic people is now growing. It had not been "found" because people had ignored it after Kraepelin decided there were no perceptual changes in schizophrenia. However he did not point out that what we call perception he called apperception. Most schizophrenics live in a rather less easy version of our world. It is more inconstant. The further disadvantage is that it is not as near an approximation to the social stereotype as that of non-schizophrenic people. What we now have to seek is, 1) ways and means for teaching them what our world is like, 2) ways and means for counteracting the disturbed physiology.

You will be interested to hear that the therapeutic use of LSD-25 in alcoholics and criminals is getting underway and is looking very promising. It seems that you need fairly powerful Northwesterns to do it, but given these the results are impressive. Even Alcoholics Anonymous are becoming interested. This work you will remember came from *The Doors of Perception* via Al Hubbard. The difference in our method is that two therapists take LSD with the sick person. We do not devote much energy to analysis, far more to a new synthesis. Duncan Blewett our very able psychologist has written a handbook<sup>1</sup> for the psychedelic (*pace* phanerothymic) use of LSD. Would you like a copy?

Good wishes to Laura.

Very cold her[e], 15–20° below and has been so for much of two months.

Hope all goes well.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
28 April 1959

My dear Aldous,

How are things with you?

I am just recovering from flu, whatever flu may be, and have been cossetted by Jane into an extra day away from work which is certainly pleasant and therefore probably wise. Jane, Helen and Euphemia Janet are all very well. The little girl is very lively and seems quite disinclined to sleep though in excellent health and very responsive and cheery.

I was in New York three weeks ago and saw both Matthew and Ellen. I spent most of a day with Matthew, but only had a couple of hours with Ellen. I had the curious feeling that they were living in very different worlds whose boundaries could only be crossed by an active and concerted effort of love. I don't think that the chances of that effort being made are good. I hope that I am wrong. Matthew orders experience according to a rational and logical scheme – it is not easy for him to imagine that this is but a possible scheme among many. It is valid for him and those who can use it. Not everyone can. Ellen, it seems to me, makes the supposition that Matthew's scheme is impossible because she has never attempted to cross into his country. I believe she might do so more readily than he could into hers. But so far neither has been able to make that effort of love which would be necessary to cross those frontiers. Can it be done? I think so, but to do so they would have to *want* to make the effort. I don't even know whether one can acquire a need of this sort. People make much of doing it "for the children's sake," but this too often only means using the children as a pawn in the game. Ellen and Matthew are too honest for that. Yet could the children genuinely become a focus of their love it would work.

In recent years neither Matthew nor Ellen seem to have been together alone long enough to develop a mutuality of feeling. One of the awful side issues of the mobile age of leisure is that few have any time for serious matters. Francis has not helped particularly, though I don't think it is fair to blame him. His strong views on emancipation of women have, I think obscured the real problem which is not how might things be arranged in an

ideal state of affairs, but how to cope with a here and now which is not ideal. His sympathy has misled Ellen and annoyed Matthew without in any way helping either, that I can see. But I believe he intended to help.

When I left them Ellen seemed to be in better shape than Matthew. She lives in such a different world from him and is less concerned with the past and the future than he. The uncertainties which he finds unbearable – what will become of the house, the family, the future; what will people think etc. – she is not distressed by. It is the immediacies, the clashes of temperament which she finds so very uncomfortable and tries to evade. Yet it may only be in these clashes of feeling that love can develop. Matthew has never produced a show down in terms of feeling – he acts and thinks his way out whenever he can.

The trouble is that it is so hard to help and one does not want to prevent others from doing so.

I am increasingly convinced that some sort of temperamental indices would be enormously helpful. People just do not realise that we inhabit separate worlds and those worlds may be as far removed as the *umwelts* of different species which von Uexküll<sup>2</sup> describes. People may marry those who are very close to them temperamentally or very distant. To conjoin worlds active and sustained love properly directed is needed. This at best must be a mutual effort, but one partner can and sometimes does take the initiative. The responsibility clearly lies with both and people should have a chance to know what sort of effort they will be called upon to make. Most people believe that their world alone is “real,” unaware that this is meaningless.

I left Matthew some leuco – of which more later. He seems to be making progress with Progoff<sup>3</sup> and to be becoming aware of aspects of himself which have been out of focus.

Easy marriage, easy divorce, unrealistic ideas about the satisfactions of sex and domesticity, plus a lack of social pressures to maintain marriages, leave people in a vacuum. Many who might be content are made uneasy and unhappy by the thought that they are missing something. It needs a great deal of resilience, tough mindedness, luck and love to come through unscathed. Of course it always has, but in the past couples were forced to keep together by society and by the enormous child and maternal mortality. We tend to forget how much such obvious dangers enhanced common

feeling and allowed separate worlds to become conjoined. We still face these things. We always will but for the moment we can pretend they aren't there. But their immanence, like Dr Dodd's hanging in a fortnight, "concentrated the mind wonderfully."<sup>4</sup>

What we have to do is to learn more about this disparity of worlds and how, short of mutual catastrophe, to allow the boundaries to be dissolved. I believe that we are on the track of this, but much has still to be done.

Our work has reached a very interesting point. The immediate issue being whether or not adrenochrome is present in the body. In the last month we have modified our assay so that such objections as there were have been removed. We have found adrenochrome in the red cells in considerably larger quantities than in plasma. We have not got what seems like a specific indolic substance which appears in the urine of schizophrenic people and those who have taken LSD. We are exploring this. We are putting the onus on our American critics to disprove our findings, which at this moment they are not competent to do since they have not worked with adrenochrome very much. The leuco compounds look very promising and are giving us clues about depression and the control of mood. They should allow a much more rational psychiatry. The LSD work with alcoholics is promising, apparently those who develop a positive experience can free themselves from alcohol.

It is now six years ago that I was starting out, apprehensively for Los Angeles. I see *The Doors* is coming out of a Penguin! We are still only on the fringe of great developments but our work with Maria helped us to move more quickly. The many uses of psychedelics have still to be explored. Mistakes have been made, but a body of knowledge is accumulating. How grateful I am to you for your valiant help culminating on a May morning in Hollywood. Love to Laura.

Jane sends love. The Duck Poetess has just caught a crayfish and eggs as a pet.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
6 May 1959

Dear Humphry,

Many thanks for your letter, which sums up only too correctly the problem that confronts Matthew and Ellen. Inhabitants of different and largely incommensurable worlds *can* live happily together – but only on condition that each recognizes the fact that the other's world is different and has just as much right to exist and be lived in as his own. Once the other's right to live where he or she is temperamentally and, no doubt, physiologically predestined to live is recognized, there can be something very stimulating and liberating about the experience of being joined in a loving relationship with somebody whose universe is radically unlike one's own. It becomes possible for each of the partners to enlarge his own private universe by taking his stand vicariously, through empathy and intelligence, within the other's territory and trying to see what reality looks like from that other vantage point. I remember a very touching passage in one of my grandfather's letters about his own obtuseness – the obtuseness of an immensely intelligent man of the highest integrity – in relation to his wife's insights, immediate, non-rational and almost infallible, into human character. Jack Sprat could eat no fat, his wife could eat no lean<sup>5</sup> – which is precisely why it is possible for them to constitute a symbiotic organism superior to each of its components. But, alas, what is possible goes all too often unrealized and, instead of federating their two worlds, the temperamental aliens settle down to a cold war.

I am glad that work goes forward so well and look forward to reading your next official report on it. Meanwhile what are the drugs you mention? Are they these psychic energizers of which there was much talk at the psycho-pharmacological conference at San Francisco two months ago, and of which I have been hearing more recently from Howard Fabing and our brilliant pharmacological friend, Dr Barbara Brown? There must be something rather disturbing, to people brought up in the traditional Christian fold, in the spectacle of an overwhelming conviction of sin being completely dissipated in a few days by a course of pills. The spiritual

problems of the future will revolve around the question: how are we to prevent the intense healthy-mindedness which is now within reach of all from turning into complacency, bumptiousness and philistinism? It may be found necessary to alternate euphorics and energizers with depressants and sense-of-sin-producers.

I have finished the first half of my course of lectures at the University of California at Santa Barbara. It dealt with The Human Situation in its large-scale manifestations – as influenced by destruction of natural resources, population growth, advancing technicization of everything, the suicidal traditions of nationalism, etc. Next semester I shall talk about the Human Situation as manifested on the small-scale level – shall talk about the make-up of the individual, the relations between datum and concept, the nature of art, the actualization of latent potentialities, etc. In the interval, during the coming summer, I hope to do some work on my Utopian novel, which keeps opening up as I work upon it, so that it threatens to expand into something indefinitely vast – a prospect all the more serious since I don't yet have a very satisfactory story line to support the necessary exposition. However, like Mr Micawber,<sup>6</sup> I confidently expect that Something will Turn Up.

We go to New York on the 17<sup>th</sup> of this month for ten days or two weeks, then shall be back here more or less indefinitely – unless, maybe, we slip away for a little to some mountain or seaside retreat for a little while. I wish there were a chance of seeing you.

Give my love to Jane and the young ladies.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

Yes – six years since we made that first experiment. “O Death in Life, the days that are no more”<sup>7</sup> – and yet also O life in death.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
9 May 1959*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. Particularly that there *is* a chance that our paths will cross only for a few hours, but I might be able to extend my stay in New York. Could you let Eileen know at the Parapsychology Foundation as soon as possible, i) When you will arrive in New York, and ii) where you will be staying? I will see that I find out. My present plans are to leave late on the 17<sup>th</sup> but I would try to make it late on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Unless you are too heavily engaged. There is much to discuss.

I certainly agree there is a great delight in symbiotic universes. Surely we should find out more about achieving them? Intellect and feeling must combine to cross those dimensional barriers. For unless this happens mutually repulsive universe[s] can easily develop.

I shall look forward to news of the novel and hope the plot Micawberises. I am weighed down with book(s) and papers, but am tempted to write a short story or play about memorable Point Venus. Darwin<sup>8</sup> is referring to his stay in Tahiti just after Galapagos Island where the erstwhile “rat catcher and idle shooting man” to use his father’s words had begun to pursue the origin of species. We are never told anything about “memorable point Venus.” Darwin’s remarks about the Tahitians are very strange and he is one of the few travelers to speak ill of the charms of the women of Tahiti – though he defends them quite vigorously. For at least six months after Tahiti he is clearly disgruntled and only emerges into his South American and Galapagos self when the coral island idea strikes him. I wish we knew more about memorable Point Venus.

I saw Abram yesterday and it looks as if we are very close to having used our model to develop a far more useful and accurate map of schizophrenia. We can now account not only for a remarkable number of other people’s apparently contradictory findings, but for our own as well! We can now assay adrenochrome in body fluids and cells. There is plenty of it and the question arises, what is it doing? Also is there more of it in man than in animals? The new anti-depression substances derive from our hypothesis and were for years (since 1950 referred to as E or U substance), a natural euphoriant substance(s) derived from adrenalin. They have been little mentioned publicly because it was enough to get people to swallow one hypothetical substance! Also in recent months we don’t want to give



away their formulae etc. because we don't see why the research should not benefit. What pleases me is that the ideas, derived from observation, long preceded the synthetic compounds and made it possible for us to discover them. Our attack has been very different from the pharmaceutical houses', who are getting very interested. We are "deploying" our hypothesis quickly and it seems to be capable of deployment in many ways and shows no sign of overextension of exhaustion – rather the contrary.

I agree with you that we shall be faced with new spiritual problems. But I wonder whether our anxiety laden efforts to cope with the world haven't been responsible for complacency, bumptiousness, etc. when we are, for a little, freed. I wonder if, relieved of this deep and increasingly inappropriate anxiety which can show itself in so many ways, we might not begin to behave in wiser and kinder ways. We would be patient enough to do so. At the moment we have an adrenalin system appropriate for a wild animal and we are attempting to become more or less domesticated. But with psychedelics readily available we should be able to reduce inflation. I shall look forward to talking it over with you.

Jane is on excellent form – Euphemia Janet is exceptionally active and amiable, making furious efforts to crawl. A doer like her sister. It is very interesting watching her feeling her way into the world. She learns by constantly repeated activities.

Love to Laura. I do hope I shall see you both. Jane sends love. Let Eileen know.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
11 June 1959*

My dear Aldous,

It was good to see you and Laura again. I hope that the indoctrination at the National Academy went well, though I can't believe that it could have been

as delightful as being *o sabio*<sup>9</sup> in Brazil.

We are just getting vaccinated for our flight to Britain in 12 days time. Helen and Euphemia Janet will be meeting their aunts, great aunts, grandmother, uncles and various cousins. I shall be in Le Piol and back in Britain until about August 1<sup>st</sup>. Poor little Euphy is a bit sad tonight. She had a vaccination and the new quadruple shot of polio, diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus. She disliked the injection and roared mightily. I hope she won't be long ill because she is being christened on Sunday.

The work has continued to go very well and we expect that those who have been mourning the passing of adrenochrome will have a rude shock. It has already been declared defunct several times in the last five years. We even caught a quite eminent chemist in New York claiming that it is inactive but when you read his actual reports you find that he is referring to a very different chemical. Such carelessness is indeed odd.

Bill W. continues to find himself benefited by our new substance and since he can pick it up in a variation of the classical double blind study it looks as if it must be active for him at least. Also for 60–70 other people here. It has struck me that it might help Sir Julian. Abram will be in London about the 11<sup>th</sup> July. I shall be in England by the 24<sup>th</sup> June. My address will be c/o the Misses Gray, Onet Cottage, Godalming, Surrey. Phone Godalming 445. I have seen some classical depressions clear up in a very encouraging way. It might help him. It can't harm and it won't cost anything. If it did work for him he could help us greatly. Our belief is that this adrenalin derivative acts to neutralize the tension produced by adrenalin. The idea is plausible and elegant but it is not yet accepted. Anyway I felt that you would know whether Sir Julian would be interested and might drop him and me a line if you think so.

Very busy getting a bit of my budget ready before I go and working out some research plans. What is so striking is the simple questions which are not asked. You would think that we would know how people recognise each other and their own selves for that matter. After all in another country we most of us feel that all foreigners are alike until we learn they aren't. Clearly if our ability to discriminate between people was impaired we would be in great social difficulties. There is much clinical evidence that this has happened to many of our schizophrenic patients. I have just

finished a preliminary study of 37 biographies of mentally ill people and feel that we have got a marvellous source of information.

One curious fact about parapsychology is that very little effort has been devoted to exploring the limits of normal perception. One would have supposed that those who profess interest in the paranormal would want to know where the normal ends. The work on the tachystoscope would be an obvious start, but generally they don't seem to be in the least bit interested. Statistical hassles are much more attractive. We are planning work to explore these limens. At present we are asking a simple question. Suppose someone could communicate from beyond death, how would one know that it was a particular person? It is obvious that you don't need to be dead to find this out. Eileen has given us a small grant and we are pushing ahead. As long as one is prepared to ask very simple questions one is likely to get useful answers, but many people are not prepared to ask such simple questions.

I hope all goes well with you both.

Let me know how the new book goes.

Abram and I have almost finished the first draft of our book. I don't know what the critics will make of it. I don't suppose that they will like it, but I hope that by the time it comes out they will have many awkward facts to think about which may damp their ardor a trifle.

Jane sends her love.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
20 June 1959*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. I hope you and the family have by this time arrived safely in my native town. (I was born in Godalming at a house called "Laleham" now used, I believe, as a sort of overflow for boys, for

whom there is no room in the regular Charterhouse boarding houses. One of my early recollections is being taken to church in Godalming and disgracing myself by vomiting during the sermon – a precocious expression, no doubt, of anti-clericalism. In those days what is now the Headmaster’s house belonged to a rich widow, Mrs Ewart, who had a semi-imbecile son who was a King’s Messenger, and who wore a gold bangle from which depended several dozen teeth – the early sheddings of her nieces and nephews. Every Thursday, if I remember rightly, the Muffin Man came round, ringing a dinner bell, like the character in *The Hunting of the Snark*.<sup>10</sup> He had a long white beard and wore a flat topped military cap, on which he carried a large tray, on which, under a white cloth, were the freshly made muffins and crumpets. And of course the meat was delivered in an elegant little box on wheels with the butcher’s boy perched on a high seat at the front end of the box, driving a very high-spirited horse. And once a steam roller came and rolled the road outside our gate – a truly glorious object with a spinning flywheel and a tall chimney. It exhaled a deliciously thrilling smell of hot oil, and on the front end of the boiler was a golden unicorn.)

You are quite right to be interested in the potentialities of “straight” perception. The Bates Method people have records of extraordinary feats when eyes and minds are thoroughly relaxed – seeing the moons of Jupiter, reading microscopic type at a distance at which the apparent height of a letter would be less than the diameter of a single retinal rod. The academic testers of perceptual power have consistently neglected to prepare the sense organs and the mind for their best performance by getting them first into a suitable state of relaxation. I think it would be worth your while to do some work with a well trained Bates teacher. If you ever come here, you should have a talk with Mrs Corbett,<sup>11</sup> my teacher, who has had an enormous experience and probably knows more about eyes-and-mind in their functioning than any ophthalmologist or professional psychologist.

I wrote to Julian that you were coming to England. He has been in Wales, but I think must be due back in London about now. His address there is 31 Pond St, London NW3.

I have just had a week in bed with the flu, but am on the way up now and hope to be clothed and in my right mind in another day or two. Love to Jane.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

P.S. I suspect that one might pass from ordinary sp to ESP by steadily pushing the Bates procedure to the point where it would be physically impossible to see in the ordinary way – always suggesting confidence in the subject that he would go on succeeding.

---

*Onet Cottage  
Godalming, Surrey  
1 July 1959*

My dear Aldous,

My 42<sup>nd</sup> birthday being spent only about a mile from my first. The old house is under or almost under a by-pass road. The new one built in 1934 looks out at the Devil's Jumps, Crooksbury and the Hogsback. England is marvellously green and today damp. The drought (two weeks or more without rain!) has broken. The mild damp is delightful after Saskatchewan's dryness – but I suspect that in November and December it might become tiresome.

I was in Godalming yesterday. The pepper-box<sup>12</sup> mysteriously put up in 1812 is still standing. Why did they publicly subscribe for so useless though now interesting an object? One could have understood 1815 or 1805. I did not see your muffin man but Godalming still has many citizens who might qualify for this post. We passed a steam engine coming from the airport. I could not see the front end. Who knows, there might have been a golden unicorn on it! English shopping is deliciously personal, shopper and shop keeper derive much pleasure from their relationship. I suspect that English people derive much enjoyment even from the frustrations of their lives. They are not harried like the Americans to be doing something else or uncertain like Canadians.

Less refreshing and delicious is the still very marked class consciousness and snobbery. This does not seem to have abated at all with the general levelling of income. I suppose there is no reason why it should.

The similarity of dress between classes and the spread of BBC and ATV<sup>13</sup> English still don't seem to have dented snobbery a bit, all that has happened is that new refinements of snobbism have developed. Of course this gives people a marvellous sense of belonging even when they don't like it.

Euphemia Janet behaved very well on the way over, sleeping much of the time – which is not her wont. Eileen her formidable Godmother visited her last Thursday and Euphemia was very amiable. Gave her an oration lasting some time of coos and friendly shouts. Eileen was on her way to Le Piol and I shall be going there on Saturday. She has been having Smythies trouble which had been worrying her. I think that I was able to reassure her that John's edgy, cantankerous arrogance responds best to a sharp rap across the knuckles. The awful thing is that he has a sort of Bourbonesque rigidity. He does not seem to learn. Nine years ago when I first knew him he was alienating people who might have been very helpful and who were well disposed by the same sort of silliness which he now exhibits. John's considerable intelligence far from helping him seems to compound his blunders because it encourages him in tiresome and specious rationalizations which irritate other people. He unluckily interprets their irritation as an indication that his blows have got home – while in fact it arises from their puzzled awareness of his astounding obtuseness!

I am glad you like the idea of reaching paranormal perception via straight perception. I got the idea from a talk we had at Pear Tree, I think, about Solomon Eagles.<sup>14</sup> I shall try to get Eileen to pay my way down to meet Mrs Corbett. I think you are right, we should find much odd evidence just to one side of the beaten track. I'm sure you have seen about Land's<sup>15</sup> (Polaroid) new theory of color vision which upsets all that has been taught for a century and suggests that the mind-brain plays a far larger part in perception than had been thought. I expect this may make Bates' ideas much more respectable. You will find it referred to in the May *Scientific American* (maybe April). I think that the Bates procedure plus a tachistoscope might tell us a lot. We may find that ESP plays a much larger part in general perception than we have come to suppose.

I may have told you that a young physicist friend has observed that if other aspects of time or times exist then one would predict new forms of energy because all our current ideas about energy are linked to our present time dimension.

It is striking how much parapsychological phenomena are related to affective changes – very often to agonal phenomena. The Chukchees among others even involved their Shaman in diving under ice after he had taken the mushroom. This allowed the hoped for temporary dissociation of body and mind, though it sometimes proved to be permanent. So far as I know this has not been followed up in spite of its obvious possibilities. Of course one can see that the investigators may not have relished the ideas of half killing themselves. But in fact we do this regularly with anaesthetics and can produce the same brain-mind conditions that exist in the agonal state without any very great risk. If one compares such risks with those of say motor racing or even skin diving they would be very small. I suspect that the condition which we need to explore is that of “timelessness” often referred to in mystic, agonal and psychedelic writings and also in mental illnesses. Anyway I shall keep you posted.

I have not heard from Sir Julian but hope to do so. It would be nice if our stuff helped him. Reading an excellent biography of a sparrow, to which he wrote a foreword, called *Sold for a Farthing*.<sup>16</sup> Like the Len Hutton<sup>17</sup> books it shows clearly how remarkably birds respond to really sympathetic handling. They do things which they should not do! I suspect that much the same applies to humans – only perhaps we are still not too good at taming them.

Jane sends Love. Helen is largely horse borne at the moment. Good wishes to Laura.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
3 September 1959*

My dear Aldous,

I have been back from England for almost a month and find the change a sad one. Saskatchewan and its prairies does not compare with England in

one of its loveliest summers. There is no point in pretending. Returning was a horrid wrench for all of us. Yet I can work here in a way that is still impossible in Britain. The Americans seem to be mesmerized by transdisciplinary groups – while the British are mesmerized by committees. There is much to be said for committees but I doubt whether they have been the best way to encourage, institute and develop that special kind of gambling which is research. The “sound” men get together and they back ideas which all sound men agree are sound. Such ideas are, however quite worthless for research, indeed enough sound men are the best possible screen against research. In psychiatry the British have made a fine art of this. They assemble 16 or 17 of the most critical minds available and get them to scrutinize the new ideas. Soon there aren’t any left and everyone is mystified at the dearth of research workers. They have a new Medical Research Council Committee enquiring about this strange dearth. It carries on it a number of those largely responsible for the trouble. It is rather sad.

Le Piol went well. The atmosphere was genial and people worked well. I hope Abram and I will produce a report by Christmas. We are finishing our first book at the moment. Le Piol was very beautiful and I think much building has been done since you were there. I would have enjoyed it even more had I not been a co-chairman.

Abram and I saw John Smythies and decided that his trouble is that he is still so far from being grown up. We were a bit annoyed at the silly pranks that he had been up to, but it was clear that these are just part of his usual erratic ways and not in the least bit personal. He is shaking the dust of the New World off his feet and will be back at the Maudsley this month. A splendid intelligence who functions socially at the level of a conceited eight year old. John already has “plans” for “taking over” the Maudsley which are absurd if he means them, and since he talks to all and sundry about them, likely to harm him unnecessarily if he doesn’t. Yet he made some excellent and lucid contributions.

Francis H. was there. Doesn’t like Haiti, though says it is very interesting. An example of government by secular black magicians – if you can call it government, since it is mostly the exercise of force and fraud in a random way. If Haiti were a cold climate I suppose they would have starved long ago. A good many get pretty near starvation as it is. Haiti sounds hellish from Francis. He is starting a niacin cult which sounds as if it would



be successful. He is also in pursuit of a zombie but has not yet found one which satisfies his criteria.

In London I saw Sir Julian and Lady Huxley at their home. I could only stay an hour which was a great pity. Sir Julian told me that he had once written a poem about Crooksbury. He seemed concerned about Francis – felt that he was not employing that excellent mind to the best advantage. He, Sir Julian, seem[ed] extraordinarily organized – a mind really very much like a card index – or one of those new data selectors. You pressed a button and out came the references and very useful and apt ones too.

I am going to try and write a book for Chatto on our research. If I do it properly I think it should be fun and useful at least to me. I want to sharpen up my ideas about how research is done and perhaps some aimed reminiscences about our one will be useful. Since I last wrote data has continued to pile up and by the time our book is ready there should be much more of it. Briefly there have been about half a dozen important findings in the last six months all of which support our adrenochrome hypothesis. These are: i) The Worcester Group (Hoagland and Company)<sup>18</sup> have found that schizophrenic serum inhibits a certain sort of climbing behaviour in rats. The active portion of the serum is a small molecule attached to a protein. ii) Many reports are coming in about peculiar indole patterns in the urine of schizophrenics. iii) Bercel has apparently shown that the spider's web pattern produced by schizophrenic plasma (injected into flies and fed to the arachnids) is not like mescaline, benzedrine or LSD fed spiders, it is very like adrenochrome fed spiders. iv) Two Frenchmen claim to have found adrenochrome and adrenolutin in the urine of "exhaustion states" – six day bicyclists and some uraemics. They say previous assays have been unsound. Hence the failure to find it. v) Dr Fedoroff<sup>19</sup> in Saskatoon has found a toxic substance in schizophrenic plasma – it is also an antihistamine (adrenochrome is an antihistamine) he is trying to isolate. vi) Abram has found that most adrenochrome is in the red cells and not in the plasma. It seems to be stored there. vii) Our chemists have crystallised a specific indole from schizophrenic urine. They processed 200 litres of it a couple of weeks ago. This substance is found after LSD-25 and after injecting adrenochrome. Apart from this we have so far only found it in schizophrenics. We are now characterizing it. I think the hunt is up. And I guess that this is the view.

Meanwhile information about our anti-tension substance is piling up. We have several people who have been on it for a year. We have run a number of double blind trials. The evidence is that it is a powerful and effective substance in comparatively very small doses. It is also very probably a natural metabolite. We suspect it will be useful in psychosomatic conditions. We are developing a number of similar substances. It is exciting.

Jane, Helen and Euphemia Janet are on good form. Helen spent an idyllic holiday mostly on horseback. Euphy-Jenny was the focus of admiring great aunts and aunts. She is a delightful little girl who stands, crawls, has great skill with her hands and is in every way accomplished. She has only one fault, an appalling one. She hardly sleeps. Her personality has to be extremely amiable for us to find her so beguiling inspite of her causing us to subsist on almost no sleep.

So the winter approaches on the great northern plains. I wish I could be sure it was our last. It has been an exile, but a useful one I hope. An odd little happening this week underlines how things have changed in five years. Then there were constant complaints about our hospital from the townsfolk. Now they have a mass resignation from nurses in their hospital who complain of bad administration and suggest we should be called in to advise. And so I suppose we should.

Good wishes to Laura. Hope all goes well with you both.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

P.S. P. Calvocoressi<sup>20</sup> of Chatto's showed me the Spanish pirated version of your writings which had been "unusually profitable." You are luckier with your pirates than Mrs Humphry Ward.<sup>21</sup>

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
15 October 1959*

My dear Humphry,

Many thanks for your letter of I don't like to think how many weeks ago. I shall be interested to see the paper when it comes out, and to hear meanwhile of any further advances.

The radio announced blizzards in Saskatchewan the other day – hard to believe here, where we have a heat-wave with 94° temperatures and a continuing drought of the most alarming nature.

I am kept very busy with lectures at Santa Barbara, reading for same and spasmodic work on my book. Too much to do and too little time to do it. And my subliminal self always tends to work rather sluggishly – creating not in first fine careless raptures, but in a series of second and third thoughts, which compel me to go back and change or add to or cut out from the material provided by my first thoughts.

Can you recommend a good book that sums up the most advanced treatment of the mentally ill, not merely on the pharmacological level, but all around – in relation to diet, occupational therapy, group therapy, sleep therapy, etc? I don't want to have to look up dozens of separate papers, and hope you can supply me with the titles of one or more comprehensive summings up. And meanwhile have you found in your hospital work that somatotyping along Sheldonian lines has helped in diagnosis and, more important, in programming treatment and general handling?

My love to Jane and blessings to the children.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
19 October 1959*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. Your letter reached me in unusual conditions – bed ridden, with flu, whatever flu may be. However I'm on the mend and

should be at work in a day or two.

You are right, we have had 12–14 inches of snow – all melted now, but another sprinkle tonight and cold air seeping down from the arctic. This and heavy September rains have allayed drought fears and replaced them with concern for grain still in the fields and winter fodder.

First your questions. I don't know of any book which does exactly what you ask and wish I did, I would buy it. I suppose you have looked at Noyes' *Textbook of Psychiatry* (Saunders).<sup>22</sup> I don't enjoy it much but it would be worth a glance. Then there is the huge new half century American Textbook of Psychiatry edited by Arieti<sup>23</sup> and published by Basic Books. It is authoritative, verbose and sounds unattractive. It might do what you want. Also there is the new *Progress in Psychiatry* (1959).<sup>24</sup> I haven't seen it yet, put out by the British *Journal of Mental Science*<sup>25</sup> (Royal Medico-Psychological Society), usually excellent value. I think I would take a look at that first. I'll let you know if I hear of others.

No we aren't doing somatotyping though we should much like to and plan to start it as soon as we can get money. We aren't pushing it because we have not got our essential biochemical tests on a service basis yet and believe they will throw much light on Sheldon's scheme and vice versa. I use a rough and ready Sheldon almost every day and this has made me sure that we need the real thing.

The work moves on quickly and very much on the lines about which I told you earlier. But the work with leucoadrenochrome (the dihydroxyindole family) is now picking up speed. You will remember that our model suggests that adrenochrome occupies a key place in this particular way of breaking down adrenalin. It usually turns into dihydroxyindoles which seem to be concerned with the control of tension and hence may be the mood balancing substances. But it can turn into trihydroxyindoles (of which adrenolutin is an example) and that way madness lies. Data is coming in which supports both these hypotheses and this of course supports the general adrenochrome hypothesis. I hope it is right. Its so damned elegant that it ought to be! Of course even if it is "right" it will be hugely modified and qualified, but as it stands it is a thoroughbred which is more than one can say for many psychiatric hypotheses. Anyway today Abram told me that Merck's are getting excited about its peculiar properties which are like nothing they have yet come

across. Even that would be a bit of a triumph. We now have good evidence that dihydroxyindoles are present naturally in the body (as one would expect). This, of course, strengthens the adrenochrome hypotheses while advancing our new one. We have another family up our sleeve too.

So far, due to our tiny resources we have always had to work from humans to animals, but with the drug companies getting involved we can now use their safer methods. Having the pure compounds has let us trace their breakdown paths in the body, and this has been a shining thread in a vast maze of varicolored indoles, quinones and other curious compounds whose names I forget. Our organic chemist is far ahead of us in syntheses, but even those we have suggest a huge number of unusual and powerful substances. The mystery is that no one got at them before. The answer to this is fairly simple – once you assume that adrenochrome can't be made you aren't going to waste money making it! Luckily for us we didn't make that assumption, although we were urged by many well informed people to do so, we relied on our experience with adrenochrome, adrenolutin and leuco rather than on their opinions about our experience. It looks as if once again fortune favors those who study the phenomena rather than those who know what is *a priori*. Though one would think that by now people would tumble to this. However much has still to be done and we can't tell how far we have bitten into the great psychoses. While we naturally hope that we have now found Excalibur it may only be a flint knife. We shall have to wait and see.

Meanwhile we have just finished an interesting piece of work for Eileen to see how one would identify an "entity" if it did communicate through a sensitive. This is a problem which can be modelled pretty well. We have run into many fascinating problems in the recognition of others and self identification. A cheap way of becoming recognised as a profound thinker in psychology seems to be to read Galton. Remarkably little has been done with many of his best ideas and explorations. Do you know any account of ESP work done with identical twins? And to be a little more refined, using twins who meet two of Galton's other criteria, 1) Have a high degree of identity, about 25% of his sample, and 2) Have really good visual imagery – about 6% of the sample. About one pair of twins in 64 should have these qualities. In New York there should be several hundred pairs of twins who have these qualities. It should not be impossible to find half a dozen such

pairs. In such people I suspect (and owing to no proper evidence, Galton apart, I can only suspect) that ESP goes on all the time. It would not be very surprising for sending and receiving equipment would be ideally matched by both nature and nurture. The essential intellectual and emotional sympathy should be easy to evoke. I wonder why it hasn't been tried? Yet so far as I can make out it never has been even discussed.

Jane and Helen are on good form. Euphemia Janet astonishing, very mobile and already producing a large number of interesting noises which will doubtless soon turn into words. She is a jolly little thing and much spoiled by all of us. Keep me posted about the new book. The CBC seem very pleased that you will do something for them in the spring. Good wishes to Laura.

Love from us all.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. I nearly forget to pass on some of the British Election news which I culled from Chris Mayhew, Labour ex-Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Chris is a very intelligent Fabian. I saw him in London in July and he played a part in Labor's intelligent propaganda on TV. As you know only 200,000 votes separated the two parties inspite of the 100 seats difference. Labor's great problem is the unpopularity of the trade unions. The Tories have the city as their skeleton in the cupboard but it irritates far fewer people than the unions do. It is a sort of upper class football pool – the national point of view on gambling has altered. The city are no longer monsters but rogues – like pools promoters etc. In a country in which anyone may get £100,000 tax free no one objects to someone else getting £1 million. You can be a more or less loveable rogue!

The unions are very different. Once, much longer ago than they care to think, they were the workers' spear head against the bosses. In the U.S. they have developed into a mixture of insurance organisations, big business cum gangster. Britain has its own brew of 19<sup>th</sup> century lower middle class morality and commonsense, plus bureaucracy and tiresome self righteousness. This is made all the trickier because this engenders "wild cat" strikes, essentially against the unions, at least as much as against

management for which the unions are blamed. So there is a tendency for unions to be blamed in Britain for irresponsibility and stuffy bureaucracy and in the U.S. for communism, right wingism, and gangsterdom. It is no wonder that the Labour party are wondering what sort of a political ally the unions are and how expensive they are likely to become.

The difficulty is that no one knows what the goals of the unions are or should be. Most of the early goals have long ago been obtained. The union leaders are extremely cagey on nationalisation, workers' ownership, large scale cooperation, etc. Indeed interunion jealousy and strife is a not infrequent cause of strife. All these uncertainties make the unions well suited to become bogey men even if no one had an interest in making them look that way. Further most of their business which has become complicated and expensive is done by paid organizer[s] who are becoming increasingly professional – by the rules which govern bureaucracies! The British unions are little tainted with gangsterdom, they are just dull and representative of an out of date morality. New issues for which unions were never intended further complicate the issue. It is no accident that Hoffa,<sup>26</sup> one of the most corrupt and powerful union leaders, is also head of a union in which automation will, presumably, come very late. Hoffa is spared one of the major worries which beset union leaders – that strikes may simply speed automation. Chris feels that neither Labour nor union people in Britain want to think too much on these gloomy topics, and until they do I suppose that the Conservatives who are opportunists guided by bright young advertising executives will continue to win. Perhaps too a flexible fellow without principles is less dangerous than a rigid one with out of date ways of applying his principles. It is interesting.

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
4 November 1959*

Dear Humphry,

Thanks for your good letter. About identical twins and ESP – see C.E. Stuart, *Journal of Parapsychology*. 1946. Volume 10, pp. 21–35.<sup>27</sup> Also Garst and Albright, *Parapsychology Bulletin*, Nov. 1948<sup>28</sup> for experiment comparing scores of married couples with those of casual acquaintances.

In haste,  
Aldous

---

3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
29 November 1959

Dear Humphry,

What news of you? I keep reading of frightful blizzards blowing down out of Canada, and imagine that you must be having a rather bad time, meteorologically speaking. Here our bad time is of a very different kind – a drought which has lasted for ten months, and only five inches of rain in the preceding year. Temperatures are in the 80s – which is very pleasant, until one starts looking at the vegetation, outside the irrigated areas, which is burnt to a crisp.

I am near the end of my lecturing at Santa Barbara – one more panel discussion of a Darwin Centenary Lecture by Professor John Randall,<sup>29</sup> and two more lectures of my own. After which I shall be free to work whole-time on my book. As for plans – I am invited to go in late March or April to Topeka, to be a visiting professor for a few weeks at the Menninger Foundation. It will be interesting, I think, to penetrate the holy of holies of American psychiatry and to take a searching look. Nathan Kline's<sup>30</sup> report on Soviet psychiatry, as summarized in *Time*, was interesting and no doubt, to Menninger et al., disturbing. Have you read the full report? I think I will write and ask him to send it [to] me. Laura, meanwhile, works away at her psychotherapy – with remarkable results in many cases: for she seems to have an intuitive knowledge of what to do at any given moment, what technique to use in each successive phase of the patient's mood and feeling. She has had some very good results with therapy under LSD in a few cases



where the method seemed to be justifiable. (Incidentally, what frightful people there are in your profession! We met two Beverly Hills psychiatrists the other day, who specialize in LSD therapy at \$100 a shot – and, really, I have seldom met people of lower sensitivity, more vulgar mind! To think of people made vulnerable by LSD being exposed to such people is profoundly disturbing. But what can one do about the problem? Psychiatry is an art based on a still imperfect science – and as in all the arts there are more bad and indifferent practitioners than good ones. How can one keep the bad artists out? Bad artists don't matter in painting or literature – but they matter enormously in therapy and education; for whole lives and destinies may be affected by their shortcomings. But one doesn't see any practical way in which the ungifted and the unpleasant can be filtered out and only the gifted and good let through.) And talking of LSD – would it be possible for you to send me half a dozen doses of it? I want to try some experiments myself and Laura would like to give it to a couple of people, to round off their therapy. I don't want to bother Sid Cohen too often – and don't want to have to ask people like Oscar Janiger<sup>31</sup> or Hartman or Chandler,<sup>32</sup> who have the stuff, use it badly and of whom I disapprove. If this is feasible, I'd be most grateful. And if it isn't feasible, who should I apply to in the Sandoz set-up?

Give my love to Jane and the children.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
9 December 1959*

My dear Aldous,

How good to have news from you. I have been away from Weyburn much of the last two weeks at our union negotiations. These are boring, but I usually get a fair amount of writing done and always learn something about unions and management. I think one of the most misleading ideas about

unions is to look upon them as gatherings of revolutionaries, radicals or even mildly progressive people. They are essentially traditionalists. Conservatives bound by traditions which change little if at all. Although the Tolpuddle martyrs<sup>33</sup> were an agricultural union, trades union tradition is an industrial one and union leaders think in terms of plants operating for profit. That this may be a very loose analogy with a government hospital or civil service has not bothered them much. It is only just dawning on them that most workers aren't in industry but are in offices and shops.

The union leaders have a "boss" stereotype of 19<sup>th</sup> century steel master design. That he hardly exists anywhere now does not deter them from trying to conjure him up. It is curious.

However while the negotiations have been ambling along I have got my chapter on the night spent with the Indians of the Native American church written. It has been hard work and difficult. I hope it will convey something of the experience. It has taken me three years to write it and I don't think I should have got it done yet but I was asked for a radio talk and in preparing this I got my teeth into my peyote religion notebook. We hope to publish a book on the ceremony soon. I think I told you Abram and I have a book coming out in January, February or March on our schizophrenia work. I think it may be timely because the tide seems to have turned. Our latest paper "Schizophrenia: A New Approach (Continued)" is in great demand. There is a growing amount of support for a toxic hypothesis and the evidence is now accumulating rapidly. We believe that we have much improved the method for picking up the toxic factor in urine. Others are closing in on the stuff in blood. It is very different from a few years back. The attack now is concentric and sustained. This does not mean that the adrenochrome hypothesis is generally accepted yet. It does mean that its opponents have retreated much in the last six months, and from attacking us vigorously in early 1959, they now even allege that they really agreed with us all along. Which is odd.

Hope your drought breaks soon. We had an 18 month one which ended in September with much rain and snow. We had a very cold spell a few weeks back but it is fairly pleasant at the moment, 20 below or less at night and round about freezing during the day.

I agree with you about LSD. It is very unfortunate. I only hope that some of our newer developments will make it less profitable for the incompetent

and crooked. Many psychiatrists are either unsuited or insufficiently trained for the work. The trouble is that the demand is considerable and the less able or more unscrupulous can make much money. Medicine has a long and depressing history of substandard professional work about which we have been incredibly slow about doing very much. We are collecting a good deal of information about our alcoholics and hope to be publishing it soon.

Al Hubbard did not come out of his wrangle with the Professor of Psychiatry in Vancouver too badly. Indeed he did very well considering how formidable his opponent is known to be. As I feared his correspondence course PhD was not wholly approved of, although undoubtedly legal. Al was nonplussed by this. It had not struck him that regarding a scientific qualification recognition by peers might be most important. However he hasn't come to much harm.

Thank you so much for the two references – there are pleasantly few on twins and parapsychology and none on twins and imagery so far. I would have expected some learned German to have 100 or so cases tucked away, but apparently not.

I shall send you half a dozen 100 mg of LSD-25. Sandoz are a bit sticky at present but we shall weasel some out of them.

I am also sending you along a few leuco adrenochrome tablets. They seem useful in tension and depression associated with tension. Not with apathy. We suspect this may be a naturally occurring anti-tension substance in the body and that adrenochrome may have a physiological function as a precursor of this. There is a huge family of adrenalin derivatives, and perhaps those of different constitution use and lack different ones. Indeed we already have some evidence that this may be so. Clearly this will have to be linked up with Sheldon's work. One of the puzzling things for the pharmacologists, though hardly surprising, is that our substances in ordinary and even very large doses produce few effects on animals although often working rather well on upset humans. Only quite sophisticated pharmacologists realise that an active rat may not be a happy one and that even an Olds rat who is always pushing the "joyshock" button may feel uncomfortably addicted. We have found intelligent humans who are reasonably introspective a very valuable source of information, better even than monkeys. But this is a highly heterodox point of view. Pharmacology's triumphs have so far usually sprung from watching the muscle of the leech,

or a guinea pig's womb, etc. They are now developing better techniques for humans.

Jane is on pretty good form although she is still not greatly in love with the prairies. Helen now ten is still a stormy but very amiable person. It is interesting how very similar her temperament has remained since she was a tiny child. She and Euphy-Jenny are excellent friends – the little girl's face lights up when her big sister appears on the scene.

I do wish someone would do an *adequate* popularisation of Sheldon. The sociologists etc. in their keenness to emphasize their omniscience have greatly over stated their case. In spite of some of their claims madness is marvellously cross cultural, though a mad Englishman goes mad in an English way, the mad Chinese in a Chinese way. One rather striking thing seems to be that all cultures seem to recognise madness. Not all cultures recognise suicide for instance. As a matter of fact the less wild sociologists have long realized this, but a few wild men still proclaim that man is nothing but a social entity. A few of these men are clearly highly extraverted people and so what they claim about man as a whole is a reflection of their own experience.

Good wishes to you and Laura for the season, which I expect you hope will be a wet one. I do hope we shall soon meet again. Look forward to your Menningeritic adventures. It is an odd place. You will be able to savor analysis en masse. Scientifically the whole set up has been sterile, though clinically very active. Of course there is no reason why a clinically active centre should do much in research. It is only that research has become prestigious that makes many people who have no gift or inclination for it sweat away to obtain grants. It is unfortunate that no one likes to admit that not everyone is good at research! The huge grants available have really become an industry – and the numerous consultations without which no research is apparently able to function are honey for many mouths. Oddly enough in our 7½ years of research we have never required any of these valuable consultants at handsome fees. We know the men in the field and if we don't know the answer they rarely do! If they know it and have published their views it is much cheaper to read what they have written. We also prefer to go and see others than have them to come and see us.

I saw Sir Julian and Lady Juliette in Chicago with Heinrich Klüver. He seemed on good form and was organizing the Darwin centenary. I wonder

what old Charles would have made of it all? There was great excitement at the University of Chicago.

I breakfasted with Matthew in New York and talked with Ellen. Matthew seemed much more at ease than when I last saw him. He is still understandably vexed with Francis who has disappeared into the Haitian backwoods. Ellen sounded well too.

I saw Eileen who, although recovering from some cardiac trouble seemed her usual astonishing self. I think she will back our enquiry into imagery which has been astonishingly neglected. We are attacking the association work from another direction and it is yielding interesting information.

Ever,  
Humphry

1 D.B. Blewett and N. Chwelos's *The Handbook for the Use of Lysergic Acid Diethylamide-25: Individual and Group Procedures* was written in 1959 and circulated for years in mimeograph form. According to the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, who published it in digital form in 2002, it remains one of the most comprehensive guides on psychedelic therapy, offering a wealth of details on dosage, setting, the stages of the LSD experience, and common issues that may arise.

2 Jakob von Uexküll (1864–1944). Baltic-German biologist who worked in the fields of muscular physiology, animal behaviour studies, and the cybernetics of life. He authored the term *umwelt*, meaning “environment” or “surroundings,” an important concept in Osmond's work and conversations with Huxley.

3 Ira Progoff (1921–98). American psychologist who pioneered using writing as a tool for ongoing self-growth.

4 A comment made by English writer Dr Samuel Johnson (1709–84) when he was criticized for writing *The Convict's Address to His Unhappy Brethren* (1777) on behalf of William Dodd (1729–77), an Anglican clergyman who was convicted of bribery and forgery, imprisoned, and hanged.

5 Reference to the nursery rhyme “Jack Sprat” (1639), whose contemporary version reads, “Jack Sprat could eat no fat. / His wife could eat no lean. / And so between the two of them, / They licked the platter clean.”

6 Reference to the poverty of Wilkins Micawber, a character in Charles Dickens's (1812–70) novel *David Copperfield* (1850).

7 From English poet Alfred Tennyson's (1809–92) “Tears, Idle Tears” (1847).

8 Charles Darwin (1809–82). English scientist best known for his theories of evolution. The reference to “memorable Point Venus” is from his *Journal and Remarks* (1845), 403, based on his voyage on HMS *Beagle*. The remarks attributed to his father are paraphrased from Francis Darwin, ed., *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, Including an Autobiographical Chapter* (London: John Murray, 1887), vol. 1, 32.

9 “The wise man.”

- 10 Nonsense poem by Lewis Carroll published in 1876.
- 11 Margaret Darst Corbett (1889–1962). Practitioner and advocate of the Bates Method of vision improvement.
- 12 The Pepperpot (popularly known as the Pepper Box) was built in Godalming in 1814, replacing an earlier timber building on the same site that had been the market house.
- 13 Associated Television, an independent British television station that broadcast from 1955 to 1968.
- 14 Solomon Eccles (aka Solomon Eagle, 1618–83). English composer who became a Quaker and distanced himself from church music, burning his earlier compositions.
- 15 Edwin H. Land (1909–91). American scientist and inventor who in 1948 introduced the Polaroid Land Camera, which developed pictures in sixty seconds. His article “Experiments in Color Vision” was published in *Scientific American* in May 1959.
- 16 Claire Kipps (fl. 1890–1962). English author whose *Sold for a Farthing* was published in 1953.
- 17 Len Hutton (1916–90). English cricketer regarded as one of the game’s best batsmen who seriously injured his arm, recovered after surgeries, and was able to return to the game. He also had a career in journalism and published several books and articles describing his life as a cricketer.
- 18 Hudson Hoagland (1899–1982). American neuroendocrinologist who co-founded the Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology in 1944.
- 19 Sergey Fedoroff (1925–2012). Latvian-born neuroscientist who was an early specialist in studying tissue culture.
- 20 Peter Calvocoressi (1912–2010). British lawyer, politician, and publisher who worked at Chatto and Windus from 1955 to 1966.
- 21 Mary Augusta Arnold (1851–1920). British novelist and Huxley’s aunt by marriage (sister of Julia Frances Arnold) who published under her married name. Her novel *Robert Ellesmere* (1888) was very popular, and pirated editions of it sold widely in the United States and Canada.
- 22 Alfred Percy Noyes (1880–1963). Physician, psychiatric hospital administrator, and medical educator whose *A Textbook of Psychiatry* was first published by MacMillan in 1927. He published a different book, *Modern Clinical Psychiatry*, with Saunders in 1951.
- 23 Silvano Arieti was editor-in-chief of the *American Handbook of Psychiatry*, a seven-volume, multi-authored psychiatric reference work; the first volume was published in 1959.
- 24 Reference to the third volume of *Recent Progress in Psychiatry* (1959), edited by G.W.T.H. Fleming and A. Walk.
- 25 The *Journal of Mental Science* was renamed the *British Journal of Psychiatry* in 1963.
- 26 Jimmy Hoffa (fl. 1913–75). American labour union leader.
- 27 C.E. Stuart, “GESP Experiments with the Free Response Method,” *Journal of Parapsychology* 10 (1946): 21–35.
- 28 The experiment by Elaine Garst and Lois Albright is discussed in “A Survey of the Current Attitude of American Neuropsychiatrists Toward Parapsychology,” *Parapsychology Bulletin*, no. 12 (November 1948): 1–4.
- 29 John Turton Randall (1905–84). British physicist and biophysicist who shared the 1962 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine with James Watson (b. 1928) and Francis Crick (1916–2004) for determining the structure of DNA.
- 30 Nathan S. Kline (1916–83). New York psychiatrist who pioneered the use of tranquilizers and antidepressant drugs in treating mental illnesses. Kline’s article, praising the care of mental patients in the Soviet Union, appeared in *Time* on 23 November 1959.
- 31 Oscar Janiger (1918–2001). A California-based psychiatrist who conducted extensive LSD research.
- 32 Radiologist Mortimer A. Hartman (1919–2004) and psychiatrist Arthur L. Chandler (1912–91) ran a Beverly Hills practice administering LSD to celebrities such as Cary Grant, who praised the

results of their treatments.

33 The Tolpuddle martyrs founded the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers, an early form of organized labour, in 1833, which resulted in their banishment to Australia. They were pardoned in 1836 and returned to England.

1960

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
2 January 1960*

My dear Aldous,

All good wishes for the '60s, that sibilant S allows all sorts of prefixes for the questing journalist from the *Times* to *Confidential*, each can choose an appropriate set of adjectives.

I am just getting up from flu and feeling a little ashamed of my low capacity for work when feeling ill. When one realises that masterpieces have been written by sick men in great pain, it is galling for a healthy brute like me to be wholly incapacitated by so little. I excuse myself with the thought that it is a matter of what you are used to but wonder whether it is anymore than an excuse. I am used to feeling well, whatever well may be. How do we know that we all mean the same thing by well? When well I write slowly and rather painstakingly plodding away revising much and generally chewing the cud. If I feel ill I have much difficulty in setting pen to paper. How did D.H. Lawrence who was so very ill much of the time manage? Of course if my excuse that it is a matter of contrast has a little to it then D.H.L. would feel as well or even better than I do although absolutely much iller. It brings us back to the control of mood which Abram and I are now working hard on. We are preparing a nice little bomb for psychiatrists to start the '60s in the right spirit.

The schizophrenia research is faring well. I think we weathered an all out attack from the Americans in 1959 and to their surprise gave better than we got.

The enervating influence of Freud and Adolph Meyer on U.S. psychiatry has made learned controversy almost bad form. Freud was, so far as I can make out a poor debater and so he discouraged this. Meyer held there was much to be said for everything. In the last decade the idea has got around that all one need [d]o is to be agreeable and stiletto your man in



committee, by foot note or by innuendo. Of course if you play to such rules you cut your own throat – the snag is that these rules can only apply to those who accept them. Abe and I don't. This has been a horrid shock for some and a delight for many who support an older tradition. No one thought we could be such cads as to state openly that someone had been caddish enough to “obtain” adrenochrome which was unobtainable from a man we had lent some to without our permission. This is a well known bit of scientific decency and this particular chap tried to pull a fast one on us. He failed, but neither he nor his boss expected to have it thrown back at them in print. So long as the issue is a real one and the difference of opinion is made clear scientific controversy does nothing but good. Very often the issue is not made clear. Abram and I made it very clear that we disagree with the pundits and we don't think they have examined the evidence or produced other evidence. Anyway 1959 was a year of continuing progress in our own work and a growing realisation among others that huffing and puffing won't blow it away. It cuts no ice to say adrenochrome is or is not present in the body – what has to be examined is evidence.

