

THE PAST LIVES OF BETTY EISNER: EXAMINING THE SPIRITUAL PSYCHE OF
EARLY PSYCHEDELIC THERAPY THROUGH THE STORY
OF AN OUTSIDER, A PIONEER, AND A VILLAIN

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Abstract

In this thesis, I argue that early LSD research was imbued with a sense of mysticism that was constructed to be commensurable with concurrent scientific epistemology. I demonstrate how mysticism entered psychedelic research and therapy through the history of a pioneer LSD psychotherapist named Betty Eisner. Since the late 1940s, Eisner was a key member of a bible study group that emphasized the psychological foundation of mystical experiences. When she entered psychology in the 1950s, she imported this influence into her research and therapy. As an active member of the small international LSD research community of the '50s and '60s, she participated in ongoing discussions about the place of mysticism in LSD psychotherapy. However, following malpractice accusations in the 1970s, Eisner lost her clinical license. Using records from her license revocation hearings, I will contextualize her work within the larger psychology profession's attitudes toward mystically inspired therapy.

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The Past Lives of Betty Eisner: Examining the Spiritual Psyche of Early Psychedelic Therapy
through the Story of an Outsider, a Pioneer, and a Villain

The *Journal of Psychopharmacology* recently dedicated their entire December 2016 issue to psychedelic research and commentary. The novelty of the content notwithstanding, the issue was notable for featuring eminent authors that included past presidents from the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP), as well as medical scientists who have acted as national health advisors to various governments (Nutt, 2016). According to David Nutt, a British psychiatrist, past ECNP president, and former advisor to the United Kingdom Department of Health, the issue's star power represents the consensus that the fields of psychiatry and pharmacology share regarding the clinical safety and therapeutic potential of psychedelic substances (Nutt, 2016). The issue was not at all a dispassionate collection of recent work in a productive but arbitrary field; it was a proclamation, backed by the full weight of the medical science discipline, that the marginalization of psychedelic drugs is not based on scientific evidence. Nutt, who is also editor of the *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, opened the issue with the assertion that the lineup of authors alone "should reassure any waverers" that psychedelics have a role that is "well within the accepted scope of modern psychiatry," and that psychiatrists "all agree we are now in an exciting phase of psychedelic psychopharmacology that needs to be encouraged and not impeded" (2016, p. 1163).

The issue also demonstrates psychedelic researchers' particular position as scientists: they are as concerned with changing society to accept the credibility of their discoveries as they are with making empirical discoveries themselves. Their discourses include the tight, operational descriptions of hypotheses, methods, results and rationales that satisfy the conventions of

scientific publishing. However, they also include the social, legal, and scientific histories of psychedelic drugs, because scientific rhetoric alone cannot overcome these drugs' negative public image.

Psychedelic scientists' articles include brief allusions to the historicity of psychedelic fear with remarkable consistency. In his introduction to the *Journal of Psychopharmacology's* special issue, David Nutt embedded the issue's empirical content within LSD's role in the development of Alcoholics Anonymous, its influence on 1960s' revolutionary politics, and Reagan-era campaigns to manufacture drug fear (2016). In his review of current clinical evidence for psilocybin' efficacy in the treatment of anxiety, past APA president Jeffrey Lieberman told a familiar story about a generative therapy drug called LSD whose medical promise was corrupted by frivolous delinquents and political agitators (Lieberman & Shalev, 2016). Reporting his results for the first clinical LSD psychotherapy trial conducted since the 1960s, Swiss psychiatrist Peter Gasser summarized the development of psycholytic and psychedelic streams of LSD psychotherapy in the 1950s (Gasser et al., 2014). In their review of recent psychiatric literature on MDMA (also known as ecstasy), leading MDMA researcher Michael Mithoefer and his colleague Berra Yazar-Klosinski outlined the questionable circumstances under which MDMA became a Schedule 1¹ drug: In 1985, the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) picked up on MDMA's trending recreational use and banned the drug for its lack of "accepted medical use, high abuse potential, and lack of accepted safety" (Yazar-Klosinski & Mithoefer, 2017, p.194), despite contrary medical evidence and judicial recommendation.

¹ The DEA categorizes controlled substances according to their medical use, abuse potential, likelihood to create dependency. Schedule 1 is the most restrictive of five categories. It states a drug has no accepted medical use, a high abuse potential, and are highly likely to cause dependence. Schedule 1 drugs carry severe legal penalties (United States Drug Enforcement Administration, n.d.; Yeh, 2015).

History is clearly very important to contemporary psychedelic scientists, and for good reason. According to their main narrative, their line of research was cut off in a period of ascendance, giving current researchers impetus to pick up where past researchers left off (Nutt, 2017). However, it is crucial to note that only a very particular selection of psychedelic history is being recovered and affirmed in mainstream psychedelic studies. Early empirical research conducted with humility and respect for the scientific process is included in the category of ascendant research (e.g., Hoffer, Osmond & Smythies, 1954; Sandison & Whitelaw, 1957; Chwelos et al., 1959). Early recreational, underground, or flamboyant use of psychedelics is portrayed as threatening, irresponsible, unrepresentative of prevailing scientific opinions, and culpable in the premature demise of psychedelic work (e.g., Leary, Metzner & Alpert, 1964; Leary et al., 1965; Lilly, 1967; Castaneda, 1968; Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979). Therapeutic work that blurred the boundaries of science, spirituality, and recreation gets washed of its less positivistic qualities or ignored altogether. In this thesis, I will revive the role that the terms “spiritual,” “mystical,” and “religious” played in some of the earliest clinical LSD research to take place in the United States. Contrary to what recent historical accounts of psychedelic science might convey, I will illustrate the ways in which numinous spiritual concepts were an integral part of 1950s LSD research. In doing this, my intent is to demonstrate the deep entanglements of the spiritual with the scientific and to argue that these entanglements are fundamental to understanding the ontology, epistemology, and resulting practices of psychedelic scientists in this period.

Several scholars have taken psychedelic science’s recent upswing as a cue to examine the mechanisms by which psychedelics have been constructed as scientific objects. In *Psychedelic Psychiatry* (2012), historian of medicine Erika Dyck illustrates how the scientific role of LSD

was shaped by a confluence of social forces, including the interdisciplinary communities that formed around the drug, and a political climate that transitioned from supportive to hostile. In *Neuropsychedelica* (2012), the medical anthropologist Nicolas Langlitz traces the historical circumstances that led to the return of psychedelic studies. Langlitz claims that technological advances in neuroscience have allowed scientists to dislocate psychedelics from their sociohistorical context and reconstruct them as interesting but affectless investigative tools. He also examines how contemporary psychedelic researchers eschew overt statements about their spiritual influences, and instead use psychedelics and altered states of consciousness to examine how mystical experiences manifest in the brain. Ben Sessa, the house historian of the psychedelic renaissance, has written some more conservative histories detailing the timeline of scientific projects, conferences and collaborations that took place from the 1800s until the current day (Sessa, 2012; Sessa, 2015). Sessa conveys the many ways that scientists formed psychedelics as serious tools of medicine and biochemical research, and in doing so, underplays the cohesion that spirituality and science enjoyed in the labs and clinics of early LSD researchers (Sessa, 2014).

Sessa's explicit aim is to translate the importance of psychedelic research to a mainstream audience that has otherwise been inundated with messages of psychedelics' severe potential for harm (Sessa, 2012). His version of psychedelic history demonstrates Langlitz's claim that if spirituality makes an appearance in current psychedelic science, it is to examine the neurochemical events that precipitate experiences subjectively interpreted as spiritual (Langlitz, 2012). Discourses that construe psychedelics as sacramental are categorized as shamanic if they are used outside the West; but if they are used by Westerners, they are categorized as naive and pseudoscientific (Sessa, 2012; Sessa, 2014). In my research into the psychedelic science of the 1950s and '60s, I have come to learn that North American LSD researchers were not so

concerned with how the drug lent itself to religious experiences. Individual researchers may have doubted the spiritual valence of psychedelic experiences, but they still explored the clinical applications of chemically-induced spirituality.

For example, the Weyburn, Saskatchewan psychiatrists Abram Hoffer and Humphry Osmond were committed biochemical researchers, and were at one point on the global forefront of neuropsychiatric schizophrenia research thanks to the psychotomimetic properties of LSD and mescaline (Dyck, 2012; Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979; Healy, 2002). When they branched out into clinical work, Hoffer and Osmond hesitated to completely attribute the success of their alcoholism therapy program to the spiritual potency of LSD, but the program's political, financial, and community supporters believed that LSD cured alcoholism by connecting patients directly to a higher power (Dyck, 2006). As such, Hoffer and Osmond worked with religious organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous and gave them the power to define chemically-potentiated self-awareness in the ways that best suited the alcoholic community's recovery process (Dyck, 2006). Similarly, Los Angeles psychopharmacologist Sidney Cohen did not himself have a mystical worldview, but his psychotherapist research partner Betty Eisner did (Cohen, 1964; Eisner, 2002). When they began their research program, Cohen understood the therapeutic value of Eisner's mystical beliefs, trusted her therapeutic authority, and the two built spiritual values into their model of LSD-assisted psychotherapy (Eisner & Cohen, 1957; Eisner & Cohen, 1958). Cohen accepted that LSD could be used to link the epistemic worlds of scientists and mystics, stating "there is much to learn about what we [psychiatrists] call 'ego dissolution' and the mystics call 'self-transcendence'" (Cohen, 1964, p. 242).

But what did spirituality, mysticism, and religion really mean to scientists and psychologists who worked with LSD in the drug's early history? My goal stated above was to

address the ways that a spiritual cosmology was commensurable with the scientific methods that many early researchers employed in their LSD studies. But up until now, I have been using spiritual terminology loosely, and as if it were impervious to historical circumstances. To state my goal more precisely, I will use the first chapter to outline the specific form of spirituality that early American psychedelic researchers worked with given their historical location. I will argue that this form of spirituality was largely constructed at an affluent comparative religion studies retreat called the Sequoia Seminar, and made fast inroads into psychology because its leaders deliberately sought an audience of ambitious, academically-inclined professionals. In the second chapter, I will map the transmission of this psychospiritual epistemology across the wider global network of LSD researchers. In particular, I intend to convey the ways that LSD therapists reconstructed spirituality as they collectivized and negotiated the boundaries of a shared methodology that united them under the professional title of “psychoalytic therapy.” The third chapter will trace appearances of very similar forms of psychospiritual commitment in therapeutic practices outside of, but contemporaneous to, psychedelic psychology. Like psychedelics, humanistic psychology and the human potential movement lent themselves to forms of therapy that prized spiritual experiences as the prime motivators for psychological healing and personal growth. Psychedelic- and humanistic-based therapies shared significant temporal and geographical overlap; looking at the permeability between the two therapeutic philosophies provides one effective way of exploring LSD’s embeddedness within the ethical and methodological standards of the wider psychology profession.

My overarching goal is to demonstrate that there was far weaker a differentiation between rigorous science and esoteric mysticism in the early days of psychedelic research than is currently suggested. I will do this by investigating the career of pioneer LSD psychotherapist,

Betty Eisner. Eisner was among the first Americans (and certainly among the first of very few women) to experiment with psycholytic therapy, a form of drug-assisted psychotherapy that relied on administering small doses of LSD, mescaline, and other psychoactive drugs in order to potentiate the psychoanalytic process. She was an original member of both the Sequoia Seminar and of the cohort of psychiatrists that officially established psycholytic therapy. She also kept a meticulous personal collection of therapy records, correspondences with leading scientists, therapists, and cultural figures, and other important documents that capture the cultural milieu within which she worked. I will use documents from this collection to describe how Eisner formed her theoretical commitments as a psycholytic therapist within the spiritual and psychological cultures particular to her time, and explore how psychedelics fit into the fabric of psychotherapy by tracing professional receptivity to her work. By situating Eisner within already explored histories of psychedelic culture, psychopharmacology and psychotherapeutic movements, I will provide another narrative that demonstrates the interactions of these institutions, one that is enriched with new insight about the role that spiritual philosophies played in the creation of psychedelic science.

Eisner was a particularly industrious therapist and networker, but aside from the practical consideration of having good source material, I also want to distinguish her work in a sub-discipline that mainly counts (or knows about) the contributions of men. In the preface to their seminal book *Untold Lives: The First Generation of Women Psychologists*, Elizabeth Scarborough and Laurel Furumoto recall that they “came to recognize that the omission of women from historical accounts of psychology placed a serious limitation on our understanding of the past and on women’s sense of having a legitimate place in our discipline” (1987, p. xi). By rendering the history of psychology through the lives of the earliest women psychologists,

Scarborough and Furumoto (1987) have shown that psychology's professional structure and discursive content are factors of its contributors' personal lives. Examining women psychologists' personal lives provides a broader account of psychology's history, but it also reveals ways in which gender-based prejudice has influenced psychology's subject matter. Betty Eisner's story is thus a vector for conveying important events in the history of psychedelic psychotherapy, for better representing women's involvement in the field, and for illustrating how attitudes toward women in psychology had shaped the work she was able to do (and had therefore demarcated the operational boundaries of what "psychology" could mean to her). Psychedelic literature researcher Nese Devenot (2016) has noted that although women and people of colour are severely underrepresented in the psychedelic research community, there has been no significant movement to explore how psychedelic research culture might potentially marginalize these groups. Human rights activist Annie Harrison (aka Annie Oak) founded the Women's Entheogen Fund (WEF) to counterbalance the underrepresentation and underfunding of women involved in psychedelic research (Harrison, 2006). By centering Eisner's importance as a pioneer of psychedelic psychotherapy and exploring how her professional activities interacted with her gender, my work will contribute to the feminist re-vision of psychedelic science that Devenot, Harrison, and others currently advance.

An Introductory History of Psychedelic Science

A brief biography of Betty Eisner. Betty Grover Eisner was born Helen Elizabeth Grover on September 29, 1915 in Kansas City, Missouri. After graduating from high school in 1933, she left Kansas City to attend Stanford University and study political science. She graduated with a BA in 1937. The same year, she married fellow Stanford graduate Willard

Eisner, and the two left Stanford for Santa Monica, where Willard found work as a mechanical engineer with the RAND corporation (Morgan, 2009).

Only after graduating, did Eisner begin to cultivate an interest in psychology (Eisner, 2002). In the 1940s, she started attending an annual summer bible study retreat held in Northern California called the Sequoia Seminar. The Seminar was run in part by Harry Rathbun, a Stanford business professor that Eisner had taken a class with as an undergraduate student and maintained contact with due to their mutual interest in the study of leadership (Gelber & Cook, 1990). Although its main textual reference was the bible, the Sequoia Seminar taught that adherence to Christian morals occurred most naturally when an individual manifested the psychology of Jesus Christ, which could be achieved by freeing oneself from psychological barriers using methods devised by psychologists such as Carl Jung and Fritz Kunkel (Gelber & Cook, 1990). The Seminar operated on the doctrine that, by adopting Jesus' psychology, a person would also adopt his equanimity and ability to inspire moral behavior in others. Their utopian end game was the production of moral leaders that would work to inspire others to moral leadership (Gelber & Cook, 1990).²

In 1951, Eisner seized on the Seminar doctrine and enrolled in UCLA's clinical psychology program. She specialized in Rorschach administration. For her dissertation, she researched whether women whose infertility had no "proven organic cause" (Eisner, 1963a, p. 391) could instead be experiencing psychogenic infertility. In 1955, nearing the final stages of her doctorate, Eisner came across a bulletin requesting the aid of a graduate student in research involving an unnamed "new and unusual drug" (Eisner, 2002, p. 5). She suspected that this drug

² The Seminar was consistent with the early 20th century American practice of portraying Jesus as a champion of modernism, liberal individualism, and entrepreneurship (Ribuffo, 1981; Lears, 2000; Nichols, 2009).

was LSD, which one Seminar leader lauded for its ability to cause the transcendence of all psychological conflict just that prior summer. Between a three-year old daughter, a newborn son, and many sleepless hours finishing her dissertation, Eisner had no time to commit to any other research. However, she was able to join the study as a participant, and on October 10, 1955, Eisner became UCLA's first LSD research subject (Eisner, 2002).

Her participation proved to be a defining moment in her life and career. She was fascinated by the experience, met with the research director Sidney Cohen to discuss his study on a regular basis, and shortly after completing her PhD in July 1956, became his main collaborator in LSD research. Between 1956 and 1959, the two of them authored publications describing their experiments with LSD-assisted therapy on psychiatric patients at the Brentwood Veteran's Administration hospital (Cohen, Fichman & Eisner, 1958; Eisner & Cohen, 1958; Cohen & Eisner, 1959). Their approach entailed administering doses just small enough to "bring [a] patient out of himself [sic]" (Eisner & Cohen, 1957, p. 3) whilst remaining talkative and engaged in the session. This orientation – later to be termed "psycholytic" to distinguish it from "psychedelic" – was already in practice at a few sites in Europe, but it was a novelty in North America, where therapists preferred to administer large doses that launched patients into incommunicative states of mystical rapture. In my thesis, I will provide a detailed account of Eisner's vision of psycholytic psychotherapy and her participation in the field. Before doing so, though, I will review the history of psychoactive drug research that preceded the synthesis of LSD and the widespread application of psychedelics in psychology.

Experimentation with psychoactive drugs before the psychedelic movement. Before hallucinogenic substances came to be associated with recreational drug use, their appearance in the psy-disciplines was accompanied by curiosity and a sense of promise. In 1896, Silas Weir

Mitchell, the neurologist best known for promulgating the rest cure (Poirier, 1983), published a physiologically detailed report of an ordinary work day spent under the influence of peyote tincture, then referred to as “mescal” (Mitchell, 1896). Through his experience, he came to believe that mescal provided “an unusual privilege” for conducting experiments on the mind, and concluded, “for the psychologist this agent should have value” (Mitchell, 1896, p. 1627).

Mitchell obtained the extract from D.W. Prentiss, a professor of medicine at Columbian University (now George Washington University) who researched the physiological, phenomenological and therapeutic properties of the cactus in humans, animals, and in himself (Prentiss & Morgan, 1896). Prentiss had published his research with colleague Francis Morgan in a book called *Mescal Buttons* (1896) several months prior to Mitchell’s report. That same year, the English psychologist Henry Havelock Ellis took notice of their publications and began his own experiments with mescal buttons (Berridge, 1988; Ellis, 1897; Ellis, 1898). Like Mitchell and Prentiss, Ellis rendered his experiences in terms of knee jerks, pupil dilations and skin temperature. However, his experiments took place at a London temple with the co-investigatory support of the poets Ernest Dowson and William Butler Yeats (Berridge, 1988), and his conclusions were duly more sentimental: peyote took the person of sound mind to an “artificial paradise,” and happened to be the only way to fully appreciate the poetry of William Wordsworth (Ellis, 1898).

Mescal promised privileged experimental access to the mind (Mitchell, 1896), and Mitchell and Ellis expected it to become very popular amongst physiologists and psychologists who “cultivated the vision-breeding drugs” (Ellis, 1897, n.p.). After German chemist Ernst Spath first synthesized mescaline in 1919 (Spath, 1921; Shorter, 2008), the drug was used less extensively than expected to research the physiology of colour vision, hallucination, and

psychosis (Maclay & Guttman, 1936; Smythies, 1953; Hogan, 2001; Langlitz, 2012). It was not regarded as a therapeutic drug (Healy, 2002). Ellis believed that mescal had an “educational influence” only on the “healthy person” (1989, n.p.), and expended its entire educational value in the first or second experience. In a review of Ellis’s *A Note on the Phenomena of Mescal Intoxication* (1987), colour vision researcher Christine Ladd Franklin did suspect that mescal could enjoy a “great future” (Ladd Franklin, 1897, p. 543) as a homeopathic treatment for neurasthenia, but this reflected a belief that psychoactive doses of the drug caused temporary psychopathological symptoms, and were not therapeutically useful (Healy, 2002; Maclay & Guttman, 1936; Prentiss & Morgan, 1896). In the 1930s, two London psychiatrists named Walter Maclay and Erich Guttman asked patients with psychosis to draw their hallucinations in an effort to understand the primarily visual psychotic experience (Hogan, 2001). Through experimentation with mescaline on themselves and others, they had come to believe that the psychotic experience cannot be effectively verbalized, and that communicating by drawing conferred greater therapeutic and psychoanalytic advantages. Although their work with mescaline had therapeutic outcomes, they reported, “mescaline intoxication itself has no direct clinical bearing” (Maclay & Guttman, 1936, p. 216).

I have described how early peyote and mescaline researchers had used the drug to learn about the structure and physiology of consciousness rather than to treat psychological conditions. Given that modern audiences interpret psychological research with consciousness-altering drugs as divisive, how did past publics react to similar research? In *Psychedelic Psychiatry* (2012), Dyck illustrates that 1950’s and 60’s psychiatry’s psychedelic discourse ran parallel to political and media discourses that framed psychedelics as potential objects of abuse, addiction, and racial conflict provocation. Conversations between psychiatrists, politicians, and the media were

strained at best, and psychiatrists had to moderate their work constantly to satisfy the growing number of unscientific legal limitations (Dyck, 2012). Contrarily, it seems that government and media intervention had yet to meaningfully interact with pre-1950s mescaline researchers. For all its anticipated scientific popularity, mescaline remained too obscure to have registered on the public radar as a cause for concern (Smythies, 1953). Early and mid-century Americans did share similar concerns about drug abuse, addiction and drug-influenced racial conflict.³ In 1897, feminist activist-author Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward wrote Mitchell to praise his mescal research and share with him her own spontaneous visions of “highly ornate objects” (Tuttle, 2000, p. 90), but she also shared a consternation that revealed a risk-oriented social attitude towards mind-altering drugs: “We have narcotics enough. I hope to learn your new delirium will not be added to our general dangers!” (Tuttle, 2000, p. 90). In *Acid Hype: American News Media and the Psychedelic Experience*, journalism historian Stephen Siff (2015) claims that these general dangers were mainly alcohol, opium, and marijuana, and that the early 20th century saw a proliferation of moralizing movies, journalistic watchdogs, and censorship boards designed to slander these substances out of existence. Drugs were either banned from any mention, or invoked as agents of terror. Positive descriptions of drug experiences did not exist in mainstream media (Siff, 2015). According to Siff, mescaline (and for a short time later, LSD) had managed to avoid being marked as taboo because its Western use had been almost entirely confined to scientific spaces and had no underworld associations.

³ It is important to note that mescaline and other psychedelic research had occurred in many parts of the world, and not just in North America. Different countries have different drug and research cultures, therefore many countries diverge in their approaches to researching, using and controlling psychedelic substances. Langlitz (2012) and Sessa (2012) outline some of the distinct conditions that allowed research with LSD to continue in nations such as Switzerland and the former Soviet Union for longer than it did in North America.

With no basis from which to report criminal behaviour and no permission to report experiences framed in openness, psychedelic research occurred almost entirely outside of public awareness well into the 1950s (Siff, 2015; Dyck, 2012). When psychedelic drugs did begin to appear in the media, they “arrived as marvels of science rather than artifacts of crime” (Siff, 2015, p. 41). LSD’s media depictions only turned reliably negative in the 1960s, before it became illegal but after it had become co-opted as a countercultural emblem (Dyck, 2012). Eisner and Cohen’s cohort of psychedelic psychotherapists began their work when hallucinogens were still completely obscure to the public, mostly obscure to other human scientists, and not entirely considered therapeutic amongst the psychiatrists who did work with them. Although the drugs shifted away from being objects of basic science to being objects of therapy, Eisner and colleagues importantly retained a tradition of self-experimentation that became the foundation of their therapeutic approaches. It might be the most noteworthy tradition they retained in an era of psychiatry that was otherwise significantly differentiated from its past: Anthropologist Nikolas Langlitz has argued that early LSD research was part of a “profound transformation” (2012, p. 27) in psychiatry that included the discovery of other psychiatric drugs such as chlorpromazine, and that this transformation had buried the “therapeutic pessimism” (p. 27) that characterized the prior tone of psychiatry. In the next section, I will outline the development of psycholytic therapy as it had emerged from this new psychiatric context, and trace its short-lived arc through Eisner’s career.

Betty Eisner and the arc of psycholytic therapy. The Swiss chemist Albert Hofmann first synthesized LSD in 1938 and first ingested it in 1943 (Hofmann & Ott, 2013). Its effects were more remarkable than he could ever have expected, but the decade was nearly over before the drug had left Hofmann’s lab at Sandoz Chemistry and entered the worlds of psychology and

pharmacology. Its initial uses were not too different from the range of uses explored in later decades. In 1949, the Swiss psychiatrists Werner Stoll and Gion Condrau experimented with LSD's psychotherapeutic potential for individuals with schizophrenia, depression, or no clinically significant mental health concern whatsoever (Sessa, 2015). That same year at the Boston Psychopathic Hospital, the American psychiatrists Max Rinkel and Robert Hyde had begun researching the ways in which LSD could advance physiological understandings of psychosis (Sessa, 2015). By the mid-1950s, LSD (as well as mescaline) was a fundamental tool for studying the most widely accepted biological hypothesis for schizophrenia at the time (the transmethylation hypothesis), had led to the discovery that there are multiple serotonin receptors, and had been used to both treat and research the biological basis of alcoholism (Healy, 2002; Dyck, 2012). LSD researchers had begun to form an international network united by their common use of LSD despite very divergent research interests and methods (Dyck, 2012). Members of one such community, titled The Commission for the Study of the Creative Imagination, supported each other by sharing research results, access to drugs, and information about funding opportunities. They were also beset with disagreements on how far LSD could or should stray from medical standards of good research; however, their disagreements were confined to their community, and they still enjoyed freedom from the scrutiny of popular media (Dyck, 2012).

This was the context within which Eisner began her psychedelic journey. The Commission was established in 1955, and though Eisner and Cohen were newcomers to the LSD scene, they were immediately indebted to its resources. Commission founder Al Hubbard, a wealthy eccentric with a mail order PhD, had invested personal time and money guiding psychedelic sessions and setting up psychedelic clinics along the west coast of the United States

and Canada since 1954 (Dyck, 2012; Blewett & Chwelos, 1959). Hubbard has been credited with originating many of the practices that became templates for psychedelic therapies across North America (Blewett & Chwelos, 1959; Dyck, 2006; Dyck, 2012). He stressed the importance of cultivating creative, empathic environments for patients who were otherwise treated in overtly clinical settings (Blewett & Chwelos, 1959; Dyck, 2006). His staple environmental transformations included allowing patients to listen to music, bring sentimental photographs, and gaze at mirrors while hallucinating (Blewett & Chwelos, 1959; Eisner & Cohen, 1957; Eisner, 2002). He also encouraged the use of large doses that would guarantee patients their promised mystical experience, augmented by additional doses of nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, or methamphetamine to further release inhibitions – to “blow out the stuff” (Eisner, 2002, p. 9), as Eisner noted he was fond of saying.

