

Lsd and the counterculture assignment

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LSI and Counterculture of the sass LSI, lysergic acid thalidomide, is commonly regarded as one of the most powerful substances known to mankind. Its name is almost synonymous with the counterculture and the “hippy’ movement of the 1 sass. Though it is now listed as a Schedule controlled substance, there was a time when LSI widely used and accepted without the harsh social stigma that it carries today (Jenkins). L SD, which is known to the younger population as acid, Lucy, and various other colloquial terms, came into being by complete accident. Albert

Hofmann, a chemist, first created the drug in 1 938, but it was not until 1943 that Hofmann unintentionally ingested a small dose Of the drug leading to one of the greatest discoveries in the history of psychoactive chemicals (“ History of LSI”). From there, LSI exploded with popularity, and by the sass psychiatrists were legally administering the drug to patients in order to explore Lass’s potential to heal or treat psychological issues. During trials, doctors discovered that LSI did indeed have some potential benefits for mental health patients.

Many individuals suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, and alcoholism-?? among other illnesses-?? showed gradual improvements in their conditions when given LSI in a clinical setting (Brood). To satisfy the demand for clinical trials of L SD, Sandal Pharmaceuticals began to manufacture the drug en masses. The ample supply of LSI led to widespread distribution by physicians to trial participants and, unintentionally, the general public (“ History of LSI”). A black market developed, controlled by select groups of unofficial chemists who were able to synthesize the drug.

Various musicians, artists, and figures of esteem took LSD use, describing it to the population as a world-changing and mind-altering experience.

Psychedelic drugs became a growing trend, even receiving the endorsement of Harvard psychologist Timothy Leary, who encouraged the youth to “turn on, tune in, and drop out.” The youth of the generation began to view LSD as nearly harmless, eventually causing the drug to run rampant in the streets, unregulated and, ultimately, legal (Lee, Slain, et al).

Such proliferation of the drug caught the attention of government officials who were interested in the drug's psychoactive effects. Government agencies launched a series of tests, having decorated individuals from both the military and academic worlds take LSD in a controlled setting. The government's motives, at the time, were questionable, with some critics suggesting that the government saw LSD as a means for mass mind control and various other nefarious ideas. Government funded tests continued for a long period of time (Lee, Slain, et al.).

Their findings, however, did not shed a good light on LSD. Though there was a surplus of clinical information showing the potentially costly effects of LSD, some government studies stated that LSD could actually be a detriment to human mental health--causing depression, anxiety, fear as well as other undesirable side effects. Lawmakers began to think of LSD as an illicit and potentially dangerous substance. With its rampant use among the general population, lawmakers came to fear that the nation was dealing with somewhat of a drug epidemic.

LSI was officially banned in the mid-sixties, along with a host of other drugs. At the time, it was unsure whether the ban on LSI was truly backed by medical reasoning or if it was the result of political disapproval of the drug ("History of LSD"). The possibility of LSI-related possession charges loomed over the youth of the sixties, but even still, the number of those using the drug began to grow exponentially. Disenchanted youth looked for a release from the pressures and troubles of society.

The disputes over civil rights and the unpopular Vietnam War spearheaded the growing distrust for the American government ("Vietnam War Protests"). In protest, thousands of young people engaged in the "hippie" lifestyle, preaching a message of free love and happiness, often pulled with LSI use. Through the "hippie" counterculture sprang many radical groups that chose to dissociate themselves from the modern political structure. Communes and sanctuaries, of sorts, became places where likened youth could escape the grips of the traditional social structure (Marks).

The infamous Charles Manson, most notably, led a group of young outcasts to live on the fringes of society. LSI and other psychedelic drugs were an integral part of his group's operations. He and his followers turned out to be maniacal and murderous in later years. One of the most notable events in the "hippie" movement was the legendary Woodstock Festival of 1969. Over one hundred thousand people joined to engage in a three-day-long event that promoted peace and happiness and protested the establishment.

The psychedelic culture was prevalent at the event, featuring the Grateful Dead—known users of LSI—as well as Janis Joplin, Jim Hendrix, and others

(Rosenberg). As the sass began and the turbulence of the sass began to dwindle so dwindled the use of L SD. Laws became stricter, “ hippies” grew older, and the supply of LSI in the black market became scarce. New laws orbiting the use of LSI in any medical experiments stopped academic use of the drug altogether.

Whatever potential benefits could have been gained from controlled use of the drug have now been placed on the backbencher. Possibly, with newer and more progressive legislation, laws will be passed that will allow the untapped possibilities of psychedelic drugs to be explored. Whether one maintains a liberal or a conservative viewpoint towards experimental drug use, there is no denying that LSI played a major role in the legacy Of the sass as one Of the most turbulent and exciting decades in American history.