But that is a digression. What I wanted to ask you about was something you told me years ago about William Seabrook (I think it was) and leather suits into which he laced his girlfriends tightly. Now I may have misunderstood you completely, but what I thought you said was that with these leather suits he produced curious experiences in some of the girlfriends. Was this so and if I have got it muddled what is the real thing?

Why I ask is because I have recently read a book by a man called Ed Morrell.<sup>1</sup> Title *The 25<sup>th</sup> Man*. He was a California outlaw who was sent to San Quentin with a life sentence of solitary. In the hole [he] was abominably tortured and spent days in a straight jacket. The results were unexpected. Instead of killing him he developed out of the body experiences, which he records in his book. These are very like mescaline etc. These out of the body experiences included prevision etc. His book is well worth reading on this account and also because he tells an adventure story almost as good as *Robbery under Arms*,<sup>2</sup> set in southern California in places very familiar to you. Jack London wrote a novel about him called *Star Rover*. Morrell was pardoned and became a leading prison reformer. I don't know what happened to him subsequently but hope to find out.

What is most interesting is that he never had these out of the body experiences except in a straight jacket. They were preceded by muscle cramps, palpitations and much bodily discomfort. He was also in the dark, in a weakened physical condition, half starved. He was further a very somato[ton]ic type – hugely extraverted. I feel all this played a part. He could clearly stand up to pain which would reduce more cerebro- or viscerotonic people to jelly. I have made careful notes on this and shall try to follow it up. Perhaps you can let me know about the leather suits and any more information you have on this topic.

We have, so far had a mild snowy winter but cold air filtering down from the arctic is now making it cold and snowy. It has been dismal and grey for days but is brilliant today with folded new fallen snow glittering against the cold blue sky. It must be about zero now and they say it will get much colder. The snow is a nuisance but not unwelcome. It is next year's water supply. Hope my Christmas card arrived safely with appendages intact. Fee is teething and still not much of a sleeper, she is making good progress. Helen shoveling snow vigorously.

Love to Laura. Let me know how the S?? Sixties opened in California.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. Have finished my account of the peyote ceremony and could send you a copy if you liked. We hope Chatto might publish it.

Jane sends love and good wishes. She watched the Rose bowl parade on tv with a mixture of yearning, envy, and irritation at our own white wastes.

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
19 January 1960*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. I wrote to Marjorie Worthington<sup>3</sup> – Willie Seabrook's penultimate wife – and enclose her letter in reply. Read it and

please return. (And perhaps it would be best not to mention W.S. in anything you write about limited environment. It might be embarrassing to Marjorie, who is a very nice woman – though a rather feeble novelist. And anyhow the information is not very illuminating.) The Crowley<sup>4</sup> lead might be worth following up. Did that horrible man leave any memoirs? If so, they contain something of interest to pharmacologists and investigators of the odder aspects of the psyche.

I forgot to thank you for the blue pilules. It was very good of you to send them. Laura gave three of them to a woman she had been treating – with odd results. There was some valuable insight, which was therapeutically useful: but colours, instead of being more vivid, were much duller and drabber than usual. No wonder that pharmacologists find humans such unsatisfactory laboratory animals! No standard reactions to anything – except perhaps Castor oil.

I'm glad to hear that the schizophrenia work goes on so well. Let me have a copy of anything you or Abe write about it.

I have just been reading Nathan Kline's report on Russian psychiatry. He makes it sound, I must say, a lot better than the American brand.

In haste – but I wanted to send you M. Worthington's letter in a hurry.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 January 1960*

My dear Aldous,

I was delighted to have your letter and that of Mrs Worthington which I am returning. This was a mask experiment and in that way resembles Lacenaire's<sup>5</sup> account written over a century ago. Lacenaire was later guillotined, but while being prepared for a death mask he had an out of the body experience which he describes vividly. One thing is clear that we are still very ignorant in these matters. I don't know of any Crowley memoirs –

who would know of their existence? I shall hunt around but feel you would have a better chance of knowing whom to ask. He was a curious, repulsive yet interesting man, who never, it seems, was able to perceive or relate to anyone other than himself. So in spite of great gifts he was a monster.

I certainly agree in our present state of ignorance humans are very difficult experimental animals. Apart from being self observing I suspect that there are major biochemical differences which probably relate to Sheldon's somatotypes. We have much suggestive evidence of this, but much will have to be done before we can tie up the various ends. I am sending along the latest "Schizophrenia: A New Approach." It is now out of date for it was written in mid 1958 but the broad outline holds up well, what is so difficult to get clear is what adrenochrome etc. turns into in the body. It seems to involve some rather formidable chemistry.

Regarding Russian psychiatry, I suppose that no one else can afford the weirdness of the U.S. They don't have enough rich people who worry about their psyches in the peculiar American way. Oddly enough I am reviewing a bit at the moment where an author complains about increasing use of psychological talk as a weapon in home troubles. Very true, but where next?

We are working away at the study of imagery and its relationship to ESP. Luckily have found that Helen is a first class imager. She seems to be able to do some curious things and I hope that we shall be able to invent some games which will amuse Helen, instruct me about imagery, and perhaps link up some of this with ESP. Anyway it looks as if [a] search among young imagers is likely to be very fruitful. I think I told you about the very interesting account I received from Heinrich Klüver about Ignatius Loyola's way of selecting his early Jesuits. These military-spiritual exercises were clearly designed to enhance imagery and to use it in the control of affect. Do you know of any similar exercises? I am trying to get hold of a standard book on Yoga. I suppose that most of these systems have a good deal in common.

I see that they are all getting worried about how their man in space will cope with the nothingness once he is up there. It is being suggested that he should take LSD as an antidote. I suppose that there might be some sense in pretreatment with LSD. It is odd how worked up they become over their precious hardware.

Very cold here, much snow too. Fee a year on Sunday – a most engaging beastie. The duck poetess growing up and having stopped being a baby is uneasily moving towards something else. I wish I could be as pat about children's problems as some of the experts are but one often finds, disillusioningly, that they are either bachelors or spinsters.

Working away at our leuco-adrenochrome, it is very interesting stuff but our supplies are not sufficient for our needs. However, so far it has been promising and interesting.

Love to Laura.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
10 February 1960*

My dear Aldous,

Jane and I listened to your Project 60 for the CBC with much pleasure. Alistair Cooke<sup>6</sup> made a skilled and aware interviewer. I thought you came over very well. It was enjoyable and made me long to see you again. I understand that we shall be seeing you and Julian on TV before very long.

After a brief let up winter has clamped down again. It is too long here.

We had our research meeting last week and seem to be maintaining our progress. We are on the track of a specific substance which can be isolated from urine after LSD-25, admission of adrenochrome and in schizophrenia. I have a micropipette of it on my desk at the moment. It has a sweetish musky smell. We hope to identify this substance soon and so have another link in the chain.

Adrenochrome's activity in animals is now becoming recognised so that the argument is shifting to humans. The marvelous reluctance to admit that we may be on the right track seems a good omen. If we were wholly wrong our work would I think be warmly received. The question whether adrenochrome is present in the body will, I suppose settle itself in a few

years. One tends to forget how long it usually takes to get general agreement on matters of this sort. This is particularly so in the U.S. where scientific factions are as partisan as political ones.

Our imagery work is very encouraging. It is remarkable how little has been done in the last 30 years. It appears that what made psychologists shy off was that they could not think of any experiments to do. They had not fully explored the phenomena, but did not realise that exploration usually precedes experiment. The imaging population seems to be a large one, at least in Saskatchewan, and a variation of Galton's original test lets us select very good imagers. Imagers seem to have ESP like experiences and ought to be a good source of sensitives etc. So far as we can make out no one has sorted sensitives on this basis. I think I told you that I suspect that when an exactly similar image is perceived simultaneously by two very good imagers it will have the status of an object. It will exist for the two imagers. It looks as if we shall have a chance to test this before very long. But we are moving in systematically getting to know about imagers and imagery. I am lucky enough to have a colleague Bob Sommer,<sup>7</sup> a pupil of Gardener Murphy, who does not spurn the old fashioned questionnaire, and who does not depend on statistical gadgetry. While the experimental method is admirable it is much less effective if you have not studied the phenomena acutely. Much science is not experimental.

Meanwhile our resuscitation of the old association test continues. I think it will prove a very useful piece of equipment particularly in psychotomimetic experiments. We have already got some interesting clues about schizophrenia. As I'm sure you know schizophrenics have odd associations, but what has never been recognized is that schizophrenics do not themselves have similar associations. If they did they would enjoy each other's company which they don't. By an unlucky accident the association test predated modern cultural anthropology. It seems a much better piece of equipment for exploring cultural differences than the Rorschach but has never been used in this way. It has not even been used systematically in identical twins so far as we can discover. We are now starting our twin study which seems to be the first on Galton's lines since Galton. There have been lots of such studies – but none have used Galton's ideas. Love to Laura.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
15 April 1960*

My dear Aldous,

I hope your profession, professing or whatever at Topeka goes well. I asked the amiable and efficient Paul Bay<sup>8</sup> to carry my good wishes to you and I hope that he has done so. I am back from a couple of weeks in England and a week in New York.

England was marvelously green and enjoying a slow motion spring. It is so much greener even than New Jersey. It was also raw, grey and pervasively damp and almost sunless for all my stay. I was talking on the Future of the Mental Hospital at the National Association of Mental Health's annual meeting. It went pretty well and will be coming out in a book later in the year.

I had an interesting time in London and was once again struck by the adroitness of the conservative government and the clumsy 1905-ish flavor of much of the Labour party. There is a sort of non-conformist obstinacy about many of the older Labour party people. Nationalisation, they feel will solve all ills – and with this touching faith they are embroiled in constant trouble. It is hard for trade unionist officials, happy in their bureaucratic democracy, to realise that the image of trades unionism in the public mind may not correspond to that which is in the mind of senior trades union officials. They are impervious to suggestions from the more politically apt members that all may not be well.

I had hope[d] to see Francis, but apparently he has jaundice following hookworm treatment and is far from well.

In New York I had two curious and interesting experiences. Martin Ebon<sup>9</sup> gave me an invitation to a display by Peter Hurkos, the sensitive who worked with Andre Puharich. Hurkos is a massive somatotonic Dutchman

who developed his skill after a blow on the head about 17 years ago. Interesting that I have yet to see a lean and hungry sensitive! This meeting was press and television people, a sort of preview of Hurkos' program later in the month.

The assembled company put various small articles on a table and Hurkos "read" about four of them. He seemed to score highly – so much so that it was either a put up job or he has some genuine capacity. A hoax even a clever one would be very risky and my talk with Hurkos did not give the impression of a skillful crook. Certainly not a daring and imaginative one. Indeed his first experience was so incredibly banal that it makes this sort of deception unlikely. A friend tried to sell Hurkos a coat which he said he had bought for 175 gulden when a voice told Hurkos that 125 gulden was the real sum! The friend was discomfited and Hurkos became convinced that he had an unusual gift in a manner which was wholly in keeping with his outlook and interests. At the moment I suspect that our parapsychologists haven't the wit to work out ways for testing these unusual abilities unless the Hurkos' of the world will come and perform in their labs under "standard" conditions.

Luckily astronomers are not so choosy. Where would they have got if they had "demanded" that the phenomena must occur when and where they wish?

Next day Bill Wilson let me sit in on a "trumpet" medium session at their group. Again it was impressive. This medium did his stuff with a mouthful of milk, lips sealed with surgical plaster and then bound over with a bandana. He is either one of the best ventriloquists ever or he does canalize some strange energies. After hearing Sophia's strange noises at 740 North Kings Road, which we recorded on the Gray audiograph,<sup>10</sup> I was prepared for something unusual. This was. The point one asks is, why has it never been properly investigated? I suspect that the wrong approach has been used. Instead of studying the phenomena first and learning about them in the scientific way they have usually been approached in far too grandiose a way. The question which has to be answered is, how does noise occur in space under these conditions? Is it hidden recording apparatus, ventriloquy or what? Eliminating the two which I have mentioned should be fairly simple. It is pointless to be concerned about content until we are clear about form. I hope that we can devise a method which will allow mediums to



cooperate with investigators so that we can clear up once and for all whether these things happen or not. The objections, so far as I can make out, that serious parapsychologists have is that these matters are little more than parlor tricks; but so, of course was electricity 150 years ago or so. That the manifestation of a particular phenomena should be trivial or sometimes associated with trickery has nothing to do with it. Almost all science has its roots in charlatanry and gullibility. It would be extremely difficult to project forwards from say 1660, 1760, 1860 and say where the great scientific developments would come in the next 100, 200, 300 years! I don't think it is any easier now. Indeed it would be a marvellous exercise for keeping the mind flexible! Given the data of 1860 what would one have predicted? We know that in 1870 or so Claude Bernard,<sup>11</sup> the greatest physiologist of his day, seems to have been almost unaware of Pasteur and his importance to medicine.

In my own field I would guess that psychopharmacology, linking up with hypnosis and ESP, would provide the jumping off place. But these physical phenomena, however trivial, might result in a wholly different conception of mind.

It seems clear that this is why we must be indebted to Rhine even if much that he says and does is silly and even absurd. By taking the stand, which he seems to have done, that his work in some way bolsters up the American way of life versus the Russian way, he is idiotic. What his work does strongly hint at is that two rather different materialist "conceptions" of time and space may be mistaken. The Russians, ironically enough seem to have reached the same conclusion via physics. Rhine seems wholly unaware of this and does not realise how full of hope, even though guarded hope, all this is.

The professional parapsychologists such as Osis seem to have inherited from Rhine two things apart from certain techniques, pessimism and perfectionism. The Frazer Nicholls<sup>12</sup> have the same characteristics, and one almost hears their unspoken remarks, "Oh we've heard all that before," and they mumble this so much that they no longer listen to what others have to say. Science in its creative phases seems to be optimistic, rough and ready, even a bit slap dash. Few PhDs would be gained by presenting a series of classic experiments and observations. It is nearly always possible, after the break through has been made, to show how and where it might have been

done better. At the start you must be enthusiastic to a greater degree even than the facts may warrant. Naivety and dash have many misfortunes, but in science at least, they do not seem to be as harmful as know-all inertia.

The work goes well. I have had encouraging news of ololiuqui from two sources. We shall be working on imagery this summer, also LSD and hypnosis. I hope we have some twin investigations going. Before long I shall be circulating snippets from LSD and schizophrenic experience. They can be very, very alike. We are reviving the word association test and believe it has a great variety of unrecognized uses particularly in sociology and anthropology. It was dropped in favor of ink blottery forty years ago or so.

I saw Ellen and the children last Sunday. Trev is a beautiful and remarkable child. Tessa a very amiable and lively one. They all seemed well. Jane, Helen and Fee (Euphemia Janet) are in good shape. They will spend the summer holidays in Surrey. A loss for me but good for them and my surviving aunt.

Saskatchewan is about to engage, like the U.S., in a bit of the democratic process. Consequently a fair number of moderately truthful citizens are going about lying to a greater or lesser degree. I don't know yet how far this will hinder our work, but am naturally alert to the possibility. So far as I can judge the evidence is not that the democratic process is a good one, but that it is better than the other models in use. That is not saying much. And yet when I looked at the Talley system of public accounting in the House of Commons three weeks ago, and realized that 150 years ago or so British governments regulated their spending and so their policy by this method, I felt more hopeful. The governments then regularly made decisions on data that was 10, 15, even 25 years out of date. We can do much better. We can even learn to present data and possible courses of action in an honest and clear cut way. One day perhaps we shall only vote on matters about which we have considered the agreed facts. Of course this is dangerously *Brave New World*-ish – but perhaps we have to run some risks to avoid worse. It is equally dangerous to be optimist or pessimist but hard to discover the facts and harder still to know what to make of them.

Good wishes to Laura. Shall try to see you in the fall.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
18 June 1960*

My dear Aldous,

Just had some news of you from friends in Idaho who told us that you were lecturing near there.

Much going on here of an oddly ironical sort – I don't think one would care for it as fiction, a little too neat. It is quite appropriate that I should be harassed by staffing difficulties, that is hardly surprising, but it is a bit too slick that this should coincide with much support and confirmation of our work seeping in from a variety of places. Our most encouraging support has come from Moscow in four chapters of a recent book which they were kind enough to send us. They have made adrenochrome according to our recipe. They have tested it on brain and on several sorts of animals including dogs and macaques.<sup>13</sup> The macaque findings sound particularly interesting. The Russians specialise in elaborate and elegant sorts of conditioning which they find make excellent ways of testing pharmacological action in a refined way.

With the macaques they apparently condition them sequentially. They then gave them various substances including Heath's taraxein, normal serum, caeruloplasmin, schizophrenic serum and adrenochrome. Schizophrenic serum produced a marked change, adrenochrome in very small doses produced the same sort of change. The rest were inactive.

We are particularly interested in this because we are accumulating much evidence that schizophrenics have marked trouble with learning. We know that rats who have been given schizophrenic serum have difficulty in learning. We strongly suspect that adrenochrome does exactly the same thing. Indeed we have unequivocal evidence of this in young rats and are just setting up the necessary experiments for older ones. This means that we

have a model for schizophrenia which can be studied in the lab, and we can see just how good a model it is. But this is the first model that has been available for schizophrenia and so it is very exciting. The question, of course, is why don't schizophrenic people learn and we already have plenty of evidence that the central defect is a failure in constancy of perception. It is obvious when one thinks about it that learning with disturbances of perception would not be easy. A new and very simple, indeed quite crude little test which we have developed shows how many perceptual disorders even very chronic schizophrenics have. Since classically they aren't supposed to have perceptual disorders this may be uncomfortable for some of the most orthodox.

This draws together much that is known about schizophrenia and I think that our hypothesis will very soon become a theory. In spite of a number of burials our New Approach goes marching on.

Meanwhile our work relating ESP and imagery builds up. It looks as if we should be able to link up these two fairly easily. We have good evidence not only that most natural sensitives are excellent imagers, but that among school children those who show ESP are usually good imagers. Briefly while not all very good imagers have, or believe they have ESP, almost no one who has poor imagery has ESP. We are now working to develop, via hypnosis, and starting with very good imagers, two people who can hold their imagery in common. If we are on the right track we should be close to having experimental ESP in a simple enough form for laboratory work. I hope our hypnotist is adequate and that we have enough time in which to train the good imagers. However that is a gamble which we must take. We are also making a study of your favorite ESP and psychedelics.

Jane, Helen and Fee go off to England early in July for a couple of months leaving me to do my budgeting and slog away at the hospital. You may remember your prediction that the recorded word might replace the written word? I suspect that it will be widely used in this hospital to get ideas across to both staff and patients. It is strange how much neglected its possibilities have been. It looks as if my nursing people will be clamoring for a psychiatrist to lecture to their students. So they can have the choice of me on tape or a far less competent speaker in the flesh.

I saw Al about a month ago. He is still doing some work with alcoholics and seems to be having a bit of success. I'm afraid that Al's promises of

great funds for research have been mirages. I don't think he realises that what may have been mere expansiveness sounded to some of us as if he was serious and that we are somewhat disappointed. However luckily we never took his advice about saying little about psychotomimetics and so we may well do under our own steam what we hoped he would expedite somewhat. Al is an amiable chap, but I suppose that somewhere in him there is a little too much viscerotonia and this prevents him from being single-minded enough to become a millionaire even. It also makes him a nicer person, but while there are lots of nice people about there are few millionaires interested in psychedelics.

I was watching Helen's dancing class show last night and was, as usual, astonished by the great variety of shapes and sizes in children. I wish someone would write a popular Sheldon.

Our book should be out soon. Of course it is out of date now and some of the points of view which we refuted eight-nine months ago are now dead. Unwillingly the Americans are admitting there is something wrong with schizophrenic blood. They don't want to lose their Meyerian virginity and admit that this might be overwhelmingly important. Yet the climate is changing. We may even be in danger before long of pro-pounding a popular view. Abram said rather wearily the other day that a researcher must start young so that he can outlive his opponents for many won't be persuaded. It has been this which John Smythies could not endure – that at some point one would have to risk appearing brash, obstinate and pigheaded. John's idealised picture of science has probably let him divorce himself from the most interesting piece of work he will ever take part in. But John doesn't want to be committed. He doesn't like anything so vulgar as saying that some well known person is mistaken. Obviously this may turn out to be incorrect, but equally obviously if an hypothesis is any good this must happen sooner or later. John made the appalling error of imagining himself a politician. I don't know whether he has learnt a little better. He had elaborate and wholly cracked plans last summer at Le Piol for "capturing" the Maudesley. He is now applying for a job in Oregon so perhaps he has learnt a little, at least.

If I can get someone to fly me to California in November I might see you all with luck. If you hear of anyone who wants a nice cheap lecture about that time on the adrenochrome hypothesis, hospital administration,

psychedelics, the myth of a schizophrenic language, prisons and mental hospitals, people and space, a psychosocial model for schizophrenia, do let me know. Indeed to see you again I would bone up on a number of other subjects. We have many interesting things going on here which are I'm sure worth an airfare!

We think that we have our biochemical test for schizophrenia ready for publication. It seems about as specific as the Wassermann for syphilis which is a good start. Abram is running up a good number at the moment. We have also developed a simple, indeed rather crude psychological test based on perceptual errors. It is amusing that this seems far more effective than the most refined and empathic psychiatric questioning. It seems that the impersonal nature of the test makes it easier for the schizophrenics, they don't have to think of two things at the same time – the relationship and the test. Anyway we can now demonstrate than many long stay schizophrenics have grave perceptual disorders of an easily demonstrable sort.

If I've been a little repetitious and I have been please blame it on a variety of interruptions, not the least being dear, blond, furious Fee. But she is a delightful little girl and has a remarkable persistence which seems to have been there from her earliest days.

Love to Laura from us all.

Affectionately as ever,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
17 July 1960*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your good letter. I wish there were more opportunities of meeting. Will you be in the East this fall? I shall be at Dartmouth College from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> September (conference on the ethics of medicine), then in NYC, and from September 23<sup>rd</sup> at MIT, in Cambridge, Mass., where I am to

be a visiting professor for two months. It would be very nice if we could meet there. Is there any chance?

Your work with imagers sounds very interesting. Have you any idea why some people visualize and others don't? I don't, except when my temperature touches 103°. Even LSD – at least in 100 mmg doses – doesn't make me see things with my eyes shut. I took some LSD three or four weeks ago and had some interesting experiences of the way in which, as the Indians say, the thought and the thinker and the thing thought about are one – and then of the way in which this unowned experience becomes something belonging to me; then no me any more and a kind of *sat chit ananda*, at one moment without *karuna* or charity (how odd that the Vedantists say nothing about Love, whereas the Mahayana Buddhists insist that unless *prajnaparamita* (the wisdom of the other shore) has *karuna* as the reverse of the medal, *nirvana* is, for the Bodhisattva, no better than hell). And in this experience with LSD, I had an inkling of both kinds of *nirvana* – the loveless being-consciousness-bliss, and the one with love and, above all, a sense that one can never love enough.

I liked the things you said for Dr Raynor Johnson's chapter on drugs and spiritual experience in his latest book. An interesting book – though perhaps he multiplies spiritual entities beyond what is strictly necessary. But perhaps Ockham's razor<sup>14</sup> isn't a valid scientific principle. Perhaps entities sometimes ought to be multiplied beyond the point of the simplest possible explanation. For the world is doubtless far odder and more complex than we ordinarily think.

I hope your administrative difficulties have been resolved and that you are now free to get on with something more interesting. I'm glad to hear that the Russians have picked up your work.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
21 July 1960*

My dear Aldous,

How very good to hear from you, particularly at a time when loneliness for my three girls, the worries of budgeting, the final discovery that Abram and I will have to deal with John Smythies, and the madness of the world which makes the harmlessness of my poor lunatics so very apparent, have combined to make me a bit melancholy. This is the time to get a letter that emphasizes that the best we can do is to generate as much love as lies within our capacity and to trust to the other to do what has to be done.

First: I shall do my very best to get to Cambridge in November. Walter Barton,<sup>15</sup> president elect of the APA and on my committee at GAP, is the head of the Boston State Hospital. I shall volunteer to give a chat on our work, and so get into the right area. Let us hope it will go well. I have a feeling that it will.

Jane, Helen and Fee away are a great gap. Perhaps this is a good thing, one realises how much joy one takes for granted. And shamefacedly how one makes much of those minor irritations of family life whose loss is almost physical. I'm settling down to silence and solitude, but I'm sure there have been physiological adjustments to make. I don't laugh so much. I'm not kept so alert. However they all sound in good shape. Helen horse riding and Fee learning to walk about in mac and sou'wester<sup>16</sup> plus gum boots.

The budgeting goes along and will at least let me get the administrative worries on paper. In a way it is valuable having to administer. It reminds one constantly of the frailty and uncertainty of human affairs. And this is perhaps a necessary balance for one like myself who delights in human potential.

The most recent Smythies episode is another example of the dilemmas which always arise and which are so puzzling. John Smythies in my view abandoned our work and partnership not because the ideas were running out and our hypothesis was flagging, but because he felt it might impair his plans for a career as a researcher to be associated with something that was then unpopular and he feared would fail. Abram and I begged him to hold his peace for a little. He needn't support us, but he would be well advised not to attack us, at least until someone had come out and disproved our work. But John by this time was engaged in convincing people that he had



seen the light. And the inevitable resulted, what started as an opportunist's trick ended by becoming a conviction. We had to be wrong, because if we weren't John would [not] have publicly and repeatedly dissociated himself from our work. Finally John's conviction that we can't be right ends in a survey of ten years work on schizophrenia which is abysmally poor. To approach so grand a task you must have read widely and deeply particularly when a subject is changing. Abram and I have now got to reply and we shall. At first we wondered whether we could ignore it, but John has made recommendations for courses of action which if taken would delay work in this field by years. Yet it was so completely unnecessary. Had he only kept his mouth shut and waited he could have seen which way the cat was jumping.

Of course we could still be wrong but not in the way John is suggesting. He just hasn't read the literature, a sordid but necessary task. So in the next week or two Abram and I will send in a reply drawing attention to some of these discrepancies which a three-penny stamp to us would have saved.

We have some striking work on the effects of adrenochrome on learning in rats which is very like that of schizophrenics. The relationship between failure in learning and disturbances of perception is becoming clearer. The continuing perceptual disorders in chronic schizophrenics are very impressive and account much better for much of their behaviour than most of the current explanations. Earlier work is starting to fall into place – always an encouraging sign that you are on the right track.

We have just finished a twin study for Eileen Garret which bizarrely seems to be one of the first of its kind done since Galton in the 1880s. That tiny study of his<sup>17</sup> is a classic which has never been followed up. He indicated quite clearly that some of his twins possessed an astonishing closeness. We have found the same thing. By combining uniovular twins, who are very close and are also good imagers, we should have people naturally disposed to ESP with each other. The point of course is, are they readily got hold of? They are. Their neglect becomes all the odder. In every 1,000 people there will be six identical twins (three pairs). Very close twins account for about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the sample, 2:1,000. Good imagers are about  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{16}$  of the population of 20 and over – more than that in 20 and under. So we are probably looking for easily identifiable people who occur about

1:5,000–1:10,000, but have special features which make the search for every other one peculiarly easy. Los Angeles probably [has] between 100 and 200 suitable twin pairs. It seems strange that this lead has been neglected.

Eileen sounded rather low after [her] visit to England. Much talk, much asking for money, hardly any work. Psychical research seems to be honey to a certain sort of sterile and disputatious person. I suppose that the lack of any immediate and practical [aim] leaves unlimited scope for this sort of talent. The issues are fairly clear – either one doesn't believe these things happen sometimes (in this case they are a problem in social psychology) or one believes they do happen. If the latter then the goal must be experiment in the laboratory and this requires hypotheses. Hypotheses according to Newton call for “thinking unto the phenomena.” He was pretty specific about this and his thinking was rigorous. We don't want any very large or dramatic phenomena. One noise like the birdlike squeaks and twitters of Sophia would be quite enough. With modern instruments fraud can be ruled out cheaply. I shall try and get you to discuss this with Bill W. because we have some simple ideas, which could work. I'm sure Eileen needs a few good investments and generally speaking she has been unlucky. Parapsychologists are “clever” at guarding against cheating. Less clever at producing something really interesting and unusual.

I may have to start on something after your heart willy-nilly. We are going to have [to] find some cheaper way of teaching our nurses psychiatry. Many, and usually ineffective, hours of psychiatrists' time is more than we can afford. We need the best for the beginners, but how? Obviously tape. We have a scheme all worked out. I think I shall do the 50 or 60 myself. At least I shall know what they are being taught. If it comes off we might even put the scheme on the market. It is ingenious and is based on the fact that most lectures are too long and too complicated for the audience. They take little account of how the audience learns. Our plan makes the audience work and see how much they have learnt. But I must tell you about it when we meet.

Our book is coming along. I have seen the title page so that it clearly is somewhere between printer and bookbinder. In a way I wish we could have delayed writing it a year but I suppose that had we done so we would never

have written it. Every time one comes to write there are excellent reasons for putting it off.

I have some remarkable news about Stanford Ovshinsky's energy converter. I may have told you of it. He has developed an extraordinary way of using solar energy as a catalyst. What it appears that he does is to use atomic energy (the energy which binds molecules) and not nuclear energy. If he has what I believe he has discovered there will be extraordinary possibilities.

Good wishes for Laura.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
28 July 1960*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. Alas, poor John S! What an ass – and the worst kind of ass, a clever one! It would be interesting, apropos of what you say about so many symptoms of schizophrenia being due to altered perception, to test experimentally what people do or don't do when their perceptions are changed artificially. There must be drugs which do yet odder things to perception than LSD: and then there are the mechanical perception-changers – funny spectacles, continuous noises. To these, people evidently soon become accustomed – but in the first few hours they must show many abnormal symptoms. These no doubt have been recorded – but have they been compared with schizophrenic symptoms? I imagine you could find out a great deal – given your special knowledge of schizophrenia symptoms – by looking into the literature.

An interesting procedure in regard to twins would be as follows. Give each twin an identical object – say a china figure of a human or an animal. Let them look at these and then learn to visualize them accurately. You can then be pretty sure of having two minds with but a single thought. Now

place an ESP card (or a picture, or a word) near or on the china figure belonging to one twin, and have the other twin (at a distance) try to see it. The fact that 50% of the image is already perfect in his mind might help him to visualize the unknown 50% represented by the card or picture. It might be interesting, too, to do something similar in relation to the survival hypothesis. Give identical twins identical photos of a recently dead person and see if they get the same reactions, and if these reactions have any kind of evidential value. Have twin mediums ever existed? If so they might reinforce one another and be doubly effective in establishing contact with whatever mediums do establish contact with.

I hope you will be able to come East while I am there. It would be good to see you.

Yours ever,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
2 August 1960*

My dear Aldous,

How good to have yours of 28<sup>th</sup> to hand. Abram who was down here for a day and I have just been going over John Smythies' paper. On close inspection it was worse than I had dared hope. He has not learnt Shaw's maxim "if you would injure your neighbor better not do it by halves."<sup>18</sup> We have written in to the *Lancet* suggesting that we want to do something about it and indicating various different courses of action. We have got to do something but we want to do as little as possible. It's not really worth much effort refuting John – he is just a nuisance now and not a problem. The work is moving ahead so quickly. Abram has got some cats with tubes going into their brain ventricles and we can put our strange substances in and watch what happens. The cats are social animals (semi) so one can see changes in personality reflected in dominance etc. for they are also

territorial. Our first three substances, adrenochrome, adrenalin and leuco-adrenochrome, produce very different results.

It is a major change in fastidious cats when you drop milk on paw or ear and they don't attempt to remove it. Equally big when with adrenochrome the dominant animal is bullied by the "weakling" and more surprising still, when after leuco the submissive animal chases the dominant into its cage and keeps it bottled up there. We are screening a variety of new substances in this way. It is neat and cheap. The cats stay alive and become more and more valuable.

Lots more information is coming in about the schizophrenic toxin and it points strongly at the reticulo-endothelial system. It looks as if things are now starting to *converge*. Russians, French and some Americans now agree that adrenochrome is present in the human body. Altschule<sup>19</sup> lately at Harvard claims that adrenolutin in excess is excreted in schizophrenia.

Your point about the effect of changes in perception on thinking [is] an excellent one. I'm sure you remember Heron,<sup>20</sup> Hebb and later Lilly's work which showed that something like this does occur. There is also evidence of this from arctic explorers confined alone. The tools for measuring schizophrenic symptoms are very crude, but our new test shows that schizophrenia, even very chronic schizophrenia, has much in common with LSD.

Your twin idea a nice one. We had thought of putting them in identical surroundings and using a tachistoscope to flash on the message. I'm sure that directional devices of this sort will have to be developed and that we must aim to make it easier for the ESPers and not put unnecessary obstacles in their path.

Your other ideas are very elegant. There are all sorts of possibilities. Perhaps if we meet in Boston we can get Eileen to come up and you can join me in urging her to explore this virgin territory. One person in 44 or so is a member of a twin pair, one in 130 or so of an identical twin pair. There are lots of them. Twin mediums are a marvelous idea – double barreled!

I don't think I told you the latest and exciting ololiuqui developments. You will remember that I first heard about ololiuqui from LeCron while staying with you and Maria at 760 North Kings Road. I got some in 1954, found it active and reported this in 1955. Some labs got interested and in 1956 NIH reported to me that it was active in rats. Smith Kline and French

failed to find anything. Then the mushroom came along and people lost interest. Also Isbell<sup>21</sup> at Fort Leavenworth in “a carefully controlled double-blind study” found it inactive. But he forgot one thing. His subjects were drug addicts and I’m not. But apart from occasional reports nothing much happened. Then a month ago Albert Hofmann inventor of LSD reported an active substance very potent but in small quantities. A more recent letter says two active substances crystallised and four more still there. Abram had a later letter saying that two of the substances were indoles. This pleases us very much because it fits in with our general configuration of psychotomimetics. The great majority are indoles. Hoffman says he will publish in the fall. It is encouraging to be confirmed after so long and it suggests that our adrenochrome work may also stand up as well as this has done.

Francis H. went to see Goddaughter Fee the other day and they seem to have taken to each other. She is a sporty little thing, a great joy to us. Helen spends most of her time in England horsed. She sounds very happy in her equine romances.

I shall do my very best to see you in the fall. We must try and get some livelier parapsychological work going. Good wishes to Laura.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*The Shoreham Hotel*  
*New York, N.Y.*  
*16 September 1960*

Dear Humphry,

Here I am in NYC, preparing to go on to Cambridge next week – where I hope I may be seeing you before too long. The conference on the “Great Issues of Conscience in Modern Medicine,” which was held at Dartmouth last week, turned out to be rather disappointing – as most conferences do. We never got down to discussing one of the basic issues – the manipulation of minds – though a whole session was devoted to the subject. Wilder

Penfield<sup>22</sup> read a long paper wholly about the mind-brain problem, Rado another on the control of rage, Weaver<sup>23</sup> talked about ESP – and then time was up, with no mention of hypnosis, brain-washing, mind-changing drugs or hypnopaedia.

Yesterday I lunched with Bill Wilson who spoke enthusiastically of his own experiences with leuco-adrenochrome and of the successful use of it on his ex-alcoholic neurotics. This really sounds like a break-through and I hope you are going ahead with clinical testing. Do you have any of the stuff to spare? If so, I'd be most grateful for a sample. It might relieve my tension – pains in the lower back, as it relieved Bill's aches and those of some of his friends. I would like too to be able to send a few pills to Laura, who has some of Bill's symptoms – tension, then exhaustion, and then tremendous drive to overcome the exhaustion.

If you and Abram have really found something that will normalize, say, 50% or even more of neurotics, you will be among the great benefactors of humanity. But of course you will be attacked by all the Freudians. They will be fighting, not only for the Master, but for their livelihood. No more ten-year analyses, no more couch-addicts. What will become of the poor fellows?

My address in Cambridge will be

100 Memorial  
Drive Cambridge 38  
Mass.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*100 Memorial Drive  
Cambridge, Mass.  
6 October 1960*

Dear Humphry,

I wonder if you got the letter I wrote from New York – or if I posted it? In it I asked when precisely you would be coming this way – as I hope you will before I depart towards the end of November. I am anxious to know when you may be coming, as my calendar is starting to fill up, and I don't want to find myself fully occupied, or away on a speaking jaunt, when you get here. So please let me know if and when you will be coming.

All goes well here so far. I have a seminar once a week, a weekly tea party, and a public lecture. The first of the lectures was last night, to an overflow crowd, and with 1,000 more turned away! I have been around so long that I have become a sort of historical monument, like Stonehenge, to which tourists flock in vast numbers. Very touching – and also a little depressing. It makes one feel extremely posthumous.

Bill Wilson gave me such a glowing account of the effects of leuco-adrenochrome on his back-aches, as well as his state of mind, that I am most anxious to try if it will ease my stiff spine – and may also make me a bit saner! Do you have any to spare? If so, I would be grateful for a trial supply.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
20 October 1960*

My dear Aldous,

Many apologies, but fate got in the way of a quick answer to your letter from Boston. It very nearly did so at least semi permanently. I was away when your letter arrived and on the way back an amiable farmer (he proved to be a nice man) turned suddenly across the high road as I was about to pass. The result might have been fatal for one or both of us for he didn't signal and I was travelling fast to get by him. However guardian angels worked overtime and we both ended right side up in the ditch bruised and a bit bloody but alive. I have had ten stitches in my upper lip, and such is the



healing power of the body and the fineness of modern gut, needles, etc. that the scar is hardly visible.

I plan to reach you in Boston on or about November 8<sup>th</sup> and will send you my arrival times later. Can you possibly find me a cheap hotel room near you? Could you also send me a post card c/o The Parapsychology Foundation saying whether this will be ok? Am so keen to see you, have much to tell you about what has been going on. You will be interested to hear that LSD-25-hypnosis looks promising. It looks as if the two can be fruitfully combined. The schizophrenia work is now becoming much more widely accepted – almost in danger of looking orthodox. Hope to have some leuco-adrenochrome. I shall have to be off p.m. Thursday or a.m. Friday.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*100 Memorial Drive  
Cambridge, Mass.  
28 October 1960*

Dear Humphry,

Good! I look forward to seeing you on the 8<sup>th</sup>. If you don't mind sleeping on a sofa that turns into a bed, you are welcome to my spare room.

Let me know time of arrival etc. My phone is University 4-0222.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
20 November 1960*

My dear Aldous,

How splendid it was to see you again. I hope that the visit to the Girls' College went well. After I left you I took a taxi down to the air field and got there uneventfully apart from the usual hold up at the tunnel. The taxi driver cheered me by saying that it could be 45 minutes or more so that when it was only 20 I felt that I had been lucky.

My flight to Toronto was uneventful. I sat next to a slight[ly] sozzled but amiable ex-bomber pilot executive of Trans Canada Airlines. A powerfully somatonic man, as you might suppose. We talked about administration and as I put forward the ideas which we have developed with Tom Paterson of Glasgow I was delighted to see how interested and pleased he was, liquored up or not. I felt it a valuable exercise to cast the ideas in a somatonic mould – to emphasize action rather than people's feelings. As a Northwestern he pulled me up for not thinking enough about feelings!

I enjoyed being in Cambridge. The Lanyons were very hospitable. I was much interested in Mrs L's problems about who should be asked to the pre-lecture dinners. Protocol is very important to her and she wants to be sure that she is doing the right thing. For somatonics there is no idle ceremony. It is the stuff of life which would be chaotic and liable to break down into open conflict without it.

I'm sure that this danger which is so very real and vivid to the somatonic is almost incomprehensible to those cast in a different mould. Nonsomatonics should be very careful *not* to erode those ceremonies which hold the world in place for these active people, but which are so boring and exhausting for others. I spoke to the Canadian Broadcasting people about Sheldon and suspect that I shall hook them eventually. Using human and animal illustrations it should be very vivid. I put a short bit on tape under the heading of Worlds, starting with von Uexküll's account of the tick's world and moving towards Sheldon.

I was glad to meet Leary<sup>24</sup> and Spiegel<sup>25</sup> whom I have often seen but never really got to know. He seems a warm and interested man.

You will be interested to hear that Leonard Bertin<sup>26</sup> one of Canada's best scientific journalists has been doing a very thorough study of LSD, which ended by his taking it himself under Abram Hoffer. He has interviewed dozens of people and wrote his report before taking it. He feels that it is

beneficial, that psychiatrists should enquire more boldly into it, but that like any other potent instrument it has some dangers. His own experience resulted in the alleviation of a severe tremor of 15 years' duration. This had occurred after a very desperate escape attempt in Italy. He was much interested in the psychiatrist's hostility to the idea that all isn't known about the mind. I pointed out that omniscience is part of the medical tradition. I'm sure that many people aren't really aware that my profession has a great propensity for considering itself omniscient. This is hardly mysterious, for patients have always made this demand on us even when we couldn't possibly meet it.

As I told you in Cambridge the evidence for the adrenochrome hypothesis is now accumulating quickly. Abram who has also been in the U.S. visiting Chicago and Princeton says that much work is being done there. They believe that they can clearly show that adrenochrome is present in the body. They have already shown that adrenochrome can turn into leuco-adrenochrome and adrenolutin. This means that two very important stages in our hypothesis are now at least likely. Meanwhile the remarkable potency of adrenochrome is being shown. What is also impressive is that meanwhile rival hypotheses have disappeared so that people will be more inclined to re-examine it carefully. I suppose that we shouldn't be impatient. We published less than seven years ago and it takes about that time for a new idea to be accepted.

Abram is doing some fascinating work with hypnosis which will I think have many other applications. He is giving post hypnotic suggestion for single perceptual disturbances and studying their effect upon social behaviour. The hypnotic subject is given LSD first so that she can recognise what is being suggested. I believe that we shall not only learn a good deal about schizophrenia this way, but we may learn how sensitives direct their strange ability. In addition the study of single hypnotic phenomena may give some clues about hypnosis and pain.

I was much interested in your account of the dentist and his sonic device. I'm sure that we shall soon be retracing the steps Esdaile took and going beyond him. I shall be thinking about your account of the schizophrenics at Topeka and putting that together with our work on learning and teaching in schizophrenia.

Do be sure to let me know how things are with you. I'm naturally very concerned, but will not mention the matter except to you.

I found Jane on pretty good form. We both want to get away from the prairies, but at this moment it might be better to wait a bit while we see how the adrenochrome work develops – especially now that it looks so encouraging.

I enjoyed the reading from the new book and shall look forward to seeing the completed work. I much like the idea of incorporating psychedelics in the running of a society. I've sent you a brief account of my own experience with the Indian peyotists. They learnt to incorporate a new substance in their affairs.

Jane sends you warm good wishes and joins me in hoping that you will be able to present Sheldon to a wide public – much unnecessary misery could we suspect be averted. Helen and Fee are on very good form. Fee is remarkably adept socially.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
14 December 1960*

My dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter and the two papers, both of which are excellent. This matter of death – how badly we handle it! I have a whole chapter illustrating the art of dying, as practised by my hypothetical islanders – plus other passages concerning the fear of death and the training for its acceptance. My own experience with Maria convinced me that the living can do a great deal to make the passage easier for the dying, to raise the most purely physiological act of human existence to the level of consciousness and perhaps even of spirituality. The last rites of Catholicism are good, but too much preoccupied with morality and the past. The emphasis has to be on the present and the posthumous future, which one

must assume – and I think with justification – to be a reality. Eileen told me that, in one of her contacts with what she was convinced was Maria, there was a message for me to the effect that what I had said had helped to float the soul across the chasm. (This message, incidentally, contained two items which I felt to be evidential – one a reference to something which Eileen could not understand, something she heard as “the Bardle,” (which was obviously the *Bardo*, which M. knew well and from whose spirit and whose techniques I had borrowed when talking to her in the last hours); the other, a word which Eileen heard as “Ecker” and which referred to a quotation from Meister Eckhart which I used once or twice.)

All goes well here. Dr Cutler,<sup>27</sup> the surgeon who treated me last summer, has given me a clean bill of health. I am working very hard on my book, trying to write a brief but satisfactory ending – the near-end is the chapter on the LSD state of which I read you a small piece and which I am completing now. After which I must go back and try to improve some passages in the earlier [chapters](#). I shall be thankful when I finally get through. It won't be as good as I would like it to be, I fear: but still I think it will have been worth attempting.

Give my love and seasonable greetings to Jane and the family.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 December 1960*

My dear Aldous,

I was alarmed when I heard about the great crash in Brooklyn<sup>28</sup> – it was much too near Joralemon Street. What a beastly business.

I'm glad you liked the two papers. I thought I might follow up the one on death which has been accepted as a Canadian Medical Journal<sup>29</sup> editorial with a further one on dying.

I certainly agree that the Christian preoccupation with what has been is probably, like so many other religious ideas, just a mistake. It is odd that we have slowly grasped that most science and medicine has been and probably still is mistaken about most things, but we are unwilling to see that most religion has been in much the same state. It is the unfortunate notion that religious authorities are usually correct forever and aye which crops up again and again.

In the chapter of the new book which you read me you touched on the matter of dying. It seems that having miraculously found out how to reduce pain greatly by pharmacological means, we don't want to be bothered any more.

Eileen told me about the "Bardle," it was very curious. I suspect that the dying need some direction which encourages letting go not only of their bodies but also of their past – indeed the latter may be even more difficult and more essential.

Delighted to hear of your good report from Dr Cutler, what fine news. It has been down to 20 below zero here at night for the last few days. I drove up to Saskatoon last week-end for our research meeting across the huge prairie so white that at times sky and land were almost merged.

It was a packed and exciting two days. It looks very much as if we are converging from several linked directions like columns of troops. Organic chemistry, biochemistry, pharmacology, physiology, psychology both human and animal, medicine, psychiatry, sociology and anthropology. This isn't exhaustive but enough! One has to be agile to switch from listening to the chemists discussing angelic lactams (that is the word, lactam) to the psychologist arguing about the statistics of transcendental experience in alcoholics who take LSD-25. An angelic lactam, oddly enough is a particular derivative of angelic acid, which one of our chemists believes is the or one of the urinary factors in schizophrenia. Milk of angels as the identifying mark of schizophrenics!

But I suppose that we have never had more evidence than now to support the idea that schizophrenia is a chemically induced illness, which confers certain biological advantages especially in regards to wound and surgical shock, also to allergies, while producing psychosocial harm particularly in societies where complicated social relationships must be maintained.

I hope this can be clinched in the next year or so. I am starting to make arrangements to apply many of these ideas in this hospital. It will be interesting to see how they work. My guess is that patients and nurses alike will be enormously relieved when they have a simple, fairly clear and easily imparted (teachable) idea to learn.

Abram Hoffer is doing some fascinating work with post hypnotically induced perceptual anomalies. So far we have been much surprised by the remarkable behavioural changes produced by fairly simple perceptual changes. Loss of the ability to locate sound results in the patient sitting with head hidden in arms. If time stands still catatonia results. Much more work will be needed, but much can be learnt this way. In addition many schizophrenic symptoms can be much reduced hypnotically. As important, schizophrenics can be taught with hypnosis to recognise their earliest symptoms and taught how to cope.

I am much excited at the idea of a really concerted attack on the great illness from a number of directions. So far most of the much advertised multidisciplinary research has been no more than a pious fraud. I don't think this need continue much longer. It should be possible to make clear who is responsible for what and what can be done about it. At the moment we have the absurd situation in which each discipline tries to usurp the other's field, with great confusion resulting.

Helen and I went to see a film of Stevenson's *Kidnapped*<sup>30</sup> the other day. A great improvement on the book. Splendidly set in Scotland of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and only a few necessary anachronisms such as having the tartan about which was mostly a 19<sup>th</sup> century development. Looking it up I find that the anachronism lay not so much in the tartans as in the brilliance of the colors. Much of Stevenson's padding eliminated by the film and the sea and highland adventuring excellently done. Casting as usual might have been done with Sheldon in hand – even to making a brutal assault and batterist just a little more Northwestern than his more legalistic and shrewder captain. Saw an interesting miscasting in a TV Julius Caesar where Cassius was not quite lean and hungry enough! They had clearly got into difficulties with acting capacity, length of part, and appearance. Cassius ought to be a North-Northeastern – he just couldn't develop the proper bitterness on principle which is so well fitting in such men but isn't found in the centrotypes.

Good wishes to Laura from all of us.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

1 Edward Morrell (1868–1946). Part of a gang that robbed the Southern Pacific Railroad, for which he was imprisoned in 1894 before being pardoned and released in 1908. His *The 25th Man* was published in 1924.

2 Novel by Australian author Thomas Alexander Browne (1826–1915) initially published serially in 1882–83 and eventually published in one volume in 1889.

3 Marjorie Worthington (1900–76). American author. The Huxleys became friends with Worthington and her then-husband William Seabrook (see Osmond’s letter of 15 December 1955) when both couples were living in the south of France in the 1930s. In a letter dated 11 January 1960, Huxley had asked Worthington what her eccentric husband had “hoped to elicit from the people ... he encased in touch-proof, sound-proof, sight-proof leather garments.” See Huxley, *Selected Letters*, 472. Huxley went on further to enquire whether the results were similar to those obtained from experiments conducted at McGill University and the National Institutes of Health.

4 Aleister Crowley (1875–1947). English occultist and novelist who became notorious for experimentation with drugs and sexuality.

5 Pierre François Lacenaire (1803–36). Minor French poet who was convicted of double murder and executed.

6 Alistair Cooke (1908–2004). British journalist and radio and television broadcaster who moved to the United States in 1937.

7 Robert Sommer (b. 1929). American psychologist who specialized in environmental psychology and design.

8 Alfred Paul Bay (1910–2000). American psychiatrist who became superintendent of the Topeka State Hospital.

9 Martin Ebon (1917–2006). German-born American who wrote about numerous topics, including parapsychology, and served as administrative secretary for the Parapsychology Foundation, founded by Eileen Garrett in 1951.

10 The Gray Audograph, launched in 1945, was a dictation machine that recorded sound by pressing grooves into soft vinyl discs.

11 Claude Bernard (1813–78). French physiologist and strong advocate of the scientific method.

12 Reference to John Fraser Nicol (1902–89). Scottish parapsychologist and psychical researcher who moved to the United States in 1951. He was a collaborator of J.B. Rhine.

13 The macaque is a genus of monkey found mostly in southern Asia.

14 A very early scientific principle developed by English philosopher and theologian William of Ockham (1287–1347). Based on the basic tenet that simpler theories are preferable to complex ones, Ockham held that entities should not be multiplied beyond what is necessary.

15 Walter Earl Barton (1906–99). Prominent American psychiatrist and psychiatric administrator.

16 Raincoat and waterproof hat.

17 “History of Twins” is a chapter in Francis Galton’s *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development* (1883).

18 Reference to “Maxims for Revolutionists” in George Bernard Shaw’s *Man and Superman* (1903).

19 Mark D. Altschule (1906–88). American psychiatrist.



- 20 Bernard Woodburn Heron (fl. 1920–80). Canadian psychologist known for his research on sensory deprivation.
- 21 Harris Isbell (1910–94). American psychiatrist and director of research for the National Institute of Mental Health in Lexington, Kentucky, who conducted extensive research on LSD and other psychotropic drugs.
- 22 Wilder Penfield (1891–1976). American-Canadian neurosurgeon and neuropathologist.
- 23 Warren Weaver (1894–1978). American mathematician and scientist who studied communication theory and ESP.
- 24 Timothy Leary (1920–96). American psychologist and notorious proponent of the popular use of LSD.
- 25 John Patrick Spiegel (1911–91). American psychiatrist and a president of the American Psychiatric Association. He was also on the board of the Harvard Psilocybin Project, with Leary and Huxley.
- 26 Leonard Bertin (1918–90). British-born author and science writer who moved to Canada in 1957.
- 27 Max Cutler (1899–1984). American physician who was a pioneer in the use of radiology treatments for cancer.
- 28 Reference to the mid-air collision that took place over Brooklyn on 16 December 1960. At the time this letter was written, Ellen Huxley and her two children were living on Joralemon Street.
- 29 *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.
- 30 Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–94). Scottish author whose novel *Kidnapped* (1886) was adapted for the screen by Walt Disney Productions in 1960.