Hubbard’s methods may have been theoretically naïve, but it was easy enough to interpret their efficacy within familiar theoretical frameworks. To the psychoanalytically trained Eisner, “Blowing out the stuff” became reducing defenses, and drugs became tools to facilitate access to the patients’ unconscious (Eisner & Cohen, 1958). On paper, the goal of a mystical experience was reinterpreted to mean “psychocatharsis” (Eisner & Cohen, 1958, p. 529). However, although Eisner and Cohen could bridge a substantial amount of Hubbard’s ideas with their own, their therapy diverged from his standard in an important way. Rather than substitute the conventional talk therapy session with a fully immersive psychedelic experience, they tried to accelerate the progress of talk therapy using just the right amount of substance to “loosen” patients’ defenses (Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1981). Within a few years, “mind-loosening” would be Hellenized to read “psycholytic” (Metzner, 1998). Until then, it was merely their preferred manner of working with LSD.

Eisner and Cohen adopted this orientation to LSD in 1957, after Eisner had personally experienced extreme depression and suicidality following a full 100ug dose (Eisner, 2002). From reviewing the European literature on LSD psychotherapy, they had learned that it was far more common to begin patients on minuscule doses that increased on a session-by-session basis, always for the purpose of improving access to and communication of the unconscious (Metzner, 1998; Eisner & Cohen, 1958). According to Langlitz (2012), European psychotherapists who worked with LSD understood it as opening a more direct line to the unconscious, and did not render it in the spiritual discourse so prominent amongst North American clinicians. Eisner and Cohen applied the European dosing strategy to clients with mood disorders, psychoses, substance abuse problems, and normative functioning, too (Eisner & Cohen, 1958). The tone of their articles was highly psychoanalytic: They claimed that LSD deactivated defense mechanisms that impeded access to core conflicts and early traumatic events; both a male and female therapist were present so as to provide opportunities for transference with either sex; and therapists helped patients analyze symbols that presented themselves verbally or through creative activities (Eisner & Cohen, 1957). Psycholytic therapists greatly valued the psychoanalytic linchpin of conflict resolution through insight into unconscious motives (Metzner, 1998). Contrary to the later, more recognizable and more provocative permutation of psychedelic discourse famously advanced by Timothy Leary, Eisner and Cohen's work explicitly affirmed a psychodynamic model of consciousness (Eisner, 1961).

Eisner and Cohen's European influences took notice of their work largely because of Eisner's initiative to contact them through highly genial letters (Eisner, 2002). In 1958, Eisner was invited to present her research at the first International Congress of Neuropsychopharmacology in Rome (Eisner, 2002; Ban, 2007). She presented alongside

researchers who studied the physiology and psychiatric symptomatology of antipsychotics (Ban, 2007), highlighting the symbiosis psychedelics and antipsychotics briefly enjoyed as interdependent instruments of psychosis research (Healy, 2002). The trip also proved to be an important opening for Eisner to become a fixture of the LSD therapy scene. In the weeks before the conference, she managed to secure a short visit with Ronald Sandison, a psychiatrist at Powick Hospital in Worcestershire, England (Eisner, 2002). Sandison was the first psychiatrist to bring LSD to the UK, amongst the first to research its psychotherapeutic uses in Europe, and had his own LSD psychotherapy wing at Powick Hospital (Sessa, 2012). He was also the one to propose rebranding hallucinogens as “psycholytics” at the 1960 European Symposium on Psychology Under LSD-25 (Sessa, 2015; Eisner, 2002).

Sandison coined the term “psycholytic” to describe a particular way of using hallucinogenic substances that was popular amongst European psychiatrists. Europeans quickly adopted it to refer to a style of therapy that used LSD in ways I have already described: Clients were given relatively small doses that purportedly allowed them to conquer their ego defenses, recall traumas with more clarity, experience emotions more authentically, and bond with the therapist more easily. The psycholytic process was also indicated to occur over frequent sessions – at least once a week for several months – so that dosage could be increased to more immersive levels extremely gradually. At the same time in Canada, psychiatrist Humphry Osmond coined the term “psychedelic,” which he translated from “mind manifesting.” It so happened that Osmond’s work entailed the use of doses 5 to 25 times the size that the Europeans used, and rather than administering them weekly, he aimed to cause personality transformation in a single session (Hoffer, 1967; Dyck, 2006). As such, European psycholytic therapists such as Hanscarl Leuner took his method to be the template for psychedelic therapy, and treated it is a

complementary but entirely opposite form of practice (Abramson, 1967). Current writers frequently frame past research as psychedelic or psycholytic based on these criteria (Sessa, 2012; Cook, 2014; Richards, 2016; Hofmann & Ott, 2013). However, in the 1960s, American therapists (including Eisner) objected to the psycholytic therapists' overgeneralized interpretation of the term "psychedelic." In the US, "psychedelic" was used to refer to a class of drugs whose use was not consigned to any one methodological framework (Abramson, 1967). In this paper, I will use the word "psycholytic" to refer to the form of therapy, and "psychedelic" to refer more generally to the class of drugs and the culture that surrounded them in North America.

How did psycholytic therapy attain its methodological cohesion? In 1961, Sandison organized a meeting titled "Hallucinogenic Drugs and their Psychotherapeutic Use" through the Royal Medico-Psychological Association in London (Eisner, 2002; Crockett, Sandison & Walk, 1963). He invited Eisner to present a *carte blanche* paper on her own psycholytic theories, but he additionally intended to gather the growing international community of similarly inclined therapists and forge a professional association (Eisner, 2002). After the conference, Eisner and four delegates from three other European countries joined Sandison to establish the Association for Psycholytic Therapists (APT). They discussed plans for future meetings, tours of each other's sites, and the creation of a cohesive research agenda. Although it appeared as though Sandison handpicked Eisner, getting her to count amongst the "founding fathers" of the APT did not seem as simple. If only she was an MD, instead of a lowly PhD! In a letter to Humphry Osmond, she wrote, "it does get discouraging to run into the prejudice which judges more from the initials after one's name (or one's sex, because I'm afraid that has some bearing, too) than by what the individual is and can do" (2002, p. 118).

In the end, the naysayers conceded. For all it was worth, though, the power of an association did not help psycholytic therapy stand against the swelling tides of anti-psychedelic sentiment. After 1959, Eisner left the VA hospital and embarked on a career in private practice (Morgan, 2009). She teamed up with psychiatrists in order to continue practicing therapy using LSD, but also experimented with the induction of psycholytic states using Ritalin and carbogen, a mixture of 70% oxygen and 30% carbon dioxide (Eisner, 2002). She learned to use these substances as adjuncts to LSD from Al Hubbard and deeply believed in their ability to potentiate the therapeutic rapport necessary to allow highly defended patients to articulate their feelings (Eisner, 2002). As legal restrictions and social stigma against LSD, mescaline and psilocybin escalated over the course of the 1960s, alternative psycholytic agents became Eisner's refuge. By 1966, Sandoz ceased distributing LSD (Dyck, 2005) and the drug became illegal in the state of California (Heilig, 2007). In 1968, the European Psycholytic Congress meeting in Prague was cancelled due to escalating military conflict between Russia and Czechoslovakia, and though it was rescheduled, Eisner did not attend (Eisner, 2002). By then, Eisner had not worked with LSD for several years. The paper she prepared for the conference was nearly exclusively about Ritalin, a drug she claimed reduced anxiety and increased talkativeness, but did not always promote therapeutically substantive talk, and in some patients, produced disconcerting compulsions to re-dose (Eisner, 1968).

Unsurprisingly, then, with the banning of psychedelics in the USA, Canada, and most of Europe, many of her colleagues were not motivated to invest their energies into similar work with lack-luster drugs. Ronald Sandison re-focused on drug-free psychotherapy, resenting the model of frequent dosing that became the norm in psychiatry (Sessa, 2010). Sidney Cohen ceased conducting psycholytic therapy and instead researched substance abuse (Cohen, 1981).

Funding for psychedelic research became reallocated to studies that explored their toxicity and abuse potential (Sessa, 2015). Eisner continued to experiment with new drug and non-drug treatments that could take LSD's place in the psycholytic process. In the 1970s, ketamine became Eisner's psycholytic drug of choice (Eisner, 2002). Injectable Ritalin was no longer commercially available, and she thought the shorter-acting ketamine was far more reliable for psycholytic purposes, particularly in conjunction with non-pharmaceutical psycholytic methods such as mineral baths, "cathartic blasting" (shouting away hostility into a cloth), and Ida P. Rolf's "Structural Integration" massages (Rolf, 1989; Eisner, 2002; Morgan, 2009).

In 1976, a client died after a session of blasting and mineral bath therapy (Morgan, 2009). The conditions of his death were the subject of long, drawn-out hearings. The hearings revealed a side of Eisner's therapy that she never truly revealed in any of her prior writings, presentations, and therapy records. In addition to her work with clinical populations, Eisner often talked about a special group of clients she had that, like her, engaged in psychological exercises as a matter of self-improvement. She and this group lived highly intermingled lives, meeting frequently within and outside of sessions, taking drugs together, and living in Santa Monica in a 5-house commune of up to 40 people. After the death of a client, members of this group submitted affidavits that accused Eisner of being manipulative, extortionary, physically and sexually abusive, and of coercing them into forgoing emergency services to instead heal the dying group member by chanting. They even claimed that she continued to give them LSD, but disguised it as an anti-migraine drug. After two years of hearings with the California Board of Medical Quality Assurance (BMQA), Eisner's clinical license was permanently revoked. The BMQA and the American Psychological Association (APA) concluded that Eisner experimented too far outside the bounds of standard practice, used treatments that entirely lacked empirical support and put

clients at serious risk for harm, and worked directly against the therapeutic goal of empowering clients to achieve independence and self-confidence.

Preserving her place in the history of psychedelics. Eisner tried to restore her license in the 1980s, taking courses in CPR and pain management to bolster her medical qualifications (Eisner, 1980). The BMQA denied her petition, claiming that she had only addressed the most superficial deficiencies in her practice (Board of Medical Quality Assurance [BMQA], 1984). She may have been banished from psychology, but she maintained a lifetime affiliation with the psychedelic scene. Throughout the 1980s, she kept in touch with psychedelic researchers local and abroad, reading their books and attending their presentations as opportunities arose (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, March 24, 1981; Eisner to R. Sandison, December 28, 1983). From the late 1980s until the mid-1990s, she was a director and advisor to the Albert Hofmann Foundation. Named after LSD's discoverer, the Albert Hofmann Foundation was a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the history of psychedelic science and therapy. It was founded in 1988 by Oscar Janiger, a Los Angeles psychiatrist whose own LSD research and therapy practice preceded Eisner's by only a few years, and served as a model for the group of clinics that sprung up in the Beverley Hills area in the late 1950s (Dobkin de Rios & Janiger, 2003). Since its inception, the foundation has collected over 4000 manuscripts, publications, and other documents that date back to the origin of LSD research (Erowid, 2002).

During her tenure, Eisner planned conferences and events, including one to commemorate the 50th anniversary of LSD in 1994 (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to A. Hofmann, March 24, 1993). On the board of advisors, she sat next to old friends and luminaries of the psychedelic past such as Abram Hoffer, Myron Stolaroff, Ram Dass, and Allen Ginsberg (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, J.R. Baker to Eisner, June 22, 1992). She also sat next to prolific

researchers who actively study and advocate for psychedelics today, such as clinical psychologist Richard Yensen, pharmacologist David Nichols, and psychologist and policy scholar Rick Doblin. Yensen, Nichols, and Doblin have each played a central role in the propagation of psychedelic studies into the 21st century through research, fundraising, and mentorship. Most notably, Doblin founded and acts as director of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, the organization leading the fundraising, lobbying, and research development for a global array of projects pertaining to the therapeutic use of psychedelic drugs (Sessa, 2012). It is their activities, and the activities of a new generation of psychedelic scientists that they funded and mentored, that have brought psychedelics back to the forefront of public attention.

Telling this Story in Hi-Fi: The Archival Component

To date, I have constructed Eisner's narrative using very few resources. Whereas many of her colleagues have been enshrined as the subjects of celebratory books, movies, documentaries, and other forms of media, Eisner has not been the primary subject of one scholarly or popular work to date. An unpublished memoir, an interview, a handful of publications, and a small number of loose mentions in the literature of psychedelic history is only enough to create a brief profile of her work. In order to better contextualize her professional development, clinical practices, and de-licensure in specific events, relationships and affects, I travelled to the Stanford University archives, where Eisner donated a comprehensive volume of correspondences, personal writings, legal documents, and therapy session audiotapes for archiving.

One of my goals is to describe how psycholytic therapy developed alongside psychedelic psychotherapy. What were the crucial instances of interpersonal cooperation that led to developing this distinct form of therapy? How ingrained in psychology did psycholytic therapists perceive their work, and how did the larger body of psychology receive the advent of

psychedelics? How did psycholytic therapists construct their ethical responsibilities in light of sociopolitical worries that threatened their freedom to practice? I aimed to answer these questions by searching Eisner's archive for items that described her interpersonal influences, as well as her own relationship to the wider profession of psychology.

My other goal was to discover the ways in which Eisner's gender had influenced her work. Eisner made a small number of allusions to the difficulties she had faced as a woman in a field that was "totally male-dominated" (Eisner, 2005, p. 98). However, she has not described her impressions of gender-based discrimination in the field with much elaboration. In my archival research, I found some more direct examples of how Eisner's gender had mediated her experiences as a psychologist, a pioneer, and an advocate of therapies that used controversial substances. How did being a woman impact her opportunities to access substances, work with particular people, provide particular forms of therapy, and convey intellectual authority? Answering these questions will provide insight into how the personal conditions of psychologists' lives feed into the way they work within psychology, and therefore define the parameters of psychology itself. It will also make a small contribution to the growing literature on the history of women's resistance to oppressive gender roles in the sciences.

Chapter Structure

I have organized my thesis into three chapters. The first chapter will identify the constructions of spirituality that psychedelic therapists and researchers interacted with in the nascent years of their work. As a member of the Sequoia Seminar and a student of mystical belief systems, Eisner held religious beliefs that drew on a mixture of biblical, Eastern, and psychological sources. From this mixture emerged a mode of spirituality that aimed to manifest divine inspiration in the forms of creativity and moral leadership, but considered divine

inspiration to be a latent ability that a person could activate only after overcoming the psychic barriers that occluded it. In this chapter, I will explicate exactly how the leaders of the Sequoia Seminar constructed spirituality in this way, and trace their dissemination of the construct through an extensive network of influence that reached many ambitious academics, engineers, and psychologists. By elucidating the ways that Eisner interpreted Seminar-affiliated philosophies, I will show how these philosophies were transduced into a form that was commensurable with psychodynamic epistemology.

The first chapter outlines the ways that Eisner's spiritual teachers packaged mysticism into a form that she could easily import into psychology; the second chapter will show how Eisner translated her mystical approach to psychology to the larger community of researchers and therapists who worked with LSD and similar substances. Eisner's affinity for mysticism predated her use of LSD by nearly 20 years, and her religious studies inspired her to formally study psychology four years before she ever heard of the drug. Nonetheless, because it allowed her to experience transcendence in a way that felt so subjectively significant – and because it had come into her spiritual life at the exact moment that it became a viable focus of her professional life – Eisner advocated for LSD psychotherapy with extreme dedication, working tirelessly to develop it on both theoretical and professional levels. Her committed attendance at professional events and her inclination to network with scientists, psychologists, mystics, and movie stars has left an extensive trail of documents that exemplify the strategies that psychedelic researchers employed to achieve group cohesion. As a result, her biography is one effective entry point for exploring the history of psychedelic science as a profession. In this chapter, I will feature evidence from Eisner's archived manuscripts, conference programs and correspondences that

best portrays the processes by which psychedelic and psycholytic therapy became cohesive professional brands in their own right.

So far, although the chapters are organized by theme, they also happen to closely follow the chronological development of psychedelic research. The first chapter looks at the development of a religious culture through the 1940s and 50s that began feeding into psychedelic research in the mid- to late 1950s. The second chapter examines the expansion and professionalization of psychedelic science as it occurred between the late 1950s and the late 1960s. Sometime in the mid 1960s, the story hit a snag: a new set of legal roadblocks forced Eisner and most other psychedelic therapists across North America and Europe to give up their work with LSD, mescaline, and psilocybin (the principal psychoactive agent in hallucinogenic mushrooms). In psychology, concerns were raised about the methodological looseness with which many psychedelic therapists executed their work. The third chapter, set in the 1960s and 70s, will highlight the tensions that existed between psychedelic therapists and the ethical expectations of the psychology profession itself. It will show how psychedelic therapy (particularly the Californian variety) ascended in tandem with a form of humanistic psychology that shared reverence for the transformative power of the mystical experience and disdain for the experience-restricting tendencies of rigorously controlled experimentation. The chapter will also track their tethered descent as outside psychologists began to question these therapies' true efficacy. With Eisner providing the source material, I will evaluate how Eisner's ethical and metaphysical commitments as a psychotherapist compared with commitments made in the broader psychotherapeutic community. I will examine the documents pertaining to her delicensure to convey an impression of psychologists' professional values regarding the role of psychoactive drugs in therapy.

Chapter One – Modern Mysticism for the Working Scientist

In this chapter, I will describe the iterative relationship that science and spirituality shared in the construction of psychology's earliest formal LSD-assisted psychotherapy system. A prominent architect of this system was Betty Eisner, a woman whose membership in a modernized religious studies group called the Sequoia Seminar inspired her midlife entry into the field of clinical psychology. Eisner was first exposed to LSD at the Sequoia Seminar in 1955, so her frame of reference to the drug was largely informed by a discourse that emphasized the importance of personal religious experience. However, she was also completing her studies at UCLA at a time when scholarly interest in LSD began to shift away from its ability to produce psychosis and toward its potential to heal long-forgotten traumas. Acquiring work in one of the world's few LSD research laboratories immediately upon graduation, Eisner was in a unique position to devise her own therapeutic model when LSD-assisted therapy still had very few precedents. This chapter will trace the influences that led Eisner to construct LSD therapy in a way that embraced the methodological rigor expected in the discipline of psychology, but also accepted forms of mystical experience that eluded operational description.

Eisner first tried LSD in 1956, just months before acquiring her PhD in clinical psychology. In the early and mid-1950s, the drug was still extremely obscure for all but the psychiatrists and pharmacologists who worked in the research of psychosis. Eisner herself had no connection to the LSD research community whatsoever in the mid-1950s. Her eventual introduction to LSD was filtered through a very particular set of experiences that ultimately shaped her philosophical and practical approach to psychotherapy in multiple and specific ways. In this chapter, I will map the influence the Sequoia Seminar had in shaping Eisner's psychotherapy.

The Spiritual Substrate

The Sequoia Seminar was born out of a gospel study group that disbanded in 1945, and grew to explore many flavours of spirituality over the course of the 1950s (Markoff, 2005). It was led by Emilia and Harry Rathbun; Emilia the group's spiritual savant, and Harry the beloved and connected Stanford professor (Gelber, 1990). Their entry into religious leadership came from their dedication to the message of a Canadian theologian named Henry Burton Sharman (1865 – 1953). Sharman came from an industrial farming background. In his young adulthood he studied veterinary science, briefly taught high school science, and was a religious agnostic, until a meeting with a forward-thinking Methodist evangelist set him on a new course of independent gospel study and Christian volunteerism (Gelber & Cook, 1990; Roper, 1990). In 1900, Sharman put a hold on agriculture and science, left his home province of Ontario, and went to obtain a PhD in New Testament history and literature at the University of Chicago (Gelber & Cook, 1990; Prang, 1985). There, he took to a rising form of biblical hermeneutics called “higher criticism” (Gelber, 1990). German scholars developed higher criticism in the 19th century to reconcile Christian theology with the emerging hegemony of scientific epistemology (Brown, 1960). Their aim was not necessarily to undermine Christian ethics, but to unpack the bible as they would a literary and historic document (Brown, 1960). As such, Sharman was interested in Jesus not as a divine, infallible individual, but a historical one who served as a “model for life” (Gelber & Cook, 1990, p. 6). His dissertation, titled *The Teachings of Jesus about the Future* (1909), grounded the gospels of Matthew, Luke, and Mark within their political contexts and interpreted Jesus' teachings as political commentary.

Sharman completed his PhD in 1906. Frustrated with the heated politics that distanced orthodox and modernist theologians in his department, he rejected a lecturing appointment at the

University of Chicago and returned to Ontario, where he started an agriculture company to financially support his independent scholarship (Gelber & Cook, 1990; Prang, 1985). When the company was successful enough to be run under someone else's supervision, he returned to the United States to continue his religious work. He travelled to YMCAs and YWCAs throughout the country, seeding gospel studies groups that followed the "Sharman method."

The Sharman method required that attendants explore the bible independently, then meet in groups to share interpretations supported by textual evidence (Gelber & Cook, 1990). Independent study was intended to limit attendants' denominational bias and enable individual perspectives to converge at group meetings (Roper, 1990). The nearly scientific design of the groups, wherein individuals conducted their own empirical surveys before cross-referencing their work with others, was one way Sharman attempted to modernize religious discourse. In another act of modernization, Sharman rebranded the gospels as "records" (Gelber, 1990), perhaps to instill the notion that disciples were interpreting historical, rather than divine, texts. Sharman also optimized the source material – the gospels of Matthew, Luke, Mark, and John – by organizing their events chronologically, comparing their accounts of the same event side by side, and providing brief sidebars for historical and linguistic context. He published his processed version of the New Testament as *The Records of the Life of Jesus* (1917) and followed it up with further guides for interpretation (Sharman, 1917; Sharman, 1935).

The Sharman method was designed to make higher criticism accessible to a nation whose doctrinal and experiential religious logics were being displaced by a preference for scientific, consensus-based interpretations of reality (Roper, 1990). Sharman did not teach rituals, miracles, or metaphysical properties of God. He stressed that Jesus was a historic individual who lived a life of discipline, virtue, and leadership amidst worldly trappings that also existed in the present

day. As such, Jesus' life provided a template for virtuous action amongst the material temptation and false idolatry that permeated the modern way of being. Because Sharman distilled Jesus' life down to the content of the records, these lessons were allegedly available to anyone who examined the records, regardless of tradition or denomination. This nondenominational appeal was the cherry that topped the sundae of Sharman's modern credibility: purporting to be independent of custom (and fervently avoiding public branding as a new denomination [Gelber, 1990]), Sharman constructed the baseline connection to religion necessary for engaging with the teachings of any Christian sect, but that was also sufficient for an entirely personal form of spiritual practice.

Here, a scientifically palatable form of spirituality was beginning to take root. Christ-like aspirations were losing their association with anachronistic rituals and belief in miracle. Between 1915 and 1945, Sharman toured his method throughout the United States, Canada, and even China (Gelber & Cook, 1990). His books became popular amongst university faculty and YMCA/YWCA staff, and were used as foundational texts in politically progressive groups such as the Student Christian Movement and the Canadian Girls in Training (Prang, 1985). To coalesce his international following, Sharman held a month-long records study retreat at Algonquin, Ontario nearly every summer between 1925 and 1945 (Gelber & Cook, 1990).

In 1933, Sharman slowed his travel and settled into semi-retirement in the small sea-side town of Carmel, California (Gelber, 1990). He focused most of his energy on organizing seminars accessible to residents of the San Francisco Bay Area. This was a critical turning point for the fate of the Sharman method. The Bay Area, particularly the area neighbouring Stanford University, was home to a booming community of scholars, inventors, and entrepreneurs (Adams, 2003). The Stanford community was defined by the regionalist belief that they drove

the vanguard of modernization (Adams, 2003). Sharman's modernized gospel now had a direct line into this community, and the community quickly took to it.

In 1934, a Palo Alto resident named Emilia Rathbun attended her first records summer seminar, and was immediately inspired to become a part of Henry Sharman's inner circle. Born and raised in Mexico in the early 1900s, Rathbun (then Lindeman) was socially and spiritually restless for much of her young life (Gelber & Cook, 1990). In 1924, Rathbun's family sent her to live more prosperously in San Jose, California. There, she joined the local YWCA, where she volunteered in poverty relief initiatives (Gelber & Cook, 1990). Although Christian in title, the San Jose chapter of the YWCA rarely ascribed religious motivations to its social and philanthropic activities. Instead, Rathbun fulfilled her spiritual longing at the joint YMCA-YWCA conferences, where Sharman was a fixture (Gelber & Cook, 1990). In the early 1930s, Emilia married Harry Rathbun, an adored business and law professor at Stanford University who was equally motivated by hunger for meaning (Bales, 2005; Gelber, 1990). Harry was more sympathetic to secular philosophical perspectives than religious ones, so when Emilia introduced him to records study, he was drawn to Sharman's materialistic re-presentation of the bible. Intellectual, scientific, individualized – Harry could grasp Jesus' profundity without being asked to take gratuitous leaps of faith or participate in empty rituals.

The Rathbuns began attending Sharman's seminars wherever he held them. Due to their proximity, Sharman and the Rathbuns also became friendly, and Sharman started preparing them to become the leaders of his tradition as he neared retirement (Gelber, 1990). However, the Rathbuns were not purists, and saw space for elaboration in Sharman's belief system. Emilia was on a constant spiritual hunt, and Harry regarded her as his own spiritual teacher (Gelber & Cook, 1990). Emilia understood the moral message of the Sharman method, but it was not until she

attended the lectures of German psychologist Fritz Kunkel and learned about the analytic psychology of Carl Jung that she understood how Christian morals were converted into embodied spirituality (Gelber & Cook, 1990). Carl Jung famously taught that the peak of human growth was a state in which a person accepted every one of their traumas and destructive desires as an inextricable component of their most virtuous qualities (Jung, 2014). Integration was the process by which a person came to confront their darker depths, understand that they constituted a part of the person's wholeness, and release the psychic energy that was otherwise used for their repression (Jung, 2014). Unlike Sharman, Jung stressed that emotion and intellect were equal partners in their ability to produce understanding. In Jung's words, "content can only be integrated when its double aspect has become conscious and when it is grasped not merely intellectually but understood according to its feeling value" (Jung, 2014, p. 30).

Kunkel expanded on Jung, framing trauma, inner conflict, and life challenges as obstacles to integration that required creativity to overcome (Deed, 1969). He also trumped up the spiritual aspects of Jung's psychology. The founder of a Los Angeles therapist training facility called the Foundation for the Advancement of Religious Psychology, Kunkel believed that it took "a religious personality trained in psychology" to help an individual transform their suffering into "growth and creative development" (as cited in Burkhart, 1953, p. 8). This was the crux of the connection between Jung and Sharman: Creativity was the essence of human potential, and psychology was the endeavor to manifest one's creativity; Jesus being a historical example of realized potential, people could realize their own potential by following the methods of psychologists like Kunkel and Jung.

Through Kunkel and Jung, the language of integration, individuation, and creativity entered the Rathbun lexicon. Sharman taught how to read Jesus' life as attainable, desirable, and

necessary for creating paradise in the mortal world (Gelber & Cook, 1990). Psychology, with its presumed empirical insight into the parameters of human ability, was the ticket to actually embodying the Jesus ethic. It stipulated that spirituality was more a psychological state than a process of reading and enacting scripture. A person became spiritual not by following instructions laid out in spiritual texts, but by creating certain psychological conditions within oneself that consequently allowed spiritual behaviour to manifest. With Jesus reinterpreted as a single avatar of a psychological archetype, the gospel lost the burden of being the sole manual for uncovering Jesus' archetypal qualities within oneself. That weight could now be distributed across a variety of belief systems that preached similar sentiments, Jungian psychology included.

The final piece of the puzzle came when Emilia found the format through which she and Harry would proselytize their developing beliefs. In 1942, Emilia hitchhiked her way south from Palo Alto to Trabuco College, a meditation retreat nestled in the foothills of the Santa Ana mountains. She was attending a 3-week seminar on mysticism led by a British polymath named Gerald Heard (Gelber & Cook, 1990). Before coming to America, Heard worked as the BBC's first science commentator, edited a scientific humanism journal called *The Realist* along with science fiction luminaries Aldous Huxley and H.G. Wells, and published numerous books on world religions, psychic phenomena, and the evolutionary history of consciousness (Barrie, 2016). In 1937, he moved to the United States to chair Duke University's department of Historical Anthropology, but scholarly lecturing was too limiting for the global-thinking Heard, and he left after one semester (Barrie, 2016). Heard believed that humans were emerging into an evolution in consciousness – that they would soon comprehend their simultaneous individuality and interdependence – and was not content to simply lecture in the academy when an entire

arsenal of ancient techniques for consciousness-raising was at his disposal (Barrie, 2016; Lattin, 2010).

To Heard, a raised consciousness was one that perceived the nondual nature of the universe, strove for harmony with people and nature, and took materialistic ambition for a primitive delusion. After one World War and in the midst of another, Heard believed that consciousness-raising philosophy and praxis promoted on a mass scale had the potential to transform a host society into a culture of pacifism (Barrie, 2016; Whitworth, 2012). Founded in 1942, Trabuco College was Heard's own project in mass consciousness raising. He taught multi-week seminars on prayer, archetypes, and Vedanta, a Hindu belief system brought to Hollywood by Swami Prabhavananda in the late 1920s (Barrie, 2016; Gelber & Cook, 1990; Whitworth, 2012). Aside from lecturing, Heard built his monastic campus to provide space for syncretic forms of meditation, prayer, fasting, and extended silence. Attendants participated in facility maintenance and meal preparation as a method of practicing devotion through service. In these ways, Trabuco did not resemble a college as much as it did other California retreats founded in the early 1900s by Indian emigrants Swami Yogananda, Jiddu Krishnamurti, and Swami Prabhavananda (Barrie, 2016; Gelber & Cook, 1990; Lattin, 2010; Jayakar, 1986).

Emilia spent two weeks meditating and studying mysticism at Trabuco. When she came back to Palo Alto, Harry remarked that she seemed transformed. Over the next few years, he returned to Trabuco with her. They came to see the permanent, participant-maintained facility as an ideal venue for Sharman-style seminars because it engendered a stronger will to affiliate with the lessons and the community (Gelber & Cook, 1990). They also came to see sustained membership as crucial to the messianic vision that Heard had imparted to them. As the 81-year-old Sharman receded from his practice, the Rathbuns took the helm in their own way. In 1946,

they rented a fishing lodge on the Klamath River in Northern California and began their 50-year foray into religious leadership.

Eisner's Debt to the Rathbuns

In 1946, the Rathbuns began an annual tradition that came to be known as the Sequoia Seminar. The Sequoia Seminar gathered the Bay Area's educated and affluent for summer retreats designed to explore the Rathbuns' new form of spirituality. Professionals and their spouses (mainly male professionals and their wives) paid \$35 a week to attend seminars on scripture, psychology, meditation, and prayer (Loruso, 2017; Sequoia Seminar, 1958; Sequoia Seminar, 1951). They also contributed to the upkeep of the grounds and helped build infrastructure for the camp (Sequoia Seminar, 1951; Sequoia Seminar, 1956). The Rathbuns believed that their teachings could make the widest impact if they pulled in participants from economically and socially privileged classes. Harry, a Stanford business law professor, leveraged his access to the scholarly and professional classes to populate his and Emilia's seminars with "leaders, thinkers, [and] doers" (Gelber, 1990, p. 45). Evidently, Betty Eisner was one such leader/thinker/doer. She was an engaged student, the recipient of an "unusually high" (Eisner, ca. 1933-1937) number of scholarships, and an active participant in student politics (Eisner, ca. 1933-1937). A student in Harry's business law course in 1936, Eisner was invited to join a prototypical records study group the Rathbuns held in their Palo Alto home prior to founding the Sequoia Seminar (Gelber & Cook, 1990; Stanford University, n.d.). Harry was well known to take a special interest in his most ambitious students, and was renowned for his ability to reach out and inspire students in ways that other university professors simply never tried. Other students to have passed through his and Emilia's house group included Justice Sandra Day

O'Connor, President John F. Kennedy, and Bill Hewlett and David Packard of the Hewlett-Packard technology empire (Stanford University, n.d.).

The group made a lasting impression on Eisner. Upon graduating with a BA in political science in 1937, Betty (at the time Betty Grover) married a Stanford engineering student named Willard Eisner. The two moved down to Santa Monica, where Will got a job as a mechanical engineer with the RAND corporation (Sequoia Seminar, 1951; Eisner 2002). However, despite their distance, Eisner maintained close contact with the Rathbuns. The three would meet at Trabuco College in the 1940s, and she attended their first Sequoia Seminar in 1946 (Gelber & Cook, 1990; Eisner, 2002). In this time, she learned to meditate, analyze her dreams, and explore her unconscious mind through free association (Morgan, 2009; Eisner, ca. 1947-1952; Eisner, ca. 1946). She also underwent “personality analyses” with Jiddu Krishnamurti, an Indian philosopher who established his own spiritual education facility in Ojai, California and had meditated at Trabuco College (Jayakar, 1986; Novak, 1997; Eisner, 1949; (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, September 13, 1952).

A letter to her mentor Lewis Terman, dated July 31, 1946 (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, July 13, 1946), showcased the forms of psychology and spirituality that Eisner was studying with Heard, Krishnamurti, and the Rathbuns. The letter began by admonishing mainstream psychology’s fixation on “basic drives” such as reproduction and social dominance. Eisner instead proposed the study of an alternative basic motivation that propelled individuals towards “integration,” “Unity,” or any other word that rung true to the concept, “depending on whether [a person] cared to use the language of the psychologist or the mystic.” She suggested that the motivation for integration was the source of the psychic energy that drove human behaviour. People experienced negative emotions when they “misread” the purpose of

their psychic energy and used it to pursue selfish gains in the domains of finance, sex, and political power. If evaluated “in the perspective of the integrational drive,” social and financial power could be pursued in good faith, to teach others how their dissatisfaction constituted a misapplication of their psychic energy. If understood as basic human drives, the means to social influence instead became ends in themselves, causing the competition, frustration, and mutual destruction that seemed to characterize the spirit of Eisner’s time. Eisner anticipated that Terman would likely be skeptical of her theory, imagining he might construe it as “most unscientific and much closer to religion than psychology.” To retort, she stressed her conviction that “psychological truth [was not to be] found in the field of psychology, ... biology, chemistry, or any other natural sciences, but in the field of religion and philosophy.”

In 1946, Eisner had not yet trained in psychology, a point she conceded to Terman (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, July 13, 1946). But this is not to say that she was not a part of a psychological community. Although the Rathbuns were not psychologists either, they had built psychology into the Sequoia Seminar philosophy from its very beginning. Seminar newsletters, which brimmed with lay references to psychology, are one source of evidence for this. One letter from 1950 read that Jesus “clearly understood man’s [sic] psychological nature” (Sequoia Seminar, 1950), and that his mission was to “acquaint other men [sic] with this discovery” (Sequoia Seminar, 1950). A 1951 letter stated that questions about God could be answered by “personal discovery, orientation, and growth” (Sequoia Seminar, 1951b), terms that had an established history in psychology (Jacobi, 1943; Rogers, 1946; Allport, 1955). Similarly, in 1956, the newsletter clarified that the goal of studying Jesus was for the participant “to become what he [sic] is capable of becoming” (Sequoia Seminar, 1956b). To the Rathbuns, concepts such as growth and creativity were categories of a trans-historical psychology that both

Jesus and Jung could comment upon (more accurately than the positivistic psychologists, according to Eisner). Their belief that Jesus was a proto-psychologist differentiated their seminars from Sharman's. Sharing in Jesus' mission, the Rathbuns felt that Sharman's austere, impersonal method of higher criticism failed to engage participants in the ways of thinking about the self and others that made Jesus who he was. The Rathbuns kept Sharman's works at the center of seminar programming, but augmented them with books by depth psychologists like Jung, Kunkel, and Erich Fromm (Gelber & Cook, 1990). They framed religious awakening as the process of coming to understand "the conditioned self as it interferes with creative living" (Sequoia Seminar, 1958). Records study was taught alongside courses in the psychology of conditioning, personality, and selfhood (Sequoia Seminar, 1958). Psychology even permeated meditation and prayer, which were taught as paths to forms of intuitive awareness that the rational mind neglected (Sequoia Seminar, 1958). By 1958, the Rathbuns counted psychology as one of the four fundamental pillars of the Seminar (Sequoia Seminar, 1958).⁴

Eisner Enters Psychology

In 1951, Eisner received her acceptance to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) graduate program in psychology. Writing to Terman about her prior summer, Eisner recalled attending a Rorschach therapy seminar that sent her running to UCLA to apply for a PhD in clinical psychology (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, February 5, 1951; Sequoia Seminar, 1956). Attempting a direct-to-PhD admission was lofty, but Eisner did get admitted as a Masters student under the supervision of Bruno Klopfer. This was a fortuitous snag. Born in Germany, Klopfer was amongst the first psychologists to popularize the Rorschach

⁴ The other three pillars were Eastern and Western mystical literature, Sharman's method of historical criticism, and a commitment to the translation of Seminarian ideals to social reality outside the Seminar (Sequoia Seminar, 1958).

in the United States (Handler & Acklin, 1994). In 1938, he founded the Rorschach Institute, which grew to become the world's largest personality assessment-focused professional association (Handler & Acklin, 1994; Hertz, 1986; Society for Personality Assessment, n.d.). Perhaps even more fortuitously, Klopfer had spent a year studying with Carl Jung in Zurich, and remained an avid teacher and user of Jungian analysis in America (Handler & Acklin, 1994). A phenomenologist with an interest in mysticism, he stood apart from mainstream American psychologists who held more positivistic standards of truth (Skadeland, 1986). He was also an exceptional personal mentor to Eisner. She wrote to Terman, "if it weren't for Dr. Klopfer I wouldn't even go into a class room in psychology at UCLA again, but he makes it worthwhile for all of us who really want to learn clinical psychology" (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, September 13, 1952). Working with Klopfer, Eisner established inroads into professional psychology without having to forego her mystical frame of reference.

Eisner may have been lucky to partner with a supervisor who was at once unconventional and celebrated, but as a woman embarking on work that contradicted gendered expectations, finishing her degree was tremendously difficult. First, she had to take extra course loads to make up for the fact that her Bachelor's degree was in political science (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, March 13, 1953). Starting in the summer of 1952, she had to do this while taking care of her and Willard's newborn baby daughter, Mary Leah (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, March 13, 1953). To top it all off, she was facing gender-based discrimination that threatened her potential to graduate with a clinically useful degree. The UCLA psychology department expected students to complete internships in each of three areas of clinical practice: child psychology was taught through an internship at a school clinic, adult psychology at the UCLA student health center, and adults with psychosis at a veterans'

administration (VA) psychiatric hospital (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, February 17, 1951). Eisner had no problem attaining an internship at a children's school clinic, but was denied her application for a VA appointment based on her sex. She was barred from VA work because she was married, had a young child, and could potentially have another (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, September 13, 1952). She and her teachers assumed this was the reason, but Eisner was determined to confirm the discriminatory policy directly from her department director's mouth. After being told to direct her complaints to a secretary, being cancelled on in the last minute, and being stood up entirely, she finally met with dean Roy Dorcus. Dorcus pleaded, "but Mrs. Eisner, I don't want you to think there was any personal discrimination against you" (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, September 13, 1952). Despite exceeding the academic requirements relative to some of the men who were admitted for a VA internship, policy was policy – never mind that this impersonal policy directly limited her personal success. The tone of their meeting turned when Eisner "spiked [her] feminist banner" (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to L. Terman, September 13, 1952) and threatened to go public with the fact that women were being denied a full education. She was permitted a VA internship, and graduated with the full range of experience in 1956 (Eisner, 2002).

During her summers at the Sequoia Seminar, Eisner's experience of gender could not have been more different. More than 60% of Seminararians were women, and Emilia Rathbun was the Seminar's spiritual leader (Gelber & Cook, 1990). In the years between meeting Sharman and launching the Sequoia Seminar, Emilia began her own foray into religious leadership by starting women's-only record studies groups (Gelber, 1990). When the Rathbuns began hosting the Seminar proper, Emilia continued to actively recruit women. Since women were consigned to a rigid, repressed gender role in mainstream society, Emilia wanted to provide a place where

they could learn leadership skills and assume leadership roles that they were otherwise refused (Gelber, 1990). Eisner herself became a seminar leader in 1956 (Gelber & Cook, 1990), and as a newly licensed psychotherapist, began conducting group therapy sessions with other seminar leaders (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Unknown to Eisner, April 28, 1952; Sequoia Seminar, 1958).

As well as being a consideration in the composition of the Seminar, gender was also ripe for conceptual exploration. In Carl Jung's ontology of the psyche, every individual was said to contain the sum of the collective unconscious within themselves (Jung, 2014). Each person therefore contained a blueprint of the psyche of the opposite gender. Jung associated the feminine archetype with a relationship-oriented "connective quality" and the masculine archetype with "discrimination and cognition" (2014, p. 14), reproducing a traditional gendered stratification of personality traits using the language of analytic psychology. However, he added that exploring one's opposite-gendered archetype was a necessary part of achieving psychological wholeness (Jung & Hull, 1957). Emilia was taken by the notion that an individuated person had integrated with the characteristics of both the masculine and feminine gender. She found it empowering because it permitted women access to the capacities for logical argumentation and truth discrimination that Jung claimed came more naturally to men (Gelber & Cook, 1990). It also affirmed the value of the intuition, emotional attunement, and relational skills that were ostensibly the domain of the female psyche (Gelber & Cook, 1990).

In contrast to Harry's cerebral records study seminars, Emilia developed programs that facilitated access to these feminine aspects of the unconscious. The programs circumvented the logical mind through art, dream analysis, and free association (Gelber & Cook, 1990; Sequoia Seminar, 1958). When Eisner finished her studies, Emilia invited her to co-facilitate her free association and dream interpretation groups (Gelber & Cook, 1990). By 1958, Eisner was

running her own group therapy sessions with seminar leaders. These sessions were designed to engender “deeper awareness” and build “more psychological knowledge to function more effectively in a leadership role” (Sequoia Seminar, 1958), in part by engaging one’s artistic self. A mainly female environment for learning leadership, asserting her own creative power, destabilizing the concept of gender, and having her expertise accepted without second guesses was far more empowering to Eisner than the conservative administrative practices at UCLA. With the Seminar providing the space in which Eisner could fashion herself a psychologist, Seminarian beliefs continued to have a direct line into the formation of her therapeutic principles.

LSD enters Eisner

Before studying psychology in college, Eisner’s knowledge about psychology was mediated through a community that used it to attain spiritual enlightenment, rather than working within it as a discipline unto itself. The Seminar was a prominent source of information for discerning what theories and methods counted as psychology. It is likely that there, at Gerald Heard’s seminar in the summer of 1955, Eisner first learned about LSD and its psychospiritual applications. The Rathbuns invited Heard to host a two-week leadership seminar with a small selection of the group’s inner circle (Sequoia Seminar, ca. 1955). His lecturing routine usually traversed arcane dimensions of Eastern mysticism, parapsychology, life sciences, and speculative history (Stevens, 1987). This time, he also brought up the discovery of a powerful new drug that caused users to perceive all separation as an illusion; to see the entire universe as integrated, to even experience the sameness of life and death (Stevens, 1987; Stolaroff, 2005; Heard, 2012). It was quite the coincidence, then, that Eisner returned to campus that fall to find a listing seeking

doctoral students willing to write their dissertation on the same “new and unusual drug” (Eisner, 2002, p. 5).

The drug was LSD, and the principal investigator who posted the listing was Sidney Cohen. Busy with her own dissertation in an unrelated area, Eisner was unable to commit to Cohen’s project as a research assistant. She instead signed on as his first subject (Eisner, 2002). Cohen’s study was rather cut and dried. He randomly assigned participants to ingest LSD or to take no drug at all, and compared them on a variety of intelligence and personality assessments (Eisner, 2002; Cohen, Fichman & Eisner, 1958). The combined battery of assessments was taken to represent a subject’s “ego functioning” (Novak, 1997; Klopfer, Crumpton & Grayson, 1958). In November of 1955, Cohen gave Eisner 100ug of LSD and administered an extensive battery of popular assessments: the MMPI, the Draw-a-Person, the Rorschach, a word association test, and others (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, 1955, November 10; Cohen, Fichman & Eisner, 1958; Novak, 1997).

On paper, Eisner’s ego functioning was significantly disordered. This was not because she lost her ability to perform on tasks; she merely lost the will. Free association seemed senseless. Drawing people was too exposing. No task seemed to bear any relation to the construct it was designed to measure (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, 1955, November 10). She was constantly distracted by stunning realizations about the complexity of life, its perfect transience, and the futility of trying to quantify its richness (Eisner, 2002). According to Eisner’s post-session report, trying to measure her experience using psychology’s conventional tools “was like taking all the time and trouble to go out of the pasture thru [sic] the gate, find out something trivial and then come all the way back in to write it down” (Eisner, 1955, November 10). Standard assessments may have returned an idea of how LSD caused an individual to break

down and cease cooperating in the experimental process. But as far as content validity was concerned, they could not at all render the reasons that the experience felt so significant to users.

Results from other participants were consistent with the results obtained in Eisner's trial. LSD caused decreases in measured values of intelligence, concentration, and ego functioning across the board (Novak, 1997). Although Cohen adhered to the methodological precedents of toxic psychosis research, he did not trust that the study produced a useful impression of LSD's effects. After a euphoric personal experience, he no longer believed that LSD was comparable to drugs that reliably produced states of paranoia and distressing delusions (Novak, 1997). Like Eisner, Cohen was disappointed in his failure to capture euphoric or insightful sentiments among his participants (Novak, 1997). Fortunately, Eisner viewed her trial as a net positive, and had an idea for how Cohen could salvage his opportunity to work with LSD. She suggested he explore the drug's therapeutic potential (Eisner, 2005). After Eisner was awarded her PhD in 1956, Cohen hired her to be a therapist at the Brentwood VA hospital, and the two began the prodigious research partnership that culminated in the development and implementation of psycholytic therapy in the United States.

Seminar and Psychologist Clash on LSD

Pharmacologically, the hallmark of psycholytic psychotherapy was the use of small doses of LSD that kept the patient grounded enough to carry on cogent communication with the therapist. Eisner wrote the theory and conducted empirical research on psycholytic psychotherapy with Cohen at Brentwood, but the theory was largely informed by her experiences at the Sequoia Seminar. In 1957 and 1958, Eisner continued to lead individual and group therapy sessions with Seminar leaders. During these two years, however, she did it with the help of LSD. Heard sparked a fervor for LSD at the seminar after his 1955 workshop. Seminararians greatly

revered him, and after his endorsement of the drug, they insisted on acquiring it. Heard set up one Seminar leader, a young engineer named Myron Stolaroff, with the man who had given Heard his first dose: an enigmatic uranium dealer named Al Hubbard (Stevens, 1987; Stolaroff, 2005).

Hubbard lived in Vancouver, British Columbia. Hubbard's past was shrouded in mystery, pieced together from the memories of the LSD researchers who interacted with him. Over the course of his life, he allegedly adopted various professional affiliations, including electrical engineer, technology tycoon, air force pilot, former agent for a US intelligence agency, and World War II munitions smuggler for the British Navy (Dyck, 2012; Stevens, 1987; Stolaroff, 2015). When the British psychiatrist Ronald Sandison first dosed Hubbard in 1951, Hubbard knew he had another occupation to take on (Stevens, 1987). In the 1950s, Hubbard became known as the "Johnny Appleseed of LSD," networking with North America's richest and most influential to turn them onto a brand of religious values informed by psychedelic drugs (Eisner, 2002; Dyck, 2012). In 1955, he formed the Commission for the Study of Creative Imagination, an interdisciplinary group of scientists, authors, clergy, and government officials committed to supporting and promoting each other's work with psychedelics (Dyck, 2012; Stevens, 1987). Armed with a contested PhD from an unknown Tennessee correspondence school (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, A.M. Hubbard to Eisner, August 13, 1957), Hubbard recruited Heard, Aldous Huxley, Humphry Osmond, and Abram Hoffer to sit on his board of directors (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, A.M. Hubbard to Eisner, September 9, 1958), and clamored to secure each and every opportunity for collaboration that came his way (Dyck, 2012). In 1956, he invited Stolaroff to his Vancouver home, fed him LSD, and guided him through the memory of his physical birth (Stevens, 1987). Stolaroff found the experience at once traumatic, intellectually fascinating, and

spiritually cleansing (Stevens, 1987; Stolaroff, 2005). That summer, he brought both LSD and Hubbard to the Seminar to turn on the other leaders (Stolaroff, 2005).

Eisner was the first Seminarian to experience LSD, but she sat out the Seminar's first LSD sessions in 1956. She had already signed up to conduct group therapy and Rorschach assessment sessions for the camp, and was in the process of reviewing the scientific literature on LSD with Sidney Cohen (4.87; Eisner, 2005). In the absence of a psychologist, a different group of professionals took control of LSD discourse. Myron Stolaroff was an electrical engineer who joined the Sequoia Seminar because his industrial work did not fulfill his spiritual proclivities (Stolaroff, 2005). Willis Harman, another seminar leader, was a Stanford professor of electrical engineering and economics. His positivistic worldview "permanently destroyed" over his two years in the Seminar, Harman rededicated his career to the promotion of corporate social conscience (Gelber & Cook, 1990; LoRusso, 2017). With their connections to the San Francisco Bay Area's booming technology industry, Harman and Stolaroff were Hubbard's perfect foot soldiers. Hubbard built his personal fortune in the technology and uranium industries, and believed that no institution had greater social influence than industry (Erdmann, 2009; Stevens, 1987; National Film Board, 2002). He wanted LSD to permeate every aspect of society, but he believed the most effective path to social transformation entailed dosing its most powerful capitalists (Erdmann, 2009; National Film Board, 2002).

Harman and Stolaroff's LSD session facilitation was about as crude as Hubbard's by psychology's current standards. In their sessions, someone would take LSD (100ug or more) with a few other people in the room, be left to trip how they pleased, and write a detailed report of the experience the following day (Harman, 1956). Their goal was to catch a glimpse of an ill-defined realm that existed beyond the material world (Harman, 1956). Heard had provided

Seminarians with a philosophically sophisticated template for understanding LSD as a window into the cognitively constructed nature of all binaries. Harman and Stolaroff believed that the collapse of the capacity to comprehend differentiation induced a peak state of creativity that put individuals in touch with their full potential as human beings (Stolaroff, 2015; Harman et al., 1966). It allowed people to understand that all humans had access to a vast universe of knowledge and power, an understanding they expected could motivate people to seek extraordinary heights of personal achievement (Markley & Harman, 1982). As engineering scholars, Harman and Stolaroff felt that technological advancement created the illusion of social progress, but had in fact caused people to seek technological answers to social problems, further exacerbating the defining woes of industrialized culture. Conversely, they advocated for “mind change,” and expected that a collective commitment to personal development would in turn promote social change (O’Hara, 2003). As such, if a large dose of LSD could guarantee a transcendental experience to any individual who took it, then it was itself the key to a mass evolution in consciousness.

In 1957, after studying the literature and experimenting on herself, Eisner had developed a stricter methodological framework for LSD sessions. Doses greater than 100ug may have been effective for provoking a profound experience, but in her opinion, they did not guarantee a productive one. The first time she studied the experience in a therapeutic setting rather than an experimental one, Eisner took 100ug under the care of Sidney Cohen and a childhood friend named Mimsie. Whereas her first trip was characterized by a sense of integration, this one seemed to dredge up Eisner’s darkest conflicts and leave them hanging in her mind without any resolution. She witnessed the oppression that her white race had symbolized in the world, re-experienced all the ways she had manipulated her loved ones, and came to believe that she had

provoked her brother into hating women so seethingly that he turned gay (Eisner, 1957, January 19). Even after the drug wore off, she remained under a cloud of depression for weeks (Eisner, 2005). Nonetheless, Eisner still managed to extract useful knowledge from the experience. She theorized that LSD works by disabling defense mechanisms, resulting in an upsurge of deeply repressed emotions and traumas (Eisner, 2005). She hypothesized that smaller doses would produce a more manageable reduction in defenses, and in her experience, she was right: following up her whirlwind dose with two 25ug sessions spread 10 days apart, Eisner was able to address her emotions gradually and come out of her depression (Eisner, 2005; Eisner, 1957, January 29).