1961

3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
8 January 1961

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter and New Year wishes – herewith returned with interest.

What you say of Hoffer's work with hypnosis is very interesting. How remarkable that these artificially induced perceptual changes should evoke precisely those gestures which are so characteristic of the mentally sick! One sees that Freud's notions about the cause of schizophrenia being homosexuality are pretty wide of the mark. Do I understand that Abram has been successful in hypnotizing far-out psychotics? I always thought this was all but impossible. (But then one so often finds that "impossible" merely means "incapable" or "incompetent.")

I have been reading Groddeck's<sup>1</sup> paper on massage and psychotherapy. It is full of interesting hints – though he doesn't tell one in any detail precisely how he achieved his therapeutic results – results which everyone agrees were remarkably much better than those obtained by his psychiatric contemporaries.

In your re-education of schizophrenics, are you making use of the techniques of teaching pure receptive awareness of internal and external events, here and now – along the lines described by Dr Roger Vittoz<sup>2</sup> (another immensely successful therapist whose work was ignored) and revived recently by Perls, Hefferline and Goodman<sup>3</sup> in their *Gestalt Therapy*? I feel sure that this sort of thing can be extremely therapeutic. Pure perceptual receptivity is the basis, incidentally, of many Tantric exercises aimed at preparing people for self-transcendence into cosmic consciousness. (And something of the kind is at the root of all Krishnamurti's teaching.) One can imagine a genuinely realistic treatment of the mentally ill, in which the problem is attacked on all the fronts – by

diet, by hypnosis, by massage, by teaching of various kinds (pure receptivity, devices for coping with odd psychological happenings etc.), by pharmacological methods, by “work and play” therapy, by the provision of harmless or positively helpful ways of blowing off steam – corybantic dancing, going out and hacking at trees (as some of Margaret Mead’s<sup>4</sup> savages do when they feel that adrenalin is piling up inside them), and by other yet undiscovered “moral equivalents of war”<sup>5</sup> and personal violence. And of course these attacks on all the fronts can be used in prevention of mental illness even more effectively than in its cure. A rational system of child – and adult – education would include them all in its curriculum.

Another interesting book I have just read is Dr Bernard Aschner’s *Arthritis Can Be Cured*.<sup>6</sup> It contains a long section on pre-modern medicine, in which Aschner points out that the moderns have turned their back on numerous methods of cure which worked much better than the “scientific” methods now in vogue. If you don’t know this book, do read it – especially the historical part.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
14 January 1961*

My dear Aldous,

I thought you would be fascinated by the hypnosis schizophrenia business. Acute and severe schizophrenics aren’t easy to hypnotise – I put a rather skilled hypnotist on to this during the summer and he was much discouraged. The way in which schizophrenics learn (jerkily) suggests that they would be poor hypnotic subjects. What we have in mind (and have begun to do as a start) is to hypnotise them when they are better. One can then teach them to recognise early perceptual disorders and either accept them or correct for them. Yes it does make Freud’s notion about homosexuality unlikely, but then it always has been pretty improbable.

There was a statistical study recently which showed that there was no demonstrable relationship between homosexuality and schizophrenia. It seemed to be no more and no less frequent than other psychiatric conditions. The Schreber memoirs (have you read the translation of them which came out a year or two ago?)<sup>7</sup> which are the basis of Freud's homosexual notion are fascinating. Wholly unconvincing as an example of Freud's idea. The high judge thought he was being turned into a woman by malign divine influence. Freud *inferred* that he subconsciously wanted to become a woman and from this the fairy tale began. When you read the memoirs what is really impressive is the enormous amount of florid perceptual disorder. The high judge lived for weeks on end at the height of a mescaline experience. It is an impressive and rather frightening example of our ability to see only what we want to see. A critique has been published in the last year of the case of "Little Hans," said to be the fundamental Freudian example of the Oedipus complex. It is an astounding example of Freud's ability to exclude any evidence which doesn't fit in. This the analysts claim was the special feature of his genius, but clearly, their real claim should be for his astonishing persuasiveness. In this he seems to have been not unlike Marx,<sup>8</sup> if Barzun<sup>9</sup> is correct. Marx and Freud both made the assumption on only slightly different bases that anyone who disagreed with them must be either criminal or insane. Jung told me about Freud's extraordinary touchiness in this respect. He could not be persuaded that disagreement served "any useful purpose." This must have been convenient for one of his disposition.

It seems to me remarkable that with the simple and elegant perceptual disorder hypothesis long available, anyone should waste time on the obscure oddities of the Freudians. But then the familiar, however weird, clumsy and unlikely, has a nice safe feeling compared with the novel perceptual hypothesis. But evidence is piling up and I suspect that the good will slowly oust the orthodox.

We shall attempt to plan an attack on schizophrenia from all directions along the lines which you suggest. I think by some adroit manoeuvring we can use our new perceptual tests so that we can reproduce the same changes posthypnotically in experimental subjects and learn what you do to neutralise particular sorts of disorder. One of the big and so far unsolved problems with schizophrenics is their peculiar "jerky" learning.

I sent a copy of your letter on to Abram because I was sure that he would be delighted with it.

Once we have early diagnostic tests and we are very close now, I believe, then a general regimen at many levels can be devised which can both protect and enlarge the sick or potentially sick person.

I had an interesting experience the other night “revealing” Sheldon and somatotyping in [a] simple way to our home and school club. I think they found it made good sense but they are so used to the idea that “environment is 90%” that the suggestion that it may not be seems extremely daring and modern. Few seem to know that 60–70 years ago the opposite view was equally correct. Few seem to be able to grasp that heredity and environment are useful abstractions developed to help us think more clearly and act more sanely. In no time they become idols to be worshipped.

I shall certainly look out for Aschner’s book. I don’t know if you have read Mark Altschule’s *The Historical Roots of Psychiatry*.<sup>10</sup> Grune and Stratton. It is one of those too costly books which are worth twice the money. Altschule shows, as one might have guessed, that psychiatry did not begin with Freud. That medical men had been pretty clear about the “unconscious” for a long time. The historian’s problem is why and how the psychoanalysts spread from a group of eight in 1914 to a world wide guild by 1954, even though the evidence for their assertions doesn’t seem to [be] any better now than then.

The results of the analysts’ mind without a body are now coming home to roost. Psychologists, social workers, sociologists, etc. can’t see why a medical qualification is needed for treating social aberrations. What special competence have medical men in education? A friend visiting a big U.S. mental hospital recently found the sociologist with his own empire and the writing on the door “Psychiatrists Keep Out.” It wasn’t a joke either. The argument goes that the mentally ill are socially incapacitated (many physically ill people are even more socially wrecked) and so their illness must be socially caused. I suppose that this is a variation on the old theme of plague etc. as a divine visitation.

Did I tell you that we have some encouraging news from Czechoslovakia about our adrenochrome work? I think we have strong hints of an unrecognised endocrine system which may be of great importance.

Good wishes to Laura. Enclose a picture of Fee.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
20 February 1961*

My dear Aldous,

I hope that all goes well with you. I've had news that Eileen is in hospital, New York and is apparently progressing after several operations – but she still seems pretty ill. I hope her marvelous recuperative powers will pull her through.

I'm off to Utah next Wednesday for a psychiatric-architecture meeting which should be interesting.

I had a phone call from Dr Nina Ridenour, the Ittleson Foundation.<sup>11</sup> Ittleson get their money from the leavings of the great U.S. usury corporation which calls itself (I think) Household Finance in Canada and CIT<sup>12</sup> in the states. I feel General Usurers would be appropriate but not I suppose quite pretty enough! Anyway Nina Ridenour, who is a very amiable person, is a member of a special association of foundation executives: a dinosaur but a nice kind conscientious one. They meet regularly and have about 80 members who control \$1–2 billion in potential research funds. They are all worried and sincere people longing to put their money on the right horse, but with a natural aversion to betting which respectable people naturally have. They also are worried at the undeniable fact that no one knows how to spot winners before they have started to run. The trouble is that once a winner has been found the foundations can't bet on it anymore, because they don't get any credit then.

Part of the trouble is that they are so rich that they take themselves very solemnly and indeed you can hardly blame them because their great possessions give them great responsibilities. They don't, however, make good ideas any more frequent. Indeed the more respectable the foundations become the harder it is for them to pick up the shabby and eccentric new

comers who develop new ideas. Irritable, dogmatic, often egocentric and always, if they are any good, tenacious, obstinate and opinionated.

Any way that is why they find your comments both irritating and uncomfortable. So they want you to come and face their ire and give them your ideas. I told Nina Ridenour that I thought it might be something which would interest you and I know of no one who would be better able to stimulate them to be a bit more adventurous. Research, important research, like great art, is a 1% or less business. Most research fails and most of it isn't remarkable though it may be both useful and necessary. Do foundations put aside say 10% or at least 5% of their budgets for what Darwin called "fools' experiments"? Or in betting terms for back[ing] real outsiders, 90% can go into thoroughly respectable affairs but not 100%!

I have been reading M. Field's *Search for Security*,<sup>13</sup> about ethno-psychiatry in rural Ghana. There is some excellent stuff on the relationship between witchcraft and depression, and I'm sure you'll find the chapter on spirit possession worthwhile. Dr Field is a very remarkable woman, chemist, anthropologist and psychiatrist. She feels that schizophrenia is as prevalent in Ghana as elsewhere and is remarkably unaltered by cultural factors. Indeed I've come to the conclusion that it is one of [the] least culturally determined illnesses. The main part of the book is in the first 100 pages, the rest is case histories etc.

We are all pretty well and the winter is showing some signs of ending, but I suppose we can expect six weeks more of it.

Jane sends love to you both.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
26 February 1961*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter which I am answering very briefly, at the moment, just to say that all goes well here, *deo gratias*, and to forewarn you that a young man called Don Webster,<sup>14</sup> who took LSD with Al and who is now a white hot enthusiast, is about to visit you on his way back to Toronto. He wants, he says, to write a book “dramatizing” LSD. I told him that, given the present climate of public opinion, dramatization was about the last thing that should be attempted. So please cool him off when you see him. (He also naïvely imagines that his book’s royalties will contribute substantially to the treasury of the new organization that is to sponsor LSD work in the West.)

I saw John Spiegel a few days ago, who reported on Tim Leary’s latest activities. Tim, it seems, is a little less disorganized than he was last autumn – but still in too much of a mess for his own (or his subjects’, I would think) good. It is all a great pity.

*The Devils of Loudun*<sup>15</sup> had their first night last Monday in London. The play was too long and the leading man had influenza and a temperature of 104°. But otherwise it seems to have gone off fairly well. I hope the author and director can put it into better shape before it is too late. Love to the family.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
7 March 1961*

My dear Aldous,

No sign, so far of Mr Don Webster, though shortly after your letter arrived I had more news of him from Al Hubbard and had the curious experience of listening to him on tape. One of those categorizing minds which one used to find among well trained Sergeant Majors and Chief Petty Officers of the old school. Apparently he is a very wealthy man and if instead of writing a book which won’t sell he would cough up some spondulicks it would be



much more useful. I suppose we are all experts at other men's trades, so that the man who hasn't written sees it as being a trivial chore which he could easily do – if he felt so inclined.

Al Hubbard was down here and if he is correct LSD clinics will soon be mushrooming all along the West Coast. If well conducted this would at least serve to loosen the stranglehold of the psychoanalysts. Abram and I have been asked to advise and shall do so when there is something for us to advise. While we are always keen to encourage the active and enterprising we don't want to put our names on note paper headings again until someone is actually doing something in an organised way. Al has an admirable gift of optimism and enthusiasm essential for any enterprise, but one may have some difficulty in distinguishing his honest hopes from what others really intend to do.

I see Nina Ridenour has written to you and I do hope you'll be able to go and give them a good talking to. \$1,000–2,000 million! It is a bit shocking. Yet they are usually such good kind people. The trouble is that you have to be quite a cad to gamble with other people's billions and the foundation people aren't nearly caddish enough! In effect, if they are doing their job well they should be backing horses which have odds *against* them of from 100 to 1,000 to one. Not an easy task for decent people. Of course it's easy enough to back a winner once you know it's going to win, but then anyone can do that.

I think there are certain important negatives they can look out for. First, a wholly unenthusiastic person is extremely unlikely to do anything. Cushing<sup>16</sup> talking with Whitehead<sup>17</sup> told them “the resistance of inert mind and matter to any innovation, surgical or other, was so heavy that a man who had (as he had) anything new and difficult to accomplish, must have great enthusiasm as a flywheel to carry the saw of his ideas through the knots in the log.”

Second, the person whose ideas seem wholly reasonable, innocuous and are thoroughly liked by the most balanced and well thought of men in his profession is not offering much that is new. Honest and sound derivative work should not be discouraged, but the foundation's task must surely include attempting to hatch new and remarkable ideas. When first heard these usually sound crazy, unlikely, unpleasant, inept, even blasphemous.

Third, ideas which are too tidy and too easy to follow rarely result in much – the new development is vague, fuzzy at the edges.

Fourth, they will have to back unknowns against well knowns, outsiders against insiders, younger men against older. While all rules in picking up high talent are made to be broken, under 35 rather than over may help.

Fifth, surely they have some known talent spotters and should hunt them down? The biographies of Rutherford<sup>18</sup> and pupils and talks with Charles Snow<sup>19</sup> might help here. How do these intellectual breeder piles develop?

Sixth, they should stretch their minds at least once a year – once a month – once a week? Ask themselves what is the most outrageous project I (we) can imagine? What is the most outrageous we have heard this year? What is the most outrageous we have ever backed? What happened to it? Then compare this with say someone coming forward with anaesthesia in 1830, or antiseptics in 1840, and reading carefully and slowly the cogent and intelligent arguments made against such ideas then by the best and most able men in the field.

Whitehead in his excellent dialogues always comes back to physics in the 1880s – all was known – loose ends to be tidied away only. Max Planck<sup>20</sup> had been advised not to take up physics because all was known in 1875.

When they have had these comfortable thoughts I suggest they go through the projects on their files which have been worst rated for the last ten years and see what happened to them.

However I expect you'll have many other ideas yet I'd love to squeeze some of these in: especially 1% of all funds on real outsiders!

News from Abram that LSD in rats works much the same as adrenochrome regarding learning. Adrenochrome in monkeys closely resembles schizophrenic serum. Schizophrenics themselves learn slowly and jerkily as we have shown here.

Hope *The Devils* is in good shape now.

Jane, Helen and Fee well. I've been in bed with flu but am surfacing again, and getting much writing done. Quite tycoonish with two dictaphones.

Love to Laura. No news of Eileen for three weeks – hoping that means good news.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
2 May 1961*

My dear Aldous,

How good it was to see you again and to dash around New York with you.<sup>21</sup> I hear from Eileen that your effect upon Karlis Osis was particularly beneficial. He had not thought anyone would be interested in his findings – not it seems having heard about the several varieties of research. On my return I found a couple of very appropriate quotations from Lord David Cecil's<sup>22</sup> *The Stricken Deer*. In one of them light and ecstasy play a notable part. I hope that once we can draw Karlis' attention to these sources he will attack them with his usual diligence and care.

The SPR's<sup>23</sup> latest publication on spontaneous cases is singularly dull in format and presentation. The SPR believed, I think quite mistakenly, that this sort of work was best conducted by a mathematician. However certain things stand out. ESP is still fairly frequent. 80% women. 80% associated with imagery, usually among people closely related by interest or blood, often associated with emotionally laden matters, especially death, but birth too plays a part. This immediately suggests ways of developing ESP inducing situations. Another important clue – those who believe in it seem more likely to have it and those who have it are more likely to have it again. You would suppose that a summary on these lines would be attached but I couldn't find it.

Since my return the Czech news has come in and there now seems no doubt that adrenochrome is psychologically active in humans. This means that the matter in question is whether adrenochrome is present in the human body (about 15 pharmacologists say it is). And of course, is more of it present in the schizophrenic than in the normal? This becomes the central problem and of course we are all slugging away on it. The evidence in favor

grows, schizophrenic serum behaves very like a solution of adrenochrome and vice versa. Eleven years' work almost to the day. I had to write a preface to Abram's book on niacin and went over some of our old correspondence. Slap in the middle of 1952 I found a lovely letter from a leader of U.S. psychiatry condemning our approach very determinedly as "not broad enough" etc. All in favor of biochemical studies, but not narrow ones aimed at so-called illnesses. It made me realise how tough it has been and how tired I am. It does look as if our objective is very close now – the cause of schizophrenia – and once that is known a rational therapy is a technical matter to be done on rats, cats, etc. Prevention of course will be the big thing.

In other words my *raison d'être* for being in Saskatchewan is ending. Jane loathes it and so work apart do I. One of the greatest miseries is that there is nowhere to walk here, no ups and downs. Like most English folk we are born walkers and gardeners.

The question is when to go and where to go – of course what to do next. Now I'm not going to try and foist that sort of problem on you, but I do need your advice.

I would like a year or so out of circulation – I can always get work and I suspect in a year I can get more than now. I can't afford to do this but Eileen has suggested that I may get help from the foundation. One way would be as her biographer. They have long wanted to get one but Eileen won't put up with their choices.

I'd like to do it. I think it would be a fascinating task, but I must have advice from someone whose views *on writing* I trust and who I know would say don't be a fool – if they thought I was being a fool!

Do you think I write well enough to convey the richness, strangeness and oddness of Eileen's shimmering personae? For she is someone whose very substantial nature misleads the unwary. Sentimental but shrewd, cunning but kind, unscrupulous but usually gentle, passionate but remarkably controlled, sensuous yet abstinent, hasty but patient, luxurious yet simple, credulous yet immensely sharp, almost cynical. I wouldn't do a picture post card of her – but can justice be done and can I do it?

I think I can, but for that very reason I want your advice. There isn't any hurry. I want a chance 1) To stand and stare. 2) To get Weyburn out of my blood. 3) To reassess myself and a quite different task will be a good way of

doing just that. 4) To look around and see what comes next. I'd be glad if you didn't tell anyone because I don't want the news filtering out before I've decided. News travels astoundingly in this big place.

We are coming to the end of a paper linking schizophrenia with allergy and wound shock in a negative way. It is *very* striking, and astonishing that it has been neglected so.

Jane is on good form, another baby on the way. Helen hoydening. Fee very talkative and bold.

Love to Laura.

Do let me know what you think.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*3276 Deronda Dr.  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
5 May 1961*

Dear Humphry,

I am all for the Eileen biography. But it must be more than a straight biography. You can use it (as I used Father Joseph and the Grandier-Surin stories<sup>24</sup>) as a device for expounding, in concrete terms and therefore all the more penetratingly, a great variety of general ideas. My own feeling is that philosophy is best expounded through a biography, real or fictional, or a historical narrative. The narrative doesn't suffer from being made the centre out of which the philosophy radiates – indeed, it is actually enriched by its association with the general ideas. And the general ideas take on greater force through being concretized in, and illustrated by, a particular case history. Eileen's life will permit you to ramify out into all kinds of interesting fields about which you are uniquely qualified to talk – the nature of ESP, the temperamental, biochemical, neuro-physiological conditions of mediumship, the relationship between imaging and ESP, the history and sociology of parapsychology and spiritualism, mediumistic possession and its relationship to states observable in mental illness, the nature of the mind.

All this can be woven into a biography of Eileen so as to make an extraordinary and unique kind of book. You certainly know enough and are skillful enough as a writer to be able to undertake the job and carry it out successfully. So I would say, don't hesitate to take on the job if the foundation will support you while you are doing it. And come and live somewhere in this neighbourhood while you are writing.

My work goes forward, and I hope I am finally near the end of it. I want to get away by mid-June, so must finish well before that. But goodness, how difficult this last chapter – the mushroom experience, its philosophical implications and psychological consequences – is turning out to be!

Did you read Grey Walter's<sup>25</sup> lecture to the SPR on the neurological basis of hallucinations? It was interesting, I thought.

Max Cutler, whom I saw last week, gave me a clean bill of health and pronounced me one of his most successful cases. So I'm very thankful I didn't let myself be railroaded (as the other surgeons wanted to do) into having half my tongue and a quarter of my neck cut out. It's just a year now since I went to hospital: and though the subsequent ten weeks were unpleasant, what I had to put up with was incomparably less than I should have had to suffer (and still be handicapped by) as the result of radical surgery instead of radium needles.

Give my love to Jane and tell her that Southern California is a good place for children – both those already extant and those (congratulations) to be.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
10 May 1961*

My dear Aldous,

Yours of 5<sup>th</sup> May to hand, for which I'm very grateful. Yours is an opinion which I trust and I know that I couldn't get better advice on a matter of this

sort. You have reassured me:

- i) That this needs to be done.
- ii) That it can be done in the form which we discussed in Cambridge, and which you have used so successfully. Blake, I think, emphasized that art is a matter of minute particulars, in other words it conveys its information as much through the feelings as through the intellect. By shifting from the particular to the general the artist can sometimes produce a *universal particular* in which general and particular are fused. This doesn't seem easy to do, but when it is done it is able to evoke great interest and excitement in a wide variety of humans scattered through time and space. It gets across cultural and language barriers in a remarkable way. So far as I know – and I'm sure you'll correct me if I'm wrong, very little is known about this. Eileen can I think be a universal particular for certain fairly frequent human abilities which are not specially easy to observe. Of course the very simplest and most universal human activities such as walking, running, pronating and supinating the forearm, peristalsis, lung and heart movements are utterly mysterious without immense effort. Not more than 80–90 years ago the body cavities were thought to be forever removed from surgery.
- iii) That you believe that I would be able to do it. I thought I would, but on serious matters a “weighty friend” is called for. One can be equally misled by hopes and fears, overestimating or underestimating one's abilities.

So I've let Eileen know my weighty friend's views.

We are delighted to hear that the surgeons are well pleased and that you made such a good choice. What good news.

Jane was very happy at your invitation to California – but we plan to go to England. It is so much cheaper and we have our home in Surrey looking out towards Crooksbury, Royal Common, Elstead, Frensham. I shall be able to put my papers in to become a member and I hope soon a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. I think our stocks are going up now that an LSD-25 relative has been proved to occur in ololiuqui and the Czechs have sent in a massive paper on the human activity of adrenochrome. I've just

read this and it shows that adrenochrome produces a condition unusually like schizophrenia. Then we have just found that our mauve pink factor “transplants.” We have moved it from Saskatoon to Weyburn and it still works. No small matter with a tricky chemical test. It doesn’t pick up all schizophrenics but about 70% and hardly anyone else except a few neurotics who have perceptual disorders. About 20% of neuroses get rediagnosed as schizophrenia in the ordinary course of events.

Our card sort test is doing well. I plan to make some additional cards which may be even better than those we have. Schizophrenics find the cards easier than talking with psychiatrists however sympathetic.

I hope, if the book comes through, to spend some time with you in California picking your brains and building up a composite picture of Eileen. She must exemplify her special sort of person and I hope to devise a way of showing how differently such people are seen by those of different temperaments. But clearly the same or much the same evaluation from very different people will be the more likely to represent something that “really” is there. Of course one of the more fascinating aspects of biography lies in the biographer’s attempts, not always successful, to fuse the public and private images of their subjects, and make this fusion at all credible. Of course as Sheldon has shown, although personalities are “all of a piece” the essential wholeness may be that of clashing disparate components. Presumably the more one somatotype predominates the more cohering and of a piece the personality will be and so the more predictable.

Anyway I’ll keep you posted with what happens. I feel that I’ve been here long enough and am missing so many things which I enjoy so much: walks, tree pruning, grafting budding, planting, sowing, propagating, etc. But more important Jane will be able to live the sort of life she has missed greatly: walks, the country, a garden and the astonishing richness of England. I hope to use my U.S. connection for expeditions to North America. Of course my great concern will be being further away from Abram. But our work is now well established and we can communicate pretty well in writing. Looking over it I’m sometimes astonished how much we have done. Abram has just finished his niacin book which tells of nine years niacin treatment for schizophrenia, its effects on cholesterol metabolism and rheumatism. We have several more cooking.

Love to Laura. I’m looking forward to seeing you both.



Jane sends good wishes.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
13 May 1961*

My dear Aldous,

We are all distressed to hear from Eileen and also on the radio that you and Laura have lost your lovely home in a fire. I do hope that neither of you suffered any injury and that you managed to rescue something. I am sure you will be much occupied but we will all be thinking about you both. I was most concerned, once I knew that no harm had come to either of you, about the typescript of your new book.

As I write this Jane is pounding out a chapter of the book I've promised Peter Calvocoressi, *Persistent Folly*, an account of the hunt for M-substance.<sup>26</sup> I'd forgotten what a folly it looked, and must have looked in 1951 when I came here. Luckily for the story people didn't hesitate to voice their views. At least now it is *the* hypothesis which everyone else must better. I've completed a chapter on ololiuqui, the peyote experience is done, and so too is one on Mr Kovish<sup>27</sup> – the man who took the dud adrenalin. It is a personal story with the meat and narrative interweaved.

It begins to look as if we shall be on the move this fall. I'm hoping that if the foundation does support the biography I may be at work by early next year. I plan to see as many people as I can and to use a variety of techniques for learning how they see Eileen. We have done a good deal of work on this sort of social perception and although it is implicit in many biographies for many reasons it is rarely made explicit. Yet I don't think we even *see* the same person that someone else sees. This is obvious with children and adults – but less obvious in other settings. It would be very interesting to discover how people perceive others. I can't imagine for instance that many people see you as a short, plump man, but can we be sure that someone

hasn't at some time? The other little explored aspect of perception concerns how people think others see them. We can learn much here from fairly simple instruments and I don't know that much has been done to discover something so obvious. It would be fascinating to relate this self and other perception to physique and temperament. Have you heard of this being done – except of course in a mild form in the nonesuch weekend book?

Ever,  
Humphry

P.S. News from Eileen that you are safe but burned out.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
26 June 1961*

My dear Aldous,

I've had news of you from Eileen and am sending this to Sir Julian in the hope that it will reach you safely. I hope my earlier letter reached you safely.

We are getting ready for our departure in not much more than 70 days. Our bookings are being made in the Saxonica and we should be back in England before the beginning of October. We shall be getting back almost a decade after we left.

I am hard at work getting a number of papers ready for our departure. These include the fourth "Schizophrenia: A New Approach" paper which is now on the stocks. We have just finished a nine year survey of our niacin work in schizophrenia. The results are fascinating. There seems no doubt that niacin plays a part not only in assisting recovery but in protecting those who have taken it for months and years afterwards. Abram's painstaking follow-up system has built up an enormous amount of data. The five year cures of those who take niacin as opposed to every other treatment known are very encouraging. We get about *twice* the number of cures, 60% as

opposed to 30% roughly. We find 30% is about the same proportion as those reported from England.

Abram was at Montreal and has some very interesting news. Adrenochrome did not appear much on the rostra, but among the researchers it was greatly talked about. It looks as if we are beginning to converge. Heath of Tulane – the taraxein man – had an interesting story (not yet published). He says that you can change taraxein from an active substance to a less active by removing a small bit of the molecule. They don't know what this is yet, but if you add adrenochrome, then you get your active taraxein back again. Of course it doesn't *prove* that what comes off is adrenochrome but it does make it seem probable.

There seems to be general agreement now that schizophrenia is a toxic disease, a big change from 1953 when we first met. Indeed Abram and I are quite orthodox, in Montreal a man sitting next to him at dinner said "You can't be Dr Hoffer." Abe asked him "why not?" – "Because you aren't old enough." It's one of the advantages of starting young. I have discovered that hardly any of the grand old men of psychiatry really believed that schizophrenia was anything but a toxic illness. Freud, Jung, Harry Stack Sullivan, Adolph Meyer (to say nothing of Kraepelin and Bleuler) all believed it was an organic disease! However they seem to have been remarkably good at keeping this bad news away from their loyal disciples! There is not yet general agreement about the importance of adrenochrome, but the attacks launched by the Washington (Bethesda) people seem to be weakening a good deal. Indeed we have been told that the Washington assay – which was supposed to show that no adrenochrome was present – now shows that it is present.

We have had Douglas Dean<sup>28</sup> who works with Karlis Osis up for a few days. He has some exciting news. They have been using the finger plethysmograph as a way of measuring ESP. Eileen may have told you about it – but it looks as if they have linked up affect-feeling with ESP at a psychophysiological level. What is even better, they showed that Mrs Bolton is quite efficient at this. In another dream experiment they succeeded with Gardner Murphy. I am very excited by these developments – especially since they have got away from Rhine's cards. But Rhine far from being gratified at this announces grandly that he won't "accept these findings until they have been validated against the Zener cards." He really

is a pompous idiot. He is still plugging away at his, or rather Zener's, cards. He has found that certain games improve the results, but he hasn't developed anything new. Apart from anything else he doesn't I suspect have any up to date psychological and social advice. However I think this work by Osis and Dean will encourage some much more sophisticated developments. I suspect that once we have evidence of ESP we can train people to extend, educate and direct this capacity. My guess is that from a vaguely defined feeling it can be elaborated into imagery of some sort and the imagery being turned into words. It looks as if many of us have these feelings, but presumably only imagers get the imagery. The possibility of using various pharmaceutical substances in these tests arises.

Jane hopes you'll come and see us in England – our address is Onet Cottage, Godalming, Surrey. Phone Godalming 445. We are very close to Mrs Humphry Ward's house.

Good wishes to Sir Julian and Lady Huxley and of course to Francis.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
4 July 1961*

My dear Aldous,

I've had news from Eileen that you will soon be on your way to Le Piol. I wish we had got over in time to be there. However we shall be on our way very soon – less than 60 days.

As it is turning out this seems to be a proper time to move. We have a great drought on our hands. A change in the provincial premier. A battle about a prepaid medical care plan and last but not least an astonishing bit of bureaucratic idiocy which will result in our making (so far as we can estimate) 15,000 more forms and about 4,800 more letters yearly. This is supposed to help patients but we can none of us see how. It is an object lesson in how not to do things. Strangely enough Eileen got us on the move

a few weeks before most of this developed. Very, very odd, you might have supposed she knew what was coming. Anyway we sail September 15<sup>th</sup> and all is fixed.

In my last letter I told about Douglas Dean's visit and the account of the plethysmographic work which he has been doing. I caught up with him in Saskatoon and heard about the work there which he was taking a look at. They have done about 130 tests on a number of subjects several of whom were identical twins. These tests were all controlled electronically so that you can go over every test. Apparently those between the twins (identical and fraternal) show marked differences from the rest which strongly suggest that ESP took place. The chances seem very much in its favor – according to Douglas Dean's statistics many thousands to one on. Our very proper chief psychologist using LSD-25 got 14 hits out of 25. He is rather embarrassed by this being a PhD Toronto to whom such untoward events should not occur. If they do occur they should not be recorded on tape!

Dean also saw an attempt to reproduce the Russian hypnosis at a distance work. You will remember that it was itself a reproduction of Esdaile's work of the 1840's. It is a little incredible but it looks as if it came off. They will start again in the fall.

I'm working on a model for ESP based on everything we know. Briefly you start by inducing a similar affective set at exactly the same time in people who are good imagers. We have much evidence pointing in this direction, and with these new hypnotic techniques and the plethysmograph for measuring bodily aspects of affect, I think that we have a chance of getting somewhere. I'm sure that we have to make a step by step approach, checking all the time against the naturally occurring ESP. One thing which is quite obvious about this is that it occurs predominantly in two situations, 1) Between people who have strong emotional bonds for one another, 2) About happenings which are the focus of strong emotions. These two may [be] and often are combined. In most of those who experience ESP there is some usually a strong emotional tone, often developing as part of the unusual happening.

This had always seemed self evident to me but I realized after talking to Douglas Dean that it wasn't self evident to him.

Meanwhile Abram Hoffer and I have finished our niacin paper and are plugging away at "Schizophrenia: A New Approach IV." It will be a big

paper and will invite those who disagree to find “a better ’ole.” It won’t be easy. There is an exciting couple of articles in July *Scientific American*. One claims that Swiss workers have benefitted schizophrenia with an artificial kidney on the assumption that it is a toxic illness. We have travelled some distance from Manfred Bleuler’s assertion that such investigations might be given up for a long time if not forever (1950). The other describes a pineal hormone which bleaches frogs. It interferes with melanin production. They used 200,000 cow pineals to get 100 gamma (1/10 milligram) of the pure hormone. The stuff prevents dopachrome from turning onto melanin. Dopachrome is derived from dopa and thence from tyrosine – from which comes adrenalin and adrenochrome. No one knows what the anti-melanin is doing or why it should be present in the pineal. Descartes should be interested.<sup>29</sup> We are wondering what the anti-melanin will do to adrenochrome which is extremely like dopachrome. Abram has found a close relative of adrenochrome which seems to be a first class epileptogen – a ferocious stuff.

I hope all goes well with you. I’m gradually winding up our affairs. Sad in a way, but generally we are happy to be returning to a smaller land. All the things we haven’t been able to do here, especially gardening and walking. Jane sends love.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
28 July 1961*

My dear Aldous,

I’ve just heard from Eileen that you are on your way from Le Piol and should soon be in Denmark where I hope this will reach you.

This is to give you our English address which will be ours from September 1<sup>st</sup> on. Only a month away and we are longing to go. Our address, by the way is Onet Cottage, Godalming, Surrey England.

Godalming 445 (phone). Jane whose new baby is due in October (about the middle we think) is on fine form and keen to be back in England – austerity or not.

Saskatchewan remains incredibly true to form. When I came I couldn't believe what I found. Do you remember in *Texts and Pretexts*<sup>30</sup> the single quotation from Pope? “In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half hung, the floor of plaster and the walls of dung.” You commented upon the essential horror of those walls of dung! Ten years ago Weyburn went one better: it had ceilings of dung. Stalagmatic feces hung from the grey shit splotted roof beams lit by a few low power lamps. Screams, stench, nudity – it was a place to keep out of your dreams. I would never have believed it. And indeed the hospital was worse than the bombed asylum in Attard, Malta which I used to visit in 1945. John Weir of Rockefeller (Foundation) felt it was worse than Alexandria (Egypt) but not as bad as Kingston (Jamaica). It is now among the best on the continent and can hold its own anywhere. Mind you this is no great boast, the competition in mental hospitals is not hot.

But you would imagine I would be leaving fairly cheerfully – as a matter of fact I'm glad not to be going to be here another year. A grateful bureaucracy has put up our paperwork X times – we don't know how much. At the same time reducing our qualified and competent psychiatrists.

It is ironical that Weyburn now is well administered and its woes come from outside not inside. However I have some shots in my locker yet. I have become quite versatile in this distant place and I'm going to see whether I can't worry the bureaucratic monster as much in absentia as in person. I really do know a great deal and will only keep my mouth shut at a price. That Weyburn stays decent. It is savagery in a good cause which William James commended.<sup>31</sup> I am beginning to suspect that lack of imagination is the real sin against the Holy Ghost.

Eileen may have told you that my ideas are gelling. My first job is to work out a new schema for ESP using all we know about affect (emotion), imagery and timing. This will fit in nicely with your hypnosis study – indeed we may get some valuable suggestions from there. I think I know how you control the main order variables for ESP etc. But the writing has to be done. If I'm correct or even on the right track we shall move quickly out of the statistical phase of parapsychology – because we shall get the sort of

clean experiment the physicists demand. The principle seems simple – you just have to get an affective charge occurring between two people at the same time. I think imagery often mediates this, but not always. The snag is that no one knows how to switch on a high affective “charge” and the synchrony which must probably be in terms of microseconds is tricky. This is, of course where hypnosis, psychedelics, reduced environment and modern timing gear fits in.

It makes sense, such sense that I have to be sure I’m not overlooking something. Anyway I’ll let you see an early draft.

Meanwhile the paper on schizophrenia and surgical shock is almost completed. We had an odd thing happen. Two fellows in Boston wrote a book on psychosis and physical illness. We thought they must have spotted the negative relationship between schizophrenia and shock. They note it, but they never *saw* it – so we can use their data very nicely. Schizophrenia seems to protect against asthma, allergy, rheumatoid arthritis and of course shock. Our newest figures on our urine test in today: 45 schizophrenics positive 32 negative, 2 non-schizophrenics positive 19 negative. Chances on this being significant about 10,000:1. This is better than the electrocardiogram or the EEG as a screening device and not so much worse than the Wasserman. Encouraging.

Jane sends love.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*Palace Hotel  
Gstaad, Switzerland  
4 August 1961*

My dear Humphry,

I owe you several letters – but have been so rushed these last weeks that correspondence has gone by the board. I was in London for a month, seeing old friends and making new acquaintances. Then spent a week at Le Piol, where we had a good meeting, greatly enlivened by Grey Walter, who is as



intelligent and open-minded as he is knowledgeable. Thence to Vaison in Provence, where my French brother-in-law, Georges Neveux, was having one of his plays put on in the Roman theatre. And thence to Gstaad, where Laura has rejoined me, and we breathe good air, eat large meals and listen to Krishnamurti, who is giving a series of talks here – the most recent of them among the most impressive things I ever listened to. It was like listening to a discourse of the Buddha – such power, such intrinsic authority, such an uncompromising refusal to allow the poor *homme moyen sensuel* any escapes or surrogates, any *gurus*, saviours, *führers*, churches. “I show you sorrow and the ending of sorrow” – and if you don’t choose to fulfil the conditions for ending sorrow, be prepared, whatever gurus, churches, etc. you may believe in, for the indefinite continuance of sorrow.

We leave for Italy on Monday, see Laura’s family for a few days, then fly to Copenhagen for the Congress on Applied Psychology, then back to Italy. For how long? I don’t yet know. I might go back to England for a bit – in which case I look forward to seeing you. When you’re there, incidentally, do try to do something for Francis. He is in a bad way, psychologically – can’t work, can’t commit himself to a job or to marriage or even to a love affair. There are, of course, early traumas involved. Can you dig them out and abreact them?

Love to the family.

Aldous

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
9 August 1961*

My dear Aldous,

How good to have news of you on your travels. We are beginning to feel that we shall soon be starting ours. I’ve been throwing out vast quantities of papers – what an amount of junk we collect. Perhaps that is one good reason for moving every so often lest we get lost in the physical and mental

junk in which we get enmeshed. The latter as Krishnamurti emphasizes is the worst. We are junk ridden like dung beetles.

However among the junk I've found several respectable and almost completed papers which I had nearly forgotten – one only requiring the references to be put in.

I've been collecting my papers to put them in for the English membership (of the Royal College of Physicians). There are six folders of them – over 60 papers, one book and a bit of another book. Ten pounds of stuff to go off in a day or two by air. It will be [demanding] but the examination opens the way to the FRCP<sup>32</sup> if I succeed. I hope I will but there is no point in counting chickens.

We have received some surprising and wide spread bouquets for a small paper on double blind experiments in which we pointed out that they weren't the panacea that many simple fellows have come to believe. It is surprising how people's feelings crystallise 'round a few words. It seems many have been wondering whether it is really as simple as the more fanatic methodologists have been claiming. Mind you we have been arguing from a position of strength for we did one of the first and biggest double blind experiments done in Canada nine years ago. The fact is that these tricks all have their limitations.

I do hope we shall see you and Laura. I shall do anything I can to help Francis – he is so gifted and so crippled.

This business of leaving is curious. The little brief authority which I've had is slowly disappearing. People are doing things now much more because they want to than because of my authority. The relationship is now one of friendship. It is pleasant and a little sad. However in three weeks or so we shall be in the thick of going. It seems unlikely at the moment but at least possible! I have been stenciling trunks in a lurid yellow. Transitions of any sort are disturbing unless you are a Krishnamurti.

At work on my last budget but can't quite get up steam – in a way it is a bit futile yet it rounds out my stay here. I can see where we have failed and where we have succeeded. On the whole we had good luck and have made some real advances. The next few years will show just how sound our ideas are, but so far they are holding their own very well indeed. The adrenochrome hypothesis explains much more that we know about schizophrenia than any other. This isn't too difficult because its rivals are

extremely sketchy and no one has ever attempted to explain the bodily and mental findings with one hypothesis. Indeed the *many* bodily oddities of schizophrenics have been astonishingly neglected. We have just finished a big paper on their resistance to wound and surgical shock which is impressive. Bluntly they survive when normals would die. Everyone has “known” this for years but no one has considered it as particularly important, because, I suppose they haven’t been serious about schizophrenia as an *illness*.

Do let us know if you are in England. The address is (from 22<sup>nd</sup> September) Onet Cottage, Godalming Surrey; phone Godalming 445. And if not do put your address(es) on a post card now and again so that I can intercept you.

I think the work on time and imagery may be very important.

The paper I found in the junk makes a good case for bio-chemical hypotheses of schizophrenia etc. being psychologically better than psychosocial ones. If adrenochrome didn’t exist we would have to invent it!

Good wishes to Laura.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. Jane sends love.

---

*Onet Cottage  
Godalming, Surrey  
21 December 1961*

My dear Aldous,

I’ve been intending to write for weeks but I’ve been impeded by not having your address and knowing from Juliette that you were and possibly are in India. Also I have been preoccupied with the process of reacculturation. Unlike Ulysses<sup>33</sup> my suitors can’t just be shot down in a flurry of activity – they have to be sought out, found and neutralized, but more of that later on.

First things first. Jane and I now have a sturdy little red-headed son Julian, five weeks old. He is sedate, putting on weight quickly and already moulding his surroundings to his needs. He is clearly temperamentally different from either Helen or Fee. He arrived on 14<sup>th</sup> November, the day I was giving my first big lecture, and also the day on which I heard from Mark Altschule of Harvard Medical School that he claims to have confirmed the adrenochrome hypothesis. It was a day to remember. Julian was named after a great uncle. We would like to have had an Aldous in but Aldous Osmond is impossible.

At times I feel I've been very idle since our return, but when I tot up the writing and the rest much has been done.

Psychiatrically England seems a vacuum: I am going to search diligently these coming months but I have found little evidence of any promising work, so far. This of course simply confirms what one finds reading the literature. This has its snags but I hope to use this to my advantage. In the United States you can pick up and pin-point opposition to one's ideas much more easily and quickly. It is harder to do this in Britain but there is much opposition of the good old fashioned 19<sup>th</sup> century medical kind. The clinicians don't want their craft beset by science. It is uncomfortable for them. Of course every other branch of medicine has had to endure this violation, but I don't think many of them realise this.

I started off with an early setback, my 66 papers, a bit of a book and the whole book with Abram being rejected out of hand by the examiners of the Royal College of Physicians. This was a blow not to my confidence in the work, but to my immediate prospects in England. I have not been able to track down what happened though I plan to do so. One assessor was apparently very favorable. I was not entirely surprised but am irritated and partly amused. After all Edward Jenner<sup>34</sup> at the height of his fame had great difficulty in getting into the Royal College of Physicians. It took him six or seven years. What has happened is probably a combination of several things. The U.S. opposition of two or three years ago which has been in real trouble for the last year has reached Britain. John Smythies has been talking a lot, as usual. But perhaps most of all the book and 66 papers covering everything from hospital architecture to the microchemistry of the brain was extremely unfamiliar. The ideas were not expressed with a well bred tentativeness. I have always been as unambiguous as possible.

However while this is annoying it is something to be contended with.

The position at present is that Altschule (Harvard Medical School) claims that derivatives of adrenolutin (not adrenolutin itself) are found in excess in the urine of schizophrenics and in their red cells. Our mauve factor work has been confirmed by a man in Argentina.

The card sort test has been done again independently in Saskatchewan and we have a series of papers showing its various uses. Abram has tested eight mentally defective children, or with severe sustained learning problems, against ten children undergoing major surgery. The mauve factor was tried in all of them. None (0) of the surgical children had the factor present. Five of the eight other children had it. Two of these treated with niacin showed the disappearance of the factor and began to learn again.

I suppose that the traditional clinicians have been playing schizophrenia by ear for so long that the idea of measuring it by anything except intuition is foreign to them! They see no point in such new fangled devices. It is all very familiar if you read medical history but none the less extremely irritating. So much learned twaddle about “taking all factors into account etc.” when the greatest successes in medicine have undoubtedly been achieved by deciding that some factors are of more importance than others.

In consequence of this I shall have to move in two directions, which may seem rather remote from each other.

1. *Political*: I am opening up channels of communication with the Health Ministry and have an article next week in the *New Scientist*. It is obvious that the social implications of diagnostic tests and a cheap effective treatment for early schizophrenia are not just a matter of medical politesse. 1% of people suffer from it. The cost for hospital care in Britain alone is about £15 million annually, and most of the hospitals need total rebuilding. It is a great bore having to do this in one way and fascinating in another. Like Père Joseph<sup>35</sup> I want to avoid being drawn into politics but I need political help to achieve my ends. Tricky.

2. One of the best ways around the psychiatric impasse is by producing something which no psychiatrist, whatever his persuasion can afford to ignore. The card sort is one possibility, its speed, cheapness and convenience will make it a grievous temptation. But the chemical test is a greater one. We have got it to the point where without effort it can probably be turned into a simple technical procedure. Burroughs Wellcome whose

profits go into the Wellcome Foundation<sup>36</sup> are interested. We have a fairly simple version in preparation. They like the idea, apart from anything else it is inherently much more likely to succeed. It has been estimated that 1:1,000 tranquilisers even reach the market. From Wellcome's point of view a successful test would have an enormous sale. In addition it would have equally enormous social implications. In one move schizophrenia becomes an illness willy-nilly, whatever psychoanalysts and the others say. It won't be a way of life anymore! I'm going over to their headquarters in Beckenham early in the year. As you can see this dovetails in with the political moves. It also fills in the time until Altschule has identified his adrenolutin derivatives and we our mauve factor.

It is odd here. Abram and I work for ten years and make about the only testable hypothesis psychiatry has had. We test and others do and now claim to confirm our work. My colleagues here think "there may be some grains of truth in it." But of course they haven't time to give the "ideas" more than casual attention, because they are such very busy men with really important matters on their minds. But they will perhaps get a "really good" opinion on these matters "one of these days." However all this has happened before, indeed that is what is hard to grasp. The profession is really a collection of craftsmen whose connection with medical science is tenuous. This applies especially in primitive aspects of medicine like psychiatry where clinical judgement has been untouched by instrumental measurement, except on its fringes.

I am working on my book about the research and hope to start sensitive hunting soon. I've gone over a number of papers for the parapsychology foundation. Something is clearly missing in our thinking on this subject, and I hope to develop a better model. I think affect, feeling is what has got sieved out by the "rigorous" scientific thinking. I believe there are fairly "safe" affects which can be used without enormously complicated social relationships. Natural ESP seems to be part of close or very intense affect. We want an equivalent. I think curiosity may do the trick. Many biologists believe this is a fundamental drive. With children it certainly looks that way. We have seen Fee do things which look like spontaneous ESP when her curiosity has been frustrated. Rhine's work seemed aimed to arouse lack of interest, but even he, at first could not prevent success. The objection to using major affects (fear, terror, joy, delight, etc.) is that they are difficult to

arouse with any certainty, hard to quantify, and often only briefly sustained. At their most intense the negative ones may produce autonomic changes of a serious kind. We need something more certain, more quantifiable and more controllable. I think curiosity may fill the bill without killing the cat.

Hope Laura flourishes and that you have a new home by now. I enclose a picture of Julian who is in good shape. Helen has finished her first English term very successfully. She is a bright child and seems to achieve with little effort what others have to struggle over. She has had little difficulty in switching from a prairie to an English school, although expected to be behind her contemporaries due to her Canadian education: she is no such thing.

Jane is coping with colds, Christmas, nursing Julian and all the problems of motherhood with her usual efficiency. Fee I fear has measles coming on. I enclose a picture of the new Julian at six weeks, he has gained 75% on his birthweight.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

<sup>1</sup> Georg Groddeck (1866–1934). Swiss physician and pioneer of psychosomatic medicine whose “The Relation of Massage to Psychotherapy” was published in the *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 11, no. 3 (November 1931): 228–33.

<sup>2</sup> Roger Vittoz (1863–1925). Swiss physician and pioneer of psychosomatic medicine.

<sup>3</sup> Fritz Perls, Ralph Hefferline, and Paul Goodman, *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality* (1951).

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Mead (1901–78). American cultural anthropologist who studied primitive societies.

<sup>5</sup> Reference to William James, *The Moral Equivalent of War* (1910).

<sup>6</sup> Bernard Aschner (1883–1960). Austrian-born physician who emigrated to New York when Adolf Hitler annexed Austria. His *Arthritis Can Be Cured* was published in 1957.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, translated by Ida Macalpine and Richard A. Hunter (1955), reprinted by Harvard University Press in 1988.

<sup>8</sup> Karl Marx (1818–83). German philosopher and revolutionary socialist.

<sup>9</sup> Jacques Barzun (1907–2012). French-born American author and historian whose *Darwin, Marx, Wagner: Critique of a Heritage* was published in 1942.

<sup>10</sup> Mark David Altschule’s *Roots of Modern Psychiatry: Essays in the History of Psychiatry* was published in 1957.

<sup>11</sup> The Ittleson Foundation (which Osmond wrote as “Ittlestone”) is a charitable organization established in 1932 that initially focused on mental health projects. Nina Ridenour Boll (1904–96) was its executive director from 1952 to 1967.

<sup>12</sup> CIT Bank was founded by Henry Ittleson in 1908.

- 13 Margaret Joyce Field (fl. 1937–71). English psychiatrist and anthropologist whose *Search for Security: An Ethno-Psychiatric Study of Rural Ghana* was published in 1960.
- 14 Donald (Ben) C. Webster (1930–97). Canadian businessman and early investor in “Velcro.” See Hoffer, “In Memoriam.”
- 15 *The Devils* (1960), the stage version of Huxley’s historical novel *The Devils of Loudun* (1952), was written by John Whiting. In 1971 it was adapted into a film directed by Ken Russell.
- 16 Harvey Williams Cushing (1869–1939). Pioneering American neurosurgeon.
- 17 *Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead as Recorded by Lucien Price* (1954), 255.
- 18 Ernest Rutherford (1871–1937). English physicist widely regarded as the father of nuclear physics.
- 19 C.P. Snow (1905–80). English physical chemist and novelist known for his 1959 lecture subsequently published as *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, which describes the breakdown in communication between the sciences and the humanities.
- 20 Max Planck (1858–1947). German theoretical physicist whose work on quantum theory won him the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1918.
- 21 In a privately held letter to his wife, Jane, on 12 April 1961, Osmond describes one of their many museum outings: “Aldous’ visits to the Met follow their usual pattern of darting swiftly from gallery to gallery. He peers closely at the pictures with his hand held like a telescope or with his little magnifying glass. He has to get very near the pictures and so flits in front of other visitors to the gallery, [a] long, gangly, grey figure who is clearly so preoccupied and so knowledgeable that no one objects to these brief intrusions . . . He is always fascinated by light in a picture – Pieter de Hooch, Vermeer, Rembrandt, etc. He told me one day, standing by a dark glowing Rembrandt, a man had said to his wife, ‘Sure it must have looked better when it was new.’ The comic or grotesque delights him.”
- 22 Lord David Cecil (1902–86). British biographer, historian, and academic whose *The Stricken Deer, or The Life of Cowper* was published in 1929.
- 23 Society for Psychical Research.
- 24 Central historical characters in Huxley’s *Grey Eminence* (1941) and *The Devils of Loudun* (1952) respectively.
- 25 Grey Walter, *The Neurophysiological Aspects of Hallucinations and Illusory Experience* (1960).
- 26 This book never came to fruition.
- 27 Kovish seems to be a fictional name created to protect the identity of Stanford Ovshinsky, first mentioned in Osmond’s letter of 13 April 1957. See Osmond and Hoffer, “Case of Mr. Kovish.”
- 28 E. Douglas Dean (1916–2001). Scottish electrochemist and parapsychologist who moved to the United States in 1947 and began to conduct ESP research. relationship to the soul is also treated at length in his final book, *The Passions of the Soul* (1649).
- 29 In *Treatise on Man*, published in Latin and French in 1662 and 1664, French philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650) described the pineal gland’s special relationship to the “animal spirits.” In a letter of 29 January 1640 to Lazare Meyssonier, physician to King Louis VIII, Descartes famously referred to the pineal gland as the “principle seat of the soul.” The pineal gland’s relationship to the soul is also treated at length in his final book, *The Passions of the Soul* (1649).
- 30 Huxley’s *Texts and Pretexts: An Anthology with Commentaries* was published in 1932. The quote is from Alexander Pope’s poem “The Death of the Duke of Buckingham.”
- 31 Reference to William James’s letter to E.L. Godkin of 24 December 1895: “We are all ready to be savage in *some* cause. The difference between a good man and a bad one is the choice of the cause.” From *The Letters of William James* (1920), vol. 2, 28, edited by Henry James.
- 32 Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians.
- 33 Reference to the hero of Homer’s *Odyssey*.