In her personal trials, Eisner had learned that integration could be coaxed out when personal problems were extracted patiently over the course of many sessions. She used these experiences to devise a protocol for conducting LSD psychotherapy at the 1957 Sequoia Seminar. The protocol was significantly different from the sessions Harman, Stolaroff and Hubbard held the previous year. Doses would begin small at 25ug, and increase weekly by 25ug ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). They were kept low so that the patient could experience reduced defenses whilst remaining open to communication with the therapist ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). Instead of wading through disorientation hoping to stumble upon sublime insight, the patient and therapist would work together to interpret the content of the experience. The content was broken down into particular elements and patterns: There was the level of personal problems, where people reflected on their conflicts and memories; the level of symbolism, where images that appeared in peoples' minds were interpreted within the context of their lives; and the level of the "racial unconscious," which meant something akin to the recollection of past lives ([Eisner],

1957, November 25). The level beyond these was “the cosmic aspect of the unconscious – the mystical or integrative experience” ([Eisner], 1957, November 25).

The Seminarists had sought immediate access to the mystical level of the unconscious. Eisner saw little value in achieving this hasty a mystical experience. If it bypassed the personal and symbolic stages of the unconscious, an immediate mystical experience was unlikely to produce enduring psychological transformation. Although it provided a glimpse of what life could be like if a person lived in what Huxley called “awareness of the not-self” (Huxley, 1952, p. 25), it did not illuminate the factors that caused a person to be a self in the first place. Eisner interpreted these factors – familial relationships, childhood obsessions, sexual anxieties, indeed all the subject matter that fit within the content area of psychoanalysis – as the membranes that mediated peoples’ every experience in the world, and the barriers that kept people from fully exploring their potential. It may have been well and good to temporarily rise above these barriers, but without understanding the conditions that allowed them to exist, Stolaroff and Harman were failing their mission to jumpstart a culture of self-development.

Eisner took over LSD facilitation duties at the Seminar in 1957. Bringing in the rigor of her discipline, she described her methodological intentions in a formally written protocol ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). She standardized the sessions in a format reminiscent of the research-ready regimentation she implemented at Brentwood. Once called “Seminarists,” session participants were re-dubbed “subjects” ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). Subjects’ doctors were to be notified before each session, and subjects’ personal information and dosage were to be recorded in a file ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). The prerogative was “to think in terms of a research program” ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). In session, Eisner (referred to as “the therapist”) encouraged subjects to discuss their thoughts and sensations as they come up.

Physical and psychological pain were deemed especially effective jumping-off points for the therapist's probe of the subject's unconscious ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). To the surprise of her community, Eisner asserted that it was necessary to "forget the notion that the mystical experience [was] the goal of the session or even desirable per se" ([Eisner], 1957, November 25). The stance caused friction with Harman and Stolaroff, who felt she had abandoned the Seminar's original premise that religious commitment was predicated on the direct experience of God (Gelber & Cook, 1990; Stolaroff, 2005). Harman and Stolaroff left the Sequoia Seminar in protest of Eisner's "ridiculous" (Stolaroff, 2005, p. 56) new model, leaving her to win the methodological stand-off and shape the way that religion would be construed in a therapeutic context.

Mystifying the Science

As much as she succeeded in shaping the Seminarian psychedelic experience with her formal training in psychology, Eisner also exported Seminarian philosophy into her research and private practice. Earlier, I mentioned that Cohen's first LSD study employed a standard approach to toxic psychosis research. In *the Creation of Psychopharmacology* (2002), the psychiatrist-historian David Healy demonstrates that the earliest psychiatric research on hallucinogens was methodologically similar to research on antipsychotic drugs, where the aim revolved around defining the effects of a drug on a person, rather than investigating a drug's potential uses in a therapeutic context. After adhering to conventional psychopharmacological methodology for one study, Cohen admitted that his model failed to capture the meaning and excitement he had personally experienced on LSD. Meanwhile, Eisner had been steeping in metaphysical modes of meaning extraction for ten years. Sharman taught that the most meaningful practice in the modern world was spiritual leadership, and that Jesus lived as a model leader. Jung located

meaning in self-discovery, the resolution of inner conflict, and the realization that one is connected to humanity through inherent access to a universal mythology. Elaborating on Jung, Kunkel expressed obstacles to conflict resolution as opportunities to exercise one's own creativity and connect with the higher power that gifted it. Finally, Heard taught that meaning had come from acting in ways that dismantled the illusory differences between self, others, and nature, especially in ways that imparted this point of view onto others. The Rathbuns built all of these teachings into the foundation of the Sequoia Seminar: they read Jesus and taught leadership; facilitated meditations, prayers, and mystical readings that challenged dualistic preconceptions; and imported tools and theories from psychology to reinterpret spirituality from an ideal based in scripture to an experience that could be accessed using the science of the human mind.

Finding the psychological value of LSD would come from learning how to use the drug to enable creativity, self-discovery, and leadership skills within the methodological milieu of psychology. An archived research protocol dated 1957 shows that Seminarian values were indeed codified as lessons for psychologists (Eisner & Cohen, 1957). In this protocol, Eisner and Cohen recommended that both the patient and the therapist be open to engaging with mystical ideas. More specifically, they needed to work together to situate the patient's life within the context of the harmonious natural universe. A conversation about the patient's spiritual beliefs was frontloaded in the intake interview. Eisner and Cohen needed to get a sense for whether the patient could process an integrative experience, or whether they would try to retreat from the dissolution of ego boundaries and interpret their experience as insanity. If a patient was ready, the role of the drug was to dismantle defenses; the role of the patient was to become entangled in whatever problems surfaced; and the role of the therapist was to get the patient "out of the

whirlpool and into the broad integrative stream” (Eisner & Cohen, 1957, p. 4). Probing a patient’s steam tunnels of repressed traumas and unmentionable fantasies using LSD would result in a very particular form of catharsis – a mystical sense of integration with self and surrounding, and a “consequent release of inner creativity” (Eisner & Cohen, 1957, p. 6).

It turned out that, at least within Eisner’s criteria, LSD was a remarkably effective tool for this. She and Cohen published several papers between 1957 and 1959 on their successes treating individuals with mood disorders, substance abuse problems, and even “those ‘lost’ people, unable to believe in anything” (Eisner & Cohen, 1957, p. 3). Patients on small doses of LSD were purported to respond to probing questions more openly, honestly, and imaginatively. In being able to release inner conflicts and experiment with their meanings and consequences, Eisner and Cohen’s patients could put their entire lives into a holistic context and feel integrated. Eisner distilled three primary effects of low-dose LSD that worked together to produce integration (Eisner & Cohen, 1958). First, LSD was noted to aid in the recall of repressed memories. Second, it was claimed to help patients bond with their therapists more readily, improving the fidelity with which patients transferred formative relational figures onto their therapists. Lastly, it promoted abreaction, a psychoanalytic term for the embodied release of emotional content associated with a particular memory (Eisner & Cohen, 1958). These three effects – the recall of a trauma, the sensation of living through the trauma, and the opportunity to resolve the trauma with an avatar that represented an important figure in the patient’s life – synergized to initiate the fabled integrative experience. In their papers, Eisner and Cohen defined the integrative experience as secularly and operationally as possible, as “a state wherein the

patient accepts himself as he is, and a massive reduction in self-conflict occurs” (Eisner & Cohen, 1958, p. 533).⁵

That Eisner and Cohen leaned so heavily on the language of psychoanalysis is no surprise. Demand for clinical psychologists boomed in the years following World War II, and the American Psychoanalytic Association stepped up to fill the demand by training significant proportion of new psychiatrists and clinical psychologists (Plant, 2005; Hale, 1995; Hirshbein, 2009). By the 1950s, psychoanalytically-oriented psychologists and psychiatrists dominated American sites of psy-discipline education (Strand, 2011). However, while this was happening, another force was stirring below. A subset of psychologists grew frustrated with the psychoanalytic emphasis on maladjustment and instead wanted to focus on experiences wherein humans rose above their adversities and accomplished incredible feats of creativity, empathy, and ability (Grogan, 2013). They came to be known as humanistic psychologists. In a way, this tense moment in the history of psychology is captured in the aim of this chapter. I strove to

⁵ Eisner and Cohen were not the first to propose that LSD had therapeutic potential, or even that it evinced the psychodynamic structure underlying the mind. Swiss psychiatrist Werner Stoll suggested that LSD promoted transference and access to repressed material in the first ever human study of the drug, and over the course of the early 1950s, psychiatrists Ronald Sandison, Walter Frederking, and Harold Abramson reinforced Stoll’s suggestion to varying degrees of detail (Frederking, 1955; Sandison, Spencer & Whitelaw, 1954). Like Eisner and Cohen, they also espoused the notion that LSD’s premier benefit was its ability to drastically accelerate psychoanalysis, helping clients explore their neuroses in far fewer sessions than it would have taken otherwise. However, Eisner and Cohen were the earliest researchers to publish a theory of how LSD’s effects on the psychodynamic mind could be synchronized to manufacture the most therapeutic condition possible, the integrative experience. Writing in the humble voice of science, they proposed their theory of integration tentatively, inviting interested scientists to join in on the project of verifying a concept that was admittedly mired in “semantic difficulties” (Eisner & Cohen, 1958, p. 533).

demonstrate that Eisner came into psychology intending to exercise her for penchant for self-exploration in the service of her religious community. In the process, she picked up the psychoanalytically-inflected tools of the trade, bringing them back to the Sequoia Seminar and changing the way that Seminarians were instructed to experience divinity. Conversely, she also altered psychological discourse. When LSD drove the usual psychological methods into a dead end, she arrived with a proposal to abandon those methods and consider LSD's spiritual valence as the critical site of psychological interest.

Chapter Two - The Association and Dissociation of Psycholytic Therapy

In the prior chapter, I reviewed the circumstances that gave rise to the culture of the Sequoia Seminar, and demonstrated the impact that Seminarian culture had on the development of one pioneering form of LSD psychotherapy. This chapter will situate Eisner's style of therapy within the broader practice of psychedelic science. The invention of LSD opened up a historic period of industriousness in the research of mind-altering substances, and coincided with the invention of chlorpromazine to revolutionize the research and treatment of mental disorders (Healy, 2002; Dyck, 2012; Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979). In the 1950s, LSD researchers were biochemists who explored the basic science of psychosis, psychiatrists who sought new ways to rehabilitate their interminable inpatients, and private clinicians who looked to deepen their clients' willingness to query their selfhood. Of the sub-disciplines that emerged to accommodate LSD's versatility, Eisner most explicitly belonged to what became known as psycholytic therapy. Psycholytic therapists administered small doses of LSD to facilitate psychoanalysis, in contrast to many other psychedelic therapists who gave big doses in hopes that the near-guaranteed transcendental experience would restructure their patients' pathological personalities.

Eisner's tenacious letter-writing and professional networking make it possible to observe the ways that psycholytic theory became distinct from, and existed in relationship with, other forms of psychedelic research. I will draw on Eisner's manuscripts, personal communications, and involvement in conferences and professional associations to demonstrate the mechanisms by which psycholytic therapists tried to establish disciplinary sovereignty. Many of these documents come from surprising places that do not appear immediately relevant to the construction of a scientific institution. One thing that makes LSD such a fascinating cultural object is that seemingly unrelated factions of society all found their own reasons to enshrine it, all constructed

its effects differently, but all understood that they shared access to realms of the human mind that were kept repressed in Western culture for an extremely long time. In the 1950s and 60s, Eisner propagated her research to people in the entertainment industry, spiritual leadership, and of course, psychedelic drug research. Her life left traces of how LSD functioned in each one of these sectors, but more importantly, of how the interaction of these sectors enabled ideas to flow across disparate epistemic cultures. In this chapter, I will focus on the archival pieces that provide a description of the landscape of psychedelic therapies in the 1950s and 1960s, when the psychedelic research community was at its most active and integrated. Furthermore, I will uncover the processes by which psychedelic researchers established a global professional community. Examining the history of how professional distinctions formed within the psychedelic research community allows us to understand psychedelic science as more than a blip in the larger history of human science. It reveals the processes by which psychedelic researchers worked to legitimize their content area as a sub-discipline in its own right.

Formalizing the LSD Experience

This section will describe the period in history where psychedelic researchers had not yet developed a cohesive professional network, but were beginning to explore and build on each other's work more deliberately than they had when LSD was a brand-new drug. Before beginning their trials in early 1957, Eisner and Cohen spent the autumn season combing the scientific literature on LSD and mescaline (Eisner, 2002). Although there was much less therapeutic research than there was pharmacological research, they were able to distill a number of important methodological consistencies across the disciplines. First, they found that many researchers corroborated Eisner's belief that LSD had a special psychoanalytical significance, whether by reference to the "ventilation of emotions" (Eisner & Cohen, 1958, p. 528),

“activation” (p. 529) of repressed conflicts, or “facilitation of transference” (p. 530). Second, most researchers who worked with psychiatric patients limited their dose to a value well below the 100ug that Eisner was given as Cohen’s subject (Eisner & Cohen, 1958; Eisner, 2002). Third, Eisner and Cohen noticed that some researchers administered these low doses over the course of weeks to months, increasing the dose at a slow and steady rate as their patients grew accustomed to the effects of the drug (Eisner & Cohen, 1958).

Of the few psychiatrists that attempted to draw therapeutic conclusions from their research, even fewer employed this dosing strategy. Eisner and Cohen seized on it nonetheless. All three of their methodological observations became central to their therapeutic orientation. For their study, Eisner and Cohen recruited patients whose diagnoses ran the gamut from depression to alcoholism to personality disorders. Like Sandison, they started their patients on 25ug and increased their dose by 25ug every week until they were maintained on 100-150ug.⁶ Patients were seen for up to 16 sessions, and in some cases were followed up with for over a year. While prior LSD researchers made tentative connections between their observations and psychoanalytic concepts such as transference and wish fulfilment, Eisner and Cohen took on psychoanalysis as their main interpretive framework. They designed the therapeutic environment in a way they thought would best elicit psychoanalytically pertinent content (Eisner & Cohen, 1958; Cohen & Eisner, 1959). As such, the therapy room had a domestic appearance, and included music, mirrors, patients’ family photos, and art supplies (Eisner & Cohen, 1958; Novak, 1997). They imported this technique from the Sequoia Seminar sessions and from the playbook of Al Hubbard, who had experimented with ways to channel the LSD experience in specific

⁶ Although Sandison implemented this method first and Eisner states that her and Cohen reviewed the literature before developing their own method, she claims in several sources to have devised this aspect of their treatment independently (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, January 25, 1958; Eisner, 1978; Eisner, 2002; Eisner, 2005).

directions as part of his project to enlighten the capitalist class (National Film Board, 2002; Eisner, 2002).

In addition to revising the format in which LSD was administered, Cohen and Eisner drew on clinical methods to survey its effects. Instead of tracking changes in performance on psychometric tests, they reported their own clinical evaluations of patients' progress. If they observed improvement, and if their observations were corroborated in reports from both the patient and a person close to the patient, then they considered the patient improved (Eisner & Cohen, 1958). 16 of the 22 patients in this study were deemed improved. According to the authors, most of the patients who did not improve still made therapeutic progress, but failed to mobilize their insights in their daily lives because they did not graduate from therapy into unsupportive social conditions (Eisner & Cohen, 1958). In all cases, however, Eisner and Cohen noted that patients opened up and experienced uninhibited access to repressed memories and unconscious conflicts (Eisner & Cohen, 1958).

Concluding their report, Eisner and Cohen reiterated the well-established finding that the pharmacology of LSD somehow enabled self-disclosure and abreaction (Eisner & Cohen, 1958). However, they also added that following abreaction, LSD caused a person to experience "integration," a phenomenon "in which the patient accepts himself [sic] for what he is and sees himself in harmony with his environment" (Cohen & Eisner, 1959, p. 619; also see Eisner & Cohen, 1958). Eisner and Cohen did not see entirely eye to eye on the underlying nature of hallucination and integration. Eisner attached a decidedly mystical weight to the process of integration, arguing that the felt sense of oneness with the universe had inherent psychological value (Eisner, 1961). Even more eccentrically, she believed that LSD provided real glimpses into phenomena such as extrasensory perception (ESP) and past life recollection, and was vocal about

her intent to bring these phenomena into her therapy and research (Eisner, 1961; Novak, 1997). Cohen saw Eisner's interpretation as part of a streak of confirmation bias that coloured a growing number of American psychologists' LSD research (Novak, 1997). Indeed, ESP became a hot topic in the unpublished world of LSD research (Siff, 2015; Stevens, 1987).

In 1959, when it came time to take on a new round of patients, Cohen politely terminated his research partnership with Eisner. The two remained friends and continued to associate as professionals, but their research took very divergent paths henceforth. Cohen quietly turned on psychologists, engineers, and media magnates, and became an advocate for establishing checks and balances that limited public access to LSD (Stevens, 1987; Dyck, 2012). He also continued to conduct scientific research on the therapeutic properties of LSD, and preferred to characterize the integrative experience according to its phenomenological manifestations rather than its metaphysical implications (Stevens, 1987). Eisner did not initiate any more formal studies after leaving the Brentwood VA hospital. However, she remained committed to research in two important ways. For one, as an independent clinical psychologist working outside the strict conventions of institution-supported science, her ethic of experimentalism progressed without restraint. Her private practice became her lab for exploring sundry methods for reducing defenses and inducing integration, drug-dependent or not. In this context, Eisner expanded psycholytic therapy beyond its reliance on LSD. Second, she became a fixture at psychedelic science conferences, and played a central role in the attempt to form a professional association for psycholytic therapy. Eisner's impulse to tinker, innovate, and promote her advances to her peers granted her access to an international society of psychedelic researchers (a mainly male, psychiatric society that generally excluded women and psychologists). Eisner's story provides

the opportunity to probe the professional dynamics of psychedelic research, and I will describe these dynamics in greater detail throughout the rest of this chapter.

Finding Her Place in the World of Psychedelics

In the late 1950s, Eisner began sending summaries of her research to people in influential positions across a wide swath of society. She opened channels of communication with Aldous Huxley and Gerald Heard, Al Hubbard and Humphry Osmond in Canada, Alcoholics Anonymous founder Bill Wilson in New York, and Tom Powers, Wilson's publicist and "right-hand man" (Eisner, 2005; Eisner, 2002). She sent research summaries to Carl Jung in Zurich and discussed the use of LSD to augment creativity with the surrealist and erotic novelist Anaïs Nin (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to A. Nin, July 8, 1958; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to C. Jung, March 9, 1957). Some of these connections did not return much enthusiasm. Jiddu Krishnamurti, who Eisner regarded as a spiritual mentor, did not accept her assertions that LSD was simultaneously a psychological treatment and a tool for spiritual discovery (Eisner, 1965). He reluctantly accepted that LSD might help people who are "ill" (Eisner, 1965), but did not believe it could grant existential answers to people who did not work for them. Jung had an even stronger opposition. In a letter to Eisner dated August 12, 1957, he wrote:

To have so-called religious visions of this kind has more to do with physiology but nothing with religion... Religion is a way of life and a devotion and submission to certain superior facts – a state of mind which cannot be injected by a syringe or swallowed in the form of a pill. It is in my mind a helpful method to the barbarous Peyotee [sic], but a regrettable regression to a cultivated individual, a dangerously simple "Ersatz" and a substitute for true religion. (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, C. Jung to Eisner, August 12, 1957)

This was quite the reaction to a letter from Eisner that only once referred to LSD as “almost a ‘religious’ drug” (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to C. Jung, March 9, 1957). Eisner mainly wrote to inform Jung of her finding that LSD “unlocks the door to the individual’s unconscious,” that it provides empirical evidence for his theory of the “impersonal, racial, or ancestral unconscious,” and – with extremely careful wording – that it “accomplishes in a handful of sessions the process of discovering one’s place and function in life and the universe which you call individuation” (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to C. Jung, March 9, 1957).

Unlike Krishnamurti and Jung, one group of people was much more amenable to LSD’s possible religious valence. Bill Wilson co-founded Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) on the premise that a person needed spiritual impetus to overcome alcohol dependency (Dyck, 2006). Both Wilson and Tom Powers struggled with alcoholism and drug abuse when their lives were at their spiritual nadir, and both strongly believed that embracing God was essential to their recovery (Dyck, 2006; Powers, n.d.; Wigmore, 2012). Their God was nondenominational. They were equally comfortable referring to their belief as faith in a “higher power,” or in “God as we understood him” [emphasis in the original text] (Wilson, 1953, p. 34). This higher power did not even have to be understood through religion; Powers was just as well drew inspiration from the writings of Carl Jung and modern mystics such as George Gurdjieff as he did from all religions (Wigmore, 2012). Therefore, they were open to finding a higher power in a pill, if it meant that other struggling alcoholics could, too.

Eisner and Powers came to meet via Ewing “Zip” Reilley, an investor from the Harvard Business School who privately sponsored Eisner and Cohen’s lab (Eisner, 2002; McDonald, 2013; Novak, 1997). In 1957, Reilley brought Powers to Los Angeles to meet Eisner and Cohen. It is possible that, knowing Powers’ openness to the varieties of religious experience, Reilley

intended to sway the content of the research toward addressing alcoholism. Indeed, shortly after Eisner left Brentwood, Cohen initiated a study of LSD-assisted alcoholism treatment in partnership with Eisner's fellow graduate, a young psychiatrist by the name of Keith Ditman (Novak, 1997). Until then, though, Wilson, Powers, and Reilly were the subjects of their own pilot research. In the summer and fall of 1957, Eisner, Cohen, and Gerald Heard gave the men from AA their first LSD and mescaline experiences. Eisner was not permitted access to sessions led by Gerald Heard (Eisner recalled, "the all-male sessions didn't seem to want an interfering feminine touch" [Eisner, 2002, p. 38]). However, it was Eisner who, through months of frequent letter-writing, convinced the men to come from New York to take LSD in Los Angeles (Eisner, 2002). While Heard likely channeled his sessions toward the realm of mystical realizations, Eisner directed Wilson and Powers through their personal histories to learn why they developed addictions, and to viscerally live through the pain their addictions have caused themselves and their loved ones (Eisner, 2002).⁷

Continuing her bids for professional connections, Eisner's first major conference presentation came to her by way of an introductory letter she wrote to Ronald Sandison in January 1958. In the letter, Eisner described her own research and theory of the integrative experience. She acknowledged that Sandison was the one other English-speaking psychiatrist who leaned as heavily on the language of Jung to describe the psychedelic state (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, January 25, 1958). In his reply, Sandison urged Eisner to propose her work for presentation at a neurology conference to be held in Rome in August 1958 (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, R. Sandison to Eisner, February 13, 1958). The conference, the First

⁷ Aside from introducing the leaders of AA to an experience that they nearly integrated into the AA format, these sessions had an added layer of significance: they were the first LSD-assisted group therapy sessions that Eisner held, setting off a career-long preference for group therapy that I will explicate in Chapter 3 (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, 2005).

Collegium Internationale Neuro-Psychopharmacologicum (CINP), mainly featured researchers who studied the physiology and psychiatric symptomatology of antipsychotic drugs (Ban, 2007). Although LSD researchers had already held several international conferences exclusive to their subject matter (Doblin et al., 1999), Sandison thought it a good opportunity to communicate the efficacy of LSD research to general psychiatric and psychopharmacological audiences (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, February 24, 1958). Eisner proposed to read a paper that was based on her recent publication with Cohen, but elaborated on her belief that LSD provided people direct access to the personal and racial unconscious and reliably produced mystical integrative experiences. The paper, called “Observations on Possible Order within the Unconscious” (Eisner, ca. 1958), was accepted for presentation.

This conference was Eisner’s debut to the European LSD research scene, and she planned an extended trip to make the most of it. She arranged to meet with Sandison in Worcester, his colleague Thomas Ling in London, Walter Frederking in Hamburg, and Albert Hofmann himself in Rome (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to A. Hofmann, November 3, 1958).⁸ Arriving at Sandison’s a week before the conference, Eisner was shocked to see the thoroughness of his operation at the Powick Psychiatric Hospital. She wrote to Humphry Osmond, “There are dummies [that the patients] can wreak vengeance on, there is sand, water, colors, blocks, darts -- anything you can imagine to help discharge cores of repression which are unreachable any other way” (Eisner, 2002, p. 82). Thomas Ling, a psychiatrist who ran an LSD program at the Marlborough Day Hospital in London, left a weaker impression. Eisner did not feel he conveyed the “background of experience” (Eisner, 2002, p. 82) to grasp the depth of the

⁸ Rounding off a trip that already included visits to England, Germany, and Italy, Eisner also tried to set up an appointment with Carl Jung in Switzerland. The 83-year-old Jung turned down Eisner’s request, citing doctor-ordered rest as his reason (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to C. Jung, August 9, 1958; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, C. Jung to Eisner, August 14, 1958).

unconscious. Walter Frederking, one of the earliest psychiatrists to experiment with hallucinogens, was another bust. Eisner arrived in Hamburg only to be told he was out of town, but having also sent him letters that went unanswered, she suspected he might be “wary of strange, unattached visiting females” (Eisner, 2002, p. 80).