34 Edward Jenner (1749–1823). English physician and pioneer of the smallpox vaccine.

35 Père Joseph, political advisor to Cardinal Richelieu, is the subject of Huxley's biographical work *Grey Eminence* (1941).

36 The Burroughs Wellcome Fund, now independent, was established in 1955 as the philanthropic arm of the Burroughs Wellcome Company, a British pharmaceutical manufacturer.

1962

6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
2 January 1962

Dear Humphry,

A happy New Year to you and the family. How are things going with you, and what is afoot? Here all is pretty well. We made a headlong trip to India in November – a congress to celebrate Tagore's<sup>1</sup> centenary at New Delhi, then a few days at Madras staying with Krishnamurti, then back via Colombo, Hong Kong and Tokyo. India is almost infinitely depressing; for there seems to be no solution to its problems in any way that any of us would regard as acceptable, only the prospect of overpopulation, underemployment, growing unrest, social breakdown, followed, I suppose, by the imposition of a military or communistic dictatorship. And of course, so long as the more prosperous countries spend 40% of their revenues on armaments, nothing effective can be done about India and all the other places in the same fix. *Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*<sup>2</sup>

At the end of this month I go to Berkeley as a visiting Ford professor, with no functions – so that I hope to be free to use the resources of the post to travel about and write a reflective book of notes and essays on the West Coast – in the manner of *Beyond the Mexique Bay*.<sup>3</sup> I am hoping that this may turn out to be an interesting project, and an educational one – for how little one knows, really, about anything! And how grossly incurious one remains about so many things. What an enormous number of intrinsically astonishing achievements one merely takes for granted! Meanwhile I have just finished the weary chore of correcting two sets of proofs of *Island*, and find myself wondering if the book is any good, or at least more than spottily good. Heaven knows. I will ask Chatto's to send you a set of proofs.

Did you ever contact Dr Volf?<sup>4</sup> We have had no word from him for months and I am wondering what has happened to him. And now a medical question. One doctor I know urges me very strongly to take a course of

testosterone. But another advises strongly against it on the grounds that it may be carcinogenic. What is the best opinion on the subject now?

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Onet Cottage  
Godalming, Surrey  
18 January 1962*

My dear Aldous,

Our letters must have crossed. How good to have news of you and today a proof copy of the *Island*. I shall start on it without delay.

I enclose a reprint of "Models of Madness"<sup>5</sup> which will bring you up to date on the schizophrenia work. Abram has just finished another series of mauve factor and card sorting test studies. These have held up remarkably well. It means that we now have a biochemical and psychological test which relate to each other and to schizophrenia. In other words we can begin to think of measuring the great madness. It is hard to realise that in spite of the furious efforts of psychologists and chemists for fifty years we have never before had instruments of this kind. Psychiatry is a very primitive branch of medicine and as such it uses rather vague concepts which are bolstered up by strong feelings.

Strength of feeling about medical (and I suppose many other) notions seems to be inversely proportional to knowledge and understanding. It is very hard to realise how strongly those who opposed Lister<sup>6</sup> felt. Lister and Semmelweiss<sup>7</sup> before him put forward propositions which seem very innocuous today. The fairly modest cleanliness which they both urged on their fellows was hardly revolutionary and did not involve very much inconvenience. Their results were clearly of great benefit. Yet the resistance to these ideas was vigorous. Medicine does not always oppose new ideas. Broussais<sup>8</sup> notions on bleeding caught on so well that the import of leeches into France rose from 100,000 to nearly 30 million a year within a few years.

It puzzles me.

I have got a fair amount of writing done, not as much as I had hoped but when I tot it up a fairly good lot. I hope to be hunting around sensitives in the coming months and seeing whether I can get a suitable research job in psychiatry.

Matthew sent me a copy of the Milbank Fund's Causes of Mental Illness<sup>9</sup> which he edited so well. Alexander Robertson<sup>10</sup> an old friend of mine is going to direct the Fund. He is an able chap. I was very grateful to Matthew. It seems clear that schizophrenia is distinguished by being one of the illnesses in which social factors play a smaller part than most. It is very odd you can make a strong case for lung cancer, malaria, tuberculosis, and syphilis being strongly influenced by social factors, but the most vigorous efforts to bring schizophrenia into the fold sustained for 200 years have failed completely. A recent paper from Bethlehem Royal Hospital (Bedlam) shows that the illness has altered very little in the last century. Patients are less furious today than in the 1860s, their delusions are now more often sexual than religious. This [is] not what one would expect according to Freud. The patient's stay is shorter, but although fewer die recoveries are much the same. The century's progress is not as impressive as one might have expected.

What a weird lot we are! A world ridden with misery, poverty, ignorance, vice and over population and our efforts are aimed at seeing the backside of the moon. The satirist is always outdone by the satirised. At least the *Brave New World*-ers had tried to solve their social problems. We have, as yet, no clear notion of the kind of decisions which have to be made in our kind of world.

Helen, Fee and Julian seem to be tough and intelligent. I suppose they will need all of it in the years ahead. But what does it all mean? Is feeling and intelligence sprouting all over the universe and in some strange way developing into something better? Is the aim of it all a greater awareness of being? One cannot, of course, ever be sure, and yet this is what one would most like. For the very fact that one can conceptualize and verbalize the question in that way means that the possibility of doubt exists. Yet how odd it would be to be someone who never or hardly ever doubted; massive somatotonics come in this category, I suppose.

I wouldn't like to advise on the testosterone business because I haven't been in contact with the steroid hormone work recently. If you haven't come to a decision when you get this let me know and I'll hunt around for a good opinion. Perhaps you could let me know why the testosterone is being suggested?

I have got to page 70 on the *Island* and find it excellent. I hope I shall be able to put it down. As far as I'm concerned the book is right. It doesn't suggest that anything is easy, only that it isn't hopeless if you use heart, hand and head in a manner appropriate to your temperament and the society in which you find yourself. It is very well done. Sheldon and psychedelics have never been made more comprehensible!

Splendid – have just finished *Island* at midnight. Enjoyed it enormously. Jane sends Love. Love to Laura.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

P.S. Julian very sturdy.

---

*Onet Cottage  
Godalming, Surrey  
10 August 1962*

My dear Aldous,

No news of you for some time. I hope all goes well. I tried to see both Matthew and Ellen in New York recently, though I had news of Matthew from Sandy Robertson, his new boss at the Milbank fund.

I was over in the U.S. during late June and July and had a very interesting and exciting time. I am now considering becoming director of the Bureau of Research at the New Jersey Neuropsychiatric Institute. They have offered me the job and I have until 1<sup>st</sup> September to make up my mind. I would have about 25 scientists in the group – very strong on pharmacology and electrophysiology. This would be attractive in any circumstances but as you shall hear particularly so now.

I saw Abram in New York and we went up to Boston to see Mark Altschule, Professor of Medicine at Harvard. Altschule claims to have found aminochromes (adrenochrome and similar substances) in the urine of schizophrenics. Abe and I wanted to see for ourselves. We got better than we had bargained for. It looks as if the adrenochrome hypothesis is upheld, although the original M-substance hypothesis is not upheld. The irony of this is that John Smythies has been [taking] pains to dissociate himself publicly from the adrenochrome hypotheses. He has succeeded in doing this remarkably well to the extent of telling people that it is “finished,” that Abram is a crook and I am his gull. What is more, I have good reason to suppose that much of my poor reception in England, and it has been poor and shabby, can be ascribed to John’s friendly activities.

But Altschule showed us much more. There is a relationship between the presence of aminochromes and the waxing and waning of illness. Injections of pineal hormone reduces the aminochrome levels and improves the illness. When it is stopped aminochromes come back and the illness worsens. In addition Altschule now has an easily induced animal model of schizophrenia. Altschule’s work, our own on the mauve factor, and the rapidly growing evidence of a protein blood fraction with an elusive small molecule attached, is now beginning to make the sort of pattern which even the stupidest psychiatrists will not be able to ignore indefinitely. Mind you, as you can see from Don Jackson’s<sup>11</sup> idiotic article in the current (August) *Scientific American*, they will do their very best! Jackson’s is an astonishing effort in what one would call willful distortion, if there was not such good evidence for subliminal processes!

He is apparently unable to distinguish between his beliefs and opinions, other people’s beliefs, opinions and findings, and his interpretations. Of the adrenochrome hypothesis, which now has much support, he writes casually that nothing came of it. This suggests that he has done no reading since about 1958. The genetic work of Kallman<sup>12</sup> and Slater<sup>13</sup> is revised to suit his book. He is unaware that the sociological explanation of grave diseases is one of the oldest and least successful. Plague, scurvy, tuberculosis, puerperal fever, and general paralysis of the insane have all been “explained” on sociological grounds in their time. It seems to be an unlucky explanation. It is queer to have it trotted out as a brilliant revelation, but then practitioners of medicine are remarkably unhistorical, although

paradoxically extremely traditional. Jackson presumably is entirely unaware that he represents a perfectly respectable, but on the whole rather unhelpful medical tradition – that of ascribing illnesses to social factors. The unhelpfulness springs not from this being necessarily completely untrue, but from social factors which influence illness being generally insusceptible to manipulation. The elimination of great pandemics could be helped by social enactments such as quarantining, supplying lemons to the Navy, clean water supplies, rules against spoiled rye, etc., but such enactments are only really effective when one knows what is wrong, so that they can be directed accurately.

After visiting Boston, Halifax Nova Scotia, and flying back to New York I jetted to Le Piol to a conference there. A small one this time with the amiable and shrewd Emilio,<sup>14</sup> Grey Walter, the grand old man of EEG-ery. He was the first man to grasp much of the importance of Berger's<sup>15</sup> work and to apply it to brain tumor diagnosis. Stephen Black,<sup>16</sup> the medical hypnotist who is doing some fascinating work on the allergic response, hypnosis and immunisation. Stafford-Clarke<sup>17</sup> an old Guy's friend who is a television psychiatrist and illustrates very clearly the perils of British love of anonymity etc. Due to the conservatism of the British medical hierarchy doctors must appear anonymously – the idea being that they might swipe other doctors' patients if they did not do so. But the British are also creatures of habit. David Stafford-Clarke appears anonymously on television at regular intervals, such anonymity is much more effective publicity than being named. S-C has become a fascinating impresario of psychiatry and has come to believe that he knows something about research.

I believe it became clear to Eileen that there are no magic answers to her magical abilities. Eileen would like a sort of EEG response showing trance states etc. But it is doubtful whether the EEG is sophisticated enough for this yet. Ironically Abram and I believe that the unlucky Douglas Dean may have very well got close in to what would be the sort of measure that can be used. Eileen was, I think, too impatient to let this work develop. Dean was too hesitating and inept to maintain her interest. Eileen wavers between a vision of men of science as detached supermen and as inept boobies – neither of these pictures tells us much about them.

She has sponsored the publication of Trevor Hall's<sup>18</sup> remarkable book *The Spiritualists* which is surely the ground stuff for a marvelous play? I've urged her to ask you to review it and hope you will consider this. Perhaps you have already seen it. Hall is in a way the ideal narrator for he either has a very dry sense of humor or hardly any, and this dead pan play<sup>19</sup> suits the material. Of course a novel could have brought out the stuffed-furniture, plushy, gas-lit Victorian atmosphere better – but the imaginative reader can fill this in for himself. Life again exceeds the wildest fancies of the fiction writer, that Crookes<sup>20</sup> went on to be President of the Royal Society and the Society for Psychological Research after his, apparently, quite material love affair with the spiritual incarnation Katy King.<sup>21</sup> In addition Crookes did some of his finest scientific work after this shabby, funny but extremely interesting affair.

I re-read *Grey Eminence* in Le Piol and feel it is one of your finest. I hope that one day the drama will be able to “carry” this sort of emotional catastrophe. I suppose a film could do it now. Has anyone tried? By moving rapidly from Père Joseph's spiritual exercises, to his political intrigues and then to the results of those intrigues in human misery and back to Père Joseph the contemplative, one might get the extraordinary incongruity i[n] visual-affective terms. Some of the Marienbad<sup>22</sup> techniques would be useful.

Anyway I shall let you know my decision and it looks as if I shall be back in the fray again after this puzzling interlude. I've learnt much. I haven't liked it – or [at least] not the process of learning, but I suspect over the long haul a number of gents in England will have to do a little learning which they too may find not wholly enjoyable.

Anyway we shall see.

Hope you both flourish.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.



19 August 1962

Dear Humphry,

Your welcome letter has crossed a postcard of my own – sent off, I now suspect, without a sufficiency of stamps, so that it will reach you very belatedly by ship. In that pc I announced that I expect to be in Europe during September and hope to see you. I hadn't meant to take in Europe en route to Argentina (where we are expected in early October); but have just been asked to attend a meeting at Brussels of a new World Academy of Arts and Sciences, started by a lot of Nobel Prizemen who would like to see that their science is used in a relatively sane manner. ("Ends are ape-chosen; only the means are man's," as I remarked in *Ape and Essence*. Maybe we could do something to humanize the ends.) I think the Brussels conference may be interesting; anyhow it seems worth trying at least to do something to mitigate the current organized insanity. How fabulously well-organized the insanity is was borne in upon me the other day at the local North American Aviation plant, where I went to have a look at the Apollo moon-shot capsule and the latest plan-to-ground missiles, which can turn at right angles, skim along the ground, shoot perpendicularly up into the air to avoid interception and finally be guided, warhead and all, to whatever orphanage or old people's home may have been selected as the target. All this concentrated knowledge, genius, hard work and devotion, not to mention all those incalculable billions of dollars, poured forth in the service of vast collective paranoias – and meanwhile our three billions of mainly hungry people are to become six billions in less than forty years and, like parasites, are threatening to destroy their planetary host and, with their host, themselves.

I was most interested to hear of Mark Altschule's work and of the possibilities in New Jersey. I hope you will take the New Jersey job; for the most important research is that which is aimed at the cracks in the armour between two solid scientific disciplines. We need the most intelligent and freely operating people, like yourself, to do the probing through those vulnerable joints in the conceptual carapace that encases reality.

My plans call for a short stay in Brussels, August 30<sup>th</sup> to Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup>. I may remain a few days more in the region, then shall go to London. Will you be

around? I hope so.

Laura is fearfully busy, trying to meet the deadline on her book of *Recipes for Living*,<sup>23</sup> so will not be coming to Brussels. We are to meet later on in Argentina.

My love to Jane and the children.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Onet Cottage  
Godalming, Surrey  
21 August 1962*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you. Our letters<sup>24</sup> crossed.

I have accepted the job in Princeton after a long and illuminating though not especially profitable look around in England. However I shall look forward to hearing from you and seeing you when you are in England and telling you the news which is exciting.

I was in New Jersey in July and had a very interesting time. My warm welcome there combined with Mark Altschule's finding aminochromes (derivatives of adrenolutin) in schizophrenic blood convinced me that I could not delay longer. I made a survey of British resources at as high a level as possible (four FRCPS, two FRSS, two knights, and three researchers, two full professors, two members of the medical research council, one millionairess, and the head of government psychiatry). My conclusion was that nothing could or would be done for at least a year. Then I should have to wait for 12–18 months "tooling up." There is at least a reasonable chance that the main defences of schizophrenia can be bared and carried in that time by resolute and well equipped people working in close coordination. So I am now preparing myself for export in the category of "distinguished scientist." Sounds odd doesn't it? But it looks as if we are hedging schizophrenia in. It has been a slow enough business! I was reading a book about insulin recently and found the simplicity of it almost touching after

twelve years' wrestling with the great madness. Banting and Best's<sup>25</sup> travails were over in twelve weeks. It will be splendid seeing you. Love to Laura.

As ever affectionately,  
Humphry

Jane says you must come and see them all especially Julian – Julian Senior says his head is as big as yours at the same age!

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
15 December 1962*

Dear Humphry,

A merry Christmas to you all and a happy new year! Meanwhile what are you up to? When are you taking up your job in New Jersey? Let me have some news.

Here all goes pretty well. Laura is putting the final touches to her book, and I am hard at work on a long essay on Literature and Science, which I hope to finish in another month or so. After that – who knows? I don't, at the moment.

I spent a couple of interesting days this autumn with Roger Williams<sup>26</sup> at the University of Texas, looking at his collection of pictures and statistics of human differences. One wonders, sometimes, how creatures so dissimilar manage to interbreed. Meanwhile what an immense amount of enlightening research remains to be done in this region. How are these anatomical and biochemical differences related to resistance or proneness to mental disease or the milder neuroses and hysterias? How can Eysenck's<sup>27</sup> theory of innate differences in conditionability be related to these anatomical and biochemical differences? Etcetera, etcetera. I am sure you will have a lot of fun with this sort of thing when you get to N.J. My love to Jane and the children.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Onet Cottage  
Godalming, Surrey  
18 December 1962*

My dear Aldous,

How splendid to hear from you. I am signed and sealed, due to be delivered by the Maasdam in mid January. My first long sea voyage was in January 1943, so I thought it would be an appropriate way to blow the disappointments of the last queer year out of my system.

It has been irritating, interesting and I suspect valuable and useful. Had it not been for Eileen's generosity and understanding it would have been appallingly worrying, but since she supported us I was able to face the professional annoyances with (comparative) equanimity. It has been bizarre. But I've sorted it out fairly well and though I won't bore you by citing it, I have good enough evidence for what I shall sketch briefly here. As you know my first intimation that something was wrong was that my submission of a book and 70 papers for the MRCP (Membership of the Royal College of Physicians) was turned down flat. I later found out that one assessor believed it was the most interesting body of psychiatric writing he had seen. I don't know who the other was or what he said but it must have been remarkably negative to completely outweigh such a strongly positive recommendation. Then I was not asked to give lectures here. I've given three in about 15 months, all at the invitation of my personal friends. Yet during this time people have been publicly claiming to have confirmed the adrenochrome hypothesis. One would have thought they would have at least been curious about it. Not a bit.

Then I got first hand evidence that John Smythies had been spreading around that Abe was a crook and I his dupe. I got this from a well known psychiatrist, a member of Parliament, from Eileen via the psychiatrist, from Francis (Huxley) and eventually from Rosalind Heywood.<sup>28</sup> Now as we

knew he had been doing this sort of thing in the U.S., it began to make sense. John had been at the Maudesley, the power centre of British Psychiatry. John seems to have gone around claiming, 1) to have originated the ideas (partly true), 2) attacking the adrenochrome hypothesis on the grounds that Abram was a fraud, “not a biochemist” etc. With their love of private communication (the Athenaeum complex) this was lapped up and I daresay John S. dined out on his rubbish but it didn’t really do him much good though it did me some harm. It also did psychiatric research in Britain no good for it encouraged lethargy where there was enough of it already.

Once I got on to what had happened, I used the same arrangement in reverse, and being able to produce Abram (on his way back from a very successful trip to Scandinavia, Russia and Czechoslovakia) I let a number of influential people meet the Canadian imposter! They came away impressed. While I have been caught up in the red candy floss of British Bureaucracy the adrenochrome work has pushed ahead. A Russian told Abram, “You mean there are still people in the west who can’t find adrenochrome in the body?” The Czechs have a new and very clever assay, which combined with our discoveries in Saskatchewan about the fundamental chemistry of adrenochrome, looks like [it’s] giving us the instruments which we need for measuring schizophrenia chemically. Of course this also means measuring the chemistry of people of different temperaments and physique. We know that adrenochrome alters learning and presumably we each inhabit a biochemical rainbow of aminochromes which change and in part determine the shimmering patterns of the brain’s electro-chemistry, which permits us to perceive a stable world. People who come from the same culture and are roughly the same size, shape, age and intelligence and who live in the same era perceive roughly the same world. We can’t yet be sure just how much people can differ and survive, but I agree with you that it is astonishing how diverse we can be and yet interbreed. But with chemical tests, perceptual tests and tests of learning we shall be able to measure some of this before long.

Presumably what we require is a stable society whose goal is the furtherance of human potential – stable variability – which can only occur by deliberate cultivation. It will be the outcome of a scientific art, an immense sustained creative effort of imagination.

I entirely agree with Julian, *Island* is a blue print – or more exactly an early experimental model.

So far the explorers are mostly running into trouble, much of it of their own creating. Timothy Leary and his friends seem impervious to the idea that psychedelic substances may be both valuable and dangerous if misused.

Lacking any psychopharmacological guidance that I know of (they got rid of Spiegel their psychiatrist very early on), they have played around with massive doses of psilocybin and LSD-25. You will recall that in 1960 you wondered about this. They have not grasped that because one dose of psilocybin is safe this does not mean that regular and repeated doses are safe. Abram tells me that Wasson's book suggests that the Indians don't use psilocybin more than they have to. And in any case psilocybin is not *the* mushroom any more than mescaline is *the* cactus.

Then supposing we knew how safe LSD and psilocybin were individually, this gives us no certain knowledge how they act together. Psilocybin is not a weaker and milder LSD, it is a different pharmacological substance. Chemically much more like adrenochrome. Indeed the Czechs believe that adrenochrome is about as potent as psilocybin. Now adrenochrome tends to have a prolonged and probably a cumulative effect – it may be that psilocybin does much the same thing. We just don't know. We have strong evidence that LSD potentiates adrenochrome – why not psilocybin? Timothy Leary has written to me as if he knew all there is to be known about these substances. Dangerously different from the uncertain man we met two years ago. And of course, he is in trouble because he has taken no precautions and could be shot down by anyone who cared to ask the right questions.

Substances which interfere with biologically important enzyme systems ought to be dangerous. A danger which is understood can be met and allowed for. It is like flying. It is inherently dangerous but feasible once you meet the dangers and learn how to deal with them. If you refuse to believe they exist or are too careless to discover what they are, then you are in real trouble. Psychedelics seem to be remarkably safe on the whole provided one exercises minimal prudence – but I don't think Timothy Leary has exercised that.

Al Hubbard meanwhile is having his troubles and they are compounding. His comes from mixing his drinks – he has set up a sort of

psychedelic business enterprise – but which is which? It has been costly. Al has been ingenious. He has, he believes, outsmarted many of his medical critics, but he forgets that medicine is an old profession and a battle is not a campaign. A campaign is not a war. Al has benefitted large numbers of people – but he has failed to benefit some and may have harmed a few. It has not struck him, so far as I can discover, that his enemies will use this small number of inevitable failures to destroy him. Abram and I have always urged a very different course, getting money for systematic and determined research. Al would not do this so we have learnt all we can from him. Generally I think he has done good and I know that he intends good, but like many of his temperament he has to be *sure*. He has to say that what might possibly be is certainly so, that what looks likely undoubtedly occurred, that what is probable could not be otherwise.

I fear Al's arrogance will do him much harm and hope I'm wrong. Abram and I can help him when he is doing good even if the righteous disapprove. We have done so. We can't help if he does wrong, however good his intentions. Al doesn't listen to things he doesn't want to hear. Psychedelics are not the answer to everyone's problems, and his ways of using them are not the only way or even the best.

Al's notion that hostile medical men only need a slap on the back or a punch below the belt to establish good relationships is mistaken. However we shall have to see what happens. Both Al and Timothy Leary have failed to grasp that if you say a pharmacological substance is harmless it would be at least prudent to have a pharmacologist or chemist to speak for you. It is also important to know what you mean. Recently in London a man aged 41 took LSD-25 for the seventh time and dropped dead. The psychiatrist who gave it had given 3,000 doses of LSD before. I fear Timothy Leary and Al would have said cheerily "Well of course he really wanted to die anyway!"

I suspect, from my own very unpleasant experience in one LSD session in which I went into something like wound shock, that in some people under certain conditions LSD releases adrenalin without enough adrenochrome. A few extra gamma of free adrenalin can be very dangerous. While minute energy systems of this kind might well be strongly effected by extraliminal factors, our job is to understand such systems well enough to avoid catastrophes.

Anyway I think that the plodding attack which Abram and I favor may pay off in a number of surprising ways. LSD we suspect will become one phase of the treatment of schizophrenia – which will shake most people. Loretta Bender<sup>29</sup> is already using it on autistic children – purely empirically, but the adrenochrome hypothesis makes sense of what seems senseless. We have evidence that adrenochrome is pushed out of the red cells by LSD. If they are overloaded in schizophrenia LSD might push off enough to speed up its excretion.

If we can break up schizophrenia then I think we can insist that we have a right to ensure that psychedelics are enquired into carefully and systematically. We can and indeed must do without Messiahs, however well intentioned, for they incite the somatonic to a murderous frenzy of enthusiasm or condemnation. That desperate yearning for certainty which is at the bottom of so much of our misfortunes. Perhaps after your Science and Literature essay you might brood upon the effect of Messiahs upon their followers. There seems to come an appalling moment at which the Messiah's message becomes its opposite.

My address after 1<sup>st</sup> February will be the Bureau of Research in Neurology and Psychiatry, Box 1000, Princeton, N.J. I'm keenly looking forward to everything except leaving the family behind.

An odd thing – indeed at first I thought someone had made a mistake – I've been invited to become a member of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences. I found you too are a fellow member and felt very happy about this. I've accepted but so far heard no more. It looks as if there are some able people and I hope that we can do a little to push the species towards rather than away from survival.

Jane and the children are on good form, all things considered. Though we don't relish the separation it seems the best course for the moment. The schizophrenia research may now go very quickly and we don't want to set up another home until we know how things stand and we don't want to move Helen from school to school too frequently.

Good wishes to Laura. Keep me posted with your movements.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry



---

6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
26 December 1962

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your good and most interesting letter. Yes, what about Tim Leary? I spent an evening with him here a few weeks ago – and he talked such nonsense (about the conscious mind being merely a robot, about true intelligence residing only in the DNA molecule, about some kind of Providence looking after the population problem, which therefore wasn't any problem at all) that I became quite concerned. Not about his sanity – because he is perfectly sane – but about his prospects in the world; for this nonsense-talking is just another device for annoying people in authority, flouting convention, cocking snooks<sup>30</sup> at the academic world. It is the reaction of a mischievous Irish boy to the headmaster of his school. One of these days the headmaster will lose patience – and then good-bye to Tim's psilocybin research. I am very fond of Tim – but why, oh why, does he *have* to be such an ass? I have told him repeatedly that the only attitude for a researcher in this ticklish field is that of an anthropologist living in the midst of a tribe of potentially dangerous savages. Go about your business quietly, don't break the taboos or criticize the locally accepted dogmas. Be polite and friendly – and get on with the job. If you leave them alone, they will probably leave you alone. But evidently the temptation to cock snooks is quite irresistible – so there he goes again!

Give my love to Jane and the children. It's unfortunate that they must remain in one hemisphere while you are in another – but no doubt it's the best solution for the time being.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Onet Cottage  
Godalming, Surrey  
29 December 1962*

My dear Aldous,

Indeed, what about Tim Leary?

How good to hear from you and so quickly too, only three days to get here, probably less – whirled over the warmish polar wastes – apparently the warm air has gone north this winter.

Yes. What about Tim Leary?

As you say it is such nonsense. What competence has he to make ex-cathedra statements of this kind? Yet I've seen the same thing in another very well and rigidly trained psychologist at least as able as Tim Leary: Duncan Blewitt. He talked just as much drivel.

And in his own way our dear friend Al Hubbard has engaged in a good deal of half-wittery too. I don't think Tim has any competence to talk about intelligence residing in the DNA molecule. It is just blather. Talking for effect's sake – not from the heart or the head but from the windpipe or the arse hole.

But I'm still not convinced, as Abram is not convinced, with Duncan Blewitt, that *too much of a variety of these substances too often*, may not change more or less permanently the subtle and largely unclear means by which we make complex social judgements. I'm not *sure* that this is so, but it is clear that by the very nature of the qualities one is attempting to measure one is likely to be uncertain. There is no reason at all for believing that because one dose of psilocybin once a month is safe that double the dose once a week is safe. Equally because psilocybin and LSD separately are not obviously harmful that they will be safe together or laced with amphetamine. In addition there are wide individual variations in enzyme systems and our capacity for handling complex chemicals.

One can easily exaggerate the dangers – compared with automobile driving psychedelics are obviously safer and probably compared with cigarette smoking. But you have to be as psychosocially naïve as Timothy clearly is to suppose that this advantageous comparison will be made. Tim has been most unwise to tangle with Dana Farnsworth,<sup>31</sup> a very able middle

of the road psychiatrist. As you point out – be inconspicuous among the natives, don't vex or tweak them when they are performing their sacred rites, and remain in the background, unobserved but observing.

There is another explanation which is at least as good as mine in the present state of our knowledge. This is that certain extraverted people who acquire rigid moral or intellectual or religious carapaces find the psychedelic experience alluring but unassimilable. They cannot reject it, but equally they cannot relate it to their previous morality.

They become more or less convinced, now that they have become aware of the divine ground, the other, and must work to incorporate a little more of it into our world, but that they are a divinity. This very dangerous part truth leads them to suppose that they are omniscient, omni-competent and even omnipotent. I would suspect that there is a special biochemical aspect to this, but again it might arise in several ways. The outcome is much the same, the afflicted person can't understand why others don't share his certainty about everything.

Like all part truths this contains an element of truth, but only enough to mislead the unwary.

I don't think any great artist or scientist has ever been afflicted by continuous inspiration. It comes in bursts and we then have to digest what we have acquired. Too much is as dangerous as too little. The continuously inspired would never have time for acquiring techniques necessary for communicating or for devising experiments and formulae. Art and science are social matters and are effective and useful only so far as they are socially communicable.

The great artist or scientist makes a particular experience universal in terms of a specific act which enlarges the understanding of his fellows. I'm sure you recall Blake's rebuke to Reynolds who state[d] that art was a matter of generalisation and Blake wrote, No – art is a matter of minute particulars.<sup>32</sup> I think that art expresses the universal via these minute particulars. The greater the advance we hope to make, the greater effort will have to be made. Great gestures are not at all helpful. If indeed cocking snooks and blowing raspberries in Harvard is a great gesture.

In a way I blame Sandoz more than Timothy. I can't think why they don't lay down certain conditions for working with a new substance like psilocybin whose long term effects are unknown. Why they let Leary have

the stuff without any undertaking that he should have competent medical advice is beyond me. Equally I don't know why they haven't defined the sort of advice which is necessary. It is fairly obvious that the less you know about the way in which a substance works the more careful you must be.

About all one can say about mescaline, psilocybin and LSD is that however they work, which is still obscure, they probably don't work in the same way. One cannot then infer that one is "safe" because another is "safe" and safety means little unless you know what you mean.

Adrenochrome is probably safer than LSD regarding the chances of a sudden flooding of adrenalin, but less safe regarding the accumulation of adrenolutin. Which safety do you want to use? They are both pretty safe in comparison with yage snuff made from the sap of a South American mimosa (I think) which gives you fits.

With the wide constitutional differences of which we are at last becoming more aware, safety becomes even harder to define exactly. But this is all the more reason for proceeding soberly and quietly. The dangers are not very large provided that you recognise that they exist and are alert. The less alert and aware of them you are the greater they become. It is not so much that there are so many of them but they are strung across such an enormous range from biochemical and pharmacological at one end to creative and spiritual at the other. The bulldozing approach is therefore particularly inappropriate.

I'm hopeful that in 1963 we shall have the equipment for beginning to discover how LSD at least works at a bio-pharmacological level.

Psychosocially your idea from Bergson still seems as good as ever. The doors of perception are cleansed, more gets in and the mind-brain attempts more or less successfully to organise the new information. It usually does this in terms of that which we know already and this may or may not be appropriate. Social relations depend upon a commonality of concepts and these must depend, at least to some extent, on similar percepts. The more the doors of perception are cleansed the less likely that this commonality of concepts will survive in the ebbing and flowing of perception. It would seem then that we require a psychotechnology, as Julian put it in his recent Ciba lecture, which allows us to learn how to use enlargements of perception in a rational and appropriate way rather than in a haphazard one as at present. We have ample evidence that we can learn to assimilate new

percepts by developing appropriate concepts and so changing our social attitudes and values quite quickly. I think that we often do this by means of analogies – bridges of familiar ideas which help us across the chasms of the unknown. The original bridges are often gimcrack and unsafe, but with increasing familiarity they can be replaced with something more substantial. Timothy seems to be depending upon levitation at present, which is fine if you can do it.

Off on 16<sup>th</sup> January in a Dutchman, the Statendam. Very sad at being parted, but not I hope for very long. My experience here has been a comic-nightmare and I'm not sure which side has predominated. British psychiatric research seems to be suffering from the general malaise. An unwillingness to face the fact that the past is not always or necessarily a guide to the future except in a general way. I suppose I should have guessed this would happen but two or three years ago things looked very different. However there is no point in concerning oneself with what might have been – especially when what is looks very exciting. Am much on edge to hear about our new assays of adrenalin, adrenochrome, etc. These new tools will change psychopharmacology from a craft to a science. At present it is still pretty close to cookery.

Hope to see you before long. Good wishes to you and Laura for 1963. Jane sends love.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

p.s. I think one of the better tests is to ask yourself whether you would have i) predicted or ii) not predicted this sort of behavior in Tim L. two years ago. The less likely it seems in retrospect, the more likely that something, which we can't measure yet, is wrong.

1 Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). Indian author who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913.

2 “Whom the Lord wishes to destroy, He first drives mad.”

3 Huxley's travel memoir *Beyond the Mexique Bay* was published in 1934.

4 Christian A. Volf (1894–1967). Danish-born physicist specializing in audiology and acoustics.

5 Osmond's article “Models of Madness” was published in the *New Scientist* 12, no. 267 (December 1961): 777–80. See also Siegler and Osmond, “Models of Madness.”

6 Joseph Lister (1827–1912). British surgeon and a pioneer of antiseptic surgery whose work in reducing post-operative infections earned him the moniker “father of modern surgery.”

- 7 Ignaz Philipp Semmelweiss (1818–65). Hungarian physician now known as a pioneer of antiseptic procedures.
- 8 François-Joseph-Victor Broussais (1772–1838). French physician known for his use of leeches in bloodletting.
- 9 Ernest M. Gruenberg and Matthew Huxley, “The Conference on Causes of Mental Disorders: A Review of Epidemiological Knowledge, 1959,” *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (March 1961): 7–13.
- 10 Alexander (Sandy) Duff Robertson (1926–91). English-born physician who was at the University of Saskatchewan’s School of Medicine before becoming director of the Milbank Memorial Fund in 1962.
- 11 Don D. Jackson (1920–68). American psychiatrist who did pioneering work in family therapy. His article “Schizophrenia” was published in *Scientific American* 207, no. 2 (August 1962): 65–74.
- 12 Franz Josef Kallmann (1897–1965). German-born American psychiatrist and one of the pioneers in the study of the genetic basis of psychiatric disorders. He developed the use of twin studies in the assessment of the relative roles of heredity and the environment in the pathogenesis of psychiatric disease.
- 13 Eliot Trevor Oakeshott Slater (1904–83). British psychiatrist who was a pioneer in the field of the genetics of mental disorders.
- 14 Emilio Servadio (1904–94). Italian physician and psychoanalyst known for his work on hypnosis and the paranormal.
- 15 Hans Berger (1873–1941). German psychiatrist best known as the inventor of electroencephalography (EEG) in 1924.
- 16 Stephen Black (fl. 1912–72). English physician who studied the role of hypnosis in treating physical maladies.
- 17 David Stafford-Clark (1916–99). English psychiatrist and author who was head of psychological medicine at Guy’s Hospital in London.
- 18 Trevor Henry Hall (1910–91). British author and surveyor who was a known skeptic of paranormal phenomena. His *The Spiritualists: The Story of Florence Cook and William Crookes* was published in 1962.
- 19 Osmond confusingly refers to this work of nonfiction as a play.
- 20 William Crookes (1832–1919). English chemist and physicist who, late in life, became interested in spiritualism and became the president of the Society for Psychical Research.
- 21 Katie King was the name given by Spiritualists in the 1870s to what they believed to be a materialized spirit. She was believed to be the daughter of John King, a spirit control who appeared in many séances involving materialized spirits.
- 22 Reference to *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961), an experimental film by French director and screenwriter Alain Resnais (1922–2014), which was famous for its unconventional structure and for avoiding traditional plot and character development.
- 23 Laura Archera Huxley’s *Between Heaven and Earth: Recipes for Living and Loving* was published in 1976.
- 24 Reference to the postcard Huxley mentions in the previous letter; this postcard either was not received or has not survived.
- 25 Sir Frederick Grant Banting (1891–1941) and Charles Herbert Best (1899–1978) were Canadian medical scientists and the co-discoverers of insulin and its therapeutic potential.
- 26 Roger J. Williams (1893–1988). American biochemist known for his work in discovering folic acid and other vitamins and nutrients.
- 27 Hans Jürgen Eysenck (1916–97). German-born psychologist who spent most of his career in England. He is known for his controversial views on the role of genetics in intelligence.

28 Rosalind Hedley Heywood (1895–1980). British parapsychologist and psychic.

29 Laretta Bender (1897–1987). American child neuropsychiatrist known for developing the Bender-Gestalt Test, a psychological test designed to evaluate visual-motor maturation in children.

30 Cocking a snook (British old-fashioned) is a gesture that indicates a lack of respect for something or someone; it is equivalent to thumbing one's nose.

31 Dana Lyda Farnsworth (1905–86). Harvard psychiatrist who was an authority on the emotional problems of students and a leader in the development of comprehensive health services on campus; he famously declared to Leary, "Patients suffering the consequences of the hallucinogens demonstrates that these drugs have the power to damage the individual psyche, indeed to cripple it for life."

32 Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–92). Influential eighteenth-century English painter. Osmond is probably referring to William Blake's famous rebuke of Reynolds, written in the margins of his copy of Reynolds's *Discourses Delivered at the Royal Academy* (1769–91). Reynolds wrote that "disposition to abstractions, to generalising and classification, is the great glory of the human mind." Blake noted, "To generalize is to be an idiot; to particularize is the lone distinction of merit."

1963

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
7 January 1963*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. A good example of what happens to a man when he gets too much inspiration is provided by Christopher Smart.<sup>1</sup> “Jubilate Agno” is the product of an acute phase of his mental illness, when he had no control over his pre-conscious mind and its torrent of images, notions, words and rhythms. *David* and the “Nativity” poem were written when he was crazy enough to forget that he was a product of 18th century conditioning, but not so crazy as to be unable to organize his automatic writing artistically. And then there are the boring, conventional poems that he produced when he was too sane, too well adjusted to the 18th century. Too much and too frequent, LSD would probably be fatal to art – as fatal as no LSD or none of its spontaneously occurring equivalent.

Let me have your address in Princeton so that I may contact you there if and when I go to the not-so-gorgeous East.

My love to Jane and the children.

Yours affectionately,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1000  
Princeton, N.J.  
25 May 1963*

My dear Aldous,



I was delighted to get a copy of *You Are Not the Target*.<sup>2</sup> Please thank Laura. I have skimmed a little already and am getting another copy for use with alcoholics on our LSD project. It is full of valuable and simple ideas vividly expressed.

I am wondering whether you will be in Stockholm at the WAAS<sup>3</sup> meeting? I shall be there and hope you will be. If not I may be in L.A. this fall after a drug meeting.

I am still much concerned about Tim L. and his outfit. The most recent developments are unusually worrying. It seems that some outfit took to selling a “stable LSD” which does in fact have some of the properties of LSD. Albert Hofmann [h]as analysed some samples of it (a rather alchemically greenish liquid which might well be an extract of liver of blaspheming Jew, gall of goat and slips of yew). He finds that this substance contains LSD but only 60%. 40% consists of other adrenalin like substances. He doesn’t yet know what these are or why they should be present. I have seen another alleged LSD liquid kept in an ordinary eye dropper type of bottle said to be “perfectly stable.”

Now Sandoz’s own LSD is not stable under such conditions. I have had reports which suggest that this “stable LSD” does exactly what one would expect – produces a more prolonged reaction. While this is of great theoretical interest and allows us to define a psychedelic LSD-25 and a psychotomimetic “LSD” (green, stable), there are immediate issues of importance. The more prolonged reaction in some people could be extremely harmful, especially if they had no idea that it could occur. I don’t know whether you have heard of any. If it does occur massive niacin and ascorbic acid would seem to offer the best chance of alleviation.

I hope that not much green LSD got around. Much of the blame must go to Sandoz and the FDA<sup>4</sup> for their fantastic lack of a coherent and sensible policy.

I don’t know what (if any) relationship Tim L. has to the distribution of LSD, green or otherwise. He should keep out. This is a tricky field. No chemist ever admits that he can’t make what another chemist has made. Particularly if the substance is worth say \$10,000 a gram. Such a sum will hire a fair organic chemist for one year. Consequently a psychologist who is ignorant of this little quirk may easily suppose that “stable LSD” is just LSD-25 of Sandoz’ vintage. It may not be at all. And it won’t be checked with

Sandoz' care on animals. Perhaps no one in L.A. has received samples of the green LSD, but if they do they should on *no account use them*. I would prefer they were sent to me rather than poured down the toilet so we can try them on animals and see if they also produce the persistent reactions which they ought to.

Meanwhile Abram H. and I are extremely interested, quite apart from being concerned about the particular and general harm done. We feel that we may now have some new clues which will tell us what LSD does. In addition this new LSD sounds far more like a "model schizophrenia" and so supports our earlier ideas upon this. It may also get people to define their terms and think a bit more clearly about these strange substances. It is easy to exaggerate the danger for when 30–40,000 people are killed in road accidents annually the harm done by even dud LSD is likely to be small. Nevertheless this harm is avoidable and should be avoided.

Since I saw you a number of interesting things have happened – one of the most striking being our finding that among 450 early schizophrenics who did not have niacin, nine committed suicide in the subsequent six or seven years. Of 300 who had niacin, zero. This is only on the verge of statistical significance – blessed word. But those nine suicides must be compared with the usual suicide rate in Saskatchewan of 8:100,000. The schizophrenia rate is about 200:100,000. What is so odd is that there are *hardly any* comparable figures telling us what does happen to schizophrenics, especially those in the community. It looks as if suicide is endemic among them to a much greater degree than among depressives. Anyway we are pursuing this as our chemists close in on adrenochrome and its relatives.

Do let me know if you will be in Stockholm. Love and congratulations to Laura.

Urge anyone who comes across "green," "stable," or Tim Leary's Mexican LSD to eschew it. I don't know whether Tim has made any in Mexico yet but I would be most suspicious of it. If you know of any unlucky purchaser of green LSD etc. do urge him to send it here. It may be valuable to us but it will probably be harmful to the purchaser.

Of course Sandoz's bizarre policy or lack of it has played a large though probably unrecognized part in this nonsense.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
2 June 1963*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. I have passed on the gist of your remarks about green LSD to Tim Leary at Zihuatanejo. I don't know if he bought any of the stuff from the crooks who were peddling it here. I hope not – but fear that he may have. A single untoward reaction to the green stuff could imperil his whole grandiose scheme for the reformation of society through psychedelics.

All our plans are in a state of confusion, owing to the fact that we have to be on hand when a man to whom we lent money, and who has got himself involved in legal proceedings, comes to trial in late June. I have had to cancel a lecture in Germany and a lecture and honorific banquet in England. It is a great nuisance, not only for me but for a host of other people. I imagine that we shall get over to Europe in early July. I haven't yet decided whether to go to Stockholm for the World Academy meeting – but I think that I may, above all now that I know you're going to be there. What hotel will you be staying at? I will make reservations at the same place.

I've had a busy winter and spring – completing a 100 page essay on Literature and Science, another short piece on the problem of how to enjoy the benefits of culture without being hypnotized or maddened by culture's outdated or merely senseless traditions. Now I am feeling my way into a kind of ruminative novel.

Laura's book is turning into a runaway best seller – very gratifying but also rather flabbergasting. She has had a week of radio and TV appearances in New York and starts the same thing on the West Coast tomorrow.

I hope we may have a few days together in Scandinavia this August. If not there, then in October when I expect to be in the East for some lectures and will look you up at Princeton.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1000  
Princeton, N.J.  
9 June 1963*

My dear Aldous,

How good to hear from you.

Congratulations to Laura – what fun, a best seller: most exciting.

I am glad you let Tim Leary know. I suspect that he has bought some and only hope he will be able to follow advice. My guess is that he won't. Hubris that most dangerous brand of pride seems to have gripped him. I have also written to Allan Watts and urged him to pass on the news. It is, apparently, not easy for those who have never had to work with chemists to grasp the simple fact that what they claim to have synthesized and what they actually make can be very different. It is not a matter of competence or good faith. I have seen first class chemists make astonishing howlers. LSD is a tricky synthesis at the best. I doubt whether Timothy's chemist will be the most reputable man working under ideal conditions. Then there is the question of animal studies – all very expensive and hard to interpret. I know because I have the budget of our own operations to prepare. There is the added possibility that the chemist might be rash enough or brave enough to take some of his own preparations and so impair his judgement! Ironically the keener [the] psychedelics the more harm he might well do.

Delighted you may be in Stockholm. I shall be in England July 10–28 approximately. Stockholm 29 through August 4, 5. A day or two in Norway and then home – alas no – back! Jane, Helen, Fee and Big Julian all seem to be flourishing. I long to see them. I don't yet know which hotel I shall be in but should hear in a few days. I am sorry about your vexing legal affair. The

law always seems astonishing to me and seems designed to promote, above all, delay.

I hope you will get here soon. I now have a car and can nip about quite quickly. I hope we shall have much to show you. The pursuit of the mauve factor in urine is being taken up by my chemists here. Abram's chemist will be down next week to see. If he likes it he will take the idea back with him. In this way we can get more done, more quickly and more surely. My fellows seem very keen as they realise that five years' work may well begin to pay off at last.

Meanwhile we have our LSD-alcoholism work going and are making a liaison with AA in Princeton and its surroundings. Our alcoholics are truly remarkable. People whose persona seems to have hypertrophied as their innerness atrophied. LSD seems very useful for correcting this imbalance provided you make a proper social structure and setting. Timothy Leary's notion that we must abandon all roles and role taking is such half-witted bombast. Alcoholics have got to learn that there is more to life than roles and role taking, but this does not mean that many people don't need help in learning how to cope with society.

Keenly look forward to the new work. It sounds timely and I hope to see it. Abram and I have a variety of papers either just coming out or readying for submission. We are still most preoccupied with the adrenochrome assays, but have to wait on our chemists who can't be hurried. However since they are now just as keen as we, we know they are moving as fast as possible.

Eileen is peregrinating England before settling at Le Piol. She has found John Smythies very keen to "return to the fold." However I am not especially keen on this since John is purely interested in his personal gain. His lack of scruples is transparent. But as things stand there is not much John can do to get back. His papers are on the record and apart from writing some sort of apologia I don't see what could be done. But there is little point in worrying, he has done nothing for about ten years so what he does now will not, I expect, make much difference. I found John's behavior distasteful and don't have much enthusiasm for his change of heart which I suspect is largely because he is becoming apprehensive. Yet I suppose that this in itself is indicative that things are seeping across even in Britain.

I do hope we shall meet in Europe. Love to Laura, may her sales ever multiply.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
11 June 1963<sup>5</sup>*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter. I heard from Tim, who says he has given the green LSD sold by the two bootleggers now under arraignment in California to several hundred people – with no untoward results. So presumably heaven has been (rather undeservedly) on his side. Meanwhile people of our acquaintance, just returned from Zihuatanejo, bring back the most lyrical accounts of life in Tim's earthly paradise. I shall be very anxious to see for myself what it is like down there – perhaps next winter.

I will let you know about my plans as soon as *I* know about them – goodness knows when. Meanwhile this brings you blessings and affectionate good wishes.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1000  
Princeton, N.J.  
18 June 1963*

My dear Aldous,

Many thanks for yours of 11<sup>th</sup> June. Yes Tim L. is either extremely lucky or very unobservant. I wonder which. To the pure all things are pure and from one letter I had from him I gathered that all, or almost all, had been revealed to him some time back. It was apparently all something to do with RNA and DNA. It will be interesting for a specialist in earthly paradises like you to visit Tim's psychedelic version. I wonder how 1) He is financing it? 2) Running it?

This is usually the rather mundane rock upon which these ventures founder – at least your studies suggest so. I also wonder what the locals feel – an important matter in Latin America at present. It is fairly clear that the Food and Drug people and the Narcotics people are less than well disposed. Tim's notion that he would use the IFIF<sup>6</sup> as an importing agency for psychedelics has given them the willies. I can see their point.

Meanwhile, as you have probably heard some time ago, the ordinary morning glory *ipomoea tricolor* has been found to contain substantial quantities of Lysergic Acid Amide, a close relative of LSD which is active in milligram doses. One wonders why this has not been found before, but it may be that the unnatural selection of large flowered and brightly colored morning glories has pushed up the Lysergic Acid content so that we now have highly psychotomimetic ones. Anyway we shall doubtless learn more about this. Meanwhile both the blackmarketeers and the FDA people have some cause for gloom.

Our work pushes ahead. We have now developed two new psychological tests for schizophrenia – in Weyburn – by one of my boys. Our atropine test has been confirmed. We have an EEG test and possibly a reflex test. Our chemists seem to be reproducing the Saskatchewan mauve factor test. In brief we have a variety of ways of measuring schizophrenia objectively which is encouraging.

Pushing on with our alcoholics and LSD. Very interesting and very much in line with Bill Sheldon's ideas.

Shall have some spare days in Stockholm to see various people and enjoy you both if you are there.

How goes the best seller?

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
20 June 1963*

Dear Humphry,

I return this letter to Alan Watts, directed in error to me.

You have read, of course, about Tim's expulsion from Mexico.<sup>7</sup> Regrettable, but not too surprising.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1000  
Princeton, N.J.  
1 July 1963*

My dear Aldous,

1. My hotel in Sweden will be the Malmen. I shall be there a.m. 29<sup>th</sup>.
2. Before that Onet Cottage, Godalming, Surrey, should reach me from 9<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>.

I am delighted to have Laura's record,<sup>8</sup> but have been so pushed regarding my flight in two days that I've not yet heard it. Abysmally busy.

Hofmann's report on the green LSD is curious. He doesn't seem to know what the green stuff is. Of course we need extensive animal work to give us a clue. Even Timothy has never been willing, or, possibly due to his own massive and repeated takings of LSD and psilocybin, able to grasp that chemical substances do differ greatly in their safety. Only a 1 or 2% disaster rate is enough. It may be unfair, but that is how it is.

I feel that if I am to work with patients I can't be associated with his various and it seems wholly irresponsible antics. What happened to him between November 1960 and July 1963?



Love to Laura.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
24 July 1963*

Dear Humphry,

We fly direct from L.A. to Stockholm next Saturday, arriving Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>, and have rooms at Hotel Continental. Look forward to seeing you next week.