Despite some underwhelming moments in her tour of European psychedelic clinics, Eisner made an ally in Sandison. In Rome, her allies multiplied tenfold. The CINP was formed to stimulate interaction between clinicians and the scientists who performed basic research on clinical psychiatric drugs (Ban, 2006). Although psychopharmacology was mainly comprised of antipsychotic research, a significant number of CINP founders researched LSD under its psychotomimetic heading. These founders included close colleagues of Eisner and Cohen’s: Herman Denber, a CIA-funded psychiatrist at New York’s Manhattan State Hospital, and Hoffer and Osmond from the Weyburn hospital (Ban, 2006).^o

Psychotomimetic research was well represented at CINP. Eisner described a whole day devoted to the neuroscience of schizophrenia and psychosis, a topic she nicknamed “old faithful but tiresome” (2002, p. 87). Much more exciting was the number of European psychiatrists whose therapeutic work was likewise rooted in Jungian theory and a zest for experimentalism. She met Hanscarl Leuner, a German psychiatrist who gave his patients projective tests to help them tap into unconscious imagery, rather than to record a measurable change in their ego functioning (Eisner, 2002; Sessa, 2015; Leuner, 1963). She also met Cornelius Van Rhijn, a psychiatrist from the Netherlands who had provided LSD therapy to alcoholic clients since as

^o Other known LSD researchers counted as founders of the CINP included Werner Stoll, Cornelis van Rhyn, Jean Delay, and Ernst Rothlin (Ban, 2006). Of the 32 founders, at least 7 had worked with psychedelics. Additionally, Stoll was the organization’s first president, and Herman Denber its secretary (Ban, 2006). All of this is to demonstrate how integrated hallucinogenic drugs were with what is now considered conventional psychopharmacology.

early as 1952, and had learned he could expose his patients' unconscious by isolating them in a completely dark room (Eisner, 2002; Snelders, 1995). Van Rhijn also used LSD for a reason Eisner had not considered – to provide relationally challenged patients with a sense of cosmic love and acceptance (Snelders, 1995). Finally, it took intercontinental travel for Eisner to earn an American mentor, Hy Denber. In the years following their bonding in Rome, Denber reviewed Eisner's papers, supported her future organizational roles in conferences, and “watered the tender shoots” (Eisner, 2002, p. 77) of her ideas for research and therapy. The conference was a testament to the eagerness psychedelic researchers felt to leave their labs and find each other. Furthermore, it displayed the quantity of psychedelic research being undertaken in Europe and the United States; a quantity large enough to allow researchers to form differentiable communities based around mutual interests.

When it became apparent that researchers could affiliate more precisely according to their interests, conferences started catering to more specific themes. In 1959, physician Harold Abramson hosted the first International Conference on the Use of LSD in Psychotherapy at Princeton University, New Jersey (Eisner, 2002; Lee & Shlain, 1985). Abramson was trained as a pediatrician and allergy specialist, but an interest in the psychosomatic etiology of certain allergies began to orient him to the use of psychological research methods (Aufses & Niss, 2002). In 1953, the CIA awarded Abramson an \$85,000 grant to research what they termed the “operationally pertinent” effects of LSD, meaning its effects on memory, suggestibility, and ability to provoke the divulgence of information (Marks, 1979). To maintain secrecy, Abramson's grant was disbursed via the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation, a private medical science granting agency (Macy Foundation, n.d.; Stevens, 1987).

Money from the Macy Foundation allowed Abramson to program a handful of LSD conferences in the 1950s and 60s (Marks, 1979). Although the conferences' topics were partially designed to align with CIA objectives, they nonetheless served as venues for the galvanization of a psychedelic-specific discipline (Marks, 1979). In the spring of 1958, Abramson began planning the first conference devoted to the use of psychedelics in psychotherapy. He invited Eisner to join 25 researchers from the US and Europe, many of whom she met in Rome (Eisner, 2002). The conference was not a gathering for psychotherapists who worked with LSD as much as it was an assembly of hallucinogen researchers invited to discuss the conditions in which hallucinogens might be therapeutically useful (Lee & Shlain, 1985). As such, participants brought diverse perspectives on the therapeutic potential of hallucinogens. Eisner, van Rhijn, Sandison, and Eisner's Los Angeles colleagues Arthur Chandler and Mortimer Hartman represented the Jungian orientation, wherein LSD was taken to release repression, enable symbolic thinking, and promote abreaction (Fremont-Smith & Abramson, 1960). Eisner additionally advocated for the phenomenon of the integrative experience, and she was its leading defender (Abramson, 1960). Although it was generally agreed upon that LSD opened up possibilities for psychoanalysis, the more empirically-oriented participants found ephemeral phenomena such as the integrative experience to be highly contentious. Led by a biochemically-oriented psychiatrist from Columbia University named Paul Hoch, these researchers were concerned that LSD and mescaline studies had failed to make effective use of placebos, and were therefore very likely "contaminated" (Abramson, 1960, p. 60) by investigators' preconceived notions (Eisner, 2002). Having been recruited by the CIA to study LSD and mescaline as devices for interrogation, Hoch was well-acquainted with the drugs' abilities to produce extreme paranoia, delusions, and anxiety (Marks, 1979; Lee & Shlain, 1985). He contended that

hallucinogens' psychotomimetic properties had been far more demonstrable in the laboratory than their therapeutic properties, and cautioned against their promotion as therapy adjuvants before their clinical application was evaluated more rigorously (Abramson, 1960).

Whereas Rome's conference provided a general overview of all the research being done with hallucinogens in the 1950s, Princeton's was forward-thinking, attempting to pin down what it was exactly about hallucinogens that made them good contenders for therapeutic support and how it could be demonstrated. At the conference, Abramson described the inability to define the precise, differentiable effects of each hallucinogen as "one of the most important problems in the whole field of psychopharmacology" (1960, p. 38). One attendant proposed the idea that LSD was a performance-enhancing drug, and when patients under LSD were given the task of participating in therapy, they became better at it (Abramson, 1960). Another suggested that since hallucinogens elicited biochemical reactions due to their specific molecular structures, their specific psychological effects would become apparent once their physiological effects were differentiated in detail (Abramson, 1960). The meeting was also among earliest recorded instances in which the term "psychedelic" was introduced to an audience of mental health professionals. In the context of defining the specific action of LSD and mescaline, Weyburn psychiatrist Abram Hoffer described how his and Humphry Osmond's own drug experiences left them cold to the psychotomimetic concept, and inspired them to reorient their focus to LSD's potential to "[change] personality for the better" (Fremont-Smith & Abramson, 1960, p. 18). They grouped LSD and similar drugs together according to their distinct ability to awaken a person to a deeper level of self-understanding, an ability they called "psychedelic," a translation of "mind-manifesting" (Fremont-Smith & Abramson, 1960). Meanwhile, Eisner's perspective circumvented the entire notion that LSD needed specific effects in order to be therapeutically

effective. She contended that there were actually no important differences in the hallucinogenic properties of LSD and mescaline from a therapeutic point of view. They produced states that could be obtained using amphetamines, music, or could even occur spontaneously (Abramson, 1960). Their benefit was not in the specificity of their effects, but in how reliably they allowed patients to access open and integrative states of mind (Abramson, 1960).

This position distanced Eisner from the therapists who aligned with Hoffer's assertion that certain drugs have inherent mind-manifesting properties. After 1959, "psychedelic" quickly took on a life of its own. Therapists that aimed to catapult clients into transcendence became the most culturally visible group working with hallucinogens, and it is their version of the drug that escaped the lab and inspired a new American generation to explore the realms of drug-induced insight for themselves (Sherwood, Stolaroff, & Harman, 1962; Leary, Metzner & Alpert, 1964; Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979). But just as many psychopharmacology-oriented psychiatrists branched away from psychotomimetic research and formed new ways to work with hallucinogens in therapy, therapists who diverged from the psychedelic model likewise assembled to develop a model of their own. They dubbed their phenomenologically milder, psychoanalytically familiar alternative to psychedelic therapy "psycholytic therapy." In 1960, Hanscarl Leuner hosted the First European Symposium on Psychotherapy under LSD-25 at the University of Gottingen, where he recently founded and chaired a department of psychotherapy (Passie, 1997). At this symposium, Ronald Sandison introduced a term he had been working on to better represent his observations of LSD patients than "mind-manifesting." At the low doses that he and other European psychiatrists used, it seemed much more appropriate to think of the mind's barriers to the unconscious loosening than it did to describe a person as undergoing

religiously inspired personality change. Hence, he proposed to work under the title “psycholytic,” or “mind-loosening” therapy (Passie, 1997; Sessa, 2015).

The term garnered unanimous support from attending therapists (Passie, 1997). Leuner even retroactively renamed his meeting “the first European Symposium on Psycholytic Therapy” (Leuner, 1983). In addition to agreeing on the name of their orientation, symposium participants drafted a set of characteristics that qualified LSD therapy as psycholytic. First, although it adopted the psychic structure of psychoanalysis, psycholytic therapy used drugs to enhance the exposure and integration of the unconscious, pledging to bring faster, more complete relief to clients (Sandison, 1963). Second, attendees felt that doses should be kept between 50 and 200ug, and should be gradually built upon in weekly sessions over several months (Sandison, 1961). Another item stated that it was permissible to augment LSD using drugs such as Ritalin and Methedrine (Sandison, 1963). Eisner’s work fit perfectly within this model, having accorded with all three tenets since the 1950s (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, April 11, 1961).

Eisner was not present for Leuner’s meeting, but she was present and active at the meeting at which psycholytic therapy became the official heading of European hallucinogen work. Whereas psychedelic therapists dominated in the arena of popular culture, European psycholytic therapists maintained networks of clinics and research well into the 1980s, far longer than can be said for their psychedelic counterparts. Despite its greater longevity, but perhaps because of its narrower scope of influence, psycholytic therapy has received nearly no historiographic attention. Continuing to trace this history, I will refer to Eisner’s biography to illustrate the social processes through which psycholytic therapy adopted the markers of disciplinary legitimacy.

In February of 1961, Ronald Sandison organized a 3-day conference on the therapeutic use of hallucinogenic drugs (Crocket, Sandison & Walk, 1963). The conference occupied the entire winter meeting of the Royal Medico-Psychological Association (RMPA; currently known as the Royal College of Psychiatrists), the UK's leading professional organization of psychiatrists (Sandison, 2005; Royal College of Psychiatrists, n.d.). Sandison invited speakers from all over Europe, several of whom attended the Gottingen conference from the previous year (Crocket, Sandison & Walk, 1963; Passie, 1997). He also invited two American speakers. CIA-contracted psychiatrist J.S. Gottlieb came to discuss his psychotomimetic research with PCP, a drug whose extreme hallucinogenic properties overshadowed its intended anesthetic use (Royal Medico-Psychological Association, 1961; Marks, 1979). Betty Eisner, the only American therapist in the room, came to give a paper called "the influence of LSD on unconscious activity" (Royal Medico-Psychological Association, 1961). In it, Eisner described how the effects of LSD provided empirical support for Jung's tripartite structure of the psyche. She also alleged that LSD allowed people to psychically travel across a geography of the collective unconscious, and to access convincing states of extrasensory perception. On top of arguing for the efficacy of the psycholytic method, she suggested that LSD provided an opportunity to systematically examine "uncharted border-line states of consciousness" (Eisner, 1963b, p. 144).

Sandison had planned the RMPA's winter meeting to maintain the collaborative momentum that LSD psychotherapists had generated over the past two years. But this momentum was only truly harnessed after the RMPA meeting was adjourned. Following the conference, Sandison invited a small group of therapists to observe how he managed his LSD therapy wing at Powick Hospital. It was a rare opportunity to demonstrate methods and talk shop with an international group of like-minded therapists in close quarters. Sandison also made it an

opportunity to formalize his relationships with a hand-picked group of individuals that he felt were most committed to a psycholytic model of practice. In collaboration with Eisner, Leuner, Danish psychiatrist H. Andersen, and Dutch psychiatrists Willi Arendsen-Hein and Cornelius Van Rhijn, Sandison founded the Association of Psycholytic Therapists (APT) (2.124; Andersen, 1962).

Eisner's personal account of the APT founding provides what appears to be the only record of its existence. It also exposes ways in which the founding fathers' systemic biases constructed sexism into the professional structure of psycholytic therapy. As far as the available documents indicate, six therapists were present for the founding of the APT. Of the six, Eisner was the only woman, and only her claim to the status of "founding father" was up for debate. This was the case even though the five men were ready to include Sidney Cohen, Herman Denber, and NIMH-affiliated psychiatrist Joel Elkes as founding fathers in absentia. Adding insult to injury, Eisner was not invited to the debate that pertained to her own inclusion. She only learned about it when they came to her with an ultimatum: Attend medical school and obtain an MD, or accept that she lacked the qualifications to take credit for founding what was now being strong-armed into the mold of a medical association (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, April 11, 1961).

Eisner was able to talk them down from the ultimatum. She explained that, at 46 and with a successful private practice, it was unreasonable to expect her to enroll in six more years of schooling when she could instead continue reinforcing her therapeutic expertise. Four founders ceded ground, but only Andersen explicitly agreed with Eisner. Though it seemed like their objection was rooted in a problem of qualifications, Eisner saw through it to an insidious

prejudicial core. She expressed her grievances with her APT co-founders in a letter to Humphry Osmond:

I almost didn't make it as one of the 'founding fathers' of the APT. ... For a long time there was quite a fight about me because I am a PhD. ... It does get discouraging to run into the prejudice that judges more from the initials after one's name (or one's sex, because I'm afraid this had some bearing, too) then by what the individual is and can do. ... It is doubly hard when there is the additional prejudice of the medical profession – and unfortunately the prejudice against me as a woman. I hate to have to say that, but it is part of it, too (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, April 11, 1961).

Being a PhD put Eisner at a disadvantage in the company of psychiatrists, who long fought to keep psychologists away from drug work (Buchanan, 2003; Robiner et al., 2002). And as a woman, Eisner would have had to put in far more effort to receive credit for her contributions (Furumoto & Scarborough, 1986; Hirshbein, 2009). Relative to men, very few women had investigative roles in psychedelic and psychopharmacological research in the 1950s and 60s. However, gender and profession were not orthogonal axes. Neither women nor psychologists were included in the 32-person founding body of the CINP (Ban, 2006). Far fewer women worked in psychiatry than they did in psychology, and the professional hierarchy that undervalued psychologists' contributions to the mental health field also served to block women from participating and attaining positions of influence in it (Hirshbein, 2009).

Of the 43 speakers at Sandison's RMPA meeting, only four were women (Crocket, Sandison & Walk, 1963). The gender gap was reflected in the participants' occupations – 31 of the 39 men were psychiatrists and physicians, while one woman was a psychiatrist, two held

graduate degrees, and one was a nurse. Eisner's barriers to entry might help explain why so few women attended the meeting. In letters from the late 1950s, it appeared Eisner and Sandison developed a transatlantic friendship, writing casually to share stories about their families and find opportunities to intercept each other in travels. But somehow, securing an invitation to the RMPA meeting was a task for Eisner. when it came to discussing their work, Sandison was often distant. For one, although he voiced his intention to host a hallucinogen-specific conference to Eisner in one letter, he avoided her more pointed inquiries about it. On April 10, 1960, Eisner wrote to Sandison: "I am very much interested in the meetings in the autumn. Could you tell me when and invite me formally? Will and I have been wanting to come over ... but we need to know the dates with you to hinge it around. So I'm at your service for the meetings, if you like" (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 10, 1960). After nearly three months with no response, she wrote: "I am deeply hurt and also disturbed about you ... If you don't want me to come to the meeting in England, why did you write to me about it and invite me by saying that anyone in California would be most welcome? ... Do you want me at the Oxford meeting or do you not?" (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, June 21, 1960).

Sandison returned her letter the same day. He extended a tentative invitation, stating:

The intention of the symposium is to enable British psychiatrists using LSD in psychotherapy to exchange their experience both with each other and with psychiatrists having similar interests from overseas. In view of your own particular interest in the field, I am sending this preliminary and tentative enquiry on behalf of the Committee of the Psychotherapy Section of the RMPA to

ascertain whether it would be possible for you to attend this conference. (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, R. Sandison to Eisner, June 21, 1960)

Even if Sandison did not explicitly exclude Eisner from the meeting due to her gender, the exclusion of women was an incidental outcome of restricting the meeting to psychiatrists only. But was the exclusion of psychologists from a discussion of drug-assisted psychotherapy justified? Eisner's research was done in collaboration with a psychiatrist, and shared many methodological and linguistic features with Sandison's, Abramson's, and other psychiatrists'. And it was not as if Eisner's research stood out as a singular psychological foray into psychiatric territory. Hannah Steinberg, the world's first professor of psychopharmacology and one of the four women who spoke at the RMPA, recently published a history of the contributions that experimental psychologists made to psychopharmacology since the days of William Wundt's psychology laboratory in Leipzig (Schmied, Steinberg & Sykes, 2006). From administering alcohol to participants trained in systematic introspection (Partridge, 1900) to examining the effects of drugs on animal behavior (Heron & Skinner, 1937) to finding the utility of drugs such as caffeine in industry settings (Hollingworth & Poffenberger, 1917), psychologists' drug research was as empirically rigorous as psychiatrists' by contemporaneous standards, and was not locked into questions structured around psychopathology (Schmied, Steinberg & Sykes, 2006).

Dissociation of a Psycholytic Therapist

With the APT willing to acknowledge her founding role, Eisner returned to America ready to expand the scope of her contribution to her field. She began planning a meeting in Los Angeles for May 1961 (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, April 11, 1961). Invitees included Osmond, Denber, Sandison, and Joel Elkes. Eisner was excited by the prospect of

developing a cohesive agenda with likeminded researchers, and wanted to hammer down a concerted direction for psycholytic research. She also wanted to return Sandison's favour and make a regular event out of the clinical walk-throughs and demonstrations he had given the APT at Powick. Given conservative social mores that stigmatized psychedelics and made them relatively difficult for many American psychologists to procure, Eisner likewise hoped to plan a lecture tour that would take the APT to major universities across the US (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 28, 1961). She saw the APT as a vehicle for generating legitimacy and a positive public image for psychedelics, whose contours were just starting to be redrawn by journalists over-eager to report psychedelics' sensationalistic appeal to celebrities (Siff, 2015).

Although she did convince several faraway researchers to visit her practice – Osmond, Denber, and Arendsen-Hein all came at separate points in the early 1960s - a full APT meeting never came to fruition. For one, it was nearly impossible to get Sandison to respond to letters, let alone to corral him into taking on nation-wide lecture tours (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 28, 1961). Eisner attempted to organize the APT to publish a book together, but here too, her letters may as well have been posted into an abyss (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 28, 1961). She confronted Sandison about this, beseeching him to “break [his] adamant resistance to writing letters” (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 28, 1961) and address her unidirectional efforts to realize projects with the APT. She expressed dismay at the silent treatment she received from other APT members, and wondered whether APT vice president Cornelius van Rhijn had been writing other members behind her back (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 28, 1961). Fearing the APT had changed their mind about her affiliation, Eisner told Sandison, “it will really be

devastating if you remove me as a founding father – [especially] after having taken me on through such travail” (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 28, 1961).

These 1961 letters were the first and last record of the APT’s entire existence. Although there is no evidence that the APT conspired to oust Eisner, in 1964, Leuner invited many of the same members to form the European Medical Society of Psycholytic Therapy (EPT) (Passie, 1997; Madsen, øyslebø & Hoffart, 1996). This much more cohesive organization had stringent requirements for membership, considered psycholytic therapy a medical treatment, and boasted a pan-European network of 18 psycholytic treatment centers (Passie, 1997; Madsen, øyslebø & Hoffart, 1996; Vollenweider & Kometer, 2010; Leuner, 1967). They gathered at both psychotherapy and hallucinogen-specific conferences to share resources with each other, as well as to inform general psychotherapy audiences about the responsible, productive application of hallucinogens in therapy (Madsen, øyslebø & Hoffart, 1996).

With the silent disappearance of the APT, Eisner lost her ability to advocate for psychedelic research from a position of collective power and credibility. To her, the absence of an accessible community of sympathetic researchers was the greatest threat to the progress of her work. From the early to the mid-1960s, Eisner grew increasingly exasperated with the state of psychedelic research in North America. In 1961, she complained that Sandoz’s US representative had ceased ordering LSD because an influx of illegal LSD had come in to fill the skyrocketing demand created by the entertainment industry, crooked therapists, and ordinary folks looking “for kicks” (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, April 11, 1961). That same year, California, and specifically Los Angeles, became the primary target of the US Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) first investigation of the psychotherapeutic use of LSD (Siff, 2015). Clinics were raided, and at least one therapist, Mortimer Hartman, lost his license to practice in

the State of California (Siff, 2015; McCann, 1996).¹⁰ Henceforth, the FDA ordered that all experimental drug research needed their approval in writing, severely limiting Eisner's access to LSD as a private practitioner (Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979).

While the California government was looking to put an end to all LSD use, Eisner's supervising hospital did all it could to impede her practice, to the point of interrupting active sessions (Siff, 2015; Eisner, 2002; Eisner, 1978). Eisner blamed the disciplining of California on the work of dubious therapists who charged inordinate sums of money for sessions and procured their drugs from "extra-curricular" sources (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, April 11, 1961). In particular, she blamed Hubbard and Stolaroff, two clinically untrained individuals whose Palo Alto operation was pulling in hundreds of patients willing to pay more than \$600 a session (Siff, 2015; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, April 11, 1961). Eisner desperately needed the APT to "correct some disequilibrium created by unscrupulous people operating with LSD and also the fringe elements" (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, April 28, 1961) whose "kicks" had come to interfere with her livelihood.

Although it was not the close-knit association she was hoping for, some relief came with an invitation to participate in Harold Abramson's Second Conference on the use of LSD in Psychotherapy (Eisner, 2002). The conference was held in Amityville, New York, at the South Oaks psychiatric hospital. Upwards of 40 therapists and researchers had gathered.¹¹ Sandison, van

¹⁰ Incidentally, Eisner did benefit from this in a roundabout way. Hartman's most famous client was Cary Grant, a prolific actor of superstar proportions (McCann, 1996). Known for his reservations with the media, Grant was uncharacteristically open about the psychological benefits he claimed experienced from his dozens of LSD sessions (Stevens, 1987; McCann, 1996). After Hartman's license was suspended, Eisner became Grant's therapist (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, June 21, 1960).

¹¹ To be consistent and further illustrate the relationship between the gender gap and professional gap in psychedelic research of this era, I will note that of the 46 registered attendees, only five were women. Of these five, two were psychiatrists, Eisner was a psychologist, and two were

Rhijn, Arendsen-Hein, and Leuner arrived with a contingent of European psycholytic therapists that included Stanislav Grof, a young Czech psychiatrist who later achieved fame as the founder of transpersonal psychology (Abramson, 1967; Stevens, 1987). A significant portion of the conference was devoted to defining the distinction between psycholytic and psychedelic therapy. In fact, each school was the topic of half the conference (Abramson, 1967).

Eisner was invited to discuss her paper “The Importance of the Nonverbal” (Eisner, 1967). In the paper, she outlined new methods she devised to circumnavigate psychic barriers without the use of LSD, which was coming under increasingly debilitating regulation. She was scheduled to host her discussion as part of the psychedelic portion of the conference (Abramson, 1967). In hindsight, it seems out of place to have categorized her paper as psychedelic. Like the psycholytic therapists, she advocated for the use of smaller doses, the centering of psychoanalytic frameworks of interpretation, and openness to non-hallucinogenic alternatives that fulfilled similar barrier-dissolving functions. However, at the time of the conference, the element of geography was being incorporated into the psycholytic construct. At the conference, Leuner claimed that psycholytic therapy was the only model of hallucinogen therapy known to European practitioners (Leuner, 1967). Sandison likewise believed that psycholytic therapy was of quintessentially European origin, and that it developed as part of the same cultural milieu that produced psychoanalysis and analytic psychology (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, R. Sandison to Gilbert, April 26, 1994).

Aside from the geographical distinction, the Europeans tended to define the psychedelic model as the dualistic counterpart to the psycholytic model: Rather than small doses, psychedelic

referred to as “miss” in place of an indication of their degree. In comparison, 35 of the 41 men were physicians or psychiatrists, four were psychologists, and two were professors of neuroscience and psychopharmacology. These data further evince that Eisner was working outside the bounds of both her gender role and professional role.

therapists used mega doses; rather than numerous sessions, they tried for a single transformative session; rather than being grounded in the history and theories of the psychological sciences, they adopted mystical and religious frames of reference (Leuner, 1967). Although they conceded that psychedelic researchers' positive results made their work equal but different, they were unclear about its specific purpose. Leuner listed the "classic" psychiatric diagnostic categories as the domain of psycholytic therapists, and for psychedelic therapy, he listed "Alcoholism, neuroses?" (Leuner, 1967, p. 102). In truth, however, American psychotherapy that Leuner identified as psychedelic was comprised of many qualities that Leuner categorized as psycholytic, and rarely consisted of all the qualities he listed as psychedelic. There were psychedelic psychiatrists such as Walter Pahnke, who famously provided Boston University seminary students with 30mg doses of psilocybin (compared to Sandoz's recommended 8mg, this dose was far more likely to guarantee a mystical experience [Leary, 1995; Griffiths et al., 2006]), sent them to church for a Good Friday sermon, and waited to see whether they would interpret their experience as religious (Doblin, 1991). But in Los Angeles, Arthur Chandler and Mortimer Hartman gave patients psycholytic doses that increased as the weeks went on, but believed that therapists needed a certain amount of mystical and religious literacy to properly interpret clients' reactions (Chandler & Hartman, 1960). Conversely, although Abram Hoffer gave his alcoholism patients doses up to 300ug, he preferred to explain LSD's capacity to promote abstinence in physiological rather than mystical terms (Hoffer et al., 1959).

Michael Fremont-Smith, Eisner, and Osmond took Leuner to task for his generalized definition of non-European psychedelic work. Fremont-Smith argued that disciplinary definitions had to be negotiated in collaboration with the people who worked in a disputed discipline, and were meaningless if conceived and applied unilaterally by one discipline onto another

(Abramson, 1967). He also doubted that European hallucinogen-assisted psychotherapy was as methodologically homogeneous as Leuner claimed it to be (Abramson, 1967). Indeed, Leuner's assertion that the psycholytic method was of psychoanalytic lineage and the psychedelic method of mystical non-psychological lineage did not hold true for Grof, a psycholytic therapist whose research built upon Hoffer and Osmond's psychopharmacological work and whose personal LSD experiences were so mystical that they pushed him away from staid psychoanalytic narratives (Grof, 2005; Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979). Sharing Fremont-Smith's sentiment, Eisner clarified that while the term "psycholytic" had specific methodological implications, "psychedelic" referred to the mind-expanding property of a drug, and required no adherence to any particular method (Abramson, 1967). Osmond elaborated on the conditions under which he and Huxley coined the term "psychedelic." He and Huxley themselves tried several terms that invoked the dissolution of inhibition ("psycholetic" was even one of them), but they originally initiated their experiment in morphology because they felt that "psychotomimetic" took power away from LSD users, and they continued to search for a term that emphasized LSD's ability to reveal insights and inspire personal transformation (Abramson, 1967).

Stripping the EPT's distinction between psycholytic and psychedelic of its methodological content, an underlying regionalist distinction became apparent. After the conference, geography and assumptions about method became bound in much of the psychedelic historiography (Sessa, 2012; Grinspoon and Bakalar, 1979; Gasser et al., 2014).¹² Grinspoon and Bakalar went as far as to suggest that it was inappropriate to use "psycholytic" in the US because of its unfamiliarity as a word (Grinspoon and Bakalar, 1979). The reason this distinction was

¹² Sessa even contends that the regional differences in the interpretation of the psychedelic experience corresponded to different expressions of psychedelia in popular music on either side of the Atlantic (Sessa, 2012).

perpetuated could be because American LSD therapy was eradicated very shortly after the conference, whereas European psycholytic work continued in small pockets throughout the 70s, 80s, and 90s (Langlitz, 2012; Sessa, 2012). It could also be because maintaining distance from the exploding American psychedelic popular culture helped European psycholytic therapists retain an image of superior credibility (Langlitz, 2012).

In the first chapter, I demonstrated how the Sequoia Seminar shaped Eisner's perception on the purpose and methods of psychotherapy. In this chapter, I demonstrated how Eisner turned her psychotherapeutic practice into a contribution to the wider network of LSD psychotherapists. Using Eisner's letters and conference attendance records, I showed how LSD psychotherapists began to meet in increasingly methodologically specific contexts, from the general psychopharmacological Rome conference of 1958, to the 1959 Princeton conference that asked whether LSD psychotherapy was worthwhile at all, to the 1960s conferences that progressively homed in on the formal characteristics of LSD psychotherapy. Throughout, I traced the ways that Eisner transmitted her commitment to the integrative experience into conference papers, discussions, and directly into colleagues via professional networking. Doing this allowed me to showcase the diversity of opinions on integration and mysticism that existed amongst the LSD psychotherapy community.

Chapter Three – Life After Past Life: Mysticism in Therapy After LSD’s Prohibition

My first two chapters mainly covered psychedelic science in the 1950s, when LSD was easily available to researchers who were willing to experiment with it and publish their results. In fact, it was so widely available that by 1959, it was the topic of nearly 1000 scientific publications from all over the globe (Hofmann Library Collection, n.d.). Most of these publications dealt in the pharmacology of LSD, but the late 1950s was also an era of peak productivity for psychedelic and psycholytic therapists. Their work evolved into a new social phase as they began to look beyond their independent clinics and consolidate theories and methods across international boundaries. However, as 50s turned to 60s, psychedelic substances became increasingly difficult for researchers and therapists to acquire. Thanks to over-eager psychologists and inventive home chemists, experiences that were first kept to quiet psychiatric clinics and literati living rooms were becoming cheaply available in dance halls around the country (Dyck, 2012). In 1966, Sandoz issued an international LSD recall to protect themselves from liability (Sessa, 2012; Snelders & Caplan, 2002). The recall hamstrung researchers, but did nothing to curb the flow of home-brewed LSD (Dyck, 2012; Eisner, 2002). In 1966, the State of California outright banned LSD for recreational as well as research use (Tendler & May, 1984). The United States federal government followed suit in 1968 (Tendler & May, 1984). In 1971, the United Nations held the US-led Convention on Psychotropic Substances, which culminated in international restrictions on the distribution of various drugs including LSD (Bewley-Taylor, 2002; Langlitz, 2012). These injunctions stamped out all legal LSD psychotherapy in the US, and reduced the availability of LSD in Europe to just a few clinics (Langlitz, 2012).

How did LSD psychotherapists, whose professional progress only seemed to be escalating, respond to the restrictive new social climate? How did the new legislature affect their

commitment to psychedelic methods? In what directions did the prohibition of psychedelics displace their efforts? Several authors have examined the tensions between psychedelic researchers and the social bodies that held competing constructions of LSD. *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD* (Lee & Shlain, 1985), one of the first comprehensive journalistic investigations into the history of LSD, addresses two forms of public responses to the 1960s' counterculture movement that emerged within psychedelic scholarship. Some psychologists – most famously Timothy Leary and Ram Dass (or Richard Alpert, as he was known before 1967) – took front row seats in the revolution, offering their purported expertise in the human mind to help people channel their psychedelic insights into source material for personal growth. Others, such as Sidney Cohen, halted their therapeutic use of psychedelics. To tamp down the heating rhetoric, they instead emphasized the potential harms of unchecked LSD use among youth, and posed LSD as a strict tool of science and medicine. Ben Sessa (2015) describes how the sociopolitical bias against psychedelics did not necessarily end psychedelic research, but rather, created a niche for research that verified their harms. Melting into the public corpus of sensational journalism and urban legends about hallucinogen-related psychosis, violence, and self-harm, these new studies contributed to the reconstruction of psychedelics as one-dimensional public dangers.

Erika Dyck (2012) notes that yet another ideological camp of psychedelic researchers emerged to contest scientists who discredited LSD on the basis of its perceived social danger. In 1967, a group of Canadian and American researchers that included Humphry Osmond, Abram Hoffer, and Harold Abramson established the International Association of Psychedelic Therapy, an organization designed to publically combat misinformation with medical science. Ultimately, the organization could not effectively counterbalance LSD's increasingly negative

publicity. In *Neuropsychodelia* (2013), Nicolas Langlitz describes the history of isolationist politics that kept Swiss psychedelic researchers slightly more insulated from sociopolitical interference than their international colleagues. Although Switzerland signed onto a US-led United Nations resolution to prohibit all hallucinogen use in 1971, the Swiss government broke ranks with the UN and gave the Swiss Association for Psycholytic Therapy license to research and practice for a brief period in the 1980s.

In general, these texts present scientific responses to psychedelic science as diverse, but tending to affirm the status quo. Rather than reexamining the relationship between psychedelic science and politics, law, and broader society as these writers have done, I will use this chapter to show where psychedelic research stood in relation to the larger field of psychotherapy. More specifically, I will position Eisner's therapeutic practices in relation to the countercultural therapeutic practices that were proliferating in the 1960s. With changing laws, Eisner replaced her psychedelic work with group therapy, bodywork, and other unconventional techniques that therapists were developing for the purpose of connecting people with their more honest, creative inner selves. Although these techniques were initiated or greatly influenced by eminent humanistic psychologists of the time, the psychology profession became critical of them by the 1970s (Grogan, 2013). Following the death of a patient in 1976 and the consequent revocation of her clinical license, Eisner's history contours the development and downfall of the controversial practices that characterized the cutting edge of psychotherapy in the countercultural era. Experimenting with concoctions of dubiously legal drugs, placing bodies under exceedingly strenuous physical conditions, and explanatory frameworks that took stock in past life memories and extrasensory perception, Eisner, it can be argued, is an extreme example of 1960s' countercultural psychotherapy. This chapter will use her story to trace the relationship between

psychedelic psychotherapy and contemporaneous forms of therapy, and will use witness commentary from Eisner's license revocation hearings to elucidate the contrast between her practices and the expectations of the mainstream psychology profession.

People Are the Best Potentiators

Psychology meant new things in 1960s America. According to psychology historian Jessica Grogan (2013), by the 1950s, psychologists established authority in a range of areas of American society, from media and politics to education and industry. In large part, however, their services were used to rubber-stamp the social status quo with the approval of a scientific institution. In this period, the role of the clinical psychologist was to help a client correct personal problems that caused them to conflict with society (see also Napoli, 1981; Lunbeck, 1994). The majority of clinical psychologists adhered to a notion of deviance based on an American interpretation of psychoanalysis, wherein unresolved conflicts manifested as some form of inability to meet social standards of normal behavior. Grogan draws on depictions of psychoanalysis in popular 1950s magazines such as *Life* and *Scientific American* to show that the psychoanalytic process was communicated as an austere method of introspection one would suffer through in order to achieve marital and vocational success (See also Hale, 1995). In the age of behaviourism and the adoption of animals as models of human determinism, a contingent of psychologists experimented with how environments could be restructured to control individuals' and communities' behavior for specific ends (Rutherford, 2009).

American psychology in the 1950s enlisted healthy, happy humans to be stewards of the dominant social order. Grogan's book, *Encountering America* (2013), describes the emergence and appeal of humanistic psychology as a rejection of psychological theory that prized conformity. Abraham Maslow, a founding figurehead in humanistic psychology, had a grander

idea of what it meant to be psychologically healthy (see also Herman, 1995). He expressed his vision of psychological health in diametric opposition to his peers: Rather than conformity, the healthy individual cultivated independence and creativity; rather than aspiring for normalcy, she strove to achieve more than what society had already promised her. Along with pioneering humanistic psychologists Rollo May, Gordon Allport, Carl Rogers, and many more, Maslow ushered in a new form of psychology that treated society as the sick element, and whose utopian goal was to heal society by producing individuals who modeled independence, creativity, and cognitive flexibility (Grogan, 2013; Herman, 1995).

Beginning her career in the mid-1950s, where did Eisner fit between the modernist and humanist psychologies? In which epistemological neighbourhood did she choose to build her home? In the first two chapters, I contended that the integrative experience was the pivot point around which Eisner organized her therapeutic methods. The integrative experience was difficult to articulate within the scientific modes of reasoning that Eisner's peers in psychiatry expected, but was self-evident for the Californian psychospiritual community whose truth compasses were more oriented toward phenomenological than positivistic data. Whether it was reached through LSD, religious practices, or spontaneous mystical episodes, an integrative experience was interpreted to reveal the possibility of complete self-acceptance, empowering clients to transcend traumas that inhibited their personal growth. The first chapter showed how integration came to be an organizing principle in Eisner's theory of psychology, while the second chapter situated Eisner's theory of integration within the larger body of therapists who worked with psychedelics. I will use this chapter to elaborate on the ways that Eisner found new ways to help her clients recognize and transcend their traumas as a private practitioner in the 1960s and 70s, a time when psychedelics were besieged by mounting legal and professional limitations. In doing so, I will

situate psychedelic psychotherapy vis a vis the larger field of psychology, particularly humanistic psychology, whose development overlapped with psychedelic psychotherapy in chronology, methodology, ideology, and personnel.

In a legal examination regarding the death of one of her patients in 1976, Betty Eisner described her occupation as follows: “I have now a specialized practice, the practice I really care about, a group of people who really want to change all the way down, in other words, to remove all the barriers to the fulfillment of their creativity” (Eisner, 1978). The basis of this practice took root in the late 1950s. At the VA hospital, Cohen selected the types of patients he and Eisner would see (Eisner, 1978). Many of these patients represented a psychiatric population and exhibited severe mood disorders, alcohol dependence, and episodes of psychoses (Eisner, 1978). Cohen’s objective was to help his patients restore a degree of autonomy that would allow them to reintegrate with their communities. This aim was reflected in his and Eisner’s outcome measures, which required corroboration of patient progress from family and community members (Eisner & Cohen, 1958; Cohen, Fichman & Eisner, 1958; Cohen & Eisner, 1959). When Eisner began her private practice, she picked up a rather different clientele. From 1957 until the early 1960s, her office was located a few streets away from Beverly Hills (Eisner, 1978), near the clinics of Oscar Janiger, and Arthur Chandler and Mortimer Hartman (Dobkin de Rios & Janiger, 2003; Siff, 2015). Janiger, Chandler, and Hartman served a connected community of artists, actors, and writers whose reasons for seeking LSD therapy were equal parts therapy, creative inspiration, and social kicks (Dobkin de Rios & Janiger, 2003; Siff, 2015; Novak, 1997). Like Janiger, Chandler, and Hartman, Eisner attracted affluent patients who worked in the creative and intellectual industries (Eisner, 1978). According to Eisner, most her patients were “clinically normal” (Eisner, 1964a), had never been hospitalized for mental illness, and were of above-

average intelligence. They were people who could be already be described as sufficiently functional by societal standards, but had certain “character disorders” that prevented them from fulfilling their innermost dreams (Eisner, 1978).

People came to Eisner, sometimes traveling long distances, specifically for drug therapy (Eisner, 2005; Eisner, 2002; Eisner, 1978). She charged \$100 to \$125 for private sessions that used LSD, Ritalin, and a hyperventilation-inducing mixture of 30% oxygen and 70% carbon dioxide called “carbogen” (Diamond, 1977). Eisner and her pharmacopoeia worked to tear down the psychological barriers that patients built between their self-perception and their potential. Her notion of integration unambiguously resembled a state that Maslow called the “peak experience,” wherein people realized the true extent of their abilities, felt an inextricable connection to the world, and came away motivated to apply themselves in ways that would prolong their peak functioning (Nicholson, 2007; Grogan, 2013; Maslow, 1968). Maslow even described the sensation of the peak experience as a feeling of being “more integrated” (Maslow, 1968, p. 104). Revealing another juncture with Eisner’s area of practice, Maslow believed that most spontaneous peak experiences happened by luck, but was hopeful that the responsible application of psychedelics could make peak experiences widely accessible (Nicholson, 2007; Grogan, 2013).

Maslow’s hope was Eisner’s mission statement. During drug-induced integrative experiences, ordinary clients would become aware that each moment was an extravagant sensory feast, and that they were free to imbibe in each passing moment when they were free of intrapsychic drama. Sessions were spent exploring these dramas so that patients could live them out, fully experience their emotional valence (experience “abreaction,” as Eisner and her Jung-influenced cohort would call it), and release the energy that the mind had to use to keep the

dramas repressed. However, truly resolving psychic conflict required sustained commitment to behavioural change, and the drugs and sessions themselves did not sufficiently motivate patients to align their actions with their insights. The insights were so multitudinous, and each one seemed so significant, that patients had difficulty manifesting them in the context of their daily grinds. In Eisner's words, "if you change a person very fast and put them back into the original environment, either the change is lost or they are under an enormous amount of stress from the environment which created the problem in the first place" (Eisner, 1978). An integrative experience itself was not enough to sustain change. Eisner's solution was to provide clients with a new social environment that supported their initiatives to change.

She established a supportive environment using group therapy. In 1964, Eisner delivered a paper at the First International Congress of Social Psychiatry in London titled "Psychedelics and People as Adjuncts to Psychotherapy" (Eisner, 1978). In the paper, she introduced the idea of "people-potentiated therapy" (Eisner, 1978). During her term at the Brentwood VA hospital, Eisner noticed accelerated progress in patients who received treatment from a male-female therapist dyad compared to those who sat with a single therapist (Eisner, 1978). She originally grounded this phenomenon in Jungian theory, reasoning that the presence of both a male and a female helped the patient better project archetypes of either sex. As she continued to experiment with LSD and Ritalin in private practice, Eisner started to invite her experienced clients of either sex to sessions with new clients. Strangely, patients' rate of progress was related less to the sex of her accomplices and more to their number (Eisner, 1964b). This was especially evident for patients whose complaints were more severe (Eisner, 1964b). Eisner hypothesized that drug-experienced individuals acted as models of "the open unconscious, the dedication to growth, the

capacity for empathy, ... and welcoming of other levels of consciousness” (Eisner, 1964b, p. 7) that resembled the integrative experience.

Eisner’s realization that people could be used to potentiate the integrative experience had lasting ramifications for her career as a therapist. Starting in 1960, she began holding LSD sessions with a consistent group of ten to fifteen individuals. Her clinical notes indicate that all participants were given LSD – anywhere in the range of 25ug to 100ug, depending on experience – while Eisner herself took amphetamine or methamphetamine pills. As the drugs took effect, Eisner led the group members through a variety of expression exercises. In one exercise, participants “blew out” their hostility by smashing cardboard boxes (Eisner, 1960, September 8; Eisner, 1960, September 23; Eisner, 1960, October 9). Eisner watched participants blow and interpreted the statements they made about authority, their parents, or God through their actions. In another exercise, group members took turns sitting on Eisner’s lap and opening up to her while she attempted to manifest an open, loving, nurturing archetype (Eisner, 1960, September 8; Eisner, 1960, September 23; Eisner, 1960, October 9). Sometimes, physical contact alone was enough to flood participants with a sense of connection with humanity and the cosmos (Eisner, 1960, September 23). A third exercise was called “eye therapy,” “eyeballing,” or “eyeball plunging” (Eisner, 1960, October 9; Eisner, 1967). Eisner and a client locked eyes, and what happened next was anybody’s guess. Some clients convulsed and contorted; others hallucinated distortions onto Eisner’s face; others felt that they travelled backwards and forwards in time with Eisner. In all cases, eye therapy was designed to elicit a reaction that was not cued by therapist suggestion, and was therefore an authentic statement from the untouched self.

Eisner’s exercises started off by placing an individual member at the center of the group, or at least at the center of her own attention. However, she frequently let the exercises take on

lives of their own, spinning them off into newly improvised activities, requesting participation from the group, and even handing over control to different members of the group if she felt that someone else was better equipped to lead an exercise at a given moment (Eisner, 1960, September 8; Eisner, 1960, September 23; Eisner, 1960, October 9). This ad hoc ethic inevitably led the group's energy to diffuse throughout Eisner's Santa Monica home, where she hosted group sessions. Sessions were long - sometimes lasting throughout the night - and clients ended up mingling, engaging in therapeutic activities and analyses of their own, and sometimes, forming romantic and sexual bonds (Eisner, 1960, September 8; Eisner, 1960, September 23; Eisner, 1960, October 9; Eisner, 1961, November 11). The interpersonal bonding feature was central to Eisner's belief that group therapy was more exploratory than personal therapy. The more familiarity clients felt with their group, the more comfortably they could access and expose their depths in a social space. This was especially because the group rendered depth as the performance of taboos such as hostility, sexuality, and traumatic memories.

In the context of their closeness, an experiential approach to the taboo led to sessions that often overstepped the bounds of the ordinary client-therapist relationship. In some sessions, Eisner invited clients to spit on her as an opportunity to apprehend the depth of their hostility and the degree to which it was intertwined with sexuality (Eisner, 1967). Delivering a paper called "The Importance of the Nonverbal" at a 1964 international LSD conference in Amityville, New York, Eisner outlined exactly how she used spitting to help patients discharge hostility (Eisner, 1967). She described the session in which she conceived the method: a patient "had been looking at pictures of his grandmother and aunts, and at the sight of one aunt, he started choking. Given a towel he choked, spit, and vomited into it for some time without apparent relief. Suddenly the therapist [Eisner] had an idea – she ordered him to spit on his face" (Eisner, 1967). The

suggestion shocked the patient, but he proceeded to spit “as hard and fast as he could, until he burst into tears and fell back on the bed, sobbing out the release he felt” (Eisner, 1967, p. 548). As she kept reprising this method, it took on several formal qualities. She had patients tightly grasp her shoulders to give them “the strength to keep spitting as hard as [they] can” (Eisner, 1967, p. 549). Due to the intimate nature of this position, Eisner could use patients’ changing grips and hand positions to gauge “the extent of [their] fusion of hostility and sexuality” (Eisner, 1967, p. 549). Patients were instructed to spit “until there [was] a breakthrough” (Eisner, 1967, p. 549), meaning Eisner sometimes had to withstand their spitting for over an hour. She kept glasses of water on hand for patients whose saliva gave out before their rage (Eisner, 1967). To symbolically resolve hostility at the end of a spitting session, Eisner invited the patient to wipe her face clean with a towel (Eisner, 1967, p. 549).

Whereas spitting exposed how hostility was driven by unresolved sexual conflict, Eisner also employed physical contact-based techniques to explore the degree to which hostility mediated patients’ sexual relationships, and to model the distinction between sexuality and universal love. Like spitting, these techniques arose spontaneously before taking on formal features. Reporting on an overnight peyote session held in 1961, Eisner described receiving the intuition to lie down face-to-face with a client who had isolated himself behind a couch (Eisner, 1961, November 11). She manifested an “open and loving” state and encouraged him to experience closeness stripped of its sexual overtones. As therapeutic as she believed the process was for her client, Eisner also experienced a breakthrough in her understanding of how her own body facilitated therapy. She wrote, “I was a real channel of love that day ... I could help people get love and sex together without their being skewed into the sex with frustration from lack of ability to act” (Eisner, 1961, November 11). The same night, she tried the technique with several

clients, one of whom experienced love, seduction and aggression so simultaneously that Eisner had let him writhe on her, suck her breast, and spit at a fellow member of the group before he himself gave up on the possibility of breakthrough (Eisner, 1961, November 11). As with spitting, this technique entered the group arsenal. A 1964 session record shows that with time it grew more nude, more aggressive, and more sexually explicit. In addition to revealing the intertwining of sexuality and hostility, nude contact put a lens on a client's relationship to masculinity and femininity, and on the group's hierarchy of patriarchal dominance Eisner, B. G. (1964, February 2). It, too, exemplifies the way that Eisner leveraged group dynamics to accelerate access to similar sorts of insights that LSD so readily brought to conscious awareness.

A Brief History of Countercultural Group Therapy

How did Eisner's therapy ever get so extreme? Eisner left few records of her contemporary influences in psychology, so it is difficult to know the degree to which her theories and methods were self-authored. However, she was practicing group therapy at a time when the practice was gaining national fame, and her methodology shared some overlap with a form of group therapy that humanistic psychologists were exploring. In the 1950s, the so-called "third force" of humanistic psychology began to consolidate as an alternative to the mechanistic explanations of subjectivity that psychoanalysts and behaviourists advanced (Decarvalho, 1990; Koch, 1971; Rogers & Russel, 2002). This form of psychology was structured around the belief that human behaviour was not merely limited to adaptation to stressors and traumas; at peak psychological functioning, it was oriented toward the realization of a person's creative potential. According to the maverick humanistic psychologist Sigmund Koch, group therapy was the ordinary humanist psychologist's trademark technique for empowering clients to realize their potential (1971).

Group therapy preceded humanist psychology by several decades. In the 1910s, a German psychologist named Jacob Moreno devised a catharsis induction method that he called “psychodrama,” wherein a group of clients used theatrical exercises to bypass social decorum and “put the psyche on the stage” (Moreno, 1946, p. 253; see also Highhouse, 2002; Pines, 1986). In the 1940s, pioneer social psychologist Kurt Lewin modified the psychodrama method to appeal to American corporations, who were on the lookout for ways to foster better communication, cooperation, and initiative among their management (Adelman, 1993; Highhouse, 2002). With a team of Moreno disciples, he founded the National Training Laboratories Institute for Applied Behavioural Science (NTL) and designed “sensitivity training” programs to teach corporate executives how their social styles impact others (Highhouse, 2002). Lewin retained Moreno’s notion that group interaction provided insight about the self, but changed the role of the leading psychologist from theatrical director to discussion moderator (Highhouse, 2002). In the absence of structure, sensitivity training groups (more commonly referred to as T-groups) naturally elicited frustration that the group was then forced to confront and mitigate (Highhouse, 2002).

The T-group did not provide “therapy” in the conventional sense of the word. It was a practical venue for learning how group dynamics operated in the workplace, how to interact with colleagues more sensitively, and how to better respond to critique (Highhouse, 2002). In the 1960s, Carl Rogers adapted the T-group model to client-centered therapy, reasoning that the addition of more people to a therapy session invited more sympathy and positive contact into the room (Grogan, 2013). Rogers began experimenting with the T-group method with colleagues at the University of Chicago, where he taught psychology in the 1940s and ‘50s. Rather than moderating group discussions, they developed a “group-centered leadership” approach, wherein

a therapist led by encouraging the group to determine the course of discussion themselves (Kirschenbaum, 2004). By the late 1950s, their experiments birthed the “encounter group,” a therapy group designed to teach people about themselves through interaction with others (Kirschenbaum, 2004; Grogan, 2013).

Rogers considered encounter groups “the most significant social invention of the century” (Rogers, 1968, p. 16; see also Rogers & Ryback, 1984). Amid Cold War tensions, he believed that training American society to value open communication, self-reflection, and authentic interpersonal relationships could mean the difference between world peace and Armageddon (Rogers, 1968; Watson, 1969). And for a short while, it looked like America was ready to be reprogrammed. Throughout the mid- to late-1960s, encounter groups proliferated across the United States, and even made it to the UK and Canada (Cooper, 1975). However, the historiography of the encounter group movement overwhelmingly points to California as the source of the movement’s vitality. Some of the well-known humanistic psychologists that lived and worked in California included Rollo May, James Bugental, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and William Schutz (Grogan, 2013). These psychologists’ teachings converged at the Esalen Institute, a “human potential” retreat center that leaned over the coastal cliffs of Big Sur, California (Kripal, 2007; Goldman, 2012; Grogan, 2013).

The human potential movement was an interdisciplinary effort to bring the goals of creativity and individuation to the forefront of culture. Unsurprisingly, it was a leaderless movement, but its prominent figures included leading humanistic psychologists, as well as California’s by-now-familiar public intellectuals Gerald Heard, Myron Stolaroff, and Willis Harman (Grogan, 2013; Gelber & Cook, 1990; Stolaroff, 2015). California, and particularly Esalen, was the crucible in which encounter groups became alloyed with the human potential

movement. Esalen was founded in 1962 by Michael Murphy and Richard Price, two men who studied psychology at Stanford University in the 1940s and, like Eisner, joined the Bay Area community of seekers that gathered around Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard, syncretic mysticism, and growth-oriented psychology (Goldman, 2012). After Price became a psychologist and Murphy returned from a religious journey through India in the late 1950s, the two joined to lease a ramshackle 120-acre hot springs facility at Big Sur and transform it into a luxury retreat for psychospiritual exploration. Their plan was in no small part influenced by Aldous Huxley. Circa 1961, Murphy and Price met with Huxley to solicit his public endorsement for the launch of a human potential seminar center targeted towards creative intellectuals (Goldman, 2012). Before providing them access to his social network, Huxley instructed them to meet with Gerald Heard and learn how he ran Trabuco College (Goldman, 2012). He also sent them to observe a holistic weight loss center in Baja California, Mexico, where they took LSD and learned how human potential principles could be deployed to manage physical health (Goldman, 2012). Huxley's field trips signaled the fact that the two men belonged to a lineage of practitioners who connected psychological health with spiritual practices (Goldman, 2012).