Yours,  
Aldous

---

*31 Pond St.  
London NW3  
6 August 1963*

Dear Humphry,

We are just back from a weekend with [—], the mother of a boy of 20, who has been suffering for a year or so from depression, anxiety and insomnia and who attempted suicide a few months ago. After which he was narcotized, then treated with other drugs to counteract the narcotics – the net result being that he is still depressed and tormented by a kind of intellectual scrupulosity that makes him refuse to “regard as real” any experience which he cannot explain in terms of the philosophy he has been studying at Oxford. I told his mother that this might very well be a case in which massive nicotinic acid might do good. Is there anyone in London using this treatment? And if there isn’t, is there any reason why they

shouldn't try it on their own? It surely can't do any harm. I'd be most grateful if you would write directly [—], giving her any information that you think might be useful.

It was good to see you at Stockholm and I look forward to stopping in on you at Princeton before too long.

Julian and Juliette send their love.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*Box 1000*  
*Princeton, N.J.*  
*3 September 1963*

My dear Aldous,

I've written to [—]. I agree, the odds are on schizophrenia. I've given all the details that I can on niacin and also how to get it in bulk. Having just run over the outcome of about 3,400 schizophrenics and finding 58 suicides, I'm a bit concerned in such matters. This is a rate of about 200/100,000 per annum, 20 times at least that of the comparable age group. Oddly this has never been noted before and doesn't appear in any textbook we can find.

Not so long ago about 1/6 of schizophrenics were dead inside ten years. TB, pneumonia and suicide.

Much going on – the Leary affair very, very odd, but the data so far not conclusive. The question which nags at the back of my mind is whether he has taken Gerald Heard's notion seriously of forming a "psychiatric underground" or *maquis*.<sup>9</sup> It sounds unlikely, but small groups is Tim's line. However that must wait till we meet.

We have leads on two new and unreported psychotomimetics. Further, much interest now developing in ololiuqui – not just the LSD like properties but the tranquilizer ones.

We have been repeating and extending Abram's and Sid Fogel's<sup>10</sup> hypnosis work. My psychologist is much taken and also very surprised.

Realises now that I wasn't just waffling about it. Hypnosis used as a precise tool has all sorts of possibilities.

It was splendid seeing you. I do hope we shall jostle the Academicians along to doing something really remarkable. What is the human potential – good and evil?

My good wishes to Sir Julian and Lady Juliette. I do hope he has some reprints of the Ciba lecture.<sup>11</sup> I much want to have one. Have had good news from the family.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
4 September 1963*

My dear Humphry,

Herewith a suggested skeleton outline for the human resources volume, which we so unwisely got ourselves involved in. Let me have your comments and suggestions for changes and additions. I hope to come East early in October – exact date to be fixed later – and hope to spend a day or two at Princeton discussing the book with you. After which we might slip down to Philadelphia to show the results of our confabulations to Stuart Mudd<sup>12</sup> and to get his opinion.

I had three weeks in London, with weekends in the country – at Lawford, at Kenneth Clark's fantastic Saltwood Castle, near Hythe, and under another mediaeval roof at Dartington – all very pleasant, except for the preposterously cold and rainy weather.

After London a week in Turin, with trips into the mountains – to Courmayeur and a funicular ride half way up Mont Blanc, then up the Val di Susa to Salice d'Oulx, where an Alpine village is in process of being transformed into a town of 10- and 15-story apartment houses for vacationing Italians from Torino. We've come a long way from the Swiss chalet!

Ever yours,  
Aldous

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
14 September 1963*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter of September 3<sup>rd</sup> which has followed me here, where we have been for about two weeks. Did you, by the way, receive an outline of the projected volume on human resources which I sent you about ten days ago? I hope it didn't go astray.

Meanwhile my plans have had to undergo some drastic modifications. I had a recurrence of trouble this spring – a neoplasm in the neck, centering on a gland, I suppose, which was treated with cobalt radiation. This left me in an extremely low state, from which I was only just emerging when I saw you in Stockholm. Since returning to L.A. there has been a flare-up of what the doctor thinks is a secondary inflammation of the radiation-weakened tissues, and I'm feeling pretty low again. This – plus the fact that my voice has been affected (the nerve leading to the right vocal cord having been knocked out, temporarily I hope, permanently I rather fear) – I have cancelled my lecture tour in the East and shall not, as I wrote in my letter, be visiting you in early October. Alas! But I think the sensible thing is to lie low and try to build up resistance and general health. It remains to be seen whether I can undertake the job of editing the human resources volume. At present I have my doubts – but perhaps I may get back the necessary energy later.

Thank you for writing to [—]. I hope the poor boy will emerge from his present darkness. The genetic background isn't too encouraging. His grandmother died insane, his uncle [—] was constantly on the verge of paranoia, and his elder sister had a psychotic break a year or two ago, but happily got better.

Ever yours,  
Aldous

P.S. I send you my news in confidence – so please don't mention it to Ellen or Matthew.

---

*Box 1000  
Princeton, N.J.  
18 September 1963*

My dear Aldous,

I am so sorry to have your news with trouble and that you are now feeling ill and low. This makes your cogent and splendid outline all the better.

I am very sorry for having been so slow in replying about the latter and I am still not satisfied with the attention which I have given it. Last week we had a series of talks to give (I shall be sending you a copy of mine on schizophrenia). This week budgeting and many other matters which fret away one's energy. I want to sit down with the outline and absorb it. I was going to do this, this weekend but at the last moment I had to prepare a statement on the function of the institute. Although this place has been going for some years, the people concerned are not clear about its proper goals and purposes in the mid 1960s and even more nebulous about what they should be. While business, most professions and the academic world are much concerned about obsolescence of the older men, psychiatry seems blissfully unaware that this is a greater problem than training the young men. It is obvious when you think about it.

I shall miss your October visit, but will write a detailed letter about the outline very soon. As it stands it seems to be so well conceived that it will only be a matter of detail.

I had a long letter from [—]. I have sent her details for her doctor and she seems to be interested. It is unfortunate that because schizophrenia is as dirty a word as syphilis that poor [—] wishes to believe that this is “only a nervous breakdown not mental trouble.” This must make it all the harder. As you so rightly point out, quite apart from his own illness the family

loading is clearly very heavy. The sooner we can get our substances in the better.

Good news from Abram, the crucial assays are coming along. This means that we can already measure adrenalin, noradrenalin and metanephrin elegantly and accurately which has, so far, been almost impossible. Now for adrenochrome and adrenolutin. Five years solid chemistry is now beginning to pay off.

Meanwhile my chaps are also active. Using changes produced by post hypnotic suggestion in a single perceptual modality, Bernard Aaronson,<sup>13</sup> one of my psychologist colleagues has shown that major changes in mood and thinking occur. This follows up Abram Hoffer's work and greatly surprised Aaronson. They made the world two dimensional and produced a condition closely resembling catatonia. Further there were major and obvious changes in a sensitive and standard psychological test – the MMPI.<sup>14</sup> Most gratifying was my able colleague's surprise at this. Although a skilled hypnotist he had not realized the great potency of this tool properly used.

I heard yesterday from our chemists that adrenochrome seems to be a very powerful antihistamine. This we had some evidence for before but these new experiments are more refined and new techniques are now available. Gradually my colleagues seem to be coming around to the idea that this is not a crazy notion of mine, but that they are coming in contact with an astonishing family of substances. Once they are involved I won't need to goad and wheedle them on.

Meanwhile a sociological picture of schizophrenia is emerging which does not involve blaming the patient, his family or the world at large. If we can get our assays and show that adrenochrome is in the body then all these diverse psychosomatic happenings should link up quickly.

I shall be writing again dear Aldous, soon. I will not refer to your present troubles, but let me know how things go for you, know that I shall be deeply concerned and keen to do anything I can to help.

Good wishes to Laura.

Ever affectionately,  
Humphry

p.s. Jane and the family sound well in spite of the foul weather. Julian as well coordinated as Fee and Helen. Fee has readings from your Lear poems every night – at her demand!

---

*6233 Mulholland Hwy  
Los Angeles 28, Cal.  
15 October 1963*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your letter and also for the paper, which I was in no state to go and hear Bob Lynch read. In our hypothetical volume on human resources there will obviously have to be a chapter – by you, no doubt – on the best emotional contexts in which the learning of new ways to use the mind should be placed. The Indians tried to solve the problem by means of the guru system. But this lends itself to all kinds of psychological and social abuses (you should hear Krishnamurti on the subject of gurus!), and something less dangerous will have to be worked out.

Stuart Mudd has asked me to send him a copy of my projected outline for the book – but being an Old Man of Thermopylae who never does anything properly,<sup>15</sup> I can't lay my hands on the carbon I made of it. If you have secretaries or mechanical facsimile makers available in your office, would you have a few copies made and send one to Dr Mudd (VA Hospital, University and Woodland Avenues, Philadelphia 4, Pa), together, if possible, with your own emendations and suggestions. Also a copy or two to me. I still don't know if I shall be able to undertake the work. At the moment I am so low with this secondary inflammation of the radiation-weakened tissues that I feel I shall never again be good for anything. But I hope and think this state of affairs will pass in due course. ("It will pass" – the only motto appropriate to every human situation, whether good or bad.)

Ever yours,  
Aldous<sup>16</sup>

---

*Box 1000  
Princeton, N.J.  
22 October 1963*

My dear Aldous,

Of course I shall send on a copy of your outline to Stuart Mudd and am returning one to you. I have added a few notes of my own, but feel you have already given more than enough for the first discussions.

I certainly agree with you about the guru system. I think its greatest harm lies in the damage which it can so easily inflict upon the guru himself or would-be guru. He is exposed to the immense dangers of being invested with charismatic authority. Gurdjieff<sup>17</sup> and Timothy Leary seem to be fairly contemporary examples of the dangers which inhere in this kind of authority. They are as great as those in Acton's<sup>18</sup> corrupting power – by which I guess he meant structural authority.

I do hope that you are now feeling less weak and that it is passing. Naturally I am keen to know how things are with you but not that you should use up energy by writing. Anyway you know that I am always available and don't hesitate to call upon me if I can help in any way. I shall be thinking much about you and hoping that it is easing.

Abram Hoffer was down today showing the hypnosis file – and everyone impressed and surprised. First that by changing time sense such remarkable alterations of mood and motility occur. Second that a biochemist should be so concerned about hypnosis.

We are beginning to explore the possibilities of this new way of using hypnosis for ESP etc. It looks very promising. Indeed spontaneous findings have already turned up. It seems to me that Rhine and others have failed to realise that their own enthusiasm generated their early successes and was an essential ingredient. Once that went – usually from boredom – their own first and then their subjects', the whole experience changed. We have to discover how to prevent or at least much reduce this boredom. It probably can only be done by a careful attention to much of modern psychology.



Abram has good news of our adrenalin assay which is almost ready to go into action. We shall have a quick measure of adrenaline, noradrenaline, dopamine, metepinephrine and metnorepinephrine – five neurohormones probably of critical importance to perception and mood. It has never before been possible to do this quickly and easily. We hope to add adrenochrome fairly soon. It begins to look as if the ten year campaign is moving towards its close. Gradually more and more people are taking up various aspects of our general hypothesis about schizophrenia and finding that it works. It is curious to watch it and to wonder why what has seemed to us a series of sensible and moderately stated propositions are only now getting careful attention. What is so curious is that our ideas have been traditional ones, long held by most psychiatrists.

We have been working hard on the family and social relationships of schizophrenics and it seems that they can be accounted for much more economically by supposing that one member of the family is *ill* in a peculiar way which impairs social relationships, than by supposing that the family or society has produced the illness. The really important thing is that this may lead to the sick person being treated with greater kindness, consideration and thought. Those ages when illness was located in society in general – as the scourge of God, sin, etc., were not most notable for good medical care. I don't think it helps our behaviour towards the sick if we perceive them as sinful and sinning, or as the result of social sin.

Some curious and exciting news about LSD-25 which seems to be one of the most efficient means of relieving pain for longer periods which we possess. Abram's preliminary experiments using a standard technique suggest that it works for at least two weeks. We are writing to Albert Hofmann suggesting that he hunt around the LSD molecule quickly, but I haven't heard yet. Further in ololiuqui there is an antitension glucoside which also seems to be a pain reliever. This would explain its attraction for the sacrifice-preoccupied Aztecs who required, so far as I can follow, and apparently often got a *willing* sacrifice who did not struggle unduly and so pleased their harsh gods. Smith Kline and French are much excited by this. They (the chemical companies generally) have about played out the phenothiazine molecule and have never come up with anything markedly superior to chlorpromazine in spite of the vast advertising splurges. Consequently they are now looking again at what they had in 1956! They

bought a lot of ololiuqui from Cuba but they couldn't find anything there. This is odd because apart from the lysergic acid derivatives it is loaded with this glucoside.

We are beginning to wonder whether the body does not itself produce analgesic substances and that possibly adrenochrome (or something like it) may be one of these. It is remarkable how little pain accompanies some severe injuries.

Ellen and the children seemed very well when I last saw them – about three weeks ago. The children seem to like Adam Giffard<sup>19</sup> who is a very amiable chap, and incidentally a far cousin of mine, I find.

Abram sent you his warmest good wishes and was very concerned about your illness. He and his G.P. hypnotist friend are showing their film to a big meeting in New York. In London the old Esdaile story was repeated – one man walked out at the end of the film saying “a damned good actress.” I think with Esdaile the idea was that the patient whose leg had been removed painlessly shammed his lack of pain: marvelous, the lengths to which people will go to pretend that there are no things which they can't understand.

Jane told me to send you her love and good wishes. My love to Laura and of course to you. Let me know if I can help.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

P.S. Is the new book out yet?

---

*Box 1000  
Princeton, N.J.  
31 October 1963*

My dear Aldous,

Matthew rang me tonight from Washington bringing me news of you. Curiously I had rung Ellen myself only a short time before. I hope that the road is not too hard and am thinking of you very often.

I've not yet heard from Stuart Mudd, but will try to contact him when I am in Philadelphia tomorrow or on Monday.

We are beginning to grasp some of the possibilities of these new hypnotic techniques. It looks as if we should be able to reproduce and concentrate, as it were, the psychedelic experience. We should also be able to reproduce exactly similar conditions in two people. This should result in enormously increased communication. It can be done. I believe, I hope we shall have the chance to find out just how. Our techniques for hypnotic induction are still crude. I suspect that much earlier teaching will play a big part as you have often suggested.

The architects' meeting in Hershey, the Pennsylvania chocolate town, was notable for their enthusiastic interest about the sort of space which men and women might need, and how we perceive it. It is curious that the[y] have, it seems, been pretty indifferent to this for many years, but seem to be doing some heart searching now. It seems unlikely that the design of mental hospitals should re-focus their attention upon much else, but it seems to be doing just that.

The work here moves along fairly well and I hope to be able to get five and possibly six of our departments aiming at a single problem. It isn't easy, like some nightmare alliance where there are no interpreters. It would have been fine to have had you here to bless our venture and to see for yourself. The trick seems to be to choose nodal points where several disciplines overlap and need each other. Once one finds such spots the scientists have to be lured towards them. Of course you might bid them to do as they were told and they would probably obey, but it wouldn't help much.

I shall be hoping for news any way you choose to send it.

Love to you and Laura.

Your ever affectionate,  
Humphry

P.S. I had news from Jane that Julian grows well. Fee is very active and Helen, the duck poetess is coping well at school. The Lear which you and Maria sent Helen is now Fee's favorite – Dongs and Jumblies!

- 1 Christopher Smart (1722–71). English poet whose *Jubilate Agno (Rejoice in the Lamb)* was written while he was committed to a London asylum.
- 2 Laura Archera Huxley's *You Are Not the Target* was published in 1963.
- 3 World Academy of Arts and Sciences.
- 4 United States Food and Drug Administration.
- 5 Huxley dated this letter "11.vii.63," but Osmond stamped it as received on 13 June.
- 6 International Federation for Internal Freedom. Organization founded by Leary and others in 1962 to study the use of psychedelics.
- 7 Leary and others were expelled from Mexico on 14 June 1963. See "Mexico Ousts 20 in Drug Research," *New York Times*, 15 June 1963.
- 8 Laura Archera Huxley issued a recorded version of *You Are Not the Target*.
- 9 Reference to the French resistance fighters of the Second World War.
- 10 Sydney Fogel (1920–2015). Canadian physician and researcher on hypnosis who worked with Abram Hoffer in Saskatoon.
- 11 Julian Huxley's lecture "Future of Man – Evolutionary Aspects" was given at the Ciba Foundation Conference on Man and His Future, 26–30 November 1962. It was published in *Man and His Future* (1963), edited by Gordon Wolstenholme.
- 12 Stuart Mudd (1893–1975). American microbiologist known for his work on blood plasma and combating infections in hospitals.
- 13 Bernard S. Aaronson (1924–90). American psychologist.
- 14 Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Standardized psychometric test originally developed in 1943.
- 15 Reference to a limerick from Edward Lear's *More Nonsense, Pictures, Rhymes, Botony, &c.* (1877).
- 16 Osmond wrote two notes on this last letter he received from Huxley: "22:10:63. Ellen rang. Aldous very ill, according to Laura who doubts whether he will last more than a few weeks. Cancer of the throat apparently invasive. 22:11:63. He died on the day President Kennedy was shot in Dallas Texas – Aun aprendo! [I'm still learning]." In his essay "Variations on Goya," Huxley wrote, "Goya once drew a picture of an ancient man tottering along under the burden of years, but with the accompanying caption, 'I'm still learning.' That old man was himself. To the end of a long life, he went on learning." See Huxley, *Themes and Variations*, 221–2. Huxley adopted "Aun aprendo" as his own personal motto.
- 17 George Ivanovich Gurdjieff (fl. 1872–1949). Armenian philosopher and mystic primarily known for developing the "Fourth Way," an integrated methodology for self-development.
- 18 John Dalberg-Acton (1834–1902). British politician and historian best known for writing, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely."
- 19 Adam Giffard (1934–2010). American cinematographer and second husband of Ellen Hovde Huxley.

## Epilogue

The cultural fascination with psychedelics was very different in 1963, when Aldous Huxley took his final voyage, from how it would come to characterize the notorious youth and counterculture by the end of the 1960s. As LSD captured the curiosity of thrill seekers and moved well beyond the confines of scientific or intellectual research, the reputation of the drug and its proponents changed significantly. By the end of the decade, most jurisdictions throughout the Western world had criminalized LSD. Research all but ground to a halt, whereas the popular representation of psychedelics infused a vibrant youth culture and forged an association between psychedelic experiences and a way of being. Although there were remnants of the philosophical undertones present in the countercultural appropriation of psychedelics, these drugs were more readily connected in the mainstream media with risky behaviour, hedonism, bohemian lifestyles, and political activities. Regardless of the reality of this relationship, governmental authorities fed on this association in an effort to control the spread of so-called deviant activities while often blaming LSD for infecting young minds. US president Richard Nixon and his supporters, for instance, regarded protestors of the Vietnam War as hippies and acid freaks, suggesting that taking LSD had somehow made potential draftees un-American, rather than acknowledging the legitimate concerns about extending the military draft to college students, let alone questioning American foreign policy more broadly.

During the 1970s another story made headlines that further denigrated the status of LSD. Journalist John Marks uncovered secret government files detailing covert CIA experiments involving LSD, mind control, and interrogation techniques. Project MK-Ultra had been a product of Cold War espionage and further damaged the reputation of psychedelics, not to mention that of the CIA, after Marks revealed gruesome details about testing drugs on unwitting patients in mental hospitals and on prisoners. Rumours also surfaced that CIA operatives had spiked colleagues' drinks, allegedly resulting in a suicide.<sup>1</sup> Concerns about government mind control and abuse

of vulnerable populations cast a dark shadow over the earlier scientific phase of research with LSD, forging a strong set of popular assumptions about the relationship between LSD and violence, and even death.

At the time of Humphry Osmond's death in 2004, the history of psychedelics continued to be characterized by this narrative: psychedelics emerged in a laboratory setting, were used in unethical interrogations by government agents, leaked out to a wider culture, were abused by reckless youth, and were criminalized by authorities who saw no cultural or medical value in these substances. Yet only a few years after Osmond's death, scientific studies resumed claims, first, that psychedelics were not as inherently dangerous as had been presumed and, second, that their therapeutic benefits had not been fully appreciated. By the 2010s scientific pundits were claiming that we are in the midst of a psychedelic renaissance, invoking a period of both reflection and innovation in the world of psychoactive substances and a reevaluation of their value to society and human health. In 2007 psychopharmacologist and drug advisor David Nutt introduced a new harm scale, assessing drugs according to their health care impacts, as well as their addictive and abusive qualities. Contrary to contemporary drug policies, Nutt argued that drugs in the psychedelic category had been unfairly classified as dangerous and without therapeutic benefit. In addition to losing his position with the British Drug Advisory Board, Nutt has also become a leading public proponent of the argument that substances such as alcohol and tobacco are far more hazardous to our health than psychedelics and are expensive contributors to long-term health care costs.<sup>2</sup> Since Nutt's intervention, others have similarly revisited the issue of restricting access to psychedelics and have recommended revisiting drug regulation as well as psychedelic science.<sup>3</sup> These changes in the reputation of psychedelics have had a profound impact on how these psychedelic prophets have been remembered and, relatedly, on how their networks have figured into this history.

Huxley's association with LSD had belonged to an earlier era, marked arguably by a more innocent and philosophical pursuit of understanding the human psyche, but it was a pursuit that others would later discard as overly elitist and exclusionary. Osmond, twenty years his junior, weathered these turbulent changes by moving away from psychedelics as the main door to perception and instead concentrating on further nurturing his interests in

psychobiological models of madness and mental health reforms. Yet his contributions to psychedelic science have more often remained connected with Huxley, reinforcing an image of elitism and a closed-door approach to examining the human mind with a select audience. And they were in good company. Rubbing shoulders with the likes of philosopher Gerald Heard, magazine magnate Henry Luce and his wife, playwright-politician Clare Boothe Luce, Alcoholics Anonymous co-founder Bill Wilson, renowned psychiatrist Carl Jung, and parapsychologist Eileen Garrett is hardly proof of closed doors, but it does underscore the nature of their approach to psychedelics as inherently intellectual and creative. By twenty-first-century standards, their networks were deeply interdisciplinary, innovative, and politically quite significant. Wilson's LSD experience is perhaps a case in point. Taking LSD under direction from Gerald Heard, who was a close friend of Aldous and Maria Huxley and a great writer and philosopher in his own right, Wilson articulated the need for spiritual growth in alcoholism interventions. As a co-founder of the extremely popular Alcoholics Anonymous, Wilson's influence on North American culture was profound.

The approach to psychedelics taken by these pioneers and their circle of friends varied considerably from that of an infamous group who dominated the psychedelic stage in the latter part of the 1960s. Former Harvard psychologist Timothy Leary, author Ken Kesey, poet Allen Ginsberg, and chemist Owsley Stanley are routinely connected to LSD and even recognized as critical gurus or purveyors of a psychedelic ethos, due in part to their desire to wrestle psychedelics away from elites and make them and their insights available much more widely. Some of Osmond and Huxley's friends were also intrigued by this liberalizing agenda. Captain Alfred Hubbard, who had first encountered mescaline through Osmond, but who had always pushed the boundaries of deference to authority, seemed to align himself more closely with Leary. Hubbard, who had deep pockets and powerful international connections, actively sought out collaborators in industry and publishing in an effort to evangelize the gospel of psychedelics, spreading its message of mind freedom and creativity far beyond the confines of legitimate clinical environs. By the time of Huxley's death, he and Osmond had grown skeptical of Hubbard's motivations and distanced him from their own networks as well as their supplies.

Perhaps the most famous epithet from this period in psychedelic history comes from Timothy Leary, who in 1966 before a crowd of concert attendees declared, “turn on, tune in, drop out,” a phrase that soon became synonymous with not just psychedelic drug use but also a much wider set of cultural dispositions challenging conservatism and compliance in the modern world. The activities of this crew, although well known to Huxley and Osmond, soon surpassed the comparably quiet intellectual musings and catapulted their libertarian attitudes toward psychedelics into popular culture through song lyrics, concerts, poetry, novels, and fashions. If Huxley and Osmond articulated a psychedelic experience, Leary and Kesey led a psychedelic movement.

Huxley's death in 1963 severed him from the movement per se, leaving Osmond and others to reconcile their involvement. Leary's penchant for the spotlight ensured that he continued to make waves in the media, creating a stronger and deeper connection between his flamboyant critique of established order and his fragile legal status when it came to encouraging drug use more broadly. The indiscriminate promotion of psychoactive substances, embodied by Leary and woven into the characterization of America's counterculture, also produced figures whose drug use served as lightning rods for drug regulators. Charles Manson's infamous murders in 1969 represented the culmination of the backlash against psychedelics. Manson, already known for establishing a California-based commune and breaking from conventional society, was later depicted as a calculating and manipulating presence on the West Coast. His infamy, however, had also gained him a reputation as a cultural character with larger than life attributes. The heinous nature of his crimes, and their association with the cult-like qualities of his commune, further reinforced the dangerous side of psychedelics and shattered any lingering cultural discourse suggesting that psychedelics were merely a benign substance that fed the mind or healed the soul.

Amid the maelstrom of psychedelic subcultural malaise, Osmond had attempted to retain his credibility as a legitimate researcher. He was not alone in his attempts, but his name was clearly attached to the word itself and, with it, some of the cultural fallout. In 1966 Osmond wrote (in longhand) to Senator Robert Kennedy and, appealing to his sense of justice and reason, reminded him that there were serious investigators like himself



whose reputations were at stake as well as patients like Kennedy's sister Rosemary who languished in psychiatric facilities with few clinical options. Rosemary had by then already been subjected to a lobotomy and lived much of her life under psychiatric care while the family struggled to conceal her disability. Osmond reminded the senator that valid and productive research continued and that black market sales and subterranean networks of drug pushers and seekers threatened to destabilize the meaningful work that was being done to improve mental health outcomes.<sup>4</sup> Despite these efforts, LSD's regulatory fate was sealed and its clinical future imperilled as the decade drew to a close, particularly as stories emerged of LSD triggering murder, suicide, and child abuse. (Of course, Senator Kennedy was also assassinated.)

For Osmond, psychedelics had always been the means rather than the end. He and his wife, Jane, along with their three children, left Saskatchewan in 1961 and, after a short return to England, settled in Princeton, New Jersey. There, he assumed the directorship of the Bureau of Research in Neurology and Psychiatry at the New Jersey Psychiatric Institute, where he remained for the next ten years before taking a post at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Throughout the remainder of his career, he continued to explore models of madness, often inspired and furnished by his devotion to Jungian typology and by his abiding interest in perception and empathy. Despite leaving the cold prairie winters behind, he also maintained his close friendship with Saskatoon-based collaborator and fellow psychiatrist Abram Hoffer. They continued to correspond daily or weekly for the next several decades, growing more firm in their convictions that Freudian psychodynamic theories had no role to play in treating serious mental disorders and unflinchingly searching for interventions that balanced personal autonomy with structural supports. Hoffer quickly moved past the psychedelic work, which for him had also been a stepping-stone toward a more sophisticated biochemical theory of schizophrenia.

Already in the 1960s Hoffer and Osmond, among others, had established the American Schizophrenia Association, dedicated to supporting schizophrenic patients. Osmond had secured Miss Miriam Rothschild as a benefactor, who then sought support from her influential brothers.<sup>5</sup> The main purpose of this organization was to support people and families by lobbying governments for more health care infrastructure and

by creating community networks for emotionally confronting the reality that people with schizophrenia might not be cured but could benefit tremendously from social and familial acceptance. Not only was Hoffer an important advocate for these views, but he also relied on his training as a cereal chemist to design vitamin therapies for treating his patients. Moving against the tide of blockbuster psycho-pharmacological remedies, Hoffer later earned a reputation as “Dr Niacin” for his study and promotion of mega-vitamin therapies, namely vitamin B treatments. His work attracted considerable attention, including from double Nobel Prize laureate Linus Pauling, whose contemporary research with vitamin C had already garnered clinical acclaim.

Hoffer later recalled that in 1971 he and Osmond had decided to change the name of the American Schizophrenia Association to the Huxley Institute for Biosocial Research. The name change was not only a salutary gesture but also paid homage to the influence of the Huxleys on the organization’s attitudes toward research and its impact on families. Laura Huxley, Aldous’s widow, readily agreed to lend the Huxley name to his great friend’s organization. Sir Julian Huxley, Aldous’s biologist brother, insisted on including the biological and social elements in the name of the organization as a reference to the Huxley family’s legacy in biology and Aldous’s own humanist interpretations; the name was also suitable as an acknowledgment that schizophrenia is a disease with biological and social causation and treatment.

The newly reformed organization did not readily compete with the institutional or cultural legacy of psychedelics, but it helped to concretize some of the research energy that had fuelled the Osmond-Huxley relationship and that had subsequently energized others, whether family, friends, or collaborators who remained keenly interested in understanding the human mind and all its dimensions. The renewed interest in biosocial studies also allowed the researchers an opportunity to continue their work on human perception and the intersections of biology and society, without being undermined or discredited due to an association, however misunderstood, with a psychedelic revolution underway that had very little to do with their original investigations. In this way, some of their work survived the psychedelic era and effectively continued along a sustained path of inquiry into schizophrenia and patient autonomy. Upon reflection,

Hoffer even softened his criticisms toward their early friend and collaborator John Smythies, who had parted ways with them in the 1950s, choosing instead to criticize the adrenochrome thesis rather than maintain efforts to prove it. In Hoffer's 2005 memoirs, he indicates that in 1995 Smythies even reconsidered his position and once more advocated for their work on adrenochrome, this time well isolated from the world of psychedelics.<sup>6</sup>

Osmond supported this line of work but also continued to invest his considerable energy in hospital reforms. In Alabama he worked in a classic Kirkbride-style facility, which in many ways represented the very institution that Osmond sought to overturn. However, his structural visions and architectural redesigns were only part of his contributions; his passion remained chiefly to change attitudes toward patients. He accomplished this task in part by promoting empathy but also by working closely with staff and families to engender tolerance and understanding, stemming from an unflinching conviction that patients fared best when they had some control over their lives, whether diet, housing, social interactions, or otherwise. These values took on additional meaning as jurisdictions throughout the Western world began closing long-stay custodial institutions, or asylums, and placing psychiatric patients in the community with varying degrees of support. Osmond's devotion to treatments aimed at resurrecting, or instilling in the first place, personal responsibility and authority was even more critical during this era of deinstitutionalization and the integration of ex-patients into mainstream community settings. Osmond had always maintained that social and material factors had as much influence on mental health outcomes as any regimen of psychopharmacological solutions or professional therapeutic interactions.

At the crux of his approach lay a belief in the power of medical models of illness to help guide our understanding of how to manage madness. That is, if schizophrenia is considered a biochemical brain disorder, a person with schizophrenia bears no responsibility for the disorder and deserves to be treated humanely and not to be blamed for the disorder. Patients, he argued, have rights, as well as responsibilities, including the duty to learn about the illness, seek treatment, and try to get well. These core features of his career in Alabama flowed naturally from the earlier phase of his work in Saskatchewan, where he was specifically charged with reforming an

outmoded asylum, overcrowded with patients suffering especially from psychotic disorders. Psychedelics facilitated some of his inquiries, inspired him with new insights, and likely enlivened many conversations with an expanding network of curious participants, but those experiences fuelled his already well-developed conviction to understand human perceptions, disordered thoughts, and a history of attempts to pathologize such people. In other words, Osmond had always been curious about what constitutes authority and how some groups wield it over others. In this way, he was much more like his intellectual contemporaries who provided intellectual fodder for the post-modern turn by dismantling established theories of power, governance, and biopolitics, to name a few.

Indeed, if it were not for Osmond's overt, if misconstrued, connections to misguided psychedelic studies, his political and philosophical views may have enjoyed greater circulation. He levelled sophisticated critiques of institutions and tools of psychiatry, including classification systems and expectations that patients would perform particular roles as sick people. He felt the sick role had been defined incorrectly and used inappropriately, leading to the idea that people with schizophrenia were sick and therefore unable to fulfil their other roles in society. He redefined the sick role as being only one of the roles one plays in society, allowing for rights but also responsibilities that, if fulfilled, would lead to recovery of other roles. Osmond's views were contiguous with other important intellectual critiques that emerged during this period. For example, in 1961 sociologist Erving Goffman coined the concept of "total institution" and introduced the notion of "sick roles" within the psychiatric setting;<sup>7</sup> in 1965 Michel Foucault's disarticulation of modern society laid blame with psychiatrists and psychologists, who had played a disproportionate role in creating discourses of abnormality that became subject to discipline;<sup>8</sup> and in 1960 Thomas Szasz boldly claimed that mental illness itself was a myth, held in place by a powerful collaboration between mind scientists and a then ballooning pharmaceutical industry.<sup>9</sup> The Huxley-Osmond letters attest that they too were attuned to such critiques of modern society.

In history, as in life, timing is critical. The publication of these letters now may encourage us to rethink the history of psychedelics and to reconsider the legacy of some of the players involved in shaping the modern discourse on mind exploration as well as mind pathology. Current

scientific studies are turning back to psychedelics with fresh eyes and new energy. A new generation of investigators is beginning to lay the groundwork for asking big questions about how we define and manage human behaviour, whether it is in areas of addiction, trauma, pain, spirituality, or end-of-life care. Despite the dramatic changes in our health and expansion of pharmacare options since the mid-twentieth century, several areas of human suffering remain untouched in terms of therapeutic progress. Not only do psychedelics offer a different set of pharmaceutical options, but at the crux of psychedelic science, there is also a different conceptualization of health and its care. For example, in the area of palliative care, one of the emerging areas of interest for psychedelic therapy, easing the anxiety of dying, is not reducible to a drug regimen or a perfected clinical technique but instead relies on a delicate combination of psychological attention, pain management, and interpersonal care and reflection. In other words, our collective desire to die with dignity may require our health care system to embrace a more holistic approach to care. It is perhaps not altogether surprising that some of the potential areas for (re)introducing psychedelics are in domains that balance psychological, spiritual, and physiological care, such as the treatment of pathological conditions, including mood disorders, addictions, post-traumatic stress disorders, and end-of-life anxiety.<sup>10</sup> The unprecedented shift toward profit-based pharmaceutical care over the last half of the twentieth century significantly tilted our health care economics as well as our expectations about the kinds of chemicals we consume and their influence on our health. But critics continue to chip away at the edifice of a system that we have come to accept as normal. In this way, we might empathize with the curious and charismatic exchanges contained in the Osmond-Huxley letters as we too search for new pathways for understanding the human condition.

1 Marks, *Search for the Manchurian Candidate*. There is also a Canadian connection through psychiatrist Ewen Cameron, who received some CIA funds for LSD testing in “psychic driving” techniques used on his patients with mental disorders. Collins, *In the Sleep Room*.

2 Nutt et al., “Development of a Rational Scale.”

3 For example, see “End the Ban”; and Krebs and Johansen, “Lysergic Acid Diethylamide.”

4 Dyck, *Psychedelic Psychiatry*, 131.

5 Hoffer, *Adventures in Psychiatry*, 200.

6 *Ibid.*, 104.

7 Goffman, *Asylums*.

8 Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*.

9 Szasz, "Myth of Mental Illness." Osmond countered Szasz's theories repeatedly, such as by asking why, if mental illness was a myth, one must be a doctor to treat it. In a marginal note to coverage in the *New York Times* on 6 May 1964 of one of Szasz's presentations at a meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, Osmond wrote, "It is a sad thing that men like Szasz harm the very people the[y] are hoping to help by arrogant nit-wittery." A copy of the article with Osmond's note can be found in Abram Hoffer Collection, A207.

10 In particular, there are many publications from these research groups that are revisiting the role of psychedelics in therapy. For example, see Griffiths et al., "Mystical-Type Experiences"; Franz Vollenweider's many articles, including Vollenweider and Kometer, "Neurobiology of Psychedelic Drugs"; Tupper et al., "Psychedelic Medicine"; Mithoefer et al., "Safety and Efficacy"; and C. Grob, Danforth, and Chopra, "Pilot Study."

## Note on the Appendices

The four appendices that follow amplify the relationship between Aldous Huxley and Humphry Osmond in various ways. The first two are additional letters between Osmond and Huxley's wife, Maria, as well as between Osmond and Matthew, Ellen, and Francis Huxley. All these letters are privately held. The third contains Aldous's description of Maria's last days, as typed by Humphry's wife, Jane. The last one reproduces the sworn statement on peyote that Osmond wrote on 5 November 1955 at Huxley's request.

Humphry's relationship with Maria Huxley was a special one. Although they met on only three occasions, Humphry was a guest in the Huxleys' home in two of these instances. He and Maria clearly developed an immediate closeness, and he clearly regarded Maria as an individual, not simply as Aldous's wife. A letter Humphry wrote to his wife on 28 November 1954, during his second visit to the Huxley household, makes this clear: "Maria is a heroic person, protecting Aldous, pushing him a little, but not over much, and being the friend of a wide circle of people who can undoubtedly do with a friend such as she." The three letters between these two display a candour about Aldous and numerous other topics and show the fondness that both Huxleys immediately developed for their younger friend.

The second set of letters describes an extraordinary LSD experiment that took place on 7 November 1956. It followed a month after Humphry had participated in a Native American Church peyote ceremony in Saskatchewan, which had left a significant impression on him concerning the importance of ritual as part of the psychedelic experience. The participants were Humphry, Aldous's son, Matthew, Matthew's wife, Ellen, and Aldous's nephew Francis, son of his brother Julian. The letters describe the participants' planning, execution, and recollections/reflections regarding this remarkable experience. Ellen also offers several recommendations for future experimentation, which Humphry pledges to "endeavor to make full use of" (3 December 1956). The exchange between Humphry and Francis

indicates that for both, although more so for Francis, the experience could be regarded as a “bad trip.” Taken together, these letters provide rare insight into an informal, loosely planned LSD experiment that was aimed at achieving general enlightenment outside the purposes of psychiatric treatment. These letters also offer further testament to the interconnections between Humphry, who was later dubbed “an honorary Huxley” by Matthew and Ellen’s children,<sup>1</sup> and two generations of Huxleys, along with their persistent desire to explore the boundaries of mind science.

The third appendix contains Aldous’s touching description of Maria’s last days. The events he describes reveal the sense of spirituality Aldous had reached by this time, much of which he developed through his marriage to Maria. The copy reproduced here is based on that which Jane typed; no originals of what Aldous sent Humphry are extant.

The final appendix contains a sworn statement by Osmond on the relative harmlessness of peyote, requested by Huxley in his letter of 29 October 1955. The statement was written to help persuade legal authorities in California to be lenient on someone who was using it, and the effort was ultimately successful. Besides the statement’s content taken at face value, it also reveals the extent to which both men, and others, would go to help someone who was running afoul of the laws regarding hallucinogens. When soliciting Osmond’s help for “an unfortunate man,” Huxley admits, “I don’t know him personally, but he is a friend of a friend.” As early as 1955, both men saw themselves as leaders in a cause.

<sup>1</sup> Discussed in privately held letters between Osmond and Ellen Huxley on 27 and 30 July 1960.



APPENDIX ONE

Letters between Humphry Osmond and Maria  
Huxley, 1953–1955

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
21 July 1953*

Dear Humphry,

I am enclosing the letter of Bob Hutchins which may raise our hopes a bit, don't you think?

Also it gives me the final push towards writing to you which I have wanted to do ever since I received the adorable pictures of Helen. No wonder you were so full of her when you were here.

Aldous was a father who was not interested in his children, child, I mean. So it still astonishes me when fathers are. Since Matthew's visit I understand better though I thought *He* was unusual. Now I see all young fathers are. Then I read Mrs Humphry Ward's *Memoirs*<sup>1</sup> (reading them now) and I realize we were the exception and that parents are fond of their children in a practical way as well as in a vague way. We were probably very bad parents and Matthew is forgiving indeed not to hold it against us.<sup>2</sup>

So this is primarily thanking you for the pictures which I have on my desk which means I see them all the time. There is not one of Jane but that may come ..... I imagine her very much like Ellen, my dear daughter in law.

Of course, I am the one to read all your letters. Getting quite good at it if I do not halt and wonder what those curious hieroglyphs mean, if I analyze them I am lost. Then I begin from the beginning again and fly on. It is such a very beautiful handwriting. I enjoy it even more as the letters come. We love receiving your letters. But I hope you are not wearing yourself out.

Today Aldous is giving Gerald Heard you[r] written prospectus, or whatever it is called. I have heard [him] tell everyone how good it was but Hutchins does not say it is [in] his letter, does he? Berelson is that terrible boring academical man we talked about to you, but he is the psychological department head, that is why Hutchins has to refer it to him.

If Hutchins and Gerald Heard and Kiskadden (a surgeon who is the president of Plastic Surgeons of America) and a very good musician (Stravinsky is too old, we do not want to ask) but this young man is practically Stravinsky's adopted son<sup>3</sup> (he has one who is a musician) want to take mescal we would try and raise a little fund and privately ask you down. Then, would you still think it necessary to live around the to-be-processed person for two days? That would prolong your stay so much. Could you come?

You asked for handwritings. Will my post card to you do? It has been analyzed and I was told it was "Phantas[ti]que." Considering which I suppose I am lucky to be as practical as I am. And not madder. I did not need your mescal to have the experience. But [I had it] because of the two previous "non-induced madness moments" and one the other day, very short, and produced by the four readings aloud [of a] chapter in your novel.<sup>4</sup>

The difference between real madness and induced madness I am quite sure is that in real madness the fear is "Will it get worse? Will it *stop*?", whereas in mescal you are there to remind us, which I never forgot, that it was induced *artificially*, that there is a *time limit* and that it will not affect one permanently.

Rarely do I affirm something because of my long training at living with my betters, even when they are not my elders. But this I can affirm because I have had moments of madness which frightened me very much. One induced by the taking, at the wrong time, of Atebrin. One after seeing a disturbing play when I was very tired, then the mescal experiment in which I recognized all the qualities of the real madness and then two days ago reading and being disturbed at the time by the mad elements in your book, when I was very tired and low. This disappeared as did the Atabrin and mescal after eating and drinking strong tea. I think strengthening the body, or feeding the body cleared up that *two-way* of existing that the mescal induced.

I can write and tell you more, if you really want it. I am so bad at doing it. Also I don't want you just only to be polite and think you have to ask me. (I am quite used to Aldous's importance and like it.) Also, I know much more about what I call my Magic since you have been [here]. And there is a great difference, some similarities perhaps.

If Aldous were not so very busy working he might tell me a bit how to do it. Above all there is the almost insuperable privacy of the Magic. If you were here I probably would let you listen to the recordings and tell you more. You know how very fond we both were of you, as if we had always been. As if you were our child, but knew as much as our grandfather, though that does not sound quite right either. I don't know whether I will write it down though. Aldous wants me to do it for myself anyhow.

By the way, I believe you told me you were going to Boston sometime, or your friend John Smythies. Well, if you have time do look up Matthew. He is starting in September on a year of studies which I do not exactly know in detail but it includes some biology. He has at last landed on the job which is ideal for him, and for Aldous, maybe for all of us. Some sort of organization of medical health insurance and we all think that he will be able to push open the obstinately closed doors of medical professions once he gets older and established.

I would like to know what you think of him and I would like you to be his friend. I love Matthew. And his life has not been easy. I hope that he will recapture what is essentially his nature, a loveableness which was not as apparent in his last stay with us as it had been in his first 32 years. His wife will not be there because we are now expecting a little granddaughter and she will stay in their own flat and by her own doctor. She is a wonderful creature and so is the little boy. In New York they are at 186 Sullivan Street, N.Y. 12, in Cambridge I don't know. Matthew was granted a \$3,000 scholarship which of course is going to be just what his morale needed; all the more so as it was on the recommendation of a man who knew him in his Conservation job and nothing was due to any rope pulling except his own background. So you see, we are very happy. But, and that is I suppose natural, the after effect of it was a great fatigue. It tired me more, or at least as much, as their anxiety and strain had.

The weather is cool; the roses are small but of the colouring of that unforgettable little mescal posy which I think Aldous should paint.

Good bye for the present dear Humphry, I am sure we will meet again sometime. If all goes well we shall get a car which will be so easy to drive that it will be only "mind over matter" to control it ... but perhaps my muscles are more to be trusted than my mind. I certainly have enough practice of that. So who knows where we may drive off to. Let us know whether you in fact will be in Boston at some non-North-Pole-ish time of year.

We send you our love and we have our wishes on the success of the project to Ford's.

Sophia asks if there were any reports on those envelopes.

I typed this myself, not Onnie. Please pay me a compliment too.

Maria

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
12 August 1954*

My Dear Maria,

How good to have news of you both. I was getting afraid that someone might have lured you behind the iron curtain and that we would never see our dear Huxleys again. I am glad you are both having such a proper holiday. The nougat has come safely and is very very good, a real thorough bred. Jane is going on holiday with our friend and neighbor Peggy Clancy, Helen, the Clancy children and Brandy our Chihuahua in about a week. She plans to go to Black Hills in South Dakota. I can't go because we are budgeting and have a new T.B. block coming through. I hope to holiday in the second half of October and will, if you will have me, come south by bus, it is cheap and interesting. We are a little short of cash this year because we bought a beautiful new car and we never get rich, you once prophesied as much. I have to go to New Jersey about November 11<sup>th</sup> and plan to spend a day or two in Philadelphia before or after. Will this be convenient for you both? I wish Jane and I could holiday together, but maybe next spring when I am lecturing at the Menninger Foundation in

Topeka on the New Approach. It will be an ordeal, but fun too. I am slowly realizing that I know a little about this odd subject, but it seems so very little, a mere fragment compared with my and our ignorance.

We are planning to change this place and I believe that we shall succeed. At present I think mental hospitals as a whole are designed (quite unwittingly) to harm patients to an almost maximal extent. It is a sad thought but they are as sound psychiatrically as the operating theatres of a hundred years ago were aseptically. Operations then were frequently as dangerous as the diseases they were intended to assist and so it is with mental hospitals. It will change, it is changing, but I wish we would use our energies on it as we do in preparing destruction.

We are awaiting a supply of our new hallucinogen which I have called iachimochrome, which seems very promising. These delays are very tiresome but inevitable, but I am consumed with curiosity to know what it will do and it is a great bore waiting for it to come. We had a research meeting this week and it was most encouraging how much is going on and what lively work it is. We drove up to Saskatoon in the evening and afternoon, and came back in an evening, about 270 miles. The return journey included 40 miles on pure gumbo, prairie mud, liquid, glutinous, slithery. We made about 15 mph and managed to keep on the road. We are trying some more experiments next week with lysergic acid, we think that if it is taken with the eyes bandaged that *nothing* happens, if this is so it will be of great interest and strongly suggests that it is the imbalance between inner and outer vision which is so important.

Gerald Heard sent me an interesting book of stories, of which one "The Chapel of Ease"<sup>5</sup> ranks among the finest ghost stories I know, right up in the front rank. I want to write stories but so far only papers, reports and official letters!

I have been suggested, no more, for the professorship at the University of Chicago (Psychiatry). This is a very long shot and will I expect come to nothing, but it is fun, although in my opinion I am a most unlikely candidate. I don't know whether I can teach but I am sure that I know how to help people to learn, which may be much the same thing. But would I like Chicago and Chicago me? However it is all a mere hand size cloud on a far horizon. Let me know when you will be back in California. It will be fine to see you both again. I shall write to Aldous in London – I see that *The*

*Doors* had a long review in *Time* but I have not seen it. I hope that I may meet Julian Huxley. I entirely agree that he would be very ill advised to take mescaline.

Jane sends love and Helen also.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

*Box 1056*  
*Weyburn, Sask.*  
*8 February 1955*

My dear Maria,

Jane will be writing to you tonight suggesting that she should come down for a little when you come out of hospital. I know that she would like to come. She is an experienced nurse and I think that it would set Aldous' mind at rest. It would give time for you to decide what will be best. Jane would not fuss you or bully you. I can look after myself for a bit. The house is easy to run and we have someone who comes in. I can cook enough and with frozen foods even this is superfluous. Anyway I am on a low calorie diet.

I am sure that your first inclination will be to turn this down because it would mean a heavy load on Jane etc. I think she would love to come and help and to get away from the hospital in a legitimate way. She is also a good driver which would be help to Aldous and to you in convalescence. Naturally I would miss her and little Helen but I would feel that you had someone at hand who you could really depend on and would be happier on that account.

Please let us know as soon as you can and I will see about transportation.

You can be sure that I hope all will go as you wish. But please be sure that I have thought this over very carefully and unless you have a better arrangement I think this one should be tried.

We both send Love.

Your affectionate,  
Humphry

<sup>1</sup> Mary Augusta Ward's *A Writer's Recollections* was published in 1918.

<sup>2</sup> In a privately held letter to his wife, Jane, written on 7 November 1960, Osmond describes a conversation he had with Matthew that day: "Matthew talked rather sadly of not being able to get close to Aldous, but I suggested that no one ever does get very close to the friendly Martian. I don't see why people are always being goaded to expect and hope for the impossible. Aldous, from the moment when with long curls, a velvet suit – Fauntleroy style – and doleful voice, he told a visitor that 'I'm thinking about skin,' it should be quite clear that he wasn't too cuddly. I think Matthew was glad to find that there are many others who don't find his view of the world too odd or incongruous."

<sup>3</sup> Robert Lawson Craft; see Osmond's letter to Aldous Huxley of 22 July 1953.

<sup>4</sup> The reference to a novel in progress by Osmond is a bit mysterious. Elsewhere he discusses his attempts and desires to become a playwright, but this is the only mention of a novel.

<sup>5</sup> "The Chapel of Ease" was published in Heard's *The Lost Cavern and Other Tales of the Fantastic* (1948).

APPENDIX TWO

LSD Experience of 7 November 1956: Letters  
between Humphry Osmond and Matthew, Ellen, and  
Francis Huxley

*2 Maplewood Rd  
New Haven 15, Conn.  
7 May 1956*

Dear Dr Osmond,

I was very sorry to have missed seeing you in New York; both Aldous and his nephew Francis described the conference with great zest. I'm especially sorry since you are obviously the one person who can answer the question I have had in my mind since last summer. As Eileen Garrett said when I asked her about it, "go to the source that one knows and trusts."

Is it possible, would it ever be possible, for me and Francis and Matthew to try mescaline or lysergic acid? We all want to very much; we are very interested and very serious; we want to understand, and I know that for me, at least, I must have some concrete experience to go on. You may well ask why we should have the chance and not everybody else. Why indeed – do you need any guinea pig? You have three volunteers.

Francis will be in this country for the coming year; if within that time anything can be arranged, we would be so delighted and grateful.

Warmest regards to you, and to your wife whom I liked so much.

Affectionately,  
Ellen Huxley

---



*2 Maplewood Rd  
New Haven 15, Conn.  
1 June 1956*

Dear Humphry,

Far from thinking you rude, I was thinking I'd been abominably bumptious, and I can't tell you how pleased and touched I am by your letter. Election time sounds fine to me – Matthew and I are in New Haven for the coming year (an hour and a half from New York City), and as for Francis I know he will be in Philadelphia on September 1. After that I don't know, but I'm sure he will streak half-way across the country to take part in such an experiment. At present he is streaking toward Mexico but I shall catch him at Aldous's and tell him the good news.

A treatment for early schizophrenia is the most exciting news I've heard yet – Matthew will be fascinated. This seems to me much more important, if one can speak of these things relatively (and I'm not sure one should!), than a cure for cancer or the common cold. Of course Eileen Garrett has very interesting theories about cancers, as I'm sure you know ... but the idea of cancer being a disease of frustration, and cancer cells making an effort sometimes to replace what they destroy, and her cure of the mouse by tender loving care, were startling and thought-provoking to me.

As for your new type of mental ward, I'll check with Matthew and Francis and failing that will look up Carpenter<sup>1</sup> myself. I remember Jane's description of the old-type wards, which was horrific, and I've seen a bit of Bellevue, Islip and Mayview (Pittsburgh) which made me feel that things couldn't have been more wrong.