Esalen largely began as an intellectual endeavor. Guests lodged at the facility for multi-day seminars that involved reading and discussing the works of scholars of consciousness evolution such as Abraham Maslow, Gerald Heard, and Indian philosopher Sri Aurobindo Ghose (Grogan, 2013; Wood, 2008; Murphy, 1967). Price required his staff to read Maslow's *Toward a Psychology of Being* (1968), and geared many workshops towards therapists who wanted to learn about humanistic psychology but did not attend universities that taught the nascent field (Grogan, 2013). Heard, Willis Harman, Myron Stolaroff, Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, and other staples of the human potential scene were invited to lecture and facilitate workshops on topics ranging

from philosophies of mind to the mystical applications of drugs (Grogan, 2013). Like the Sequoia Seminar, Esalen sold an intellectual approach to self-improvement, but cemented its intellectual positions in the direct, personal experience of self-transcendence.

It was after several years of operation that Esalen tipped its scale from teaching human potential verbally to viscerally through modified practices of humanistic psychology. Certainly, psychedelic drugs had a prominent presence on the retreat grounds, but Murphy and Price came to see their rampant use as an aspect of human debasement more than of human potential, and did what they could to stomp them out (Grogan, 2013). In 1967, Murphy and Price brought in psychologists William Schutz, who led T-groups at NTL, and John Heider, the Ivy League legacy son of gestalt psychologist Fritz Heider, to take up residence at Esalen (Grogan, 2013). Bored of the demure, industry-focused psychology of their Northeastern upbringings, Heider and Schutz used their *carte blanche* to electrify the encounter process. If encounter groups were designed to acquaint people with themselves, then encounter leaders had a duty to illuminate the furthest recesses of their clients' selves. Therefore, if some procedure had the potential to ramp up the emotional intensity of a session, then Heider and Schutz tried it. Their clients got nude. They fasted in extreme temperatures. They wrestled each other, yelled at each other, and expressed their sexual desires for each other in the most explicit possible terms (Grogan, 2013). In embodying extreme states of anger, lust, shame, and physical discomfort, session participants were expected to gain insights about themselves that would not have been possible under ordinary circumstances (Grogan, 2013).

Sexuality, nudity, and other subversive explorations of catharsis may have been the norm at Esalen, but they were not exclusive to it. Psychologists who drew influence from or found kinship with Esalen and materialism-critical psychologists such as Maslow were emboldened to

experiment with flamboyant techniques (Weigel, 1977). In 1967, Hollywood-based psychologist Paul Bindrim devised a procedure explicitly called nude psychotherapy (Nicholson, 2007). Noticing that Esalen clients became comfortable with group nudity towards the end of their retreats, Bindrim attempted to induce the confidence to be emotionally self-disclosing by frontloading nudity at the outset of his marathon sessions (Nicholson, 2007). Like Eisner and the psychedelic therapists, he tried this with the intention of accelerating the therapeutic process (Nicholson, 2007). With the same goal in mind, other therapists in the 1960s tried to condense the productivity of encounter retreats into two-day-long “marathon” sessions (Weigel, 2002). They forced near-constant interaction between a group of 8 to 15 clients to rapidly erode their socialized courtesy and encourage uninhibited communication. Although the marathon encounter had its origins in mid-1960s California, by the 1970s, it had spread throughout the United States and was being implemented in prisons, schools, and corporate offices (Weigel, 2002). Even Maslow himself, at the time the president of the APA, endorsed nude psychotherapy and other countercultural efforts to recover the pre-social self (Nicholson, 2007; Smith, 1990). Psychology was smitten with a notion of authenticity that opposed conformity. Just like Eisner’s therapy group, seekers of countercultural psychology ached to behave and emote in ways that unsettled polite society – the more disruptive, the more existentially significant (Nicholson, 2007). Using nudity, marathon therapy sessions, disrupted group dynamics, and psychedelics, psychologists provoked their clients to transcend the stifling effects of culture and access the dormant dreamers that waited inside.

Eisner’s Community Beyond LSD

Eisner’s no-holds-barred approach to group therapy may have seemed extreme, and indeed there were times it drastically overshot contemporary standards of therapy etiquette. But

looking at the larger context of group therapy in 1960s' California, Eisner's approach appears to have tapped into a cultural moment of willingness to test the limits of the human capacity for authentic expression. Taking Esalen as the site at which encounter experienced its most rapid and public development, Eisner began her journey into human potential-based group therapy ahead of the curve. Esalen was only founded in 1962 and began exploring encounter in earnest in 1967, whereas Eisner built human potential philosophy into her therapy as early as the 1950s. Although T-groups were ascending in popularity throughout the 1950s, even Rogers only began exploring their humanistic potential in earnest after moving to California in 1963 (Kirschenbaum, 2004). It seems likely that Eisner came to invent her style of group therapy through the influence of the Sequoia Seminar's psychologically naïve leadership training model than through direct affiliation with humanistic psychology.

Nonetheless, Eisner was close to Esalen in proximity, philosophy, and social network. Looking at how her therapy continued to evolve from the mid-60s into the '70s, connections to Esalen abound. As Sandoz, the psychology profession, and the law began to restrict the use psychotherapeutic use of LSD, Eisner adopted several nondrug strategies for reproducing the psycholytic effect. Although I have not found much direct archival evidence for their connection, it is surely no coincidence that they appeared at Esalen first. This section will describe the way that Eisner's work came into communion with the culture of human potential psychology as the culture of psychedelic science was waning.

Eisner encountered trouble acquiring LSD almost as soon as she began working with it. Under the auspices of the Brentwood VA hospital, LSD was easily obtained through Cohen's credentials. But when she completed her research contract with Cohen in the spring of 1958, she learned that Sandoz had been tightening their LSD distribution policies (Eisner, 2002). Prior to

the late 1950s, Sandoz required applicants to pledge that they would formally research and publish on LSD (Siff, 2015). Profiteering psychologists took advantage of Sandoz's leniency and collected trivial data to create the façade of research (Novak, 1997). By 1958, Sandoz restricted LSD distribution to psychiatrists with institutional affiliations (Eisner, 2002). In the same year, Eisner's "psychological associations" (Eisner, 2002, p. 81)¹³ restricted psychologists' use of experimental therapy adjuncts to hospital settings. Eisner appreciated the discipline's commitment to a medical standard of rigor, and did not endorse Al Hubbard's attempt to position LSD as a religious-philosophical sacrament in a way that could exempt LSD "directors" from medical jurisdiction (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to A. Hubbard, April 30, 1993). What looked like restrictions on drug-assisted therapy imposed by psychology's professional bodies were in fact allowances made to psychologists following the renegotiation of state-specific pharmacy laws that limited prescription privileges to the medical professions (Brentar & McNamara, 1991). Nonetheless, these standards made LSD less accessible to Eisner and more expensive for her patients (Eisner, 2002).

As LSD entered the 1960s, its nonmedical use became widespread, and psychologists who failed to replicate the unparalleled success being claimed in California and Saskatchewan began to question its true therapeutic value (Sessa, 2015; Lee & Shlain, 1985). Meanwhile, psychedelics were losing their scientific credibility in another way. Between 1961 and 1963, Harvard psychologists Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert led the Harvard Psilocybin Project, a methodologically loose endeavor to record the subjective effects that psilocybin had on the students and faculty of Cambridge, Massachusetts (Lattin, 2010). The research chafed the

¹³ Although Eisner did not name the specific association that limited her practice, she was at the time a member of the American Psychological Association, the Western Psychological Association, the California State Psychological Association, and the Los Angeles Society for Clinical Psychologists (Eisner, 1978).

psychology department for numerous reasons. Leary and Alpert believed that psychedelic drugs taught more about the mind than psychological methodology ever had, especially given the psychiatric tendency to pathologize non-ordinary states of consciousness (Lattin, 2010; Leary, 1983). As such, they rejected the notion that they could conduct psychological research as objective observers, and believed it was more valuable to take drugs with their participants (Doblin, 1991; Leary, 1983). They were accused of distracting students from their academic commitments and of undermining their colleagues' work (Lattin, 2010; Leary, 1983). Harvard found reasons to fire both Leary and Alpert in 1963, but if their intention was to curb their corrupting influence, it backfired miserably. For the rest of the 1960s, they adopted public personas that championed psychedelics as sacred vehicles to enlightenment. Timothy Leary became especially famous for proselytizing psychedelics to youth, for founding a religion called the League for Spiritual Discovery (LSD) to secure LSD's legality on the grounds of "freedom of religion" laws, and for more public antics than can be listed in this paper (Fuller, 2000; Stevens, 1987; Siff, 2015).

By 1967 psychedelic research was subject to stringent federal regulations, by 1968 LSD possession was outlawed, and by 1969 it was banned even for medical research (Lee & Shlain, 1985); but it was well before that, in 1964, that Leary and Alpert made the shift from Ivy League psychologists to scenester gurus. They traded in their suits for kurtas and mala beads, took up residence at an upstate New York mansion owned by their benefactors in the Mellon banking family, and dosed all of the celebrities, professors, and hippies who came to get a load of their experiment in utopia (Lattin, 2010; Wark & Galliher, 2009). Historians refer to this residency as a period wherein Leary rapidly constructed a drug culture that openly challenged hegemonic aesthetics, politics, and notions of fundamental reality (Siff, 2015; Dyck, 2012; Sessa, 2015).

And while he thought that psychedelic psychologists and psychiatrists were distorting the true extent to which LSD was transcendental, they were not too fond of him, either. As early as 1962, Eisner acknowledged that he and Alpert were fun to hang out with, but were treading dangerous ground (Eisner, 2002). That same year, Osmond wrote to Huxley about his fondness for Leary's boyish mischievousness, but was perplexed as to why he had to be "such an ass" (as cited in Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979, p. 64). Leary and Alpert were already in the center of a "media blitz" (Eisner, 2002, p. 135), and became a feature of paranoid conversations in Eisner's communications with Osmond, Cohen, Tom Powers, and others (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to T. Powers, June 20, 1963).

Like toppling dominoes, the "straight" psychotherapists began distancing themselves from psychedelics, Sandoz recalled their LSD and psilocybin, and legislators moved in to limit the use of these substances as much as possible. Eisner claimed to have stopped using LSD in therapy entirely by 1964 (Eisner, 2002; Eisner, 2005). Instead, she used Ritalin, a drug that kept her clients as lucid and open to the therapeutic process as low-dose LSD, but did not itself induce an integrative experience. Although Ritalin was more commonly administered in an oral form, Eisner preferred intramuscular Ritalin injections, which she had been administering to patients via her medical supervisor Dr. Marion Dakin since 1961 (Eisner, 2002). However, when it too was removed from the market in the early 1970s due to its abuse potential, it took her several years to find ketamine, her next psycholytic drug of choice. Introduced to the market in 1970, ketamine was considered a highly effective anesthetic drug, albeit with unintended psychological effects that resembled those brought on by psychedelic drugs (Hansen et al., 1988). It instantly appealed to one Mexican psychiatrist, Dr. Salvador Roquet, who learned about the psychospiritual value of mind-altering substances through interactions with indigenous Mexican

shamans (Yensen, 1973). Eisner learned of Roquet's work in 1974, established contact, and began administering ketamine in her own practice (Eisner, 2002).

While oral Ritalin and intramuscular ketamine continued to play a role in her practice, the history of LSD had imprinted insecurity and furtiveness into psychotherapeutic drug practice. This pushed Eisner to explore nondrug methods of inducing the psycholytic state. Specifically, she honed in on a set of methods that were collectively known as "bodywork." On October 22, 1970, Eisner sent Humphrey Osmond a letter that overflowed with excitement about a new, "really incredible" (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, October 22, 1993) development to report. She was shy to divulge too much until Osmond himself came to see it, lest he doubt her integrity as "the empiricist" he had always known. In the meanwhile, she clued him into the fact that it involved something called "the Rolf method." The Rolf method was a form of bodywork developed by Ida Rolf, a biochemist who first turned her professional focus to the study of yoga, anatomy, and osteopathy to manage her own arthritis (Myers, 2004). Between the 1920s and the 1950s, Rolf developed a comprehensive theory of holistic healing that she called "Structural Integration" (Myers, 2004). Structural Integration was based on the hypothesis that, if the body was designed in relation to Earth's gravity, then disruptions in its alignment with gravity resulted in the disruption of physical and psychological wellbeing (Myers, 2004). Rolf's massages targeted "structurally isolated" areas of the body and manipulated them back into integration with the body's gravity-calibrated structure. In the 1950s, Rolf began teaching Structural Integration to medical and paramedical professionals, sowing the seeds of a following that eventually grew to support the creation of over a dozen Structural Integration institutions across the United States (Myers, 2004a; Myers, 2004b).

Structural Integration was added to Esalen's roster of physical treatments in the mid-1960s, as the institute diverted away from its initial academic structure and towards participatory explorations of embodied spirituality (Wood, 2008; Goldman, 2012). Will Schutz, a social psychologist and self-proclaimed "Emperor of Esalen," had received over 20 treatments at Rolf's New York City clinic (Leal, 1992; Grogan, 2013). He was impressed by the psychological component of Rolf's theory, particularly the notion that emotion-driven physical habits and postures became set into a person's musculature in a way that perpetuated the recurrence of the emotions (Schutz, 1967). Schutz invited Rolf to come to train the Esalen staff in her method (Myers, 2004). It was at Esalen that structural Integration took on its more famous moniker, "Rolfing" (Myers, 2004). It also took on some qualities of the human potential movement by osmosis. In an oral history interview, Schutz described combining Rolfing with a "guided imagery" technique to "see where the problems, in the form of chronic tensions, are in the body ..., release the chronic tension, [and] from that release would emerge an unfinished event from early childhood" (Leal, 1992 p. 470). As an example, he told the story of one patient who was plagued by oral health problems. Through Rolfing, Schutz found that the patient carried stress in his chin. Massaging away this tension was "like turning on the projector of his life" (Leal, 1992 p. 470). The patient was flooded with a cascade of childhood memories in which held his quivering chin to keep from crying. Using guided imagery, Schutz dove deeper into these memories with the intension of reliving each one (Leal, 1992).

Schutz's application of Rolfing was remarkably similar to Eisner's therapeutic use of LSD. It was purported to provide the quickest possible access to the formative experiences that ordinary therapists spent month after meticulous month trying to excavate (Leal, 1992). Eisner picked up on this similarity, writing to Osmond, "it really is an incredibly fast means of getting

basic change in human beings – that is, provided they want to change and are physically capable of it” (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, October 22, 1993). After reading Schutz’ texts about bodywork and undergoing Rolfing herself, Eisner started referring her own patients to professional Rolfers (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, October 22, 1993; Eisner, 1978). Often, she accompanied them to their Rolfing after providing a Ritalin injection at her office (Eisner, 1978). At these sessions, Eisner discovered that Rolfing did not only have psycholytic application for the patients; it was psychotherapeutic in and of itself. After a 10-session series, she was often able to discharge patients from regular therapy (Eisner, 1968; Eisner, 1997). Just as Rolf and Schutz taught, Eisner observed that manipulating the body “with respect to gravity” literally took memories “out of the body” (Eisner, 1978, p. 27). As patients were treated, they allegedly relived memories that pertained to the area of the body being worked on (Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to H. Osmond, October 22, 1993; Eisner, 1978). In Eisner’s terminology, memories were “encoded,” “programmed,” or “lodged” into particular body parts (Eisner, 1997). These memories did not necessarily even come from the client’s own lifetime. Eisner claimed that her clients had recalled bodily traumas that took place during past lives from eras as distant as the Civil War and the Inca Empire (“Yep, past lives... we just have too much evidence to ignore this,” she affirmed in a letter to Sandison [Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, December 28, 1983]) (Eisner, n.d.). Anticipating incredulity, Eisner asserted that she considered herself a “hardboiled” (Eisner, n.d., p. 278) scientist, and that her observations contributed to a small but convincing scholarship of reincarnation (see also Stevenson, 1960).

Eisner attended sessions with her clients to help them process memories as they came up (Eisner, 1978). Whereas small-dose LSD therapy entailed allowing a person to recall trauma and guiding them to a place where they could understand the harmonious way in which the trauma

was a part of their being, Rolfing seemed to require no guidance at all. She helped her patients articulate their experiences if they wanted to, but healing would result whether they unpacked recollections in therapy or not (Eisner, 1997). In the epistemology of Structural Integration, a client's mental health could be repaired without any talk-based psychotherapy, since unintegrated traumas were resolved by correcting a person's anatomy (Eisner, 1997). Relief came especially fast when the treatment dislodged a past life memory, as it would "drain" the client of unconscious baggage that did not "belong to the person" they existed as in their current incarnation (Eisner, 1997). LSD may have provided a glimpse of psychological change and sowed the motivation to change, but by locating and solving psychological problems in the body, Rolfing bypassed the existential aspect of needing to change through action. It created the "basic psychological change" necessary for a person to begin fulfilling their potential without hesitation (Eisner, 1997). As such, when the pharmaceutical company Ciba discontinued injectable Ritalin around 1970 due to street use concerns, Rolfing took its place as Eisner's most powerful psycholytic tool while she searched for the next clinically permissible drug to augment her bodywork (Eisner, 2002).

Relative to Rolfing, the mineral bath method was a latecomer in Eisner's arsenal. At Esalen, it was impossible to separate between mineral baths and bodywork. Religion scholar and former Esalen research and theory director Jeffrey Kripal has called the mineral baths "the central ritual space of Esalen," and contemplative massage "its central body-practice" (2007, p. 244). Overlooking the Pacific Ocean from the precipice of Big Sur, Esalen's hot spring pools were the primary area for gorging every sensory modality. "Sensory awakening" was the code for indulging in sensations that facilitated presence (Kripal, 2007). It was Michael Murphy's belief that human potential could be extended as far as a person could extend their awareness of

their immediate sensations (Murphy, 1967). Using the analogy of runners attending to every aspect of their motion to shave seconds off their time, Murphy contended that any breakthrough in creativity and ability necessitated acute awareness of sensations as they occurred in the immediate moment (Murphy, 1967). The massages and baths mutually reinforced the goal of “[awakening] the senses and [allowing] the individual to live more fully in the here and now” (Kripal, 2007, p. 245). In the darkness of night, sex and drugs were the sensations bathers sought, and they too were often justified as viable components of personal growth (Goldman, 2012; Kripal, 2007).

Eisner’s first hot springs experience was not at Esalen, but it evoked a similar all-encompassing comprehension of the here and now. Of a visit to Southern California’s Gilman Hot Springs in the late 1950s, she recalled, “I went through the equivalent of a drug session with a strong psychedelic with much benefit. The particular benefits I remember experiencing were the letting go of controls ..., the imagery and the insights that followed” (Eisner, 1977, p. 22). For roughly two decades, Eisner’s experience remained a personal reminiscence. Working in the highly metropolitan Los Angeles and Santa Monica, hot springs were not accessible enough to consider using as a therapy tool. It only occurred to her in 1976 that the combination of mineral bath and massage might help her access the psyches of several long-term patients whose tough “body armoring” (Eisner, 1977, p. 22). made them impervious to Rolfing. She predicted that a mineral bath might soften their muscles and help Rolfers access deep tissues that were guarded by psychosomatic defenses (Eisner, 1977).

That year, Eisner took her therapy group for a weekend at the Murietta Hot Springs, two counties south of LA (Eisner, 1977). She arranged for a Structural Integration professional to come with them. As anticipated, even the group’s most well-armored became more accessible.

Eisner arranged for more trips to the hot springs, until she learned that she could purchase minerals and simulate the hot springs at her home. Holding mineral bath sessions at home allowed Eisner to incorporate Ritalin into the procedure (Eisner, 1978). It also provided the privacy to engage clients in socially disruptive techniques such as cathartic blasting (Eisner, 1978). Like Ritalin and LSD, Eisner contended that the mineral baths themselves extracted the psychic material that clients most needed to address, be it by Rolfing or psychotherapy (Eisner, 1978). Insofar as Rolfing resolved psychic conflict that was physically coded into the body, baths literally “[brought] to the surface problems which [were] normally lodged deep in the body” (Eisner, 1978, p. 32). Eisner claimed to have been unaware of similar work being done at the time that she was developing her mineral bath techniques (Eisner, 1978). Before her license was revoked, she was planning to do a tour of European mineral bath spas to learn more about the history and practice of “balneotherapy,” an enduring tradition of mineral bath healing that Eisner believed was underdeveloped in the United States (Eisner, 1978; Sigerist, 1942). Although Esalen was certainly in the business of spa-based healing, it might be true to say that Eisner was amongst the very few who treated the mineral bath as a psychotherapeutic tool worthy of its own theoretical explication.

There was one more key resemblance between Eisner’s practice and the Esalen environment. Earlier, I described that near the beginning of her career, Eisner learned that therapeutic gains were far more sustainable when they were enacted in supportive environment. The retreat aspect of Esalen was contrived to allow attendees to undergo a shared experience, establish distance from their ordinary routines, and support their experimentation with new personas (Goldman, 2012; Kripal, 2007). With Eisner, what began as a special therapy group in 1960 resembled a commune by the 1970s. In 1970, a group of clients rented a home together in

Santa Monica, forming a “therapeutic community” (Eisner, 1997, p. 215) that remained intact outside of sessions (Eisner, 1977). Eisner encouraged the practice, eventually acquiring four homes and an apartment complex to house up to 40 members and their families (Eisner, 1997; Eisner, 1977; Eisner, 1978). Dictating her clients’ living situations allowed Eisner to eliminate aspects of their ordinary environments that inhibited their growth.

Eisner called her specially contrived environment a “matrix,” a term that the German group psychoanalysis pioneer S.H. Foulkes coined to refer to the new networks of meaning that clients created when they interpreted their problems with the help of a group (Roberts, 1982; Eisner, 1964; Eisner, 1978). She took the concept of the matrix beyond the microcosmic therapeutic environment: it was also “that environment from which the subject comes, such as family and living situation; the environment the subject is living in while having sessions; and the environment to which a patient returns after successful therapy” (Eisner, 1997, p. 215). Her version of the matrix expanded to include every environment that clients could find themselves in, and she strove to control as many of them as possible. Thus, she scheduled vacations with clients, made time for leisure outside of sessions, and stage theatrical productions with them as the cast (Eisner, 1997; Eisner, 1977). Clients even claimed that Eisner reserved the power to determine who lived in which house, to the point that she would split up families if she considered it a clinical necessity (Eisner, 1977). This seemed fair because she, too, occasionally lived in the commune houses (Diamond, 1977; Eisner, 1977).

Eisner viewed herself as entirely embedded in the group process. It was just as significant an opportunity for her to explore her own potential; she embraced the group goals of change “all the way down” and the removal of barriers to creativity as though they were her own (Eisner, 1978). For this reason, she saw all work pertaining to this group as her “specialized practice”

(Eisner, 1978). Eisner's specialized practice looked very similar to "the grandest of all projects" (Goldman, 2012, p. 62) that Esalen had known: a year-long residency, established in the 1960s, for up to 20 clients (called "fellows") who were committed to exploring their potential to the fullest extent. Until his death, Maslow was their spiritual elder (Miller, 1971). He impressed upon fellows that, in embarking on a lengthy journey to deepen their personal insight, they had taken on a responsibility to become leaders of humanity (Miller, 1971).

The Death of a Patient and the Costs of Human Change

In Eisner's perspective, the highly-involved therapy group she cultivated in the 1970s was the furthest she had yet gone in her quest to help clients explore their creative potential. Neither her clients nor her profession entirely shared this perspective. On November 14, 1976, a patient had died during a group session that involved mineral bath therapy and a cathartic screaming technique called "blasting" (Morgan, 2009). The exact circumstances in which the patient died were ambiguous, and could only be roughly stitched together in a complicated legal inquest that solicited the testimonies of Eisner; patients both present and absent at the session; expert doctors, psychiatrists, and psychologists; the coroner; and colleagues that testified to Eisner's ethical and professional integrity. After two years of hearings with the California Board of Medical Quality Assurance and the American Psychological Association, Eisner's clinical license was permanently revoked. Though the investigation could not assemble a definitive account of the patient's death, it did catalogue the specific areas of tension that suffused Eisner's relationship with her clients and the field of psychology. This section will use the circumstances surrounding the patient's death to reconstruct the riskier avant-garde elements of Eisner's practice, and to convey the ways that her practice appeared to more professionally conservative psychologists.

Reconstructing Benes' Death. On May 16, 1977, the Psychology Examining Committee of the State of California Board of Medical Quality Assurance (BMQA) filed an official accusation against Eisner over the recent death of a patient (Deyonge, 1977). She was arraigned for gross negligence and the use of treatments that represented an "extreme departure from the standards of the community in the practice of psychology" (Deyonge, 1977, p. 2). The accusation stated that the patient had died "as a direct result" (Deyonge, 1977, p. 2) of Eisner's mineral bath protocol. As summarized by the BQMA, the protocol began with the ingestion of Ritalin, after which the patient entered bathtub filled with dissolved mineral salts, received massages and screamed into a washcloth (Deyonge, 1977). According to the coroner, the patient died of "cardiac dysrhythmia, due to ... near drowning; and from the testimony introduced at this time, we find this death to have been at the hands of another person other than by accident" (Noguchi, 1977). According to the inquest, the patient was unconscious for three hours prior to his death, and was in obvious need of medical attention (Gruen, 1978). Eisner failed to summon medical attention and impeded other patients from doing so (Gruen, 1978; Noguchi, 1977). She was determined to be guilty of gross negligence and incompetence (Gruen, 1978).

Jerry Benes (name anonymized) had been a patient of Eisner's since 1971. He attended a seminar about loneliness she gave at UCLA, and sought her to help him address his difficulties sustaining romantic relationships. In their first session, Benes became furious that Eisner suggested his difficulties stemmed from repressed homosexuality. The hostility that permeated this session forewarned the tenor of the emotions that Benes would exhibit throughout the next 5 years in therapy. In many ways, he was the picture of progress: Benes became more empathic, formed meaningful social bonds, married a woman and had a child, and was a staple member of Eisner's group for true change seekers. However, as Eisner saw it, he also had a streak for

engaging in impulsive behavior that threatened his therapeutic progress and standing in society. According to Eisner, even after Benes had learned to become an emotionally accountable husband and father, he still had sex with anonymous men on a weekly basis, sometimes in risky public locations. And despite no history of recreational drug use, he tended to sneak more Ritalin than Eisner allowed in session. In her examination with the BMQA, Eisner cited these instances as context for the events that transpired on the day of his death (Eisner, 1978).