Aldous seemed in excellent shape, I thought. He did catch a cold in Washington and consequently cancelled a lot of engagements, but nothing serious. I too liked Laura, enormously. Matthew and I had planned to go out to see them this summer, but Matthew's office is in a state of confusion so we are postponing until Christmas.

I spend my days looking for a house to rent for the fall, looking for another film job in a lazy sort of way, and reading around about Zen (tell Jane there is nothing like a Zen haiku to liven up a dull day!).

Warm thanks and great affection,  
Ellen

P.S. Having snatched your letter out of Ellen's hands before she sent it off to Francis, I am able to have a little more exact description than over the telephone! PLEASE, would you be so kind as to send me the journal name, volume, page and date of the issue carrying your paper? Our office is *very* much interested.

P.P.S. While TLC as a "cure" for cancer, as Eileen Garrett calls it, seems rather dubious, a little of the old "healing" – "laying on of hands," might be a better – if equally unsatisfactory – explanation. Personally, I'm much more interested in the recent German cell respiration theory which you undoubtedly have come across.

Best,  
Matthew

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
22 June 1956*

My dear Ellen and Matthew,

Thank you so much for your joint letter. I hope you can read my special short hand. I feel that it is very legible and everyone else agrees.

Of course I am much flattered by your interest and enthusiasm. I find it very fascinating but am always glad when others do too.

The niacin paper goes for publication in a couple of weeks to the *Journal of Clinical and [Experimental] Psychopathology*.<sup>2</sup> The figures are most encouraging. In the treated group *eight* have now been in mental hospitals, none are in at present, none suicided from a total of 72. Of the untreated 48 in hospital, four suicided, six currently in hospital. Treated group averaged 200 days in hospital for eight admissions. Untreated about 300 days for 80 admissions. It appears that so far *70 years* of hospital care

has been saved. Our experiment continues and we hope to expand it. Does Matthew have anyone keen on acute alcoholic psychoses? We have a very interesting, cheap and safe treatment scheme which we want to see tested. We don't get enough here to work it out on. Our impression is that this is very efficient and can be life saving, but we have had too very few to try it on. Can you find someone and get them to contact us? I hope to be able to visit you this fall but will let you know.

I could not go down to L.A. for the June meeting, a great disappointment, but we were having elections here and the government were a bit shaky about such jaunts because of their fear of criticism. However, they are over now and we have the evil that we know still with us – far preferable to an unknown evil!

The attack on schizophrenia progresses and evidence accumulates which suggests that we are dealing with an oddity of adrenalin metabolism – just what sort of oddity remains to be seen, but our mysterious M-substance seems to be slowly edging into the lime light. It is elusive stuff, but I think that we may run it to earth.

Abram Hoffer might be able to send a preview of the niacin paper to anyone who was interested in it.

Hope that all goes well with you both and the family. We had 1.8 inches of rain last night, but no grave damage done.

Yours ever,  
Humphry

---

*2 Maplewood Rd  
New Haven 15, Conn.  
2 July 1956*

Dear Humphry,

*How* nice it was to get your letter, and your papers. Your shorthand is very readable and quite fascinating! I managed to read the lecture on psychotomimetics before Matthew whisked the lot off to the office – what a pleasure to read about something so complicated in such simple,

uncomplicated language. Francis had told me that yours was by far the most interesting talk and that all the people after you had to apologize for not being Osmonds. And now I'm more than ever eager for November.

Julian Huxley has just been here for the weekend; he also read the talk, and was entranced, and begged a copy. We refused to give ours up, so if you have an extra for him, he would be so pleased.

All well here, finally found a house to live in for the coming winter ... perfectly lovely, country place, lots of field and stream and woodland, plus nearby playmates for the children and a not too difficult commute for Matthew. We are very lucky.

The children and I are off July 16 for a holiday with Aldous and Laura, and I'm only sorry that Matthew's work makes it impossible for him to go.

Much love to you and Jane,  
Ellen

---

*2 Maplewood Rd  
New Haven 15, Conn.  
4 July 1956*

Dear Humphry,

Many thanks for your note and enclosures. (However, I think I'd better spell *my* letter out since I don't have your admirably legible script!)

A. Business first: Our office has got in touch with a David Lester<sup>3</sup> (PhD?), Research Associate in Applied Psychology.

Reason: First, he's the chap who is responsible for the pharmacological aspects of the Yale Center for Alcohol Studies (52 Hillhouse Avenue, New Haven). Second, Primarily responsible for evaluating present studies. Third, One of the main (behind-the-scenes) driving forces in the field (especially in Connecticut State Alcohol Commission). Fourth, He heard you give your paper, and so he already knows who you are (he thought it, by the way, as being by far the best paper at the meeting).

I believe he intends to write to you directly. However, if within the next week no letter has fluttered upon your desk from him, you had better write

him, indicating that you got his name from Jonas N. Muller, MD<sup>4</sup> (at Public Health Department of Yale Medical School). Muller is my immediate boss, and asks as a consultant's fee that he receive a copy of your (mimeographed) paper!

B. In regard to your paper (mimeographed): Do you happen to have any to spare? Dr Muller would like a copy (though he'll gladly wait until it's been printed) and my uncle Julian wanted *my* only copy. Also, I think a copy should be in our Subcommittee's files – especially for the bibliography. However, if you are short at the moment, reprints of the printed version when it appears will satisfy all and sundry.

With all best – if overheated – wishes,  
Matthew

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
6 July 1956*

Dear Ellen and Matthew,

Many thanks for your letter. I am glad you enjoyed the psychotomimetic paper.<sup>5</sup> I could not write it and had it in all sorts of bits and pieces which weren't getting anywhere. Took some LSD-25 with the Captain and it wrote itself. The bits just came together. I suppose they might have done so anyway, but my feeling was that I *knew* what to write then and what would convey the necessary information combined with feeling, a point of view. I think that "It" succeeded.

I am sending a copy for Julian Huxley and was naturally much flattered that he enjoyed it, as I have many of his essays. I am also sending him a copy of "Inspiration and Method"<sup>6</sup> which I wrote earlier and deals with our own work rather more than with more general matters. I am sending you a little paper which deals with the contracted writing and a sheet for Francis. I would like his views – does he know about Carpenter's Formula? He is an anthropologist isn't he?

Jane and I hope to be in Vancouver soon and to see Aldous there early in August. I don't quite know what we are going to do together, but the television people seem interested. Of course they should be because these matters are so very important.

New work in print now shows that adrenochrome does produce marked changes in schizophrenic people too, both psychologically and EEG-ly. Encouraging. Work from USSR suggests that adrenochrome occurs in animals poisoned by oxygen. This could account for the peculiar similarities of mental states produced in very different ways – possibly due to a number of stresses, adrenochrome etc. is made instead of adrenalin.

We are hard at work reorganizing our nursing curriculum and in the interval we are having a go at the registered nurses – a paper called “In Defence of Nursing”<sup>7</sup> uses quotes from Florence Nightingale to ginger up the panjandrams of nursing, who are very keen to make laboratory rather than bedside nurses. We don't believe in laboratory nurses. Who wants to be nursed by a half-trained lab tech?

Clothing for patients is another big project as well as refurnishing the place.

At last I think we are attracting doctors and should do more of this in the future. Oddly our greatest difficulty at present is being sure of our research money. Mind you I'm sure we will get it, but so meagre is the outlook of our Federal government that instead of cherishing their scientists they feel we should “prove ourselves.” Of course we can now probably “prove” ourselves almost anywhere we like. It is annoying. However if Julian H. comes across Keenleyside of Social Aid (?) at WHO he might put in a word for us.

Love to Aldous and Laura – Jane sends good wishes.

Ever,  
Humphry

P.S. Our research fund situation is serious, for our support is uncertain. Anything J. could say, if he feels like saying it, could be vastly helpful.

---

*2 Maplewood Rd  
New Haven 15, Conn.  
15 July 1956*

Dear Humphry,

We continue to be in your debt for fascinating reading material. I am sending Julian's on to him – he is at the Marine Biology Lab in Woods Hole, for seven weeks or so. As for Francis, first I have to find him; last heard from at Aldous's, and is presently somewhere in Mexico.

I took care to read the Carpenter's Formula page myself; do you have any theories about these groups with regard to age? Having been deeply involved in running a co-op nursery school all winter, this strikes me as worth looking into. We ran our four-year-olds as a group of 25 (financial necessity), and the teachers felt it a strain. The three's just couldn't take more than 15, with 7–10 a much preferred number. Of course this ties in with the children learning how to deal with others, and groups, but this is also what mad people have to re-learn, isn't it?

Thank you so much for "Notes on Note-taking."<sup>8</sup> I certainly don't write 1,500 words a day, but many a letter lies unanswered for lack of time – I shall look up Mr Stowe<sup>9</sup> without delay. Gowers<sup>10</sup> too ... which reminds me of Ben Hecht's statement in his rather tiresome autobiography,<sup>11</sup> to the effect that nobody should write in such a way that the word "shit" cannot be used in any sentence. Rather strong, but anyone who has read a few PhD theses will agree.

"On Being Mad"<sup>12</sup> is very impressive. It seems to me it should be required reading not only for hospital staffs but also for relatives of patients; [—] has just been returned to her parents' custody after three years in Central Islip Hospital, and I don't think they have any idea of what attitude to take except forget it, don't talk about it, etc.

The children and I are off on Tuesday to join Aldous, and if you and Jane come down in early August we shall certainly see you. I look forward to that very much.

Affectionately,  
Ellen

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
17 July 1956*

Dear Ellen,

I am sending this on to L.A. So far as I know Aldous will be in Vancouver for a few days on our TV show. I fear we won't make L.A. but you never know!

Carpenter's Formula is odd. We have done some more work on it and it seems even odder. It appears that there are four main sorts of groups which have very different characteristics which have never yet been looked at closely. Groups of two and three people (the latter an unstable group usually with an inherent tendency to break down to a two group. Groups of 4-7 in which the group is getting more and more of a group. Groups of 8-11 in which the group predominates and gives support and comfort to its members, but also moulds them to its norms. 11-13 and up in which the group disintegrates. It becomes vastly complicated (much more so than even Carpenter's Formula suggests) so that in spite of the anxiety which is occasioned by group fission it becomes far more comfortable to fission!

I agree about small children. They cannot cope with large numbers because they have not learnt how to. Gessell<sup>13</sup> has shown this experimentally.

I have found the short longhand very useful. It allows me to do the rewriting which I find so necessary, without too much sweating.

I enjoyed writing "On Being Mad." We do need to understand that mentally ill people have plenty to endure without our adding to it. With a little effort many of us can recognize that their life is hard and very complicated so that we must try to learn something about it. I hope your cousin won't find it too hard.

We are preparing for our journey through the mountains - by train. Less heroic, but we want to see the Rockies without going over a precipice while we are gaping.



Hope that somehow we shall see you. Love to Aldous and Laura. Jane sends good wishes.

Affectionately,  
Humphry

---

*740 N. Kings Rd  
Los Angeles 46, Cal.  
12 August 1956*

Dear Humphry,

Thank you for your note, which it seems to have taken me a month to answer. Life here has been hectic – I and the children living at Kings Road, Laura and Aldous at their hilltop home – immense distances to drive, and the complications of opening and furnishing their house while I close and dismantle *this* one. Much of the contents I am shipping home to New Haven – very pleasant as we had expected to sit on the floor for some time there, for lack of chairs.

Long letter from Francis who is in Vera Cruz – too hot to be serious he says, but re: Carpenter – depends on whether group is looking “in or out.” And that some groups are groups only because they have a centre, when interpersonal relationships are considerably reduced. He said a bit more – I quote him out of context – but shall catch him in a temperate climate soon and then we shall see.

So sorry not to see you here, but hope for November.

Love to you and Jane,  
Ellen

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
16 August 1956*

Dear Matthew and Ellen,

I am in debt letters to you both. I am sorry. Holidays and then running around after them. *First* I have belatedly written to Dr Lester expressing apologies and I hope making up for my sluggishness. But it allowed me to see some of Captain Al Hubbard's remarkable work in Vancouver. I do not doubt that used by him LSD and mescaline have great possibilities in alcoholism. But will this be transferred to other users? This remains to be seen. Much depends on the therapist knowing how to use LSD, not only on others but on himself.

I wish we had been able to get down to California. We had a wonderful time on Al Hubbard's island off Vancouver Island. One of the loveliest places I have ever seen. Sea, mountains, a 15 acre island with every modern convenience including its own sea plane and radio telephone. Its own oysters, clams, crab and fine salmon.

I shall look forward to seeing the hilltop eyrie (I suppose that is the word I suppose it is) in Hollywood. It sounds wonderful. But I shall miss 740 North Kings Road much. I shall do my best to visit you in November but daren't make any firm promises because my affairs get so mucked up when I do. I hope to have Carpenter's Formula ready soon and think that I can meet Francis's objections. It will be a fairly lively paper, though after two weeks very hard at it I'd gladly see it in the dust bin. Only I'd have to write it all again. Aldous seems to have been very busy with his fascinating hypnosis paper. He must publish those essays in book form soon.

Am busy in various directions. New clothing programs for patients. New buildings – and above all a new sort of social organization. We are also mobilizing as many different groups as possible to pressure our government. A new schizophrenia paper on the stocks and another one on hospital ward design. Great fun but I wish I had time for the plays I want to write, but so far I have not. One day – but when will that be?

We have various exciting projects for raising research funds. I love getting money and shall not be content till we have millions – but let us hope that we not exchange being bankrupt with ideas to being flush with cash but bankrupt of ideas. It can happen. I must go back to my budgeting.

I think we can show fairly conclusively that schizophrenia is an organic disease. I had an extraordinary letter from a man in England who arose

suspicion in his date, 11 August 1956 (?). Among other odd information he suggested that surprise or disgust at coprophagia was a Victorian prejudice – feces tasting like Limberg cheese. I shall believe him and avoid Limberg.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Sanford Rd  
Woodbridge, Conn.  
26 September 1956*

Dear Humphry,

We are to be found in a morass of cartons, barrels, lumber, curtain material, etc. A very hectic move, made entirely by hand, but hope to be settled in another couple of weeks. A charming house, very much a barn even now (including smell). Lots of land and children in seventh heaven over snakes, caterpillars, frogs, newts, and the like.

Francis came up a week ago and is expected again at any moment. His Mexican trip a wild success, and wants to return to work with some Indians he found. Told him you said you could meet his objections re: Carpenter, and he grinned happily and said, “Of *course* he can!” He too is dying to try LSD or mescaline, and we refuse to consider the possibility of your November trip falling through.

Aldous and Laura are coming late October for a meeting of (Laura says druggists) I don’t know what – Aldous will speak. Perhaps we can coax them to stay over.

Hope all goes well with you and that you find time for the play. We have been going madly to the theatre here, and the world could certainly use some good plays.

Much love,  
Ellen

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
11 October 1956*

My dear Ellen,

My plans are crystalising and if all goes well I can squeeze in 24 hours with you. I would plan to arrive after midday Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, and be off p.m. 8<sup>th</sup>. It should be more, but I have a fairly tough schedule. Abram Hoffer and I are doing some foundation soliciting before I go to GAP and we must take 2½ days at it. We need much money. I suggest that if we can get the children to bed we hold a night session with LSD.

I think that you would find this fascinating as an introduction. My impression is that group experience is likely to be more suitable as an introduction to psychedelics than our sanitary, solitary lab type expeditions. I am possibly biased because last weekend I took part in a meeting of the Native American Church of Canada (peyotist) and am still trying to absorb and rationalize what happened. It is hard for a middle-aged medical gent to find himself carried into a world of epic poetry, of virtuoso drumming, of ways wholly foreign to his ... nature.<sup>14</sup> But in five years I have gradually been forced to overhaul the commonsense world. The great simplifying psychologists like Freud and Adler have much to be said for them except that they are wrong. Jung is on the right track simply because he has observed more widely and has not been overawed by common sense, i.e. he has followed the rough road of the unwilling physicists. We are now pushing ahead from Jung's base leaving common sense far behind and yet looking back uneasily. In a few years we will not be quite so apologetically concerned and will accept what seems to be the fact that a wholly new sort of methodology must be constructed. It is fun but a bit nerve wracking to find oneself involved in questions of scientific method which had seemed wholly academic.

Good news from Sweden, a chemical test for schizophrenia is on the way and we have a skin test which we are now refining. We also believe that we have got around one major difficulty with adrenolutin and have found how to administer it.

Hope to turn my night vigil into a play – it has the stuff of it. But for the moment must do my GAP homework, “The Provision of the Administrative Environment.” We are having a grand fight with Ma[nfred] Bleuler, pompous son of the great Eugen, inventor of schizophrenia. We have moved in with a series of short arm punches which should shake him. Silly fellow doesn’t know the literature, bad for one who wishes to set himself up as the authority. Let me know if this will be ok and how to get to Woodbridge.

Love to Matthew and Francis.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Sanford Rd  
Woodbridge, Conn.  
17 October 1956*

My dear Humphry,

*What* wonderful news. I am already so excited. I don’t know how I shall bear it until November 7<sup>th</sup>. This is a very good time for us, and I am about to write Francis at Chicago, whose last words were “If Dr Osmond comes I’ll be there like a rocket.” Is that enough of a group? If you’d like more I could ask my brother Chris who is a neuro-anatomist in New Jersey. That is up to you of course.

I assume you will take a train to New Haven – the simplest arrangement will be for me to pick you up at the station, as we are rather difficult to find.

Notwithstanding the experiment, we are dying to see *you* and hear in more detail about the activities and ideas you sketch so briefly in your letters. Asked my MD if he used shorthand and he was quite insulted and said, “I like to think of this as my handwriting!”

We [are] off to New York tomorrow to hear Aldous at the Academy of Science meeting on Meproamate. Aldous and Laura here for the weekend, also Eileen. Frantically busy, but really can’t think of anything but November.

Much love,  
Ellen

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
27 October 1956*

My dear Ellen,

Just a line to bring you up to date with my movements and plans which are complicated. I shall reach New York (Hotel Buckingham) 4<sup>th</sup> November and will leave there to come to you on 7<sup>th</sup> about mid afternoon. Can you send me a postcard to Buckingham with directions? My suggestion is that as soon as the children are abed we start our experiment. This would mean that it would be best not to have an evening meal. I think four should be the maximum group, that is three others, presumably you, Matthew and Francis. We could do with some source of music, possibly poetry and pictures, but these adjuncts are usually not very necessary. We shall have to work out some objectives and have some way of getting back to here and now if anyone finds himself out of depth. That can easily be provided by some niacinamide (which I shall provide) and sugary lemon which I shall leave to you. I suggest that notebooks may be useful, but they can sometimes be a nuisance. I shall bring the LSD. It is the handiest and less nasty to take than mescaline. Peyote is tiresomely leathery. I doubt whether there is much to chase.

You had better decide where we should aim our exploration – past, present, future, ourselves, other people, the Other, aesthetic experience. I am against expeditions into the immediate future. I believe they are, I think, perfectly possible, but quite outside our cultural framework. We might find it uncomfortable. Anyway talk it over with Matthew.

Now about my movements after Woodbridge. I must be in Princeton by about 18:00 on the 8<sup>th</sup> as I have a lecture to give that night before proceeding to GAP. I feel badly about rushing things like this, but we aren't

exactly strangers and my experience with the Indians has made me much more aware of the integrative possibilities of psychedelics.

Meanwhile since I last wrote we have opened a new chapter – for four hours ten days I thought it was my last one and I could not even write about it. We have picked up some very odd adrenalin derivatives which may be the missing piece of our jigsaw. I ran blind into one, not guessing that it might have wholly different properties from what we had expected. So while I was congratulating myself on it having no adrenalin-like qualities it sloshed me exactly the opposite. Anyway we know now and I suppose these are trade risks. It is interesting that Eileen is always emphasizing the importance of the adrenals. She is right.

If you want to get in touch with me the Buckingham Hotel will find me. In Chicago I shall be at the Morrison Hotel from 2<sup>nd</sup> November to 4<sup>th</sup>. Look forward to seeing you.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Sanford Rd  
Woodbridge, Conn.  
2 November 1956*

My dear Humphry,

I, too, am sorry that your visit must be such a brief one, but on the other hand it's miraculous that you are coming at all – I'm so pleased and so grateful and so excited, and I shall do my best to set the stage properly. Music, poetry, pictures, we have; sugary lemon is easy, I won't let the children rest, so they will go to sleep early; and I shall have a high tea available instead of dinner.

There will be only the four of us. Francis will have gotten in touch with you in Chicago, as I just spoke to him on the phone. I can meet either of the two trains I mentioned to him, or Matthew can – it's pretty impossible to get out here by any other method. I enclose a map of Woodbridge on the off chance you are not coming by train; our telephone is FU 7-7614.

As to objectives, I feel we should each have a vote and that you should have the final decision. Personally the future doesn't interest me, at least for the present ... knowing nothing about the past, myself, anyone else, or aesthetics, I have enough on my hands. So I vote for aesthetic experience, though I'd be perfectly happy with any of the others. There's only one remark I'd like to make, to you – that in dealing with “ourselves,” that we might very quickly go out of our depth; that Huxley *children* are highly strung characters with complex problems (so are their relations!). Knowing as little about LSD as I do, I would hate to cause earthquakes without the possibility of a clean-up campaign. Not that it wouldn't be fascinating and worthwhile – I've always thought that a study of the Huxleys would beat one of the Jukes family all hollow.<sup>15</sup>

Much love ... *how* I'm looking forward to this!

Ellen

---

*The Berkeley Carteret Hotel  
Asbury Park, N.J.  
10 November 1956*

My dear Jukes family, Ellen, Matthew and Francis,

Since I left you I have had a strong sense of loss, a wish to see you all again, resembling very much my feelings when I left my ship in April 1944 for a shore job, such is the intensity and strangeness of the long wild journey which we took. I am sorry that I was not a bit more careful of you all and did not have my stock of niacin on hand in larger quantities. I shall remember that another time. I suspect that in some strange way the group intensifies the experience. Also I feel that some framework is needed and some ceremony should be worked out that would mark the passing of the hours and centuries and allow the group to maintain its cohesion steadily. That is one of the penalties of rushing in and rushing out. Yet I found it a splendidly worthwhile expedition and hope that you, looking back on it, are as glad as I am about it. All sorts of new questions have come up which will



now have to be answered or at least some attempt at answer will have to be made.<sup>16</sup>

After I left you I made good speed to Princeton and my lecture went well. They were friendly and appreciative. I did not tell them of my journey with you the night before, though it would have been interesting to see how the communication would have affected them. "I am glad to report that we did not destroy the universe!" I have been here for the last two days working on my committee which deals with hospitals and their administration. We have been picking a report I wrote to bits and pulling it together again. In the intervals I have been thinking about you all and wondering how one could put even something into words about that remarkable night. It cannot be easy. I think Matthew is right that we can see, when we want to, that certain things are recorded – but this will have to be done so as not to hamper spontaneity and as we discussed it would not be easy having people peering in and getting anxious. But I shall look forward to getting your ideas on this.

I think we have and indeed we did produce a situation in which group feeling can be hugely increased and in which great anxiety can be tolerated and absorbed. I was much interested in my perceiving Francis as being in danger and your perceiving me. It raises some very odd questions. We must try to develop those empathic aspects, one can see extraordinary developments not very far away.

Not long after writing that I felt that I must ring you up because it would be so pleasant to hear your voices and am glad that I did so.

I think we have a psycho-social instrument here which could be of great benefit in producing integration at a very high level which may then persist. What is so very interesting is that the critical, urgent and in some ways frightening aspect of our expedition did not in the least reduce its beauty, poignancy and value. I don't think that I would have expected that, although looked at from one's experience of life this is what happens – hardship and terror don't make people like each other any less, rather the reverse.

Clearly all sorts of experiments would be possible using a group of this sort, but my guess is that more valuable would be initially an exploration of experience, done in some sort of fairly systemic way. Yet perhaps this is too early and we shall just have to look around a bit more and see how things stand before trying to impose on things about which we know so very little.

My impression is that the stuff is more powerful in the group than when given singly – and this too will need enquiry.

I am not very surprised that you felt a bit shaken up on Thursday and Friday. I was, though quite able to take part in my committee work and see my contribution being harshly chewed up by my colleagues, oddly detached from them. My thoughts being back with you in Woodbridge. What did it mean? What does it mean? What can it mean? There is this immense involvement in each other which develops so quickly – and is clearly like being in love to the N<sup>th</sup>. In the other person one sees and feels oneself. Clearly in some circles this might be frightening or unpleasant, but in this it was a recognition that we were and are not island universes, that we are not and need not be separate, that our separateness is the delusion and not the other way around. The four group seems to increase this more than the two group. I *think* also that it copes better with anxiety. I don't think a two group would have been nearly as successful in coping with our crisis.<sup>17</sup>

I suppose I miss that extraordinary world or worlds. Yet the knowledge that it is there, only a few gamma around the corner, is very reassuring and that in a way we are not only part of it but are it. No wonder the Zen philosophers faced with the extraordinary task of constructing a language to describe it fell back on nonsense syllables in the belief, I suppose, that they could not be more misleading than much learned twaddle. I look forward to hearing from you. Hope Francis will send me his address. I shall do my best to find something interesting for him. I enclose a carbon for him if he is not with you.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Sanford Rd  
Woodbridge, Conn.  
13 November 1956*

My dear Humphry,

How very nice to have your letter, especially since I am alone (Matthew not yet back, Francis gone since Sunday evening). I still have the very strong impression that we four are the only people who really exist – one can be polite to others, and so forth, but they are as seen from a distance. Julian and Juliette were here Saturday and Sunday, and we told them all we could; they were extremely interested. But they were obviously nonplussed by Francis and me, and I do believe felt quite shut out – as who would not when in the middle of an ordinary conversation a single word would make us roar with laughter or go into a brown study. I'm sure Juliette thought we were living together ... as indeed we were, living *together*. And missing you, and I for one wondering what Matthew was feeling. Having him drop out of sight is I think one of the mistakes we made; not that it could be avoided at this time, but it seems to me that the entire group should stay together during the period of “coming out”; that Matthew should not have gone to bed, that he should have been along on the walk, and later up into the hills with us. It is not only the collaborative experience but the collective sharing and interpretation ... this part is as vivid and important to me as the “wild journey” itself.

I have written some sort of account of all this to Aldous, and shall send the same on to Weyburn, but with some additions and changes which have since occurred to me. And keep on occurring all the time.

Francis's address is: Room 556, International House, 1414 East 59<sup>th</sup> St, Chicago 37, Illinois. I am sending your carbon on to him. He is writing volumes of the most fascinating and sensitive stuff – how glad I am to be even a little bit of a Jukes, so I can watch the others use their remarkable noggins!

Bless you and thank you always.

Ellen

---

*556 International House  
1414 East 59<sup>th</sup> St  
Chicago, Ill.*<sup>18</sup>

My dear Humphry,

When I left New Haven and arrived here in Chicago, I got just the feeling you did, and so telephoned Ellen – since I don't know where you are – to hear her voice and to talk with one of us.

It is all very strange, and though I have a continued temptation to rationalize our experience into familiar terms, I remember how St Francis answered a monk who wanted to know whether a little latitude wasn't allowed in interpreting the Rules – “No,” he said, “you must obey them literally, literally, literally, without gloss, without gloss, without gloss.” And now that I am trying to write out an account of that night, I find that I am always thinking, in the end, of basic religious truths, and that nothing less will serve.

This is extraordinarily exciting, as well as embarrassing, because religion, after all, is full of four letter words – even the original unspeakable name itself. I myself am more grateful to you and the others than I can say. That one night was a complete life in which I saw the beginning and the end of things – and, more important really, saw that we are one another in some indescribable manner, as you say in your letter. The only way to make sense of this is to hold it as being literally true, I am certain. It is a mouthful that will take us all some chewing.

Are you writing something down? I have got most of my memory of it down on paper, but it reads tame and stodgy and flabby. I know this doesn't really matter much, but still, it would be nice to be able to speak out the original freshness of it.

I am amazed, as I write, at the complexity of the experience, and how the accidents, so to speak, were as important to it as the purposes of the group. That is why I, for one, think that if you had had “better” safeguards that night we would not have learnt what we did.

It is amazing how the group helps itself – it really does construct a telos or purpose, if given time and of course love. What would have happened had there been no love that night? I do not like to think. And do you know why you began to repeat “together, together”? It turned out to be, I think, the unique and necessary word for us.

It will be interesting to make some ritual to protect the group from becoming separated – or just staying separated – or from becoming

frightened and wild. And if you are to use LSD to explore the mind further, we will have to use such books as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*<sup>19</sup> – or the Egyptian, or the Aztec one – which in fact leads the soul on its journey through the other world. (I think certain phases of LSD experience must be very like being “dead” as the Tibetans understand it.) And then, of course, there is a great mass of shamanistic experience to be used somehow. Not to mention John Custance and Beers and what they have to say of Wisdom, Madness and Folly.<sup>20</sup> Ah, what fascinating work is to be done!

I will let you have what I have written as soon as I type it clean – there’s rather a lot of it, since I needed to write it all down for my own benefit. What a difference a few drops of LSD make! I know something now, of enormous importance, which is not at all the same as merely suspecting its existence. It is all miraculously puzzling.

Ever,  
Francis

And what was the name of the third dog?

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
(on my way home from L.A.)  
19 November 1956*

My dear Matthew and Ellen,

Thank you so much for Ellen’s letter of the 13<sup>th</sup> which I was most glad to get.

As time passes (and does it really pass?) my feeling about that strange night became clearer, though who can tell whether those are mere rationalizations. It was I think immensely valuable but for a short period very dangerous. I think we shifted into an area where *time and feeling* are closely interwoven. Time became not as it usually and biologically properly is, something that flows and carries us along, but something that grows and which we could at that point direct (if we but knew how). This I think was

the danger which I perceived. Now is that nonsense? I suppose exactly speaking that is just what it is, nonsense. An experience which is usually never sensed and therefore has no existence. At that point our experience was ceasing to be an aesthetic one and therefore had to be brought back to its original purpose.

Thanks to Matthew's resource and our joint effort we succeeded and in my view gained some very rich treasure. Experiments (the word is not quite right) of this sort have been done to some extent before, but so far as I can make out no concerted thinking has ever gone into them later on. The people concerned have kept mostly, though not wholly, inside their island universes.

The rich treasure is of several varieties. First we have the possibility of greatly enhancing empathy, which is presumably *caritas*, the deepest, most enduring, most powerful and beautiful of human feelings, whose usual expression in our culture is through *eros*. I suppose that deprived of empathy we are bound to make much of sexual love because we know no other. Freud's astonishing suggestion that *caritas is eros* shows how muddled we had become.

Then we have the possibility that we may, may be able to share feelings and thoughts to a much higher degree than we do now. Following this comes the exploration of the universe in every direction. Perhaps in the end, a long way off, we may become able to explore time, though for the moment it seems a very tricky business and perhaps we should do no more than learn enough of its nature to make our time more endurable.

Of course we made mistakes. We should have had a clearer group structure as the Indians have discovered. I don't think we should have been so tired and I should have had my niacin more readily at hand. When I say we, I mean me, but it seems the same. We should not have been harried by "our time." Yet had we waited for those ideal conditions they might never have come about and for me that would have been a very great loss.

Aldous was very much interested, though I think that he found my account rather vague and unsatisfying. As always he listened with great attention, and one could see the great intelligence trying to sift out wheat from chaff. I feel that he is like some devoted bird watcher – or like Lorenz<sup>21</sup> who became an imprinted mother goose. To us geese he is a goose too, but the trouble is, he ain't. But he is enormously keen and willing to be

a goose so far as he is able and he is so very much more articulate than us poor geese and can put into words things that we could not possibly say.

Aldous looks and seems well. He is working hard on the musical comedy *Brave New World* which is splendid. Gay, colorful, lively, and naughty – satire but not too sharp for a large audience. If he can only get a good lyric writer (composer) it should be a very long time on Broadway. Gerald told me an interesting thing – apparently why atomic energy does not appear in *Brave New World* is that all the physicists of the day were convinced that nothing would ever come of it. So much so that they convinced everyone else that this was so. Gerald on the BBC Science Section was told that it must not be mentioned simply because it would show him up as being just a bit of a charlatan! Aldous likes his eagle eyrie. He likes the stillness for working, the lack of smog, and the wonderful night view of L.A. It has disadvantages, particularly being so far from Gerald, but my impression is that in the circumstances the move was a sound one. He was keen to know how you all were and we spent many hours together. Some of the most enjoyable being on a visit to Ohrbach's where I did some good buying for Jane aided by Aldous. Our taste in shops is similar, we like those on the grand scale. My last visit there was with Maria and I almost expected her to emerge with some treasure at any moment.

I have spent the last week in potential discomfort which has been evaded due to the kindness of Gerald and William Forthman. My bag was lost by American Airlines and the brutes have not yet found it. Luckily they lent me clothes and all my most essential notes were with me. But razorless, spongeless and detergentless one feels very lost. I hope that they will find it soon.

The Zen book is excellent. The masters knew what they were up to. Yet I believe that we can find a language more apt than theirs.

My four lectures over, I feel that our New Approach to Schizophrenia has no rivals in the field – it may still topple over at a fence all the same, but there don't seem to be any other horses. The Freudians are not running only making pretense. It is too easy to smack them down. Abram Hoffer is now pushing very quickly ahead – briefly there is conclusive evidence of an overactive enzyme system in schizophrenia (this probably means that another one is underactive). Once we can check this we can block the

overactive and gin up the underactive. If that is done I believe the illness as we know it will be a thing of the past.

With very great luck this may take three to five years, with ill luck 10 to 15, but I think that provided we don't atomize ourselves we should break this monster. Yet who is mad, we or the madmen? That is another matter and perhaps we shall only become sane through the psychedelics. We shall become mad to end madness. Almost a Zen idea.

I have a new idea (I think) on literary criticism. Novelists divide up in many ways but surely the most useful is into those who can evoke tears and those who cannot – must expand this one day.

The Pacific lies below in the sunshine, the deep blue and bronzy yellow of well tempered steel. Hope all goes well with you all.

Love,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
21 November 1956*

My dear Francis,

How very good to hear from you. I am now less lonely, but still very much aware of that extraordinary oneness. I drove through Connecticut close to Woodbridge on the following Sunday, going north of Boston, and had a great inclination to get my colleagues to drop me off and phone you, but time present held me. Although I feel that I made some quite reprehensible technical errors I am not sorry because by God's grace we came out in good order together, but I feel with the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo that it was a damn close run thing.<sup>22</sup>

What I believe happened was roughly this – up til about 23:00 we had kept our expedition inside its determined limits, but when we stopped the music we removed almost the only formal structure, and this was in one way a mistake but in another an opportunity. It simply depends how you look at it. I suppose Jesus was right, by their fruits ye shall know them,<sup>23</sup>



and the fruits are good. However that was the point when the group should have been held together by another form or structure. We drifted apart and so were able to make use of the splendidest of formal structures – love. But that would only work when something else had beaten us to our knees.

We either had to keep the experience under control, or be in grave danger of being controlled by it, and that is dangerous – like an atom but I think much more formidable. In some odd way I found myself moving into a place where time is made – now this is no place to go into unprepared and we were not prepared. We were physically tired, and in each of us there were unresolved conflicts which in that great furnace could catch fire and destroy us in a dozen ways. In these circumstances the great vital centers of the brain are hugely vulnerable and rage and hatred may storm forth. I became immediately aware of those potentials and knew that we had not very long to go before we ran into them. I perceived the deadline as being midnight. Retrospectively I was certainly right. But that sounds self-satisfied, for it was not me who got us out but us. Did I simply panic and expose you to unnecessary discomfort? That cannot be answered in terms of this biological time in which I write now, but it can be answered in terms of that other time, I think. In some curious manner we were in a position for an eternal moment to enter the cataract of time and then we had to get out of it. It seemed to me that every sort of peril faced us and they could only be evaded by making an astounding effort. It was at this point that in some way that I do not recall I asked Matthew to get my bag, the sugar and niacin. I perceived the main danger being yours – Ellen and Matthew were concerned for me. It was then that we recognized that it was by being together we would make our way back to our own biological time.

The danger while concentrated on *us* was not limited to us. Let me try and shorthand it for it was not a simple danger. What I saw happening was not limited to us – for we were mankind, and not merely in a manner of speaking, in that vortex of time we did not symbolize – we were. And indeed we are, we cannot avoid being. We could shatter on our own selfishness, by panicking, or we could get out, but to do that we had to accept ourselves and each other as we were then with every limitation, and unless we did that our whole enterprise would smash. It was as I perceived it in the very gravest danger of doing – there were a series of highly charged hatreds and prides playing through us like lightning. They crashed into us,

storms of passionate despair, each making its own future. There is hatred at the heart of each of us and that night much exploded. It was our hatred, but not only that – it was as if it was being augmented by much more. With each of those explosions futures poured forth into time, but no one of them reached our time, towards which we were struggling. The danger settles first on one of us and then on another, but in a way there was neither one nor another. We had to get back to the biological time in which we live in good order. Gradually by holding together we made headway – not very much at first. To my inner eye at one moment, though it seemed a very long time, you were moving out toward what we call death at a very high speed – and that would have meant us. What was more it would have meant that our experience could never have been communicated to anyone else. I do not know what the death of one of us would have done physically to the others – psychologically it would have been appalling that the results would have been even more appalling. Our work is in no shape to stand the heavy handed official enquiries which would have resulted and such a great setback at this time could have the direfullest of consequences for the rest of us, and us means all those others who are part of the main.

Thanks to Matthew and Ellen plying us with sugar and possibly my far too limited supply of niacin we made headway and as we made headway recognition of our oneness grew. It felt like my first convoy battle carried to the N<sup>th</sup> – a vastly expanded version of Henry V's Battle Eve speech.<sup>24</sup> Before very long we had found the shore and that vast potential of many futures had come down to one in biological time. But there are elements that transcend time and most penetrating of these is that great energy system of love-hate. We had been exposed rawly to both and had felt them rip through custom, convention, everything like cosmic rays. But as you say what would have happened had there not been enough love? I too do not like to think of it now, but I know that there were many potential solutions along those lines and very terrifying they were, very terrifying they are.

It was very different from most first steps in the other! But what different creatures we would be if we fully comprehended that great togetherness. I think that we may be able to. That is what Blake means perhaps when he said that the dark religions should perish and sweet science should reign.<sup>25</sup> We may be in sight of an age when that type of transcendental love can be achieved without murdering ourselves or others.

If we can do this then it will clearly be an evolutionary move forward of the greatest magnitude. To do this will be very perilous as we discovered in that storm of time and it will only be achieved together – there are myriads of ways of not doing it – and probably only one way of doing it – together through love. Yet that supreme word which we have been told is God also has been used for so many of its tinier (though not unimportant) facets – the bits we can glimpse in our constricted time – there is so much more.

So I am greatly indebted to you three Huxleys and yet I don't feel indebted for one cannot owe oneself anything and those usurious ideas which the divided waste themselves in are meaningless. We know that this has often happened before (if before really means anything), but not at a time when it could have any general application. The martyrs in the arena were this, the martyrs burnt by Papists and Protestants were this, but it could never be transmitted. Burning and lynching went on merrily – perhaps we are reaching an age when it can be communicated – we must have faith and hope and always love. As the Duke said it was, it always must be a damn close run thing.

I am beginning to envision a structure which will allow the group to move in with less rash unknowingness than we – yet what does unknowingness mean? But in our biological time we have to take count of many factors. One would build one's group more slowly, venture out more cautiously, use music and poetry in a planned way, have ceremonies just enough to hold the group to its course and sugar and niacinamide ready lest we went too fast and far. That we can and I believe shall do, but I shall not forget that astonishing night, that life in Woodbridge. Depending mostly on Ellen and who I wonder did she depend on? We did something that has, I believe, never been done before (a meaningless phrase in many ways) but I do think that the idea of focused group action of this intensity has very rarely been attempted with an intention of later communication. In the past there has always been much ritualized mumbo-jumbo – necessary of course, but also stultifying, for so easily the true purpose gets lost. I believe that this time we can keep the true purpose in mind. That fourfold vision which Blake tried to communicate to others – when science, religion, art and politics fuse into one.

It is now 23:30 and two weeks ago we were “there” and yet how little that conveys – for the “reality” of it is vividly with me “now.” Somehow

those lessons from “there” must be applied “here” – in some ways it is simply what all the saints and prophets, what Jesus and Buddha and all have said. That is that Love-Hate is the trans-dimensional vector. The great force that sweeps through galaxies and universes, which is inside and outside time, without which there is nothing, and because of which nothing is meaningless. However to apply this in a specific time-space, that is a human concern and does call for the use of intellect and determination and courtesy. That is the problem which faces us now and which we have faced. It is, I think, the next step in human evolution and like most of them that have sent us soaring up from the cave it is a self-imposed one, a socio-psychological one rather than a biological one. But what makes it so odd to our constricted and categorical minds is that it employs a chemical mediator. Song, dance, rhythmic bombardment, starvation, contemplation – all these strange artificial social methods we have accepted and I think we shall accept this. How good to remember that grey dawn walk as we saw a reborn world through reborn eyes.

I suppose I must stop. Here and now calls. I have had a remarkable letter from Raynor Johnson about a new book he has written based on an automatic correspondence – look forward to seeing the book. It is called *Nurslings of Immortality*.<sup>26</sup>

It was about zero (0° F.) here last night but it has swept up during the night and must be only about 32° F. Only three days ago I was flying out to Los Angeles – our little world. Let me know how you would consider working in a mental hospital or our research. I am not yet sure of funds but will try very hard.

Ever,  
Humphry

The third dog was Phrynne – we have a long way to go to learn to transmit concepts – yet intrinsically they are easier than mood.

---

556 International House  
1414 East 59<sup>th</sup> St

*Chicago, Ill.*  
*23 November 1956*

Dear Humphry,

It is rather a lot, isn't it? And I have another couple of pages to come, about what I think is happening and what we can do about it. But I thought I'd send this to you first.

My typing is sloppy – sorry!

Ever,  
Francis

At 7:15, Humphry, Matthew, Ellen and I drank our LSD. It takes, of course, some time to have any effect. At first I feel a little light-headed; then I develop a slight headache at the centre of my forehead and a feeling of constriction inside my skull. There is a flow of saliva in my mouth, my stomach twitches once or twice, and I swallow air without knowing it. None of this is at all important.

Soon, something begins to take charge of me, an intelligent automatism that makes me feel clumsy, especially if I try to force myself upon it. Left alone, it does everything perfectly. At the same time I feel an inner shuddering, a giving-way of something as if awareness kept caving in on itself and each time found itself wider and deeper than before. When I walk about I feel quite light: I am mountain-climbing inside myself, I reflect playfully, or ballooning – soon I will be able to walk upside down on the ceiling.

We talk, rather aimlessly. I see Humphry talking to Matthew, and suddenly he moves rapidly back and forth in his chair, settling himself; and what I see is not so much Humphry moving as the movement itself, all complete, a section of time that has acquired a body. Like a snake, I think. My own body, I feel, is no longer really my own, but has become part of the surroundings so that when I walk I am almost swimming. About an hour has passed since we took LSD.

It is a bit like being drunk. Our coordination, however, remains good: we play catch with apples, and our movements are quite accurate if not

forced. This is the secret, for something has definitely changed: I can now stand back from my actions in some way, I am no longer pressed for time.

Matthew says it all reminds him of H.G. Wells' story about the Accelerator<sup>27</sup> which made people live so fast that the rest of the world became like a slow-motion film. This describes things exactly, for time is indeed beginning to stand still, even though there are changes going on all the while; and I become so absorbed by what I see and do that a minute has the duration of half an hour. As time slows down, space and the things in it gain a great consistency; and just as I can be doing or experiencing a great many things at one time, so I feel myself to be in a great many places. Indeed, such a lot is happening to me that I get too full of sensations: to make a note, or doodle, then gives me great relief and satisfaction, for sensation then becomes centered around something active in myself, and this is what I need. For much the same reason we are laughing easily, in order not only to express but to disburden ourselves of the sheer pleasure that is ours. Ellen draws circles, covering a whole page with continuous circular lines. She stops when she notices me looking over her shoulder, but goes on when I say I just want to see her draw circles. (There's no need to be private any more.) I draw some circles too, but they are ugly; Ellen says so also.

A record, I think of Dufay's<sup>28</sup> music, is put on the gramophone. The sense of duration is unbelievably long: everything is coming to a stop now. At the same time I notice a curious doubled feeling to sensation, as though things were happening at a great distance or behind a pane of glass; or as though my sensations, and I when sensing them, have become separated. This turns into the feeling that I am deep in a dream and about to wake up, or that I have just woken up with the dream still unaccountably running on. I feel also a certain drowsiness, a heaviness that clouds my objectivity and makes it hard to write down notes: I can hardly remember what I want to say long enough to write it down, and the area into which I then "awake" is small, being nothing more than the effort of concentration I make. Yet there are times when I come out of this dream state and start awake almost guiltily, feeling that I have been day-dreaming when I have some job to do – quite what I don't know. Matthew at one point tells us to draw a square and try to imagine ourselves confined by it. I am now in the dream again,

and though I draw a square I am quite unable to concentrate upon it. Instead I doodle over it.

It is really very odd to be still awake while feeling I am totally enclosed in a dream. "One is used to being asleep in this state," I note, "which is why one doesn't know what is true." And then again: "We are all living our own dream, so why aren't we either asleep or awake?" Even in this ineffable drowsiness I know I am awake, since I can see the others and talk to them; and they, although also in a dream, can answer me.

"The music goes on at the same time. Funny," I notice suddenly, for the music has become part of myself, or I a part of it, I don't know which. When I listen, I become the person the music organises, indeed it is as though I cause the music by letting it take shape in my mind as it comes out of nothing; and then I become aware of myself as the organising person of my movements and my words. These two centres of being possess me alternately, and I am a little confused. (Would it be the same if I saw who played the music?)

I wonder how far this feeling of not being myself will go. Luckily, there is the whole world waiting to occupy the place what I think of as my self used to fill; but even the world itself is not itself any more, it is no longer part of a subject-object relationship. I am so struck by this that I take a new sheet of paper and write "Subject Object" on it, in large letters, knowing at last just how paradox enters life through this relationship. The feeling of being in direct communication with things, no longer having to refer sensations to ideas, is a bit unsettling. "I think there should always be an object. Because one has nowhere to cling to and that is frightening." For there are no objects left: everything for once has its own right to exist and cannot be owned. "Whose world do I think I am acting in?" I ask myself. I am not used to being free, or to an ownerless world.

I make a number of notes, though I know they will be quite inadequate afterwards. This won't go into words, for words are what make objects exist. But writing is a pleasure in itself: I take a new pencil with a soft black lead, and my writing becomes three times its usual size, and much bolder. I write "Predestination," but cross it out immediately. What I mean, I think, is that the reason for things being as they are is that it is impossible they should be otherwise: one is firmly at home in a world where there are no accidents. "It's like a party," says Matthew, "without the strain." There is

gaiety and ease, and a continual, delighted recognition of things: “It goes *on* getting more meanings,” I write. These meanings are of identity, not of reference, which is why I can go on recognising them without coming to a stop. Things suggest themselves so strongly to me that I myself give them substance and become them; to look at something new is to recognise this as a new part of myself, a new identity.

The feeling of being whatever I see or touch becomes quite extraordinary, and is accompanied by a twining sensation in my head. Somewhere inside my skull are two centres of constriction, two spiraling tubes which twine around each other just as “I” twine around the things I see, now being them, now being myself, but never just being one thing. (It reminds me of Hindu psychic anatomy which assumes the existence of two lateral psychic nerves climbing up the spine to the skull that twine caduceus-like around the central psychic nerve.) “One can be everything, everything is oneself.” And then, looking at the others: “Somehow we know one another, we are brothers.” This is even more extraordinary, for beyond identity is the act which gives birth to identity, and it is this reflecting act which I now recognise, almost incredulously.

So I go out to fetch a mirror. How amusing it will be, I think, to make the others look at their own reflections and recognise their identity in themselves. But I can’t find a mirror, perhaps luckily, for Ellen told me afterwards that she had had the same idea and it was like Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. While I am in the kitchen, however, still looking for a mirror, I see a lemon which I cut in two, so that I can taste something surprising – it is indeed very sharp. After tasting the lemon I find that I still remember that I want to find a mirror, and this I consider a feat since I am continually getting preoccupied and losing my sense of purpose, my linear memory and my self-responsibility. I feel that we are perhaps acting rather wildly, and I wonder what we would do if we woke the children: who would reassure them? “Laugh,” I note. “Who are *we*?” This is just what would frighten them: they would no longer be able to recognise in us the persons we had been to them. This worries me for some time, and I later make much the same note about frightening the children.

A record of Aldous reading from *Time Must Have a Stop* is put on the gramophone. The passage describes the bardo state experienced by Eustace Barnack<sup>29</sup> after his death: first, an awareness of absence, then the slow,



comforting approach of a presence which later is experienced as light – a light that is at first bliss, then discomfort, then terror, because it insists on destroying what Eustace Barnack thinks he is. Barnack escapes from this by finding memories which he interposes between himself and the light, clothing himself again in the past.

We all know what Aldous means, for it is plain we too are in a bardo state, and beyond the joy we have there is a premonition of discomfort, a feeling that things may get out of hand and leave one defenceless. In a way it is comic to hear Aldous lecture us, as a travel leader would a group of tourists, about what we are so deeply and immediately experiencing; it is, however, also very much too near the bode, as I note down three times, for it leads one into a profound seriousness which I, for one, am unwilling to contemplate. Indeed, “If there was no way out I should be frightened.” I get around this feeling by walking about. To move oneself is reassuring, for though I may not be “me” anymore I still have a body that obeys me.

Listening to Aldous is disquieting for other reasons. I have the same feeling as I did when listening to the music, that I am two people, for Aldous’ voice and what he says create an almost irresistible centre of attraction. I do not get this feeling when listening to one of the others, for I can always talk back: but there is no talking back to a record. I am also worried because Aldous seems to be repeating himself: “He’s already said that!” I cry out several times, astonished and dismayed, for I do not actually remember whether he has repeated himself or not. (The passage is indeed repetitious, as I found when I played the record again two days later.) The phrases sound extremely familiar as Aldous speaks them, but since my linear memory has quite gone I have no way of checking up on my suspicions. The problem of whether Aldous is really repeating himself or not gets so urgent that I suspect one of the others has been playing with the gramophone, and when they all deny this I get up to look at the record and see how much of it has been played.

The only solution to this dilemma, I think, is to imagine that we have entered a vortex of time. To picture this I first draw a complete spiral, which doesn’t give the idea I want, so then I draw a spiral made out of a number of broken curves. In this vortex, it seems to me, one can enter “time” at any point, be carried on as far as one wishes, then leave that particular groove of

time at a break and go forwards or backwards as it pleases one. Otherwise, how explain Aldous' incomprehensible repetitions?

I make a note [of] some phrases which come again and again: "backwards and downwards," "disintegrating opacity," and "the accompanying laughter." I am greatly amused over various combinations of polysyllables: "A vast ubiquitous web of beknottedness and diversity" makes me roar with laughter. At the replaying, two days later, I note other phrases which struck me before or are in some way important: "knowledge only of absence," "the awareness of absence made itself known," "immensely prolonged uneasiness," "shame and pain," "*ave verum corpus*."<sup>30</sup>

The record disturbs me a great deal, and I want to change it before it is finished, but the others want to keep it on. When it has come to an end a record of Elizabethan folk songs is put on. I have a chrysanthemum flower in my hand, with the strongest scent imaginable: I make Matthew smell it and he is startled. Then I scatter the petals over the carpet – the petals are inexhaustible, it seems, and indescribably beautiful – and as I scatter them the air itself and the music become full of flowers. I lie on the floor, my face deep in a sweet-smelling sheepskin, holding Ellen's hand, and it is like being in a summer meadow. Later a record of Gabrielli<sup>31</sup> is put on. This opens with a burst of trumpets, and the sound jangles my whole being splendidly: I want to run, jump, turn somersaults.

There are other sensations. Ellen has a piece of lemon which she sucks. "Have some," she tells Humphry. "No," he replies, "I've already tasted it." I know what he means. I eat a piece of raw chestnut that is vastly sweet, and Ellen roasts some over the fire – those don't taste so good. Humphry says we shouldn't play about with the fire, for we don't want to burn the house down. It looks quite harmless to me. I no longer feel clumsy and on the verge of "sleep," but wide awake; the curious heaviness, the unwillingness to concentrate on things, has almost gone although the joy, the sense of being everything, remains. I am awake now, in this other place. And yet when I hear Humphry asking us what we can bring back to tell Aldous about this, I feel a sense of complete irrelevance, almost of guilt, at being reminded of the other world. For if I am to be objective now I shall miss all the fun, and besides what can one say about this experience? It is like telling a blind man about colours. I sense vaguely that what we have to do

is not to think about the experience but enjoy it as much as possible, and it must be now that I make a note I no longer understand: “Now it’s different. There is something about time.”

We understand each other now by a kind of telepathy, it seems, and we all get the same unspoken joke at the same time. This intimate awareness applies to inanimate things as well: “We are part of things, and so have to be tender with them when we act.” I wonder what pain is like and try to kick my own shin, but the result is unsatisfactory being neither one thing nor another: I can’t kick hard enough. I feel charged with some enormous enjoyment which I have to use: I scratch my head and the sensation is so delicious that I bend down and ruffle my hair with both hands in a kind of ecstasy, for I am suddenly two people each vividly aware of what he is doing: one, the person ruffling his hair; the other, the person whose hair is being ruffled. These persons do not interfere with each other in the least.

Then Matthew brings in some tea, which gives me the sovereign notion of pouring out a cup and offering it to Humphry and Ellen. It is as though I offer it to myself, for I know who they are.

I discover breathing, and wonder how I hadn’t thought of it before; as the music plays I breathe everything in. I also discover that there is no longer any centre left anywhere. This realisation, like the other one about there being nothing that can be called an object, is somewhat discomposing. “The solitariness of moments. They are all that belong to themselves.” There is no centre because everything is equally important.

Ellen picks up a book on Zen and reads out a passage. “‘We have to eat every day, and how can we escape from all that?’ ‘We dress, we eat.’ ‘I do not understand you.’ ‘If you do not understand put on your dress and eat your food.’” All this is perfectly clear: what else can one do? I see Matthew sitting on the sofa. “Look at Matthew smoking,” I say, “even when he doesn’t have to!” “It’s all right,” he answers, and I agree. It is also very touching somehow. (It must have been about this time that I took a cigarette out of Ellen’s hands, saying that it wasn’t necessary anymore; but I don’t remember the incident at all. Ellen told me of it later.)

Suddenly I am aware of two metaphysical principles. They are really the same, phrased differently. The first is just – “Separation.” I have in mind the myth of how God had to separate himself into Another before he could create the world. The second principle runs: “For a moment to exist it has to

be observed by someone *else* otherwise it is all its own self and participates.” Behind this confused remark is the feeling that since I am part of each moment I do not see how they exist. Who, I wonder, is thinking us so that we exist? I leave the problem on one side and note: “There is nothing left out.” It is really astonishing how one can be so much, so many different things at the same time. When I look at my notes my writing reminds me a little of my parents’, and this I note too.

Humphry talks about Einstein and relativity, and we wonder briefly whether all natural laws are really psychic ones. I am only just getting over the feeling that he is an impartial observer, a feeling that has made me a little self-conscious before. (It seems that when I speak of moments having to be observed before they can exist I am not speaking of clinical observation.) I am reassured about him when I ask at one moment: “What time is this we are in?” for he answers, “Time doesn’t exist.” (I reply “Of course, but I don’t mean the *time* time,” an answer that seems so funny I write it down. I want to know what epoch, what state, what existence we are in: the time of Once upon a time.)

A Bach record is put on the gramophone. Though the notes continually change, they are somehow motionless, with such stretches of duration around them that one can play a kind of hide and seek there. Matthew then brings out a metronome and sets it going, because he wants to find a way of setting our experience against an objective reality, of recording it somehow. Humphry hates the metronome, and I think it absurdly pompous – tick, tick, tick!

Soon Humphry asks us again what we can bring back to Aldous from this experience, and this time I understand. “Humphry is the thread,” I say. There must be a way of facing the old reality with this new one which I now feel so much a part of: we must not remain isolated here. I know something has to be done, though what I do not know, and with this knowledge comes a feeling of control and responsibility. Soon after the Bach record stops and Humphry says: “Most of the physiological effects having passed, we can get on without music.” (I do not remember hearing this remark.) Without music, the atmosphere is getting more sober. Three hours have elapsed since we took LSD.

Humphry and Matthew are talking. I listen to them and then feel that I have been silent a long time and that I should join in; so I do. Humphry

mentions his three dogs, and tells us that two of them are called Brandy and Whiskey. "Guess what the third one's called," he says. I assume that his dogs are imaginary, thought up to fit the situation, since they have alcoholic names and we are drunk with LSD: the third dog must therefore be us, or something that we are all looking for.

The[n] something emerges as telepathic communication. When the others speak or are just about to speak; when they smile, or wink, or gesture, I understand exactly what they are getting at, with such immediacy that I seem to have been aware of their intent from the beginning of whatever time has now become. We knew, for instance, just what Humphry meant by the third dog, and even when I miss a factual reference I don't worry. This is when Ellen tells Humphry of the Jukes family, people I've never heard of. "It's a joke," she says, "and I'll tell you later." The way in which I sense her psychological intent is so amazing and beautiful that I have no time to waste over missing a referential meaning that could also, perhaps, have been transmitted by telepathy, if telepathy were operating.

Our conversation must now sound extraordinarily disjointed to an outsider, though to me it is a continuous flow of meaning. We are all (I think) considering this novel way of communication: Humphry utters half a sentence about it and then comes to a stop, Ellen says yes, I start to say something but see the meaning of what I am asking about emerge somehow from the others' silence; and I know this is so when Matthew looks up and winks at me.

Someone, Matthew I think, goes out to the kitchen to get lemonade, which he pours into plastic cups. In some extraordinary and familiar way I can sense what the others do as part of myself: it is me standing there at the fireplace and scratching an ear, me coming into the room with the lemonade on a tray, me laughing over there in the armchair. So, when I look at Ellen a moment later (Matthew has just pointed at her, for some reason) I am not surprised that I know exactly and without a doubt who she has suddenly become. "Oh, so it's you," I say: "it's all our fault," and I throw my lemonade at her, cup and all. By this I mean that I've seen her as the old yellow hag who plots destruction and brings about the downfall of the world, age after age. But at the same time I realise this is our fault, not hers, for we have in some way managed to exclude her and what she stands for from our conversation; in being abstract and loveless we have forced Ellen

in to a hag-form. (She told me afterwards that this was just about what she felt had happened.) I throw the cup at her not in hatred or for any personal reasons, but in recognition; perhaps, also to make her recognise herself.

When we settle down again, the feeling of being in telepathic communication is even stronger than before. It is really true, I see it with astounded joy, that we understand each other instantaneously, without words; that we share everything and are no longer separate or afraid of one another. I am so clear about this that suddenly I seem to have entered a science-fiction situation in which such things as group telepathy are commonplaces. I dislike this feeling, for it is somewhat cheap – something, I feel has been left out – but I accept it because the situation so plainly exists. Those science-fiction writers, I think, they had something after all.

It is partly, I suppose, because of this science-fiction feeling that I see the four of us as a kind of committee cut off from the rest of the world and having to decide something of great importance. It is, after all, the first time that four people share a common intelligence in the most literal sense, and this without the least feeling of envy, egoism or strangeness. What do we have to do with it? Almost immediately I understand that we have to find a way of stopping the atom bomb, which is about to go off at midnight. (This idea came from Humphry when he suggested that “things should come to an end about midnight,” meaning, of course, our LSD experience. I, however, took him literally.)

This seems quite natural, and except for the slight feeling of urgency I am not worried. We have about an hour and a half, and in that time, with four minds for once actually thinking as one, we should be able to find an answer to the problem. I do not know, however, just where we start. Do we pick up the telephone and speak to Eisenhower<sup>32</sup> and Bulganin?<sup>33</sup> They will, I know, listen to us, but somehow the real problem does not lie with them. It is the atom bomb we have to think of, for it is set to explode willy-nilly at midnight.

I wonder what each of us has to contribute. We have four particular kinds of intelligence, I realise, but I wonder how this will be useful and why we were chosen for this responsibility – a responsibility that now begins to appall me. Yet there are certain things we do not have to do. All the knowledge we shall need has already been gathered – why, we even have the encyclopedia to hand here – so all we have to do is use it. The question

is, how? I wonder whether we have not come into other new capacities besides telepathy. If I let go of the glass I have in my hand, will it float in the air unaided? I try, and am disappointed to see it fall. Obviously the answer isn't that kind of thing.

Then an appalling revelation bursts upon me. It is not just that we are responsible for saving the world from the atom bomb: we are responsible for the world because we are its creators. The room has become very quiet, and as I look at the others with horror and in startled recognition I see them as being weary to death and immoderately old. It seems to me they avoid my eyes. Suddenly I am amused by a new thought, at all the people who believed there was only one God, or that he was three, or even two: for there are four gods, and we are they. And even we didn't know this till a moment ago. We must have made the world and then forgot who we were; I could see all the mistakes that came from this, and all the people who helped to make us remember by coming near to the truth themselves. These people, somehow, were ourselves. Why couldn't we have gone on sleeping, I wonder, why did we have to take that damn LSD which made us wake up? But I see that there was no other possible outcome. Our meeting here had been planned carefully by the very world we had created, and everything we had ever done had led, by seeming accidents, to our frightful awakening here and to the deadly knowledge that, having passed an eternity asleep, we now had another eternity ahead which we would pass awake, conscious all the time that every calamity was a result of our past actions. The same disasters, wars, tragedies would occur, new civilisations would endlessly rise and fall, and we would have to be part of it all since there was nothing to save us from the endless round of time we had started. We were not so much gods as intelligences, caught in our own trap; and besides the endless round, I remembered, there was the atom bomb. If that did explode, as it surely would, we would shiver back into the lifeless nothing we had come from, and it would all have been in vain: the enemy, the endless dark, would have won.

But the enemy, I see next, is not really the atom bomb, it is ourselves. And somehow things have changed again, for though there is still a telepathic atmosphere we have become entirely separate, and this is a kind of hell. Still, I feel a kind of confidence, even after the appalling revelation we have had, and I get up and go out of the house to have a pee in the

backyard. Outside, everything is quiet and in suspense; there is a dim light on the horizon, and the trees around the house go straight up into the misty night. As I stand there I think of the beginning of the world and of how one of the old gods made man by pissing onto the ground. "What down-to-earth notions we had in those days!" I think, and see that we also have to do something like this: we have to create a new man among ourselves.

I have the feeling now that it is time the others called me into the house, and as I look in through the window I see Humphry get up. He opens the back door and says "Won't you come in Francis?" just as I expected. I follow him in and sit down, and after a minute I realise something else. The four of us sit here every night writing the scenario which the world has to act out the next day, and things sometimes get a bit out of hand but that's nothing to worry about. I say as much: "It's all an illusion." At once Humphry answers that it isn't, that things are real. This makes me think again, and I see that he is right. Perhaps we do write the scenario for the world play, but this doesn't mean to say that the play isn't real: war, bloodshed and death are not illusory. Yet something, I feel, is an illusion: time, for one. It must be that human beings create time as one of their natural products; we, however, can hold time in abeyance by a certain act of inner control. This solves several problems. For one thing, we need not fear the approach of midnight any more, for it can only arrive when we want it to: it, the atom bomb and ourselves are not three things but one, with ourselves in charge. For another thing, I now see how the world can be both real and illusory: it is real when we let it happen, an illusion when we withdraw its life into ourselves. The moment we give the world its life back, however, it starts from where it left off. I think suddenly of a minor problem: what is food in this world that we have created, that is both real and illusory? Will we still get hungry, will we eat tomorrow?

If we have to make a new man it must be done by changing ourselves somehow. What have we to offer? I look at Matthew, who is writing notes, and I think he is drawing up some great plan. He used to like plans when he was Aldous, too, I think, for the first time really seeing the fact of reincarnation. But I am a little uneasy when I look at him, for he has such tall and difficult ideas. Wasn't that one of the troubles with the old world? In Humphry I see all kinds of practical capacities for which I feel curiously grateful. I'm not good at that kind of thing. I look at Ellen and know quite



distinctly what she has to do, though I cannot put it into words: how fortunate that one of us is a woman. And when I think of myself I see that just as Matthew was once Aldous, so I was Julian, the inventor of biology and evolution and flesh. But though he and H.G. Wells – the reason for whose existence I am suddenly aware of – created between them the substance we are made of, we have to go one better: there has to be a new kind of body altogether, a new kind of flesh. As I think this I become aware of history as a number of attempts towards this moment by certain particular people who were all occupied with the problem that now confronts us, and who all provided indispensable piece of knowledge towards solving it. Somehow, I feel, they are all incarnations of the same actor who now looks through our eyes.

But if we are all the same actor, how is it that I have not experienced the same pain and anguish as those killed in war, or nailed to a cross, or murdered, or tortured? If I am really to be the same actor, it seems, I must experience these things too: the wheel must go around again, for the last time. “This must be the last time it happens,” I say, and this revelation is the most terrible yet, for I see everything closing inexorably around me, a cold and fatal reality that is in dead earnest. There is no way out of this situation, so I cannot reject it; but how can I accept it? How was it that only a moment ago I was playfully making plans, thinking there was some easy way out?

Matthew must have become alarmed some minutes before for he now comes with sugar and niacin with which he begins to feed us. I understand, as he does so, that this is how necessity is going to close onto me, and that I am the one who has to suffer it. The situation has various sickeningly familiar aspects. I remember having been forced to eat things, forced to be good while something horrible was done to me, at various other times, long forgotten but now vividly immediate. The sugar is nauseatingly sweet, but I am urged to eat it and eat it, and I know it is a prelude to some horror: to some operation that is now to be performed on me. I smell a fleeting whiff of ether in the air. Then, as I shrink from what has to be done I am overwhelmed by a deeper terror and fear which in turn becomes a complete despair; and even when I at last rise out of these states by degrees into a kind of ease I know that whatever joy I have in the future will always be shot through with dread, for I am bound to this wheel which goes ever around, as far down into the depths as it goes up. Suddenly I am back in a

more or less normal world, and I hear Humphry saying “I’m sorry”; but I know as well as he that this has to be done, it’s not his fault. More sugar; then the image of an Aztec victim about to have his heart torn out comes into my mind. I ask the others if I have to die and they immediately answer no, which is immensely comforting. I also begin to see that the past being past, we have done with it and there is no need to go through it all again; and if there is to be pain it will be quite unlike what I had imagined, something constructive and not destructive.

“Well, we got over that all right,” says Humphry (meaning, I now realise, that I had passed through some physical crisis). I take this to mean that we have started the great work of creation and though the wheel has turned again we knew what was happening and so the atom bomb didn’t explode. But just then the wheel starts another round. I eat more sugar, and am given some lemon. This lemon is almost painful, it is acid and burning; soon, I think, it will turn into fire. I expect this to happen for it seems we have to experience everything if we are to make the new man properly. But the lemon-taste turns instead into a dirty yellow anger that rises in me against some insistent force pressing into me from the outside. Against this force I resist strongly till I hear Humphry say that this is all the fault of our emotions, so instead of resisting the force I try to receive it. In some wholly familiar but yet unexpected way this makes the force quite harmless and turns it into myself. The wheel now does not go down as far into the horrors as it had the last time, and I hear Humphry repeating his statement about the emotions. So he is Freud too, I realise, almost amused. But now I am feeling desperately tired, and I can’t bear having to eat any more sugar or having to make any further effort: I just want to be left alone and to sleep. Yet somehow my recognition of Humphry as Freud makes me understand just how the state of the world is caused by my being angry, by my not realising that I am deep in the commonest of Freudian situations; and that, if only I stop fighting and accept my quite ordinary self I will find I am cured and that my nightmares about the atom bomb will prove to have no foundation. Is this what everyone goes through when under analysis? I wonder. It seems quite plausible at one moment, but then I become puzzled. Didn’t we start off with something much bigger than psychoanalysis? Isn’t there really a new world to be made out of what was once nothing but a capacity to explode? And how is it that an eternal intelligence is being

psychoanalyzed? I find myself greatly confused, like a small child struggling against his parents' demands that he wake up; I also feel abysmally stupid and ashamed of myself for being so childish. The others take it all quite calmly, it makes sense to me, and then I hear Humphry say "You've been a long time"; at once I know them for three buddhas who are tirelessly engaged in bringing me to birth as another buddha.

I ask Ellen about childbirth, for it seems to me then that men must somehow turn into women: in order to produce the new man we must give birth to him. She comforts me, and says it isn't at all bad. At the same time Humphry is saying something about bringing back some words (?) which I hear as bringing back the Word. I am at a loss to know what this is, where to find it, how to let it appear. Do I have to say it? I keep silent, on purpose, waiting for something; I question, "Ellen?" and when she asks me something I answer "Yes." This is the nearest I can get to the Word. Suddenly, however, the problem becomes quite irrelevant, for I understand just why we went wrong at the beginning. People thought God was three, while we were four; we thought we were four and that there was no one else, when all the time there should be five. Somehow we have to make room in ourselves for this fifth, who is God and love and the new man at the same time. This fifth is the most astounding discovery, for it solves everything: there is still hope for us, since we are not alone and no longer entirely responsible. We may be Intelligences, but we are not God. How did we forget that?

One way of making room for the fifth is to become five myself. For instance, I want to get the fingers of my left hand, which Ellen is holding, interlocked with hers, and when I manage this something in me is ordered and comes to rest. (My right hand, which is held by Humphry, is both sweaty and grimy. This sweat is a mark of the old flesh: when we succeed in making the new one, it will change into something else, though what I don't know.) I also notice the ache in my legs, which comes from kneeling on the floor for so long. This vague pain is necessary in some way, I feel, till I suddenly move and sit down with my legs in front of me. Now that everything is in its right place, I really feel I am a five, a Vesalian man whose limbs describe a circle.<sup>34</sup> It is at this point that I understand what the sugar is for. It is energy, just like the atom bomb: energy that has to be transformed in much the same way as God in the beginning turned himself

into brute energy and from that into matter and life and mind. This energy is value; and so is lysergic acid, I see, being a spiritual money or £SD.

Matthew is behind me, and partly because of this I at once feel that he is holding back. I feel we should form a definite pattern in order to let the fifth appear. Soon he comes and sits in front of me: he reminds me of my brother and then slowly turns into him, into the other part of myself that was too close to see properly. Indeed, he is The Other, and his face takes on a menacing symmetry as I look into his eyes, a symmetry so intense that I almost expect to see two other eyes appear to make a mandala foursome. But, long as we look at each other, nothing happens, and so, to tell him where the obstacle lies in myself I say "Damn you, Matthew, damn you; I hate you, I hate you." It is only by saying this that I can be certain I do not in fact hate him or wish him damned.

More sugar is given to me, nauseatingly sweet, and from time to time tea and cold water. Tasting all these things is one way of making the new man: the cold water is an especially important taste, having an enormous truth to it, while the sugar, though horrible, is about to change into something else. At one moment it indeed changes, and turns my mouth into a kind of marble or white-green jade: it is the Word itself. I have a momentary awareness of Christ and the Buddha sharing this knowledge with me: we are the same Knower who looks at himself compassionately.

Because of this I know I now have a right to demand something from the others. "You don't love me," I say. The way to love is through shame, and when we have passed this there is an overpowering heat of love, a summer in which all new things are taking form.

What also takes form is a new aspect of the world which has to be made part of what I have already experienced. With love, I understand, has to go knowledge. This is where we always went wrong before: the others invented such complicated things that I could never remember them, and so the world got out of true. As I become aware of this I see the enormous difficulty involved, and I say several times "I can't face it, I can't face it." What I can't face is to be fully conscious, and I say this not because I refuse to face it, but to make the difficulty apparent. When I do try to face it, and open my eyes, the world looks quite cold and dead, and I know we must try again. The next time I open my eyes I see Ellen's brocaded coat, which has little figures woven in it. I look in awe at this work of Maya, who weaves

everything – men, mountain, trees – into one great cloth of the most exacting detail. Because the coat is Chinese, I think of all the Zen masters who had their eyes opened and could see men and mountains and trees as they really were. We must do better than weave cloth, I think.

Now Humphry begins to say “Together, together.” Over Ellen’s shoulder I can see the lamp in the next room which, being partly obscured by the stair-rail, somehow grows four arms of light, not quite joined at the centre. “Together, together” says Humphry: we too are four arms of something that must join together at the centre. We hold hands after a moment and sway to and fro, saying “together, together.”

There are also my eyes which have to be put together. I have to make them see single and not double, make them see one thing. And when I think about eyes it seems I really mean I’s, and that the “one thing” I want to see is the One. Then, when I try to talk about this, I am aware of my R’s which I can’t sound properly. Here, it seems, lies the great mystery: if I could say my R’s properly it would be like Vishnu saying “boo!” and creating the world;<sup>35</sup> for R’s are vibrations, are wave theory, are pattern, are atoms and electrons, are the Word. I try several times but the R’s I produce are the same as ever.

Soon I begin to breathe quickly and deeply, feeling my energies gather together, feeling also a great heat down my back which I take to be the sugar turning into a new kind of energy. (This must have been partly the effect of the niacin.) There is enormous power in my concentration, and I am able to hold new, still separate ideas long enough in my attention for them to merge at last with a great body of being that supports me; I can feel this merging as something physical in my brain, and majestically controlled. It is, I know, the opposite of coming together. Then, somewhere in my mouth or behind my throat I feel what I know for certain is the new flesh. It is shaped something like a heart, though I think only at the top – the bottom is unfinished – and is made out of a hard yet somehow resilient stone, a coral-coloured jade. As I feel it in my throat my vision opens onto an immense emptiness and serenity, an eternity that is nowhere menacing.

And abruptly I am back in a drab reality, knowing that we have, after all, failed to change the world as we set out to. Humphry is saying that the next time we will know better, now we must try to understand what happened and bring something back from our experience. This moves me to

a feeble indignation: that is the Enemy's argument, I try to say, the Enemy who has managed to separate us and who now wants to stop us from trying again. When I try to explain this I stutter and feel completely ashamed of myself. It puzzles me exceedingly that the others talk as if they didn't know what had been going on. I look at my watch and see that the time is half past one: this also puzzles me. How did midnight come and go, if Time is what we do to the world? At least, I comfort myself, the atom bomb hasn't gone off yet.

As the others talk, I understand how they saw the crisis we had been through. Humphry thought I would die; Matthew thought the same of Humphry, and was worried that I would go off into a trance and never come out again. To me this anxiety is quite absurd, and I am even annoyed at them for having fed us all with niacin. We might have succeeded, otherwise.

As we talk and drink coffee, the incessant tug of the other world lessens and I begin to fain some self-possession. I am still puzzled, however, at these two orders of reality and how they can contradict each other so firmly, and where I belong. Soon, after Matthew goes to bed, I feel slightly sick, and my controlling identity in this world withdraws: I begin to doubt whether it will ever come back fully, and I will know the comfort of being someone. Though I am tired, the thought of going to sleep frightens me, and I cling to all the control I can find over myself. (It was, I realised later, the same feeling of not having a self which we had all experienced before, but now without any of the supporting joy.) So we went for a walk up and down the road in a centerless world of mist and trees, and then we all managed to sleep for an hour or so in armchairs. All through the day the feeling that I had no self came and went in ways, at once discomforting and yet strangely reassuring; I was very glad to have Humphry and Ellen in the same house, though at the same time I was chary of thinking too deeply about what had happened. We went to sleep early that evening, and for the first time in my life I dreamt music: pure music, without tune. As a tail-piece to the dream I saw Adlai Stevenson with a violin in his hand. He also was a candidate who failed.<sup>36</sup>

---

*556 International House  
1414 East 59<sup>th</sup> St  
Chicago<sup>37</sup>*

My dear Humphry,

I am glad to get your letter; I have been waiting to hear from you. I felt strangely tongue-tied after our night at Woodbridge was over, partly because I was ashamed – there is a shame that hangs over the sacred, as well as over the obscene – and partly because to think too deeply of what had happened seemed to me dangerous in some way. We were tired. And so we never really did what Sahagun said the Aztecs did: “When the intoxication from the little mushrooms had passed, they talked over among themselves the visions they had seen.”<sup>38</sup>

Except of course it was no vision, it was reality; and this reality, inevitably, was not quite the same to any of us. Yet, how strange that we clearly knew that it was the same one, that it moved through us in the same way, that we were together in it and shared each other. It is true that there is a single Identity, and that we are it. But around it we have constructed an entanglement of love and hate, and conflicts that are only too dreadfully our own. And in some way I think they remained our own even though we could feel them at work in one another. Every happy family is alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way, as Tolstoy<sup>39</sup> or someone said.

I wish, in a way, that there had been a tape recorder there that night. How did the atom bomb slip into our thoughts? Was it mentioned in word? I cannot remember. How did Ellen know that at one moment a piece of sugar in my mouth felt as though it had turned into jade or marble? I remember no words about it, and I was, I think, too occupied to speak. And how was it that we turned each other’s urgency into a purpose that was at once personal to each of us and yet common to all?

It is plain that everyone has unresolved complexes: some, as complicated as the word “complex” suggests; others, of an extremely general nature, so general as to be organic. Whenever one does without the observing eye of the conscience these unresolved forces are able to spar and fight. I am extremely glad that I had the chance of letting mine fight a little that night, for it taught me that the psyche, given the right conditions, has its

own natural telos towards completion, and that it can deal with itself adequately. The problem, of course, lies in getting the right conditions. I find myself always going back to the awareness that the Knower knows himself. If LSD removes one of the eyes by which one knows oneself normally, then I think th[at] half the problem about how to deal with LSD lies in getting back that mirroring eye that now shows one's Self to oneself. Jung deals with the problem when he describes how the system of internal observation becomes a "mandala" during the individuation process; one just has to go one step further. But that isn't enough, of course, because the other half of the problem is love, as you say, which only worked for us when we had nothing left.

So what can we do? Is it possible to conduct a guided tour of the psyche, I wonder? One is in such a state of suggestibility that I don't see why not. One might use the great texts that deal with the other world, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, or the Egyptian or Aztec ones, to provide one with some kind of an itinerary, some suggestions for exercising oneself in different forms of reality. And yet, perhaps once one is through a certain psychic barrier there is very little anyone can do except remember to love, because things go on their own way regardless of what one might, in this world, have desired. There are however some words that one can remember, like your "together": but one must also remember that every word will [be] understood in the way the psychic telos wants to understand, and not necessarily the normal way.

Music must be used, I agree. It provides the emotional colour on which one rests. But one must let the psyche speak itself as well. These things are extremely difficult to gauge. How far can one trust the psyche to gather itself together and not come to harm? Shamans trust their naked souls to the terrors of the other world, and to its joys, and pass through unhurt, indeed strengthened, as I think we all were; but there must have been shamans who were not successful, who went mad or died, and this as you say we cannot afford. "A damn close run thing": absolutely.

But really, what extraordinary things can happen under LSD. I was reading your paper on "Inspiration and Method" in schizophrenia research, about that three-dimensional Javanese dancing girl. If one can not only understand that the world is an "illusion," whatever that means, but manage to create perfectly firm illusions as well ... Makes me think of Alexandra



David Neel,<sup>40</sup> in one of her books on Tibet, who managed by intense concentration to materialise the image of a monk who after some weeks gained an autonomous control of his appearance, was seen by various people, and at last became so malicious that Mrs Neel had to destroy him – which she did after six months of hard contemplation. The mind can do some very improper things, it seems to me, as well as be transcendently opened.

Well. Your letter is a great help to me, and I begin to see what and how inside and outside do and are, under LSD. And I too feel greatly indebted, and yet not at all. But now knowing that one can do something.

If you can find me some research or hospital work to do, I should be delighted and intrigued. Just the kind of thing I'd like.

Ever,  
Francis

---

*Sanford Rd  
Woodbridge, Conn.  
24 November 1956*

My dear Humphry,

Having received Francis's opus (EPIC!) this looks pretty feeble, but as I told him, this sort of thing is in the true Jukes line and I ain't a True Jukes.

Thank you for our good letter – have they found your bag? What a bore to lose one's possessions unnecessarily.

Would love to discuss caritas-eros with you. Have you read *Yankee Saint*<sup>41</sup> or Aldous's appendix in *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*?<sup>42</sup> I do believe Aldous is in favor of this scheme – harnessing of eros to *serve* caritas. Or do I mistake him?

Matthew wishes me to say he is late with notes but will come along eventually. He is being very critical and very systematic – believes we “experienced” but did not “experiment” – results not proven. Is shocked that people do this without thinking it out afterward, or without structure – which he feels is on the level of any bunch who like to take hashish or

heroin. But I shall leave his remarks to him. We argued a good deal, but are better friends for it, I believe.

Hope this is of some help to you – if anything else occurs to me I'll send it along.

Much love,  
Ellen

p.s. The bridge puzzle a wild success – the children *adore* such things. *How* kind of you!

My dear Humphry,

I have considered writing you a “formal” report – THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 7, 1956 AS RECORDED BY THE FIVE OR SIX SENSES OF E.M.H. HUXLEY. However, I've never felt less formal, or clinical, and the idea rather strikes me funny. One ought to be critical I'm sure, and as far as possible, chronological.

7:30 P.M. (Having taken LSD at approximately 7:15.) Sitting on sofa. The first sensation is a slight thickening of the throat. Things seem slow.

7:45 P.M. For the first time I closed my eyes, as Matthew suggested that after-images had become very strong. I found that they moved in slots, from right to left.

8:00 P.M. Francis turned upside down in his chair. He looked quite normal upside down. Recorded this fact and then wrote “I watch the pencil move and have nothing to do with it, is this like automatic writing?” A pleasant sensation; one was perfectly satisfied to let “that hand” and “that pencil” do as they would. I was aware of the exact position of all the fillings in my teeth.

8:10 P.M. Closing my eyes, I did not see the flashes of colour or showers of jewels I had expected. Instead there were geometric, pastel kaleidoscopes – I remember a pale blue one with black spots, and a scalloped one which was apparently very like one which Francis saw.

One felt that there was plenty of time. No need to hurry, no need to worry – a real sense of luxury came over me ... surely the feeling of having got “within” time is one of the greatest of luxuries.

8:20 P.M. We started tossing apples back and forth. My notes say “can catch an apple but it’s all too funny.” It was easy so long as we didn’t try to do it.

Waves of light fanned through the room, from the fireplace but not from the fire itself. The effect is like a stroboscope. “The trouble is one can go in so many directions – which one?” I become confused – there are personal things, and inter-personal things. Humphry and I are continually “recognising” each other, on various levels.

Someone put Aldous’s recording of *Time Must Have a Stop* on the phonograph. I happened to be looking at the wood paneling and the doorknob; the light grew brighter, the knots and grains in the wood began to curl and grow and twine, the doorknob attained the most enormous significance. Significance of what? Of doorknobs: of doorknobbiness: the essence of all possible knobs. What an effort to drag one’s self away and then Aldous’s voice, and the words, and the laughter – I wrote “Aldous is so funny if you don’t listen to him.” When one’s own time sense had altered the repetition was annoying, or funny, and then (most important) one had to laugh in order to defend one’s self against going along with Eustace Barnack. This I was not prepared to do.

I put Bach’s Concerto in D Minor on the player. I recall picking it because it was Bach, but also because it said “both solo parts played by Jascha Heifetz,”<sup>43</sup> and had a photograph of the two Heifetzes looking at one another – how appropriate! I might mention also the fascination of putting on a record on the machine, turning it on ... the great pains to put the needle down, the wonder and amazement and joy when achieved – as though I had created the entire mechanism myself, and because I had done my part with care it graciously consented to play. And then the music, which lifted me and swept me away; it was so circular. I became absolutely sure that I could draw a perfect circle, and told everyone else to try, and made a page of really quite beautiful ones.

8:55 P.M. Matthew ate a raw chestnut, and gave us each some to try, saying it was so sweet. It was, incredibly so, and I roasted some but they were terribly mealy, and burned, and my mouth rebelled against it. The silkiness of the inside of the shell was marvelous. Humphry kept saying “don’t get so close to the fire, don’t fall into the fire.” I left the room, but

the effect was lessened and the group irresistible – to be light and warm again.

I began to dance, and became completely caught up in movement. Why not have a trapeze, to go round and round on, in the music? Humphry kept saying “What are we going to bring back? We must bring something back to Aldous.” They said “the dance ... bring the dance.”

I gave everyone a chrysanthemum, which seemed a terribly important thing to do – I believe I even made bows as I gave them. Mine began to unfold and expand, and I said to Humphry “it’s breathing!” he said “Flowers breathe, therefore they are.”

Here my notes say in large letters, NO CENTER. There was no central thing – just like a dream, changing focus all the time.

We all drew squares and tried to confine our attention to that area. It didn’t work. I thought “circles and squares, better have a triangle.” Drew one, which became an A, which became Aldous.

Sitting by the fire I found a piece of lemon. The taste was overpowering and almost nauseating. I offered some to Humphry to try but he said “No thank you, I tasted it while *you* were tasting it.”

Gabrielli on the phonograph. A piercing brightness. One could walk in and around the notes – time really stretched out. I watched Humphry look at me, and then at Matthew, and then back at me – the whole world hung suspended, for HOURS, as he did it.

9:30 P.M. *Elizabethan Songbag* (children’s songs of Shakespeare’s time, Esoteric Records).<sup>44</sup> I found I could still sing a round, which Humphry said was “worth noting.” This music lingers on so, it penetrated everything. It even got into the printed fabrics on the furniture. Francis and I danced and flowers grew in the air. Matthew still being detached, and being scientific and “Taking the group pulse.” We hated him for not giving in to the joy – he seemed to sit on the rim of the world, and we others in the bottom of the cup. Why didn’t he laugh? Francis and I lay on the floor, hand in hand, our noses pressed into the sheepskin rug – this is pure joy.

“A moment takes more than forever and one loses the reality of dream and the unreality of the other.” I knew, even as I wrote the sentence down, that it would be difficult to interpret later. Normality seemed absurd – this was the real world. I knew it, had been here often; it was not strange, but “where I live.”

“Zen is TRUE” – we read some of Suzuki aloud. Paradoxes make perfect sense. This feeling came back to me again and again, and I found myself answering Humphry’s questions with paradoxes of my own.

9:50 P.M. Matthew brought down a metronome. Humphry said “Absurd!” Francis laughed. I laughed. Francis said “and yet ... the music and the metronome.” “Yes,” I said.

9:55 P.M. We all sit and look at a large sea shell and say – how to tell Aldous about it, or about the dance. This worried me, as I had no idea how to do it ... unless of course Aldous would take LSD with us while we told him ...

10:00 P.M. Humphry said “NO METRONOME.”

10:10 P.M. Humphry: “Most of the physiological having passed, we can now get on without music.” We had been playing Bach sonatas for flute and harpsichord.

10:20 P.M. Being without music was sobering. We tried to get down to business. Humphry tried to communicate the name of his third dog. This did not work at all ... I said “Whiskey, and Brandy, and Jane ... Jane. Take Jane back to Aldous. Can’t remember the name of third dog.” I am the dog. Behind the dog, behind the dog! This is hilarious – again the recognition of one’s self, and acceptance, and compassion for one’s self.

I sit and stare at the fire. Humphry is trying to tell me something, or ask me something. Maria is there. Humphry asks “Is it Maria?” I nod yes, and know that I am crying. “What do you see?” I cannot answer, there are absolutely no words, anymore. There are no words now – one can speak of going into the light, of all things coming into order at last, of the exquisite balance of it, the perfection – not of vaulted heavens – but of things As They Are.

Perhaps it is better not to speak ... I call once, silently, to the others, “you do see, don’t you, you can’t not see, it’s all so simple.”

Shapes leave and shapes return. Someone ruffles my hair. Then it is Matthew and Francis and Humphry, and how did we all come to have cups in our hands? They turn on me, snapping like dogs, men against woman. Humphry says “Why did you do it?” and I become ten feet tall and very thin and very powerful and malignant, and I destroy them, because they cannot cheat me and ignore me.

I am full of poison, which is reinforced by drinking the lemonade, and I go to crouch in a corner. Francis curses me and throws his cup of lemonade at me. This “woke me” and I then considered, abstractly, the effect of lemonade on rug and clothing, and even made some slight effort to clean it up.

Then it becomes clear to me that Francis and Humphry are both in a bad way, and that Humphry is worried about it. He gives Matthew some orders about sugar and lemon and says “we must get out of it by midnight.” I become terribly concerned but unable to help much with practical matters like sugar (I did find myself in the children’s room at some time during this period, as both children woke up – how I got there I don’t know. They were easily soothed and went back to sleep). Matthew comes with sugar lumps soaked in lemon juice, which we fed madly to Francis, and to Humphry, and to ourselves – the sugar became quite symbolic; in order to help anyone we all had to eat it. Humphry is able to tell Matthew where to find the nicotinic acid. We eat that, and the bitterness of it is perfectly appalling. A great crisis, and the group really galvanized. Now we must do something – all bars are down, what an enormous relief. Matthew and I exchange looks – can we rescue, and at what cost? I think maybe the best thing [is] if Matthew and I can let go and crash too, but no time, and anyway we are all together. Rescue is possible only if we clasp hands, and eat the horrible sugar, and say “together.” Love is the only thing which will rescue any of us. Humphry looks ashen and in shock. Francis looks like he is being tortured. The problem is to rescue Francis, which will also rescue Humphry whose concern seems to be with Francis. Francis is occupied with the four of us being totally responsible for the universe, which we must rebuild. This does not come across to us, but what we say seems helpful – we speak about his eyes, and his “R’s,” I tell him about childbirth which he thinks will be terribly hard. He wants us to be five instead of four, he speaks of Plato, and for an immensely long moment he looks at God, as the Fifth One. Gradually he recovers and we realize that Humphry’s grave concern was that Francis would die, which would mean the end of his work (Humphry’s) as we wouldn’t be able to explain it. Matthew concerned over Humphry possibly dying. Death did not occur to me at all, but I felt we must follow Francis and stay together at all cost.

All seemed relatively normal after that; Matthew went to bed, feeling very jumpy. The rest of us dozed and talked in the living room. About 5:00 A.M. Francis became extremely uncomfortable and we went out and walked up and down the road for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour. The weirdness of the mist and the trees and the crows and the road to nothingness ... Francis complained of feeling as though he were nobody, that he didn't exist. I wanted to run into the nothingness and embrace it, but instead closed my eyes and let myself be led quietly, along the last mile of the dream.

Breakfast was a little difficult to make, and getting Matthew off to work at 8:30; his vision and depth perception normal and he could drive a car perfectly well. Humphry and Francis and I took the children for a walk in the woods during the morning, still feeling "far away." Driving Humphry to the station seemed to me difficult because it was too easy; one had to concentrate every second or one wouldn't bother at all.

And what about the after-effects? There are some; as Aldous says, one can never be quite the same again.

For many days I had the strong feeling that only the four of us really existed. This I believe is a common feeling among any people who pass through a crisis together. I was very sorry to see Humphry and Matthew leave afterwards, and would have been extremely unhappy had not Francis remained here for several days ... simply being in the same room was very reassuring.

I was quite struck by the feeling that I could never be *really* angry – totally angry – again. Having seen all sides this is an impossible emotion ... not that one does not become annoyed, or even "angry" (I'm sure I scream at the children as much as ever), but basically one is not fooled into taking one's moods as seriously as before.

I no longer smoke. This of course has been accomplished by hordes of people without benefit of LSD; however, there is no doubt that before Francis crushed my cigarette and said "why go on and on with that awful smoking!" I had not thought of giving it up. In fact I didn't think *then* of doing so, but found in the next few days that my consumption was way down. Giving up became inevitable, which I regret because I enjoyed it hugely.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP LSD

1. That the group should come together well in advance of the experiment. There should be no sense of rush, and I think perhaps people should not travel long distances on that day.
2. That, for experimental purposes, it is probably best to use people with at least one previous experience with LSD, or mescaline. There is so much to be seen and explored, so much to “get used to” – I for one would have resisted very much structuring this time, and would now welcome it the second time around.
3. That there must be “structure,” previously discussed and agreed upon, and that some simple ritual also be tried.
4. That any and all remedies such as sugar, niacin, lemonade, be in great supply and near at hand, and that all members of the group be instructed about its use.
5. That the group should stay together for a least two days after taking LSD. If you think of using such groups for “healing” this is of utmost importance ... it is during this period, when we think we are normal but are in fact not, that I believe we might most influence each other.
6. That some mechanical form of recording take place, so that the group is not hampered by this effort.

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
1 December 1956*

My dear Francis,

How very good to hear from you, both the report which is excellent and the letter.

We should have had time to talk it over like the Indians, just as we should have had time to structure it fully. But had we done that we would not have done what we did and I don't think we would have discovered in one session the tremendous possibilities of shared feeling or tremendous



need for it. My respect of Bergson's extraordinary intuition about the brain working to cut things out has gone up greatly. We have to cut out awareness of: i) our hatred, fears, etc. which would otherwise overwhelm us, and ii) our sense of suprapersonal identity which would have been biologically unuseful at some stages in our development. I wonder whether we may not have carried this a bit too far? In any case we shall have to ponder this a bit.

I'm not sure how the atom bomb crept in or exactly where the sense of disaster came from. However it was there and in weathering it we found out a good deal about ourselves and about the other. Our great trouble is that our language is as unsuitable for it as it is for physics. Whorf deals brilliantly with this in his discussion of Hopi.<sup>45</sup> The Zen masters were preoccupied by it when they said not this, not that, etc. What in fact they were saying was that their linguistic apparatus was not suitable for delineating and discussing such states. This again is not surprising. I think you will find that our capacity for symbolizing is limited by the dimensional system in which we exist.

By certain devices (perspective is one) a four-dimensional system can be represented in a two-dimensional symbolization. It seems possible then that we *may* (and being very unmathematical it is a large may) have a formula. Where  $N$  is the number of dimensions  $N-2$  is the minimal dimensions of the schema necessary to represent them (unless special techniques are used). This means that only with very great ingenuity could we symbolize a six-dimensional system in a way which would be generally understood. The usual way has been to talk of other worlds, heavens, hells, etc., but unfortunately this is misleading. The Zen masters brilliantly understood this, however it did not make their ideas very much easier to communicate, particularly when it has not always been recognized that they are defining by negation – for if one says a thing is not this or that eventually one makes a silhouette of it, as it were.

I shall do my very best to find a suitable place for you. My initial attempt failed but we have several others up our sleeve. What I would like you to do is to treat a mental hospital like Mayan tribesmen and draw out the customs and beliefs of us natives from the same sympathetic detachment which you use for the scarlet ponchoed horsemen. If I don't succeed immediately it does not mean never – our research progresses and

one day, not too far distant, when we no longer need their funds, I suspect we shall not have any difficulty.

I shall be brooding on your excellent report.

Ever,  
Humphry

---

*Box 1056  
Weyburn, Sask.  
3 December 1956*

My dear Ellen,

Many thanks for your letter and report. Am keenly looking forward to having Matthew's views. I have Francis' on hand.

I think Matthew is right to be critical, but I still think that the difficulty in recording is technically far harder than one supposes at first. I have tried many sorts of recorder and we have not yet got even a sound one which is sensitive, easy to use, will not have to be changed in the middle, and does not obtrude too much.

I am sure that the group should have a few days before hand as you suggest *and* a day or two afterwards. In the course of this time they would be able to record something and would finally make individual and group reports. However having agreed that this is correct I think one is always in danger of doing *no* experiments because one is so keen to work only under the best conditions!

Our work in schizophrenia was severely criticized on these grounds. It was too subjective, not sufficiently controlled, etc. etc., but what is now becoming clear is that we may take years to design elegant and wholly satisfactory experiments. In the meanwhile we will probably wholly change our understanding of schizophrenia long before the wholly elegant experiments have been carried out. I would say that our experiment was also an exploration – not an experiment, perhaps, but not the same as hashish smoking because we are using the information to develop something else.

I find your recommendations excellent and shall endeavor to make full use of them. Oddly I believe that in spite or possibly because of our errors in design the exploration was exceptionally valuable and we shall glean much from it.

We must have many aspects of mind approaching these experiments, from the most detached, systematic and scientific to the wholly and passionately involved. Only in this way will we learn how to make use of them and discover something about ourselves. Personal explorations should come first.

My bag has been located and is on the way here. I shall be glad to get it, but would have been gladder to have had it three weeks ago.

Am hard at work in many directions, hospital design (have been asked to consult on this in Pennsylvania), articles, the schizophrenia research, and something which cannot be verbally communicated, but one day I hope to tell you. It is utterly odd, but great fun. We have a new suggestion for an evolutionary leap which takes up Aldous' idea of soma, but very much more seriously and systematically. Aldous put his finger on the spot, but I don't think he drew the correct conclusion. Soma is an amateur idea, a brilliant one, but the implication is different. Having got his bottle babies it should have been possible to alter their enzymic arrangements so as to make soma unnecessary. I believe we can make an evolutionary leap in a non-genetic way. It should be fun.

Love to you both. Jane sends love.

Love,  
Humphry

<sup>1</sup> See Osmond's letter to Aldous Huxley of 20 July 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Abram Hoffer, Humphry Osmond, M.J. Callbeck, and I. Kahan, "Treatment of Schizophrenia with Nicotinic Acid and Nicotinamide," *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Psychopathology* 18, no. 2 (April-June 1957): 131-58.

<sup>3</sup> David Lester (1916-90). American biochemist who conducted extensive research on alcoholism.

<sup>4</sup> Jonas N. Muller (fl. 1920-82). American physician who specialized in public health.

<sup>5</sup> Humphry Osmond, "A Review of the Clinical Effects of Psychotomimetic Agents," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 66, no. 3 (March 1957): 418-34.

<sup>6</sup> Humphry Osmond, "Inspiration and Method in Schizophrenia Research," *Diseases of the Nervous System* 16, no. 4 (1955): 1-4.

- 7 John Zerny and Humphry Osmond, "In Defence of Nursing," *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 75, no. 9 (1956): 752–6.
- 8 Humphry Osmond, "Notes on Note-Taking," *Lancet* 266, no. 6887 (August 1955): 415–17.
- 9 Fred G. Stowe's *Short-Longhand: As Universally Used in Journalism* (1943) is cited in Osmond's article "Notes on Note-Taking."
- 10 Ernest Gowers (1880–1966). English writer and civil servant whose pamphlet *Plain Words* (1948) is cited in Osmond's article "Notes on Note-Taking."
- 11 Ben Hecht (1894–1964). American journalist, director, and screenwriter whose *A Child of the Century: The Autobiography of Ben Hecht* was published in 1954.
- 12 Humphry Osmond, "On Being Mad," *Saskatchewan Psychiatric Services Journal* 1, no. 2 (September 1952): 63–70.
- 13 Arnold Lucius Gesell (1880–1961). American psychologist and pediatrician whose research focused on child development.
- 14 One or two words are missing from the text at this point.
- 15 "Jukes" was the pseudonym of a "family" in upstate New York that became an example used to support various theories of eugenics. Richard L. Dugdale's (1841–83) *The Jukes: A Study in Crime, Pauperism, Disease and Heredity* was published in 1877, although much of his evidence and many of his findings have since been discredited.
- 16 In a four-page, privately held letter to his wife written the day after the experience, Osmond's brief description focuses on the commonplace and stands out for what it does not mention. His matter-of-fact narration stands in stark contrast to the passion he expresses to those who took part in the experiment with him: "I took the train to Woodbridge a journey of about 1½ hours through the lovely Connecticut country of which I have already told you. Matthew met me at the station – he has a mop of hair over his eyes, a Huxley habit going back to grandfather T.H. who championed Darwin against anti-evolutionists. We drove to their house which is deep in the woods very beautifully situated. An old barn which has been converted. Ellen asked keenly after you and Little. She is a likeable person. Shortly after this Francis came, he is Julian's son – more slender than Matthew with a voice very much like Aldous'. He is an anthropologist. I am hopeful that we might get him to work with us later on. I think he would like to try his techniques on a mental hospital and also on the Indians. We carried out an experiment which was in many ways very successful, though puzzling. I can see that a vast amount of thought and effort will have to go into work of this sort. Next day after not very much sleep I left the Huxleys about midday and trained to New York and then on to Princeton where I was giving my first lecture."
- 17 In a privately held letter to Ellen on 6 May 1957, Osmond describes an experiment he did with only one other participant: "The four group working as a group is, I think, technically beyond us at present – but by using the knowledge gained from it in a series of two groups we shall learn how to construct one later. It is much more complex than I had supposed (I mean by this the operational details, because I had not doubted the complexity of the whole exploration)."
- 18 This letter is not dated, but the reference to Osmond's phone call indicates that it is a response to the carbon forwarded to Francis by Ellen, mentioned above. In addition, the question about the name of a dog raised in the postscript is answered by Osmond in his letter of 21 November 1956.
- 19 The *Bardo Thodol*, which Aldous Huxley and Osmond refer to several times in their letters, was popularized in the West by Walter Evans-Wentz's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, published by Oxford University Press in 1927. The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* is a funerary text based on ancient manuscripts translated by Karl Lepsius in 1842. The "Aztec one" probably refers to the calendar-based *Book of Destiny*.
- 20 John Custance's *Wisdom, Madness and Folly: The Philosophy of a Lunatic* was published in 1951; see Osmond's letter to Aldous Huxley of 22 August 1953. Clifford W. Beers (1876–1943) was

a mental health advocate who gave an autobiographical account of his time in a mental institution in *A Mind That Found Itself*, first published in 1908.

21 Konrad Zacharias Lorenz (1903–89). Austrian zoologist, ethnologist, and co-winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1973. In his work with geese, he studied the process of imprinting, by which young birds bond with the first moving object they see within hours of hatching.

22 See Osmond’s letter to Aldous Huxley of 31 October 1956.

23 See Matthew 7:16–20.

24 Also known as the St Crispin’s Day speech; see William Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, IV.iii.

25 Osmond refers here to William Blake’s unfinished poem *Vala, or The Four Zoas*, begun in 1797.

26 Raynor Johnson’s *Nurslings of Immortality* was published in 1957.

27 H.G. Wells’s science fiction short story “The New Accelerator” was published in 1901.

28 Guillaume Du Fay (ca. 1397–1474). Franco-Flemish musician.

29 Eustace Barnack is a character in Huxley’s novel *Time Must Have a Stop* (1944).

30 “Hail, true body,” a common Eucharistic hymn.

31 Domenico Gabrielli (1651–90). Italian composer.

32 Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969). Thirty-fourth president of the United States (1953–61).

33 Nikolai Bulganin (1895–1975). Soviet politician who, at the time of this letter, was premier of the Soviet Union.

34 Reference to one of the tenets put forth by Andreas Vesalius (1514–64) in his seminal work on human anatomy, *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*, published in 1543 and drawn in part from the works of Leonardo da Vinci.

35 Reference to Hindu belief that Vishnu created the universe by commanding that it be done.

36 This experiment took place the day after Adlai Stevenson II (1900–65) was defeated for the second time by Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969) in the US presidential election.

37 This letter is not dated, but it seems to be the other “couple of pages” Francis referred to in his previous letter.

38 Bernardino de Sahagún (1499–1590). Spanish-born Franciscan Friar who moved to “New Spain” (now Mexico) as part of the colonization effort and spent the rest of his life studying the Aztecs. The widely cited quote is from Sahagún’s *Historia general de las cosas de la Nueva España* (1585).

39 Reference to the opening sentence of Russian author Leo Tolstoy’s (1828–1910) novel *Anna Karenina*, first published in 1877 and translated into English in 1887.

40 Alexandra David-Néel (1868–1969). Belgian-born opera singer, explorer, and writer who published extensively on Tibet and other Eastern countries and cultures.