The day of his last session, Benes arrived at Eisner's with a fellow group member who was studying professional Rolfing. Benes was to take a mineral bath, undergo blasting, and receive a massage with the assistance of Ritalin. As he had done before, Benes ignored Eisner's suggested dose of 60-70mg and instead ingested 80mg. Throughout the session, Benes continued to display outbreaks of insubordination. He disregarded Eisner's bathtub safety protocol, and at one point, violently attempted to turn over and submerge himself while proclaiming his intention to drown. Eisner and the Rolfing student wrestled Benes out of the water and, noticing a sudden drop in his energy, walked him to a bed. For several hours, he made repetitive motions with his arms or legs, but did not speak a word. As afternoon turned to evening and clients began arriving for the regular Thursday group therapy session, therapy itself was sidelined as focus was directed toward Benes's condition (Eisner, 1978).

Since more people were now physically present, this was the point at which testimonies became scrambled. It had become apparent that Benes was having difficulty breathing. He was wheezing and his airway was obstructed by mucus and blood. According to Eisner, group members calmly encouraged Benes to relax and patiently awaited his return to full consciousness. When his eyes rolled to the back of his head, everyone snapped into action. Eisner got someone to call emergency medical services, and two clients performed CPR. When

the paramedics arrived, they could not resuscitate Benes, but as they took him away in the ambulance, everyone figured he was still alive and would recover. Eisner stressed that his response was not abnormal in the context of her extremely embodied, nonverbal form of therapy, and only became abnormal when his breathing stopped (Eisner, 1978).

Client affidavits painted a contradictory picture. One client stated that Benes was in terrible shape from the minute she arrived, and that for over a half hour, the group was made to treat his worsening condition by chanting at him, passing energy to him through their hands, and verbally assuring him that “he didn’t have to die, he’d worked through the problem” (Dushane, S., 1977, p. 2). She suspected that the group had indulged Eisner’s dubious methods because Eisner had socialized them to accept her judgment unequivocally, lest they be reprimanded for acting “out of authority” (Dushane, S., 1977, p. 3). When Eisner finally suggested someone call a paramedic, she reportedly back-peddled and instructed clients to perform CPR for another ten minutes while she thought about how they could best represent the situation in the inevitable police report (Dushane, S., 1977). Another client corroborated this narrative. He recalled, “Someone questioned if it would not be best to call the fire department for help. Dr. Eisner’s response was ‘of course you know there will be an investigation.’ No one dared commit that heresy. A little while later, Dr. Eisner decided to make the call for help, and even then expressed the feeling that everything would be alright” (Krouskop, 1977, p. 2).

The Professional Response. The coroner’s report described the first responder arriving to a scene of “15 to 20 people ranging in age from their late teens to late 50’s, standing around the victim Benes holding hands [in what appeared] to be some type of occult ritual” (Carpenter, ca. 1977). Although Benes’ death may have been the cause for the official accusation against Eisner, the strange circumstances of his death prompted the BMQA to take on a general

examination of Eisner's unorthodox practices. She came under scrutiny for using drugs with little recognized psychotherapeutic use, and for using her expert status to cultivate a coercive, authoritarian personality. Official interpretations of Eisner's methods provide a glimpse into the perspectives that dominated professional attitudes toward drug and human potential-based therapy in the 1970s. Employing the tools of both medicine and psychology, her archive leaves the reflections of both disciplines.

An anesthesiologist was asked to provide an opinion on Eisner's use of ketamine, Ritalin, and carbogen. In short, he stated that her use of these substances constituted "an extreme danger to the health and welfare" (Koons, 1977, p. 3) of her patients. In the medical community, it was wildly inappropriate to administer ketamine at a private residence, without resuscitative or monitoring equipment, for a purpose other than inducing anesthesia (Koons, 1977). It was also ill-advised to forcefully massage an individual on ketamine, because even at sub-anesthetic effects, the drug dulled pain response. According to the anesthesiologist, it was likely the reason that several clients had broken ribs and other injuries following ketamine and Rolf sessions (Koons, 1977). Even carbogen, which Eisner had been administering since the 1950s, was claimed to constitute an extreme danger (Koons, 1977). Carbogen had the effect of elevating blood pressure and heart rate. Used in conjunction with Ritalin, a stimulant, carbogen created a risk of elevating blood pressure and heart rate to levels that increased the likelihood of stroke and cardiac arrest (Koons, 1977). A second physician added that the hot mineral baths themselves increased heart rate, and corroborated that Ritalin only exacerbated the fact.

Another expert witness testimony came from a clinical psychologist and consultant for the National Institute of Mental Health who specialized in drug and family research. He was equally condemning. In preparation for his testimony, the witness researched available evidence

for the therapeutic efficacy of Ritalin, ketamine, and carbogen, but found no instance in which any of these drugs has been shown “to assist the attainment of personal insight” or provide “relief from patients’ emotional problems” (Goldstein, 1977, p. 4). In his opinion, the use of experimental drugs whose utility only Eisner could access was part and parcel with the “cultist” (Goldstein, 1977, p. 6) environment she had established around herself. The witness wrote, “effective group and family therapy is based upon the notion that the ethical therapist operates to assist patients achieve a sense of personal autonomy and worth” (Goldstein, 1977, p. 3). Reading patient testimonies, he found only “sadistic treatment” (Goldstein, 1977, p. 4) and an inculcated sense of “self-denigration and humiliation” (Goldstein, 1977, p. 3) that consolidated Eisner’s power over her patients.

As clients reported their experiences in Eisner’s therapy groups in their affidavits, a variety of violations of client autonomy came out of the woodwork. The most benign of the bunch was a series of mandatory sessions Eisner was reported to hold every Friday night (Deyonge, 1977). The sessions began with short check-ins from the group members, but the meat of the session consisted of Eisner, clad in a black leotard, reading aloud from a book she was writing that had no direct consequence for individual clients’ growth (Deyonge, 1977; Diamond, 1977). One client estimated she was grifting a total of \$300 – \$400 from the group at each one of these sessions (Diamond, 1977). The violation of trust here was financial, but it only begins to describe the degree of control she exercised over her clients. According to the affidavits, Eisner micromanaged every aspect of the lives of the 40 to 50 clients who lived in the group houses, some of which were owned by Eisner and her family (Diamond, 1977). She relentlessly inquired and advised on their occupations, education, large purchases and investments, friendships, and sex lives (Diamond, 1977). To maintain clients’ commitment to the group, she sometimes

separated families between the homes, or threatened to evict non-compliers entirely. Living in the group houses was at times enjoyable, but residents could not escape the condition of being in constant therapy. Since everyone lived together, Eisner had a scoop on any one person's activities from each resident's perspective (Diamond, 1977).

Eisner purported to demand such intense loyalty to her vision because she saw the barriers that stood between her clients and their potential, and the only way to dismantle the barriers was to trust the person who could see them. Clients described group membership as a process of developing "blind obedience" (Dushane, T., 1977, p. 2) and "accepting her reality as the only reality there was" (Diamond, 1977). With so large a group sharing and protecting Eisner's reality, she was able to behave in ways that clearly transgressed the ethical obligations of a psychotherapist. Clients of one house claimed that she ordered them to restrain a housemate to a plastic-covered bed for days to weeks, freeing her only twice a day for meals and denying her bathroom time (Deyonge, 1977; Dushane, T., 1977). The house obliged because she threatened that any dissent would undo years of the restrained client's therapy (Dushane, T., 1977). Further staking her authority, Eisner pressured her clients to cease seeking medical care, convincing them that their physical ails were psychogenic and best treated by her. To distance them from the medical community, she brought in a family physician once a year to conduct extremely superficial checkups (Dushane, T., 1977). In affidavits, clients contended that Eisner did this in order to obfuscate her ethical indiscretions from medical authorities (Dushane, T., 1977). She chastised patients who wanted medical treatment for post-session injuries, despite the seriousness of their complaints. Several patients suffered broken ribs after being aggressively Rolfed under the dissociating effects of ketamine (Deyonge, 1977; Dushane, T., 1977). Others were injured in a treatment called "containment," whereby Eisner and other clients sat on and

asphyxiated a targeted client to the point of unconsciousness (Dushane, T., 1977). In an effort to obscure the dubious conditions under which she administered drugs, Eisner instructed clients to exclusively refer to ketamine therapy as k-sessions, and deceitfully snuck patients LSD whilst claiming it was a migraine medication called Sansert (Dushane, T., 1977).

The ideas that undergirded Eisner's use of contested drugs, group manipulation, and severe bodywork all pertained to the banishing of past life burdens, which created physical barriers to the vague mystical aim of integration. In Benes' case, Eisner allegedly represented his death as the consequence of past lives rushing out of his body too quickly (Egger, 1983). At the end, the psychologist witness did not only criticize Eisner for a series of separate irresponsible incidences. He criticized the core metaphysical commitments that differentiated Eisner's practice from his. He held that psychology's orientation to treatment was based on the principle that "emotional problems lie within early family relationships and are exacerbated by current disturbances in interpersonal relationships" (Goldstein, 1977, p. 6). As a representative of "modern psychotherapeutic practice," his approach was to examine the interplay of these early and current relationships "within a rational context" (Goldstein, 1977, p. 6). meaning he relied on verbal methods that were accountable to a scientific standard of truth.

To contrast, he accused Eisner of using methods that were not supported by current scholarship on the "determinants of emotional disturbance" (Goldstein, 1977, p. 6). They were instead grounded in the pseudosciences of mysticism and exorcism, and so were bound to further confound clients on their search for psychological wellbeing. He thought Eisner's rejection of rational theories of psychology was especially dangerous given her charismatic nature. Personable, persuasive, and armed with all the right indications of psychological authority on paper, Eisner managed to shift "the context of the therapist-client relationship from a scientific

practitioner-client one to a spiritual-religious cultist one, which [explained her] peculiar hold upon her clients and the domination... both social and economic” (Goldstein, 1977, p. 6). In the psychology of the 1970s, psychologically healthy individuals were constructed as agents that could navigate the clash of social duties in ways that allowed them to retain the sense that they were the sources of their choices (Lerner, Hutch & Dixon, 1983). Conversely, Eisner’s ideology and personality purportedly combined to rob clients of this individuality. Indeed, when the BMQA revoked Eisner’s license, it was neither for the isolated event of the patient death, nor for several experimental transgressions that pocked an otherwise conservative practice; it was for “a continuing course of conduct over a period of years” (BMQA, 1980, p. 6).

Eisner’s clinical license was revoked on December 18, 1978 (BMQA, 1980). In 1980, she submitted a petition to restore her license, but was rejected for failing to demonstrate sufficient “rehabilitation” (BMQA, 1980, p. 6). The State of California Psychology Examining Committee’s comments on Eisner’s rehabilitation further demonstrate where she stood in relation to her profession. On December 9, 1980, the committee convened to examine whether Eisner’s beliefs had changed to align with modern psychotherapeutic practice. As one committee member put it, Eisner’s professional transgressions stemmed from her “failure to recognize her limitations as a psychologist. She did not know what her training and expertise limited her to do” (BMQA, 1980, p. 6), and the aim of the inquest was to determine whether she had acquired these limits. Eisner’s petition was rejected because rather than demonstrating an appreciation for the risks inherent to her highly experimental and unconventional methods, she attempted to defend them and argue how they had been misrepresented (BMQA, 1980). In fact, she even insisted that she would continue to use or refer patients to therapists who used drugs and bodywork as therapy adjuncts (BMQA, 1980). She also did not demonstrate sufficient engagement with activities that

would realign her standard of care with the rest of the profession, be it through continuing education in the ethics of psychology, formal meetings with mental health ethics consultants, or curiously, psychotherapy itself (BMQA, 1980). Finally, Eisner was determined to be unable to “distinguish between casual relationships and psychotherapeutic relationships,” and revealed “no clear theoretical basis for her philosophy of treating patients as friends” (BMQA, 1980, p. 2). She was therefore judged to be unfit to satisfy the role of the psychotherapist, whose relationship to clients included a closeness that resembled friendship, but was bracketed by distinct ethical responsibilities outlined by the profession’s governing bodies.

Parallel Critiques of Eisner and the Encounter Group Therapists

Eisner’s style of therapy was a clear divergence from the mainstream psychology of its day, and her interactions with the professional body of psychology show us precisely how. The opinions of the BMQA’s psychological adjudicators – that Eisner’s style of therapy dismantled individuality rather than stimulated it, and that her methods were devoid of accountable empirical support – reflected critiques that were applied to many of her cousins in humanistic psychology and the human potential movement. While not all encounter group therapists viewed themselves as much a part of the group as Eisner did, many did inhabit a similar paradoxical role in which they were moderators of spaces for self-led discovery at the same time that they were gurus that pierced into their clients’ souls. In adhering to an ethic of leaderlessness, encounter group therapists allowed patients to take the reins as an attempt to honour the primacy of their emotions (Grogan, 2013). At the same time, though, therapists learned that they could manufacture a greater impression of profundity when they pushed to their clients to experience the most extreme versions of their emotions (Grogan, 2013).

Their cavalier experimentation with clients' vulnerabilities invited criticism from other professionals. One scathing example came from Irvin Yalom, the preeminent existential psychiatrist that spent the 1960s earning tenure at Stanford, ground zero of the human potential movement. With colleagues Morton Lieberman and Matthew Miles, Yalom studied the experiences of over 200 individuals who participated in encounter group of various orientations (Lieberman, Yalom & Miles, 1972; Yalom & Lieberman, 1971). The researchers found that encounter group leaders could not reliably judge their clients' outcomes, and greatly overestimated the positive impact that their therapy had (Lieberman, Yalom & Miles, 1972). Additionally, they found that clients themselves could not reliably judge their own improvement. Although they claimed to leave therapy more open-minded and growth-oriented, reports from clients' friends and family did not corroborate behavioural change (Lieberman, Yalom & Miles, 1972).¹⁴ According to Yalom and colleagues, this indicated that encounter participants absorbed the ideology of the human potential movement, but not the tools to improve their conditions.

At best, encounter groups produced an attitude improvement; most benignly, they gave clients "a certain degree of pleasant stimulation" (Lieberman, Yalom & Miles, 1972, p. 50) and sent them on their merry way; at worst, however, they inflicted lasting psychological damage. Lieberman, Yalom & Miles called victims of this final condition "encounter group casualties," clients who left their groups with problems ranging from critically injured self-esteem to

¹⁴ Intuitively, we might question whether friends and families' judgment of individuals' behaviour is more meaningful than a statement from the individuals themselves. The researchers address this, stating that the method of evaluating participants' associates has been effectively used to assess the quality of other forms of psychotherapy in prior research (Lieberman, Yalom & Miles, 1972). Certainly, the method was used to assess the efficacy of LSD psychotherapy at least a decade prior (Eisner & Cohen, 1958; Dyck, 2006). Regardless of its accuracy, it seems reasonable to infer that the opinions of clients' associates were taken to hold significant epistemic value at the time. An inability to corroborate behaviour change in associate testimonies thus constituted a valid critique of a style of therapy.

psychosis (Galinsky & Schopler, 1977; Yalom & Lieberman, 1971). Their label prompted further studies of the phenomenon over the course of the 1970s (Galinsky & Schopler, 1977; Harley, Roback & Arbramowitz, 1976; Jaffe & Scherl, 1969; Schopler & Galinsky, 1981; Parloff, 1970; Frankel, 1976). Marathon sessions and individual-focused group sessions (common in both Eisner and Esalen's group practice) were shown to be the biggest culprits for producing casualties (Yalom & Lieberman, 1971). Yalom's profile of the worst offender included the traits of charisma, intrusiveness, aggressivity (meaning an inclination to engage clients' most aggressive personas), and "high stimulus input" (Yalom & Lieberman, 1971). This profile put Eisner firmly within the camp of therapists who embraced the "highest-risk leadership style" (Yalom & Lieberman, 1971). She was in the company of Esalen's finest (Frankel, 1976). William Schutz and Esalen's notorious gestalt psychologist Fritz Perls were reportedly engaged in a competition for who could bring their group clients to the most extreme catharses, which served their egos to the known detriment of their clients' mental states (Grogan, 2013). Although they were aware that their techniques often harmed the clients, they believed that their results were no less insightful and fascinating (Grogan, 2013).

The first chapter introduced a concept of mysticism that was modern enough to embed within the scientific enterprise of psychology in the context of 1950s LSD research. The second chapter explicated the discussions that early psychedelic and psycholytic therapists held to disambiguate the ways in which mysticism was a component of the psychedelic drug experience. Chapter three was dedicated to exploring notions related to mysticism and integration that Eisner

shared with the humanistic and countercultural psychologists of her time. In sharing the goal of bringing clients to peak states of self-awareness, Eisner and these psychologists also drew from a shared pool of therapeutic methods. Evidently, Eisner used these methods in nefarious ways, which culminated in the death of a patient. I used Eisner's failure to uphold the ethical standards of her profession as an opportunity to showcase a selection of non-countercultural psychologists' critiques of countercultural psychology. In all, I aimed to provide a sketch of the psychological milieu outside the bounds of psychedelic psychotherapy.

Conclusion

There is an upsurge of interest in the history of psychedelics that is largely being driven by the reawakening of psychedelic research in current health science. Researchers in the sciences constantly refer to psychedelics' scientific and social histories to convey the conditions that dictate why they use psychedelics to study certain topics, why their work is marginalized, and why it is crucial to combat their irrational marginalization if we expect to improve the quality of mental health care. Sometimes they draw directly from historical studies, and other times they draw from the historiography of psychedelic studies, but the narrative is usually the same: legitimate psychiatrists and psychologists who were dedicated to the scientific method generated sound evidence that psychedelics were tenable solutions to a range of psychiatric conditions. The narrative continues, these researchers' legitimacy came into question due to a combination of conservative politics and provocations from influential cultural figures who publically disavowed the psy-disciplines. These figures – most notoriously Timothy Leary – aligned with religious practices and mystical epistemologies that undermined conventional scientific standards of truth in favour of direct experience.

Contrarily, I wrote this thesis to show that religion, mysticism, and the epistemic virtue of experiential knowledge were in fact built into psychedelic science as it was practiced by many of its most revered figures. Although the concepts were not accepted universally, there was a period time in which they were rendered in ways that were compatible with conventional expectations of clinical research. In chapter one, I described a particular construction of mysticism that appealed to 1950s' intellectuals because it could be integrated with scientific modes of thinking fairly seamlessly. This form of mysticism was constructed in large part at the Sequoia Seminar, a Stanford-based religious studies group that made a point to attract California's leading thinkers.

They taught that Jesus Christ could be studied as a historical role model rather than a supernatural one, and that attaining his equanimity, self-confidence, morality, and leadership skills required embodying his psychology. Through the writings of Carl Jung, they contended that a record of Jesus' psychology (or more generally, the person-nonspecific archetype of the individuated Self, which Jesus personified) existed in the collective unconscious, and that psychological methods of introspection provided systematic suggestions for finding this archetype within oneself.

Their construction of mysticism had several routes to the world of psychedelic science: Seminar-affiliated intellectual celebrities Aldous Huxley and Gerald Heard provided LSD and mescaline to psychologists all over North America; Seminarians who taught engineering at Stanford researched LSD's potential to enhance creative thinking about engineering problems; and Betty Eisner, who attended the Seminar since its inception, used its values to interpret the reasons that LSD facilitated psychotherapy so effectively. She claimed that LSD reliably imbued users with awareness that they were inextricable from their surroundings, and that their prior experiences were inextricable from who they were in the present day. These insights appeared to motivate clients to approach life with a renewed sense of commitment to developing their best possible selves. She classified these insights under the heading of the "integrative experience," a Jungian term that Seminarians used to describe moments of deeply personal religious significance. Eisner's conviction that LSD's efficacy was grounded in a metaphysical explanation made its way into her clinical methodology. Developing what appears to be the earliest comprehensive theory for LSD-assisted psychotherapy in North America, Eisner stipulated that therapists be open to and knowledgeable about religion, and that clients be open to discussing their spiritual convictions. Although religion was at the forefront of her style of

therapy, it did not stop her from publishing a few of the earliest (and frequently cited) empirical reports on the efficacy of LSD-assisted psychotherapy. It was rendered in such a way that did not interfere with the expectations of scientific publishing.

While chapter one was about the construction of a form of mysticism that was compatible with contemporaneous science and became known as the integrative experience, chapter two tracked how the integrative experience propagated through the wider community of psychedelic psychotherapists. Historians have written about early psychedelic research as it was undertaken in dispersed areas of globe (Sessa, 2012; Sessa, 2015; Lattin, 2010; Langlitz, 2012; Grinspoon & Bakalar, 1979), as well as about the historical coincidences, boundary figures, and salient subject matters that connected geographically separate researchers into a loose network (Stevens, 1987; Lee & Shlain, 1985; Dyck, 2012). However, very little has been written about how psychedelic researchers also made deliberate attempts to establish formal networks. In this chapter, I reviewed these attempts through an analysis of Eisner's professional activities in the 1950s and 60s. Eisner was present for the majority of international psychedelic psychotherapy conferences in this period. Groups were small, meetings were discussion-based, and Eisner was an outgoing participant. She played an active role in decisive debates about the mystical nature of the integrative experience and the degree to which mysticism belonged in psychedelic therapy. These discussions indicate that the field was somewhat divided on the metaphysical meanings of drug-induced mystical experiences, but that many therapists worked to elicit mystical-type experiences from patients regardless of their personal metaphysical orientations.

Chapter three considered Eisner's methods of integration induction vis-a-vis other styles of psychotherapy that emerged in the 1960s. At the time, the clear majority of therapists who worked with psychedelics were psychiatrists. Although they accepted that LSD created a

subjective impression of spiritual insight, most of them hesitated to adopt methods that induced mystical experiences if they also interfered with the familiar discourse-based tools of psychoanalysis. In the chapter, I showed that it was much more characteristic of humanistic psychologists to emphasize the spiritual significance of integrative experiences (which they called “peak experiences,” a Maslovian term) and to strive for them by any means necessary. I aimed to convey that the subtle intrusions of mystical concepts into the main body of psychedelic therapy differed significantly from the forms of psychospiritual practice that came to define psychedelics in the popular mind – forms of practice that were actually far more common in nondrug humanistic-influenced countercultural psychology.

Eisner and the counterculture psychologists designed their techniques to extract as much emotional intensity from their clients as they could. They used massages, nonverbal expression, group manipulation, and in some cases, drugs to bring their clients to a state of vulnerability that enabled an explosion of personal disclosure. Eisner represented some of the most extreme elements of counterculture-era psychology, experimenting with methods that risked her clients’ physical health and framing her clients’ current problems as consequences of past life traumas. In 1976, she lost a patient in treatment. The legal proceedings that followed this event left an archival record of professional psychologists’ reactions to her ethics. Using this information, I reconstructed the wider professional context within which Eisner worked. I showed how psychologists that represented professional associations denounced Eisner’s work as an affront to the recognized standards of evidence, a critique that was leveled against psychedelic psychologists such as Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert, but also reflected critiques of drug-free humanistic methods.

For reasons both legal and professional, psychedelic and psycholytic therapy became scant by the 1970s, and clinical therapeutic uses could not happen above ground in the vast majority of cases. Instead, psychedelia took over representations of the 1960s counterculture. That being said, although psycholytic therapy descended into obscurity, its presence in current psychology remains detectable. First, it lives through the theories and practices of transpersonal psychology, a clinical orientation that affirms the edifying value of alternative states of consciousness (Walsh & Grob, 2005; Lahood, 2007). The Czech psychiatrist Stanislav Grof, founder of the International Transpersonal Association, was himself an active psycholytic psychiatrist and an acquaintance of Eisner's (Langlitz, 2012; Eisner, 2002; Metzner, 1998; Eisner, B.G., 1946-1998, Eisner to R. Sandison, March 24, 1981). After legal conditions halted his work with pharmaceutical psycholytics at Johns Hopkins, he spent the rest of his career creating and promoting elaborate drug-free methods for achieving psycholytic states (Cortright, 1997). More directly, psycholytic therapy experienced a brief official resurgence in 1988 with the formation of the Swiss Medical Association for Psycholytic Therapy (SAPT) (Langlitz, 2012). Between 1988 and 1993, the Swiss government allowed the SAPT to administer LSD, MDMA and psilocybin in therapy (Langlitz, 2012). Although the group only lasted 5 years before Switzerland outlawed psychedelic research again (Gasser, 1995), its training program left a legacy that is just now receiving mainstream recognition. In 2014, Peter Gasser, a psychiatrist who trained with the SAPT, published the first government-approved LSD psychotherapy study in over 40 years (Gasser et al., 2014).

Gasser's research program is one of many ongoing attempts to restore the vitality of LSD psychotherapy. In accordance with the cultural milieu, contemporary psychotherapeutic research attends more to the neurological and cognitive-behavioural mechanisms of psychedelics' effects

than to their psychoanalytic and mystical underpinnings (Gasser et al., 2014; Gasser, Kirchner, & Passie, 2015; Johnson, Garcia-Romeu & Griffiths, 2017). However, evidence of the psychospiritual past still lurks in the language and methods. Gasser and colleagues' recent study placed patients of life-threatening illnesses in "experimental" psychotherapy sessions that included 20ug or 200ug doses of LSD, followed by "integrative" sessions that allowed the patients to verbally explore and integrate their challenging insights (Gasser et al., 2014). They also reported their participants' spiritual orientations (Gasser et al., 2014). Johns Hopkins psychiatrist and leading psilocybin researcher Roland Griffiths conducted a double-blind, active placebo-controlled trial (the placebo was Ritalin) on the therapeutic efficacy of psilocybin, and found that clients reported "mystical-type" experiences that remained spiritually significant two months post-treatment (Griffiths et al., 2006). In quantitatively assessing the experience's mystical valence, Griffiths aimed to provide tractable evidence to support or reject 1960s psychotherapists' contentious anecdotal claims (Griffiths et al., 2006). In a conspicuous effort to imbue the experience with the quality of a religious ritual, New York University researchers had their psilocybin patients ingest their dose from a clay chalice (Hofmann, 2016; Pollan, 2015). The researchers quantitatively and qualitatively assessed psilocybin's effects on anxiety, depression, quality of life, and spiritual orientation (Ross et al., 2016). Curiously, they did not report the use of a chalice (Ross et al., 2016; Swift et al., 2017; Belser et al., 2017). It seems as though the current psychedelic psychotherapists are conscientiously trying to integrate their mystical heritage with the positivistic present, hoping past lives will not rush up faster than their new body could handle.

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