41 Robert Allerton Parker’s *A Yankee Saint: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community*, a description of a mystical and Utopian experiment in New York State, was first published in 1935.

42 Huxley’s “*Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*” and *Other Essays*, titled *Adonis and the Alphabet and Other Essays* in the United Kingdom, was published in 1956; in the appendix, he discussed the human sexual experience.

43 Jascha Heifetz (1901–86). Russian-born violin virtuoso who spent most of his career in the United States.

44 The album *An Elizabethan Songbag for Young People* was released in 1954.

45 Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897–1941). American linguist who studied the Hopi language extensively.

### APPENDIX THREE

## Aldous Huxley's Account of Maria Huxley's Last Days, ca. 15 February 1955

Maria was in hospital for two periods of about two weeks each, with an interval of a week between them. During these two periods she underwent a long series of tests and was given twelve X-ray treatments to relieve the pain in the lower spine and to guard against the spread, in that area, of what was suspected to be malignancy. These treatments were tolerated at first fairly well; but the last of them produced distressing symptoms of radiation sickness. The symptoms were aggravated, a few days later, by the appearance of jaundice, due, as it turned out, to cancer of the liver. During the last few days in hospital Maria was unable to keep any food or liquid on the stomach and had to be fed intravenously.

She was brought home in an ambulance on Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, and installed in her own room. The nurse who had taken care of her after her operation,<sup>1</sup> four years before, was waiting for her when she arrived. Maria had a real affection for this good, deeply compassionate woman, and the affection was warmly reciprocated. Three days later a second nurse was called in for night duty.

On the Monday afternoon her old friend LeCron,<sup>2</sup> the psychotherapist, came in for half an hour, put her into hypnosis and gave her suggestions to the effect that the nausea, which had made her life miserable during the preceding days, would disappear, and that she would be able to keep down whatever food was given her. Later that evening I repeated these suggestions, and from that time forward there was no more nausea and it was possible for her to take liquid nourishment and a sufficiency of water for the body's needs. No further intravenous feeding was necessary.

The progress of the disease was extraordinarily rapid. She was still able to find a great and fully conscious happiness in seeing her son, who had flown in from New York on Tuesday morning. But by Wednesday, when

her sister Suzanne<sup>3</sup> arrived, her response was only just conscious. She recognized Suzanne and said a few words to her; but after that there was very little communication. Maria could hear still; but it was becoming harder and harder for her to speak, and the words, when they came, were wandering words, whose relevance was to the inner life of illness, not to the external world.

I spent a good many hours of each day sitting with her, sometimes saying nothing, sometimes speaking. When I spoke, it was always, first of all, to give suggestions about her physical well being. I would go through the ordinary procedure of hypnotic induction, beginning by suggestions of muscular relaxation, then counting to five or ten, with the suggestion that each count would send her deeper into hypnosis. I would generally accompany the counting with passes of the hand, which I drew slowly down from the head towards the feet. After the induction period was over, I would suggest that she was feeling, and would continue to feel, comfortable, free from pain and nausea, desirous of taking water and liquid nourishment whenever they should be offered. These suggestions were, I think, effective; at any rate there was little pain and it was only during the last 36 hours that sedation (with Demerol) became necessary.

These suggestions for physical comfort were in every case followed by a much longer series of suggestions addressed to the deeper levels of the mind. Under hypnosis Maria had had, in the past, many remarkable visionary experiences of a kind which theologians would call “pre-mystical.” She had also had, especially while we were living in the Mojave Desert, during the war, a number of genuinely mystical experiences, had lived with an abiding sense of divine immanence, of Reality totally present, moment by moment in every object, person and event. This was the reason for her passionate love of the desert. For her, it was not merely a geographical region; it was also a state of mind, a metaphysical reality, an unequivocal manifestation of God.

In the desert and, later, under hypnosis, all Maria’s visionary and mystical experiences had been associated with light. (In this she was in no way exceptional. Almost all mystics and visionaries have experienced Reality in terms of light – either of light in its naked purity, or of light infusing and radiating out of things and persons seen with the inner eye or in the external world.) Light had been the element in which her spirit had

lived, and it was therefore to light that all my words referred. I would begin by reminding her of the desert she had loved so much, of the vast crystalline silence, of the overarching sky, of the snow-covered mountains at whose feet we had lived. I would ask her to open the eyes of memory to the desert sky and to think of it as the blue light of Peace, soft and yet intense, gentle and yet irresistible in its tranquillizing power. And now, I would say, it was evening in the desert, and the sun was setting. Overhead the sky was more deeply blue than ever. But in the West there was a great golden light of Joy, the rosy light of Love. And to the South rose the mountains, covered with snow and glowing with the white light of pure Being – the white light which is the source of the coloured lights, the absolute Being of which love, joy and peace are manifestations and in which all the dualisms of our experience, all the pairs of opposites – positive and negative, good and evil, pleasure and pain, health and sickness, life and death – are reconciled and made one. And I would ask her to look at these lights of her beloved desert and to realize that they were not merely symbols, but actual expressions of the divine nature – an expression of pure Being; an expression of the peace that passeth all understanding; an expression of the divine joy; an expression of the love which is at the heart of things, at the core, along with peace and joy and being, of every human mind. And having reminded her of these truths – truths which we all know in the unconscious depths of our being, which some know consciously but only theoretically and which a few (Maria was one of them) have known directly, albeit briefly and by snatches – I would urge her to advance into those lights, to open herself up to joy, peace, love and being, to permit herself to be irradiated by them and to become one with them. I urged her to become what in fact she had always been, what all of us have always been, a part of the divine substance, a manifestation of love, joy, peace, a being identical with the One Reality. And I kept on repeating this, urging her to go deeper and deeper into the light, ever deeper and deeper.

So the days passed and, as her body weakened, her surface mind drifted further and further out of contact, so that she no longer recognized us or paid attention. And yet she must still have heard and understood what was said; for she would respond by appropriate action, when the nurse asked her to open her mouth or to swallow. Under anaesthesia, the sense of hearing remains awake long after the other senses have been eliminated. And even



in deep sleep suggestions will be accepted and complicated sentences can be memorized. Addressing the deep mind which never sleeps, I went on suggesting that there should be relaxation on the physical level, and an absence of pain and nausea; and I continued to remind her of who she really was – a manifestation in time of the eternal, a part forever unseparated from the whole, of the divine reality; I went on urging her to go forward into the light.

At a little before three on Saturday morning<sup>4</sup> the night nurse came and told us that the pulse was failing. I went and sat by Maria's bed and, from time to time, leaned over and spoke into her ear. I told her that I was with her and would always be with her in that light which was the central reality of our beings. I told her that she was surrounded by human love and that this love was the manifestation of a greater love, by which she was enveloped and sustained. I told her to let go, to forget the body, to leave it lying here like a bundle of old clothes, and to allow herself to be carried, as a child is carried, into the heart of the rosy light of love. She knew what love was, had been capable of love as few human beings are capable. Now she must go forward into love, must permit herself to be carried into love, deeper and deeper into it, so that at last she would be capable of loving as God loves – of loving everything, infinitely, without judging, without condemning, without either craving or abhorring. And then there was peace. How passionately, from the depth of a fatigue which illness and a frail constitution had often intensified to the point of being hardly bearable, she had longed for peace! And now she would have peace. And where there was peace and love, there too there would be joy, and the river of the coloured lights was carrying her towards the white light of pure being, which is the source of all things and the reconciliation of all opposites in unity. And she was to forget, not only her poor body, but the time in which that body had lived. Let her forget the past, leave her old memories behind. Regrets, nostalgias, remorse, apprehensions – all these were barriers between her and the light. Let her forget them, forget them completely, and stand here, transparent, in the presence of the light absorbing it, allowing herself to be made one with it in the timeless now of the present instant. "Peace now," I kept repeating. "Peace, love, joy *now*. Being *now*."

For the last hour I sat or stood with my left hand on her head and the right on the solar plexus. Between two right-handed persons this contact

seems to create a kind of vital circuit. For a restless child, for a sick or tired adult, there seems to be something soothing and refreshing about being in such a circuit. And so it proved even in this extremity. The breathing became quieter, and I had the impression that there was some kind of release. I went on with my suggestions and reminders, reducing them to their simplest form and repeating them close to her ear. “Let go, let go. Forget the body, leave it lying here; it is of no importance now. Go forward into the light. Let yourself be carried into the light. No memories, no regrets, no looking backwards, no apprehensive thoughts about your own or anyone else’s future. Only the light. Only this pure being, this love, this joy. Above all this peace. Peace in this timeless moment, peace now, peace *now*.” When the breathing ceased, at about six, it was without any struggle.

<sup>1</sup> Helen Halsberg; see Aldous Huxley’s letter to Osmond of 10 February 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 567, identifies this psychotherapist as Leslie LeCron.

<sup>3</sup> Suzanne Nys Nicolas.

<sup>4</sup> Maria died on 12 February 1955.

APPENDIX FOUR

## Humphry Osmond's Statement on Peyote, 5 November 1955

*To Whom It May Concern:*

I, Humphry Osmond, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, England; Diplomate in Psychological Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians, London, England; Certified Specialist in Psychiatry by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Canada; Member of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association, London; Member of the Canadian Psychiatric Association; Member of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry; Consultant to the Federal Department of Health and Welfare, Ottawa, on the Training of Psychiatric Nurses; Clinical Associate in the Department of Psychiatry, the University of Saskatchewan; declare that I am presently Physician Superintendent of the Saskatchewan Hospital, Weyburn, Saskatchewan, a provincial hospital with a population of about 1,800 gravely mentally ill people.

After training for medicine at Guy's Hospital, London, England, I was licensed by the General Medical Council, London, England, in 1942. Following my internship and a period spent at sea as a Surgeon Lieutenant, Royal Navy, I have spent the last eleven years in the practice of psychiatry (psychological medicine). I have held the following appointments: 1945–47, Psychiatrist to the Royal Naval Hospital, Bighi Malta G.C. and the 90<sup>th</sup> General Military Hospital Imtarfa Malta G.C.; 1948, Assistant in the Department of Neurology, Guy's Hospital, London, under Sir Charles Symonds, FRCP; 1949–51, First Assistant in the Department of Psychological Medicine, Saint George's Hospital, London, under Dr Desmond Curran, FRCP; 1951–53, Clinical Director of the Saskatchewan Hospital, Weyburn, Saskatchewan.

Furthermore I am a member of the Saskatchewan Committee for Schizophrenia Research, supported by the Provincial Government of

Saskatchewan, the Federal Government of Canada and the Rockefeller Foundation. I was a co-founder of this research group with my colleague Dr Abram Hoffer, PhD, MD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Saskatchewan, and Director of Psychiatric Research in the Province of Saskatchewan. Dr Hoffer is additionally consultant in Psychiatric Research to the Federal Government of Canada.

In the course of our researches my colleagues and I have made extensive studies, many of which have been published and many more are in the process of publication, on the following substances: mescaline (the active principle of the cactus peyote – *anhalonium williamsii*), lysergic acid di-ethyl-amide, adrenochrome, adrenolutin, ololiuqui (*Rivea corymbosa*). Our work has been presented and discussed at many learned professional gatherings. I have carried out many experiments with all these substances on myself and on volunteer subjects. Our work has made it necessary to read widely in the scientific literature of many languages, but also to consult directly with most of those who work in this field in both North America and Europe.

We have naturally been aware that some of these substances might produce an addiction or other deleterious effects. We did not ourselves use peyote (*anhalonium lewinii*) because it is less effective than the synthetically produced substance, mescaline; the amount of active principle in the cactus varies greatly from sample to sample; it has a queer taste which some people find nauseating. In our scrutiny of the extensive literature we have found no evidence that peyote is

1. A drug of addiction. It does not produce a morbid craving, nor does its discontinuance result in bodily and mental disturbances characteristic of addictive substances.
2. We have found no evidence that those Indians who take peyote as part of a religious rite are harmed by it. Indeed the available evidence is exactly to the contrary. They seem to be richer, happier and more socially cohesive than those who do not do so.
3. We have an increasing amount of evidence that some of these substances, in particular mescaline and lysergic acid, when used by skilled therapists under the right conditions, can be highly beneficial to nervous and unhappy people. It seems very promising

in certain cases of addiction to alcohol which would otherwise seem to have a very poor outlook. These treatments are still in the early stages and require thorough scrutiny.

These considerations do not, of course, alter the laws of the State of California. Nevertheless I believe that those who administer justice should be aware that the effects of the cactus peyote (*anhalonium lewinnii*) do not resemble those of alcohol, opium, morphine, heroin, cocaine, and many barbiturate drugs, and other dangerous addictives. Indeed, I recently interviewed a patient in the best known mid-western centre for psychiatric treatment in the United States, who had for many years been an addict, taking every known drug in large quantities. He assured me that it was after taking peyote (*anhalonium lewinnii*), which he had run across in the course of seeking ways to relieve his craving, that he decided to apply to this well known centre in the United States for psychiatric help, a course of action that had previously been repugnant to him. He says that peyote gave him a deeper self understanding and the sense of the worthwhileness of life that he did not have before. With this deeper understanding and a greater sense of worthwhileness he recognized what a terrible situation he had sunk into, by becoming totally dependent on narcotics, and determined to change his ways. I am happy to say that he is now freed from his multiple addictions. Curiously, he had no special wish to take peyote again.

In my opinion, peyote, like anything else that contains a powerful chemical substance, should be handled with respect. This would apply equally to alcoholic drinks, aspirins, tobacco, coffee, or even coca-cola. Peyote should not be confused with those powerful, damaging habit-forming narcotics which form the basis of a world-wide criminal traffic. It can be no danger to a responsible person and may broaden and enlarge the mind. A skilled person can use it for a valuable form of therapy. In the hands of a foolish, cruel or malignant person it could be harmful, but is there anything so good that the fool, the brute, or the wicked cannot pervert it? Even the Christian Eucharist was used for the devil's worship in the Black Mass.

I submit this as my true and considered opinion regarding the cactus peyote (*anhalonium lewinnii*).

Date:

Signed,

Witnessed by:  
Commissioner of Oaths

Humphry Osmond  
Physician Superintendent

# Bibliography

## ARCHIVES

- Abram Hoffer Collection. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, Regina.  
*Aldous and Laura Huxley Papers*. UCLA Library Special Collections, Los Angeles.  
*Canadian Psychiatric Association Papers*. RG 28, I 165, Library and Archives Canada.  
*Dr Humphry Osmond Papers*. W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.  
Marjorie McEnaney Files. Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

## BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- Angoff, Allen. *Eileen Garrett and the World beyond the Senses*. New York: William Morrow, 1974.  
Bannon, Lisa. "The Vision Thing: Disney Tries to Display Mr. Magoo's Insight." *Wall Street Journal*, 31 July 1997.  
Bedford, Sybille. *Aldous Huxley: A Biography*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1974.  
Braslow, Joel. *Mental Ills and Bodily Cures*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.  
Burnham, John. "American Medicine's Golden Age: What Happened to It?" *Science* 215, no. 4539 (1982): 1474–9.  
Collins, Ann. *In the Sleep Room: The Story of the CIA Brainwashing Experiments in Canada*. Toronto: Key Porter, 1997.  
Dyck, Erika. "Introduction." In *A Culture's Catalyst: Historical Encounters with Peyote and the Native American Church in Canada*, ed. Fannie Kahan, ix–xxxiv. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016.  
– *Psychedelic Psychiatry: LSD from Clinic to Campus*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.  
– "Spaced Out in Saskatchewan: Modernism, Anti-Psychiatry, and Deinstitutionalization, 1950–1968." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 84, no. 4 (2010), 640–66.  
Dyck, Erika, and Larry Stewart, eds. *The Uses of Humans in Experiment: Perspectives from the 17th to the 20th Century*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.  
"The Edison of Our Age?" *The Economist*, 30 November 2006.  
<https://www.economist.com/node/8312367>.  
"End the Ban on Psychoactive Drug Research." *Scientific American* 310, no. 2 (February 2014): 33.  
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/end-the-ban-on-psychoactive-drug-research>.  
Fabing, H.D. "Experimental Compound MER-17 (Frenquel): A New Blocking Agent against the Development of LSD-25 Psychosis." *Psychiatric Research Reports* 1 (1955): 140–4.  
Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Vintage, 1965.  
Friend, David. *The Peyote Religion among the Navaho*. Chicago: Aldine, 1966.  
Freud, Sigmund. *On Dreams*. Leipzig and Vienna: Franz Deuticke, 1900.  
Furst, Peter. *The Flesh of the Gods: The Ritual Use of Hallucinogens*. New York: Praeger, 1972.

- Gatlin, Stephen H. "William H. Sheldon and the Culture of the Somatotype." PhD diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1997. <http://hdl.handle.net/10919/37907>.
- Gelman, Sheldon. *Medicating Schizophrenia: A History*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999.
- Gingrich, Arnold. *Nothing but People: The Early Days at Esquire, a Personal History, 1928–1958*. New York: Crown, 1971.
- Goffman, Erving. *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1961.
- Griffiths, R., W. Richards, M. Johnson, U. McCann, and R. Jesse. "Mystical-Type Experiences Occasioned by Psilocybin Mediate the Attribution of Personal Meaning and Spiritual Significance 14 Months Later." *Journal of Psychopharmacology* 22, no. 6 (2008): 621–32.
- Grob, Charles, Alicia Danforth, and Gurpreet Chopra. "Pilot Study of Psilocybin Treatment for Anxiety in Patients with Advanced-Stage Cancer." *Archives of General Psychiatry* 68, no. 1 (2011): 71–8.
- Grob, Gerald N. "American Psychiatry: From Hospital to Community in Modern America." *Caduceus* 12, no. 3 (1996): 49–54.
- "The National Institute of Mental Health and Mental Health Policy, 1949–1965." In *Biomedicine in the Twentieth Century: Practices, Policies, and Politics*, ed. C. Hannaway, 59–94. Washington, DC: ios Press, 2008.
- Gruenberg, Ernest M., and Matthew Huxley. "The Conference on Causes of Mental Disorders: A Review of Epidemiological Knowledge, 1959." *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (March 1961): 7–13.
- Healy, David. *The Creation of Psychopharmacology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.
- *Let Them Eat Prozac: The Unhealthy Relationship between the Pharmaceutical Industry and Depression*. New York: New York University Press, 2004.
- Herzen, Alexander. "To an Old Comrade." 1869. In *A. Herzen: Selected Philosophical Works*, trans. L. Navrozov, 576–95. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1957.
- Herzog, Dagmar. *Cold War Freud: Psychoanalysis in an Age of Catastrophes*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Hinkle, Lawrence E. Jr, and Harold G. Wolff. "Communist Interrogation and Indoctrination of 'Enemies of the States': Analysis of Methods Used by the Communist State Police (a Special Report)." *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 76, no. 2 (August 1956): 115–74.
- Hoffer, Abram. *Adventures in Psychiatry: The Scientific Memoirs of Dr. Abram Hoffer*. Caledon, ON: KOS Publishing, 2005.
- "Humphry Osmond: Countering Schizophrenia with Vitamins." *Guardian* (London), 26 February 2004.
- "Humphry Osmond Obituary: Doctor Who Helped Discover the Hallucinogenic Cause of Schizophrenia." *Guardian Weekly* (London), 4–10 March 2004.
- "In Memoriam: Donald (Ben) C. Webster." *Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine* 13 (1998): 3–5.
- Hoffer, Abram, and Humphry Osmond. *The Hallucinogens*. New York: Academic Press, 1967.
- Hoffer, Abram, Humphry Osmond, M.J. Callbeck, and I. Kahan. "Treatment of Schizophrenia with Nicotinic Acid and Nicotinamide." *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Psychopathology* 18, no. 2 (April–June 1957): 131–58.
- Hoffer, Abram, Humphry Osmond, and John R. Smythies. "Schizophrenia: A New Approach II: Result of a Year's Research." *Journal of Mental Science* 100, no. 418 (January 1954): 29–45.
- Hoyle, Fred. *The Nature of the Universe*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1950.
- Huxley, Aldous. *After Many a Summer*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1939.



- *Ape and Essence*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1948.
  - *The Art of Seeing*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942.
  - *Beyond the Mexique Bay*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1934.
  - *Brave New World*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1932.
  - *Brave New World Revisited*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1958.
  - *Complete Essays of Aldous Huxley*. Vol. 6, 1956–1963. Ed. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002.
  - *The Devils of Loudon*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1952.
  - *The Doors of Perception*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1954.
  - “Drugs That Shape Men’s Minds.” *Saturday Evening Post*, 18 October 1958.
  - *Ends and Means: An Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for their Realization*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1937.
  - *Eyeless in Gaza*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1936.
  - *The Genius and the Goddess*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1955.
  - “Gesualdo: Variations on a Musical Theme.” In *Adonis and the Alphabet and Other Essays*, 251–73. London: Chatto and Windus, 1956. Published in the United States as “*Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*” and *Other Essays*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956.
  - *The Gioconda Smile: A Play*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1948.
  - *Grey Eminence: A Study in Religion and Politics*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1941.
  - *Heaven and Hell*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1956.
  - *Island*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1962.
  - *Letters of Aldous Huxley*. Ed. Grover Smith. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.
  - “The Minimum Working Hypothesis.” *Vedanta and the West*, March–April 1944.
  - “Miracle in Lebanon.” In *Adonis and the Alphabet and Other Essays*, 195–203. London: Chatto and Windus, 1956. Published in the United States as “*Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*” and *Other Essays*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956.
  - “Morals, 1837.” *Nash’s Pall Mall Magazine*, March 1937, 92–5.
  - *Music at Night and Other Essays*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1931.
  - “The Oddest Science.” *Esquire*, March 1957. In *Complete Essays of Aldous Huxley*, vol. 6, 1956–1963, ed. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, 76–82. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002.
  - *The Perennial Philosophy*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1946.
  - *Point Counter Point*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1928.
  - *Selected Letters of Aldous Huxley*. Ed. James Sexton. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007.
  - *Themes and Variations*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1950.
  - *Those Barren Leaves*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1925.
  - *Time Must Have a Stop*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1944.
  - “*Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*” and *Other Essays*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956. Published in the United Kingdom as *Adonis and the Alphabet and Other Essays*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1956.
  - “Voices.” *Atlantic Monthly* 196 (July 1955): 33–45.
  - “Who Are You?” *Harper’s Magazine*, November 1944, 512–22.
- Huxley, Julian, ed. *Aldous Huxley, 1894–1963: A Memorial Volume*. New York: Harper and Row, 1964.
- Huxley, Laura Archera. *You Are Not the Target*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1963.
- Huxley, Laura Archera, and Piero Ferrucci. *Between Heaven and Earth: Recipes for Living and Loving*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976.
- Jung, Carl. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. New York: Random House, 1963.

- Kahan, Fannie. *A Culture's Catalyst: Historical Encounters with Peyote and the Native American Church in Canada*. Ed. Erika Dyck. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016.
- Kaufman, George S., and Leueen MacGrath. *Amicable Parting*. New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1957.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *Either/Or*. Copenhagen: University Bookshop Reitzel, 1843.
- Krebs, Teri, and Pål-Ørjan Johansen. "Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD) for Alcoholism: Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials." *Journal of Psychopharmacology* 26, no. 7 (July 2012): 994–1002.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- Lewis, Aubrey. "Between Guesswork and Certainty in Psychiatry." *Lancet* 271, no. 7014 (January 1958): 171–5 and 227–30.
- Littlefield, Connie. *Hofmann's Potion: The Early Days of LSD*. Documentary, 56 min. National Film Board of Canada, 2002. [https://www.nfb.ca/film/hofmanns\\_potion](https://www.nfb.ca/film/hofmanns_potion).
- Lothane, Zvi. "Freud's 1895 Project: From Mind to Brain and Back Again." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 843, no. 1 (May 1998): 43–65.
- Maclay, Walter S., Eric Guttman, and Wilhelm Mayer-Gross. "Spontaneous Drawings as an Approach to Some Problems of Psychopathology." *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 31, no. 11 (September 1938): 1337–50.
- Marks, John. *The Search for the Manchurian Candidate: The CIA and Mind Control*. New York: Times Books, 1979.
- Mayhew, Christopher. *Men Seeking God*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1955.
- McDougall, Walter A. *The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age*. New York: Basic Books, 1995.
- Melton, Gordon J., ed. *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*. 2 vols. 5th ed. New York: Gale Group, 2001.
- Mithoefer, M., M. Wagner, A. Mithoefer, L. Jerome, and R. Doblin. "The Safety and Efficacy of  $\pm$ 3,4-Methylenedioxymethamphetamine-Assisted Psychotherapy in Subjects with Chronic, Treatment-Resistant Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: The First Randomized Controlled Pilot Study." *Journal of Psychopharmacology* 25, no. 4 (2011): 439–52.
- Myerhoff, Barbara. *Peyote Hunt: The Sacred Journey of the Huichol Indians*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976.
- Myers, Frederic W.H. *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*. Ed. Susy Smith. Foreword by Aldous Huxley. New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1961.
- Nutt, D., L. King, W. Saulsbury, and C. Blakemore. "Development of a Rational Scale to Assess the Harm of Drugs of Potential Misuse." *Lancet* 369, no. 9566 (2007): 1047–53.
- Osmond, Humphry. "Function as the Basis of Psychiatric Ward Design." *Mental Hospitals* 8, no. 4 (April 1957): 23–30.
- "How to Judge a Mental Hospital." *Schizophrenia* 1, no. 2 (1969): 95–9.
- "Inspiration and Method in Schizophrenia Research." *Diseases of the Nervous System* 16, no. 4 (1955): 1–4.
- "Mental Health." Letter. *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 74, no. 11 (1956): 936–7.
- "Models of Madness." *New Scientist* 12, no. 267 (December 1961): 777–80.
- "Night in the Tipi." In *A Culture's Catalyst: Historical Encounters with Peyote and the Native American Church in Canada*, ed. Fannie Kahan, 67–83. Introduction by Erika Dyck. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016.
- "Notes on Note-Taking." *Lancet* 266, no. 6887 (August 1955): 415–17.

- “Ololiuqui: The Ancient Aztec Narcotic.” *British Journal of Psychiatry* 101, no. 424 (July 1955): 526–37.
- “On Being Mad,” *Saskatchewan Psychiatric Services Journal* 1, no. 2 (September 1952): 63–70.
- “Peyote Night.” In *Psychedelics: The Uses and Implications of Hallucinogenic Drugs*, ed. Bernard Aaronson and Humphry Osmond, 67–85. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1970.
- “Peyote Night.” *Tomorrow Magazine* 9, no. 2 (1961): 67–83.
- “Rehabilitation Services within the Hospital.” *Mental Hospital* 9 (1958): 45–7.
- “A Review of the Clinical Effects of Psychotomimetic Agents.” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 66, no. 3 (March 1957): 418–34.
- “The Spoken Paper.” *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 71, no. 1 (1954): 49–54.
- Osmond, Humphry, and Abram Hoffer. “The Case of Mr. Kovish.” *British Journal of Psychiatry* 104, no. 435 (April 1958): 302–25.
- “Schizophrenia: A New Approach (Continued).” *British Journal of Psychiatry* 105, no. 440 (July 1959): 653–73.
- Osmond, Humphry, and John R. Smythies. “The Present State of Psychological Medicine.” *Hibbert Journal*, January 1953, 133–42.
- Porter, Roy. *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1999.
- Rafter, Nicole. “Somatotyping, Antimodernism, and the Production of Criminological Knowledge.” *Criminology* 45, no. 4 (2007): 805–33.
- Roos, David A. “Matthew Arnold and Thomas Henry Huxley: Two Speeches at the Royal Academy, 1881 and 1883.” *Modern Philology* 74, no. 3 (1977): 316–24.
- Rosenbaum, Ron. “The Great Ivy League Nude Posture Photo Scandal.” *New York Times*, 15 January 1995. <http://www.nytimes.com/1995/01/15/magazine/the-great-ivy-league-nude-posture-photo-scandal.html>.
- Roudinesco, Élisabeth. *Freud in His Time and Ours*. Trans. Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.
- Santayana, George. “The Philosophy of M. Henri Bergson.” 1913. In *Selected Critical Writings of George Santayana*, ed. Norman Henfrey, 122–60. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1968.
- Schultes, Richard E. “Peyote Cult.” *Literary Digest*, 13 November 1937.
- Schultes, Richard E., and Albert Hofmann. *Plants of the Gods: Their Sacred, Healing and Hallucinogenic Powers*. Rochester, VT: Healing Arts, 1979.
- Scull, Andrew. *Madness in Civilization: A Cultural History of Insanity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015.
- Sheldon, William H. *Atlas of Men: A Guide for Somatotyping the Adult Male at All Ages*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954.
- *Psychology and the Promethean Will*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1936.
- *Varieties of Delinquent Youth: An Introduction to Constitutional Psychiatry*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949.
- *The Varieties of Human Physique: An Introduction to Constitutional Psychology*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940.
- Shorter, Edward. *A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1997.
- Shute, Nevil. *On the Beach*. London: Heinemann, 1957.
- Siegler, Miriam, and Humphry Osmond. “Models of Madness.” *British Journal of Psychiatry* 112, no. 493 (December 1966): 1193–203.
- Slotkin, James Sydney. *Menomoni Peyotism: A Study of Individual Variation in a Primary Group with a Homogeneous Culture*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1952.

- *The Peyote Religion: A Study in Indian-White Relations*. New York: Octagon Books, 1975.
- Smythies, John R. “Autobiography.” Unpublished manuscript, 2004.
- Snow, C.P. *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1961.
- “Sociopetal Building Arouses Controversy.” *Mental Hospitals* 8, no. 5, architectural supplement (1957): 25–32.
- Sommer, Robert. “Floor Designs Can Be Therapeutic.” *Hospitals* 34 (1960): 54–6.
- Sullivan, James. “Twisted Tales: The Beatles’ Real-Life Dr. Robert Had the Feel-Good Cure for Celebs.” *Spinner*, 4 September 2009.
- Symons, Allene. *Aldous Huxley’s Hands: His Quest for Perception and the Origins and Return of Psychedelic Science*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2015.
- Szasz, T.S. “The Myth of Mental Illness.” *American Psychologist* 15, no. 2 (1960): 113–18.
- Teo, Kam. “Kiyoshi Izumi: Saskatchewan Nisei Architect – Part 1.” *Discover Nikkei*, 1 February 2016. <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2016/2/1/kiyoshi-izumi-1>.
- Tone, Andrea. “Tranquilizers on Trial: Psychopharmacology in the Age of Anxiety.” In *Medicating Modern America: Prescription Drugs in History*, ed. Andrea Tone and Elizabeth Siegel Watkins, 156–82. New York: New York University Press, 2007.
- Tupper, K., E. Wood, R. Yensen, and M. Johnson. “Psychedelic Medicine: A Re-Emerging Therapeutic Paradigm.” *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 187 no. 14 (2015): 1054–9.
- Valenstein, Elliot. *Great and Desperate Cures: The Rise and Decline of Psychosurgery and Other Radical Cures for Mental Illness*. New York: Basic Books, 1986.
- Vollenweider, F., and M. Kometer. “The Neurobiology of Psychedelic Drugs: Implications for the Treatment of Mood Disorders.” *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 11, no. 9 (September 2010): 642–51.
- Wenner, Jann. *Lennon Remembers: The Rolling Stone Interviews*. New York: Straight Arrow Books, 1971.
- Whewell, William. “On the Connexion of the Physical Sciences. By Mrs. Somerville.” *Quarterly Review* 51, no. 101 (March 1834): 54–68.
- Wiener, Norbert. “Cybernetics.” *Scientific American* 179, no. 5 (November 1948): 14–19.
- *Cybernetics: Or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*. New York: John Wiley, 1948.
- Wyndham, John. *The Day of the Triffids*. New York: Double Day, 1951.
- Yanni, Carla. “The Linear Plan for Insane Asylums in the United States before 1866.” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 62, no. 1 (2003): 24–49.
- Zerny, John, and Humphry Osmond. “In Defence of Nursing.” *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 75, no. 9 (1956): 752–6.

## About the Editors

CYNTHIA CARSON BISBEE earned master's and doctoral degrees in psychology from Auburn University. She has spent most of her career in the health and mental health fields, in both private and public hospital and community services. She met Osmond when she worked as a psychologist at Bryce Hospital in Alabama and worked closely with him for over 20 years.

PAUL BISBEE earned his doctorate in psychology from Auburn University. He was employed by the Alabama Department of Mental Health for 35 years, first at Bryce Hospital, where he met and worked with Osmond. Later, he became the director of Alabama's psychiatric hospitals. Currently, he teaches psychology in the graduate school of Troy University.

ERIKA DYCK received her doctorate from McMaster University and is a professor in the Department of History and a Canada Research Chair in Medical History at the University of Saskatchewan. She is an expert on the early history of psychedelics, notably on Osmond and his colleagues in Saskatchewan. She has published numerous books on the history of medicine and is currently the co-editor of the *Canadian Bulletin for Medical History*.

PATRICK FARRELL earned a master's degree in the history and philosophy of science from the University of Alberta. He is an editor based in Toronto. He also teaches courses in philosophy and the history of ideas in the School of Continuing Studies at the University of Toronto.

JAMES SEXTON has earned doctorates from the University of Oregon (1980) and the University of Victoria (1997), where he was a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada scholar from 1994 until 2013. Since 2000 he has been a contributing and guest editor of the *Aldous Huxley Annual* and has published numerous articles on Aldous Huxley, as well as edited or co-edited ten book-length collections of his work.

JAMES W. SPISAK earned a doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh in 1977, and he has published two books on Thomas Malory and several academic and professional articles on a variety of topics. He has been the executive director of the Aldous and Laura Huxley Literary Trust since 2011.

# Index

The index that appeared in the print version of this title was intentionally removed from the eBook. Please use the search function on your eReading device to search for terms of interest. For your reference, the terms that appear in the print index are listed below.

For the purposes of conciseness and clarity, this index limits the number of page citations for certain commonly discussed themes and people due to their ubiquity in the letters. It does not include entries for expressions of well wishes to and from family members and various acquaintances since these expressions occur in virtually every letter. Osmond's wife, Jane, and their children, Helen, Euphemia, and Julian, are among the most referred to individuals in the letters; Jane is indexed when her name occurs in a substantive context, and the children are indexed only upon the first occurrence of their names. Likewise, Osmond's routine updates on the state of the Weyburn Mental Hospital are excluded. Whereas the letters containing the origins of the term "psychedelic" are indexed, further reference to psychedelics and LSD are excluded since they comprise the substance of the correspondence.

Aaronson, Bernard

Abood, Leo G.

Abramson, Harold

Adler, Alfred

adrenalin. *See also* schizophrenia, adrenochrome hypothesis of

Agnew, Neil

alcoholism; Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

Alexander, F.M.

Alles, Gordon A.

Altschul, Rudolf

Altschule, Mark David

American Psychiatric Association

Ames, Adelbert, Jr  
Aquinas, Thomas  
Arieti, Silvano  
Arnold, Mary Augusta (Mrs Humphry Ward)  
Arnold, Matthew  
Arnold Bennett, Enoch  
Aschner, Bernard  
Assailly, Alain Jean Joseph  
Auden, W.H.  
Axelrod, Julius  
ayahuasca  
Ayer, A.J.

Bach, J.S.  
Bacon, Francis  
Banting, Frederick Grant  
Barbellion, Wilhelm Nero Pilate  
*Bardo Thodol. See also Buddhism*  
Barth, Karl  
Bartlett, Frederic  
Barton, Walter Earl  
Barzun, Jacques  
Bates, William Horatio; Bates Method  
Bateson, Gregory  
Baudelaire, Charles  
Bay, Alfred Paul  
Beaverbrook, Lord (Max Aitken)  
Beers, Clifford  
Belk, William Henry, Jr  
Bender, Hans  
Bender, Loretta  
Benoit, Hubert  
Bercel, Nicholas A.  
Berelson, Bernard  
Berger, Frank Milan  
Berger, Hans



Bergson, Henri  
Bernard, Claude  
Bernays, Edward  
Bertin, Leonard  
Best, Charles Herbert  
Bey, Tahra  
*Bhagavad Gita*  
Black, Stephen  
Blain, Daniel  
Blake, William  
Bleuler, Manfred  
Bleuler, Paul Eugen  
Blewett, Duncan  
Boehme, Jacob  
Bolton, Frances Payne  
Bone, Edith  
Bourne, Wesley  
Bouverie, Ava Alice Muriel (née Astor)  
Brain, Russell  
Brod, Max  
Brontë, Emily  
Broussais, François-Joseph-Victor  
Brown, Barbara B.  
Brown, Harrison  
Buddhism; Zen Buddhism. *See also Bardo Thodol*  
Bulganin, Nikolai  
Burns, Robert  
Burr, Courtney  
Burroughs Wellcome  
Butler, Samuel

Cairns, Hugh  
Calvocoressi, Peter  
Campbell, Joseph  
Camus, Albert  
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)

Canfield, Cass  
Cannon, Alexander  
Cantril, Hadley  
Cardinal Richelieu  
Carpenter, Clarence Ray; Carpenter's Formula  
Carroll, Lewis  
Cecil, Lord David  
Cerletti, Ugo  
Chandler, Arthur L.  
Chang, Garma Chen-Chi  
Cholden, Louis S.  
Clancy, Ian  
Clark, Kenneth  
Cohen, Sidney  
Commonwealth Fund  
Conolly, John  
Cooke, Alistair  
Corbett, Margaret Darst  
Craft, Robert Lawson  
Cromwell, Oliver  
Crookes, William  
Crowley, Aleister  
Cuba  
Cumming, John  
Cumming, Elaine  
Curran, Desmond  
Cushing, Harvey Williams  
Custance, John  
Cutler, Max  
cybernetics

Dalberg-Acton, John  
Dale, Henry Hallet  
*The Dark Night of the Soul* (St John of the Cross)  
Darwin, Charles  
David-Néel, Alexandra

Davis, Kingsley  
Dean, Douglas  
death and dying  
Descartes, René  
Dewey, John  
dianetics  
Dille, James M.  
Dingle, Herbert  
Ditman, Keith  
Dostoyevsky, Fyodor  
Douglas, T.C.  
Drake, Francis  
dreams  
Du Fay, Guillaume  
Ducasse, Curt John

Eagle, Morris N.  
Eagles, Solomon  
Ebon, Martin  
Eccles, John Carew  
Eckhart, Meister  
Eder, David  
Edison, Thomas A.  
Eeman, L.E.  
Einstein, Albert  
Einstein, Alfred  
Eisenhower, Dwight D.  
Eisner, Betty  
Eliot, T.S.  
Ellenberger, Henri  
Elliotson, John  
Ellis, Havelock  
Ehrenwald, Jan  
Erickson, Milton  
Esdaile, James  
*Esquire* (magazine)

eugenics

Evans, Margiad; *A Ray of Darkness*

Evans-Wentz, Walter

Eysenck, Hans Jürgen

Fabing, Howard Douglas

Farnsworth, Dana

Fedoroff, Sergey

Félice, Philippe de

Field, Margaret Joyce

Fischer, Roland

Fogel, Sid

Ford, Arthur

Ford, Henry; Ford Foundation

Forthman, William H.

Foucault, Michel

Francis, Saint

Fraser, Len

Frazer, James

Freud, Sigmund; Freudianism; *The Schreber Case*. *See also* psychoanalysis

Frye, Northrop

Fuseli, Henry

Gabrielli, Domenico

Gage, Margaret

Galilei, Galileo

Gallienne, William H.

Galton, Francis

Garrett, Eileen; and LSD; and parapsychology

Georgi, Felix

Gerard, Ralph

Gesell, Arnold Lucius

Gesualdo, Carlo

Gibson, William

Giffard, Adam

Giffard, Ellen Hovde Huxley; and LSD experience; and Osmond

Ginsberg, Allen  
Godel, Roger  
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von  
Goffman, Erving  
Golla, Frederick Lucian  
Gowers, Ernest  
Greene, Graham  
Grey Walter, William  
Grob, Gerald  
Groddeck, Georg  
Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry (GAP)  
Gurdjieff, George Ivanovich  
Gurney, Edmund  
Guttman, Eric  
Guy's Hospital

H-bomb  
Hall, Elsa  
Hall, Trevor Henry  
hallucinogens  
Hardwicke, Cedric  
Harley-Mason, John  
Harrison, Charles George  
Hartman, Mortimer A.  
hashish  
Haun, Paul  
Hawkins, David R.  
Heacock, Ronald A.  
Heard, Gerald  
Heath, Robert Galbraith  
Hebb, Donald Olding  
Hecht, Ben  
Hediger, Heini  
Hennell, Thomas  
heroin  
Heron, Bernard Woodburn

Heywood, Rosalind Hedley  
Himsworth, Harold  
Hincks, Claire  
Hinkel, Lawrence E.  
Hitchcock, Alfred  
Hoagland, Hudson  
Hogben, Lancelot  
Hoffa, Jimmy  
Hoffer, Abram; and farming; and hypnosis; psychedelic work of; and  
psychopharmacology; publications of; and schizophrenia  
Hoffman-La Roche (company)  
Hofmann, Albert  
Hoyle, Fred  
Hoyningen-Huene, George  
Hubbard, Alfred (Captain Al)  
Hubbard, Rita  
Hunter, John  
Hurkos, Peter  
Hutchins, Robert  
Hutton, Len  
Huxley, Aldous, publications of: *Adonis and the Alphabet*; *After Many a  
Summer*; *Ape and Essence*; *Beyond the Mexique Bay*; *Brave New World*;  
“Brave New World Revisited”; *The Devils of Loudun*; *The Doors of  
Perception*; “Drugs That Shape Men’s Minds”; *Ends and Means: An  
Enquiry into the Nature of Ideals*; *Eyeless in Gaza*; *The Genius and the  
Goddess*; *Grey Eminence*; *Heaven and Hell*; *Island*; “Miracle in  
Lebanon”; “Mother”; *Music at Night and Other Essays*; *The Perennial  
Philosophy*; *Point Counter Point*; *Texts and Pretexts*; *Themes and  
Variations*; *Those Barren Leaves*; *Time Must Have a Stop*; “Variations on  
Goya”; “Visionary Experience, Visionary Art and the Other World”;  
“Voices”  
Huxley, Francis; and LSD experience  
Huxley, Julian  
Huxley, Laura Archera; *Between Heaven and Earth: Recipes for Living and  
Loving*; *You Are Not the Target*  
Huxley, Leonard

Huxley, Maria; death of; and psychedelics  
Huxley, Mark Trevenen  
Huxley, Matthew; and LSD experience; and Osmond  
Huxley, Tessa  
Huxley, Thomas Henry (T.H.)  
Hyde, Robert W.  
hypnosis; and psychedelics

indoctrination  
Isbell, Harris  
Isherwood, Christopher  
Ittelson, William H.  
Ittleson Foundation  
Izumi, Kiyoshi (Joe)

Jackson, Don D.  
James, Edward  
James, Henry  
James, William  
Janiger, Oscar  
Jenner, Edward  
Johnson, Donald  
Johnson, Raynor  
Jones, Ernest  
Jones, Kathleen  
Jong, Herman de  
Josiah Macy Foundation  
*The Journal of a Disappointed Man* (Barbellion)  
Jung, Carl; Jungian; Osmond's meeting with

Kafka, Franz  
Kallman, Franz Joseph  
Katz, Leo  
Katz, Sydney  
Kaufman, George  
Keats, John

Keenleyside, Hugh Llewellyn  
Kelly, Ronald  
Kennedy, John F.  
Kennedy, Robert  
Kennedy, Rosemary  
Kerr, Deborah  
Keseey, Ken  
King, Carlyle  
Kirkbride, Thomas  
Kiskadden, William  
Kitselman, A.L.  
Kline, Nathan  
Klüver, Heinrich  
Koch, Robert  
Kumler, Warren D.  
Kraepelin, Emil  
Krishnamurti, Jiddu  
Kruif, Paul de  
Kusel, Heinz

Lacenaire, Pierre François  
Land, Edwin H.  
Langdon-Davies, John  
Lawrence, D.H.  
Le Barre, Raoul Weston  
Le Corbusier, Charles  
Leach, Byron E.  
Lear, Edward  
Leary, Timothy  
LeCron, Leslie M.  
LePut, Marie  
Lester, David  
Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien  
Lewis, Aubrey  
Lewis, Nolan D.C.  
Liagre, Alfred de



Lilly, John Cunningham  
Lister, Joseph  
Lloyd Wright, Frank  
London, Jack  
Lorenz, Konrad Zacharias  
Loyola, Ignatius  
Luce, Clare Boothe  
Luce, Henry  
Lynch, Mary Louise  
Lynch, Robert

MacArthur, Charles S.  
Macaulay, Rose  
MacDonald, Ramsay  
MacDonald Tow, Peter  
Mackerracher, D.G.  
Maclay, Walter S.  
Meduna, Ladislav J. von  
Maison, George L.  
Malamud, William A.  
Manson, Charles  
Marcel, Gabriel  
marijuana  
Marmer, Milton J.  
Martin, John  
Martiny, Marcel  
Marvell, Andrew  
Marx, Karl  
Marxism  
Mátéfi, László  
Maudsley Hospital  
Mayhew, Chris  
McDougall, William  
Mead, Margaret  
Menninger, Karl  
Menninger Clinic

Meyer, Adolf  
Michaux, Henri  
Milbank Foundation  
Miller, James G.  
Milne Bramwell, John  
Milton, John  
Mitchison, Naomi  
MK-Ultra  
Morrell, Edward  
Mudd, Stuart  
Muller, Jonas N.  
Mundle, Clement  
Murphy, Gardner  
Murray, John  
mushrooms (psilocybin)  
Mussolini, Benito  
Myers, Frederic  
mysticism

Nasser, Gamal Abdel  
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)  
Native American Church; and Osmond  
Neilson, William  
Newton, Isaac  
niacin; and psychedelics  
Nicol, John Fraser  
Nightingale, Florence  
Nixon, Richard  
Noyes, Alfred Percy  
Nuffield Foundation  
Nutt, David

O'Brien, Roland  
Olds, James  
ololiuqui; and Osmond  
Oppenheimer, J. Robert

Ortega y Gasset, José

Osis, Karlis

Osmond, Helen

Osmond, Humphry, publications of: "In Defense of Nursing"; "The Doctor in Court"; "Inspiration and Method in Schizophrenia Research"; "The Model Psychoses"; "Models of Madness"; "The Nature of Schizophrenic Experience"; "Notes on Note Taking"; "On Being Mad"; "Peeping Tom and Doubting Thomas"; "A Review of the Clinical Effects of Psychotomimetic Agents"; "Schizophrenia: A New Approach"; "Schizophrenia: A New Approach II, Result of a Year's Research"; "Schizophrenia: A New Approach III"; "Schizophrenia: A New Approach IV"; "Science and Secrecy"; "The Spoken Paper"; "On Teaching Nurses"

Osmond, Jane; dislike of Prairies

Osmond, Julian

Osmond Blackburn, Euphemia (Fee)

"Outsight"

Ovshinsky, Stanford

Packard, Vance

parapsychology; and ESP; mediums; and psychedelics; telepathy; twin studies

Parapsychology Foundation

Pascal, Constance

Pasteur, Louis

Paterson, Thomas Thompson

Pauling, Linus Carl

Pavlov, Ivan; Pavlovian

Payza, A.N.

Peck, T.T.

Penfield, Wilder

Penrose, Lionel

perennial philosophy

Petrullo, Vincent M.; *The Diabolic Root*

peyote; and Osmond

Picasso, Pablo

Pinker, Eric S.  
Piranesi, Giovanni Battista  
Planck, Max  
Population Limited  
Pound, Ezra  
Prabhavananda, Swami  
Price, Henry Habberly  
Progoff, Ira  
psilocybin. *See* mushrooms  
psychedelics, origin of term  
psychoanalysis. *See also* Freud  
psychotomimetics  
Puharich, Henry (Andrija)

Rado, Sandor  
Randall, John  
Rank, Otto  
Rau, Leo  
Renshaw, Samuel  
Reti, Ladislao  
Reuther, Walter Philip  
Rhine, J.B.  
Ridenour, Nina  
Robertson, Alexander (Sandy) Duff  
Rockefeller, Nelson  
Rockefeller Foundation  
Romano, John  
Ropp, Robert S. de  
Rorschach inkblot test  
Rothschild, Miriam  
Rougemont, Denis de  
Round Table Foundation  
Russell, Bertrand  
Russia  
Rutherford, Ernest  
Ryle, Gilbert

Sakel, Manfred  
Sales, St Francis de  
Sandoz  
Santayana, Georges  
Sargant, William  
schizophrenia: adrenochrome hypothesis of; and perception; and  
psychedelics  
Schoenberg, Arnold  
Schreber, Daniel Paul  
Schultes, Richard Evans  
Schwarzenbach, Fritz Hans  
Schweitzer, Albert  
Seabrook, William  
Sammelweiss, Ignaz Philipp  
serotonin  
Servadio, Emilio  
Shaftesbury, 7th Earl of (Anthony Ashley Cooper)  
Shaw, George Bernard  
Sheldon, William H.; *Atlas of Men; Atlas of Women; The Varieties of  
Delinquent Youth; The Varieties of Human Physique*. See also  
somatotyping  
Shelley, Percy Bysshe  
Sherover, Max  
Sherwood, William Kneedler  
Shorvon, H.J.  
Sidgwick, Henry  
Skilbeck, Eirene  
Skinner, B.F.  
Slater, Eliot Trevor Oakeshott  
Slotkin, J.S.  
Smart, Christopher  
Smith, Kline & French (company)  
Smith, Philip B.  
Smith, Sidney  
Smythies, John  
Society for Psychical Research

Sommer, Robert  
Snow, C.P.  
Soal, Samuel George  
socio-architecture  
somatotyping  
Spiegel, John Patrick  
Spiegelberg, Frederic  
Stace, Walter Terence  
Stafford-Clarke, David  
Stalin, Joseph  
Stanley, Owsley  
Stefaniuk, Ben  
Stevenson, Adlai  
Stevenson, Robert Louis  
Stewart, George R.  
Stewart, Kilton  
Stowe, Fred G.  
Stravinsky, Igor  
suicide  
Sullivan, Harry Stack  
Surin, Jean-Joseph  
Sutherland, Alastair  
Suzuki, Daisetz Teitaro  
Swan, Harold J.C.  
Symonds, Charles  
Szára, Stephen  
Szasz, Thomas  
Szatmari, Alex

Tagore, Rabindranath  
Takes Gun, (Frank)  
Tanner, James  
Teller, Edward  
Thompson, Francis  
Thoreau, Henry David  
Tiebout, Harry M.

Tocqueville, Alexis de  
Tolstoy, Leo  
Traherne, Thomas  
transcendentalism  
*The Twentieth Century* (magazine)

Uexküll, Jacob von  
Underhill, Evelyn  
unions (labour)

Van Gogh, Vincent  
Vedanta Society of Southern California, Vittoz, Roger  
Voisin, Auguste  
Volf, Christian A.

Waley, Arthur; *Monkey*  
Wasson, Robert Gordon  
Watson, John B.  
Watts, Alan  
Weaver, Warren  
Weber, Max  
Webster, Donald (Ben) C.  
Weil-Malherbe, Hans  
Weir, John Marshall  
Weir Mitchell, Silas  
Wells, H.G.  
Wesley, Onnie  
Wessberg, Rose Nys de Haulleville  
West, Louis Jolyon  
Weston, Jessie L.  
Wetterstrand, Otto George  
Whistler, Peggy Eileen  
Whitehead, Alfred North  
Whorf, Benjamin Lee  
Whyte, William H.  
Wiener, Norbert

William T. Grant Foundation

Williams, Charles

Williams, Roger

Williams, Sophia

Wilson, Bill

Witt, Peter N.

Wolff, Harold G.

Woodford, Vernon

Woodman-Smith, Cecil

Wordsworth, William

Worthington, Marjorie

Young, J.Z.

Zaehner, Robert Charles

Zaslavsky, David

Zener cards

Zeno the Stoic

Zilboorg, Gregory

Zimmer, Heinrich

Zinneman, Fred

Zubin, Joseph