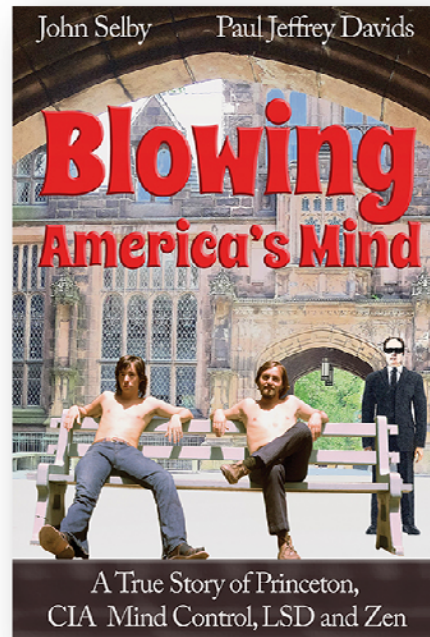


Various Excerpts Various Lengths from **Blowing America's Mind**

**A True Story of Princeton,
CIA Mind Control, LSD and Zen**

By John Selby & Paul Davids



(516 words)

How in the world can a book's subtitle put together, on the same line, America's notorious and often entirely amoral CIA ... and the pristine spiritual realms of Zen? How in fact did the CIA get tangled up in things like psychedelics, meditation – and Princeton student life?

This historic entanglement happened because our own government decided secretly, in the late fifties, to develop and employ new devious ways to impact the minds of its enemy - both foreign military personnel and also supposedly-dangerous internal enemies ... like college kids determined to fight against their own government's Vietnam War atrocities.

The lawless decision of the CIA to secretly try to use depth hypnosis, psychedelic chemicals and ancient spiritual practices as a mind-manipulation combo ended with the LA Times blaring out a '70's exposé headline they called "The CIA: Blowing America's Mind":

"Once again this nation confronts how to prevent its powerful secret intelligence agencies from becoming a threat to the very freedoms they were established to protect."

For fifty years, no one has stepped forward to reveal the insider true story of how innocent Princeton students got caught up and nearly done in by the CIA's late-1960's LSD-laced hypnotic research. That research was part of the CIA mind control program known as MK-

ULTRA, which was top secret for decades and its existence finally exposed in 1977.

Now two Princeton alumni who lived these experiences – a distinguished author (John Selby) and a noted Hollywood film producer and director (Paul Jeffrey Davids), take their true story out into the open. In this book you will meet the real participants in that first wild rush up ‘Psychedelic Hill’ – the psychiatrists and psychologists who led the charge, and the young human guinea pigs who not only had their sex lives and university experiences perverted by MK-ULTRA manipulation ... they also nearly altogether lost their sense of personal identity in the process.

Blowing America's Mind is complex drama - a poignant Princeton love story and a suspenseful misadventure of youth; a detailed look at research hypnosis and the psychedelic revolution in the late '60s; and an intimate documentation of a famous Ivy League university, during its final years as an all-male college, on the edge of exploding.

At the same time, this fact-based account delivers a present-day heads-up call for more transparency in and control over our government's ongoing secret war-fixated research policies. The theme of endangered personal freedom rings out for attention just as urgently now as it did back then!

John Selby is the noted author of several dozen books including *Seven Masters One Path*, *Powerpoint*, *Quiet Your Mind*, *The Mindful Marijuana User* and *Let Love Find You*.

Paul Davids is the writer/producer of such films as “Timothy Leary's Dead,” and Showtime's “Roswell: The UFO Cover-up” – and for NBC Universal International Television he produced, wrote and directed “Starry Night,” “The Sci-Fi Boys,” “Jesus in India,” “Before We Say Goodbye” and “The Life After Death Project” (Syfy). His most recent film is “Marilyn Monroe Declassified.”

THE FOREWORD: (844 words)

This book is an exposé of what our CIA is capable of doing to its own people and institutions; a unique Princeton love story; an insider exploration of the power and dangers of mind manipulation, hypnosis and psychedelics; and a controversial view of Princeton kids becoming men in the rugged 1960's.

We're currently moving through a strong resurgence of interest in cognitive remodeling, consciousness expansion and psychedelic exploration. This resurgence follows a long period of rejection of mind-chemicals and hypnosis to induce altered states of awareness. After ‘The War on Drugs’ had effectively shut down LSD research for decades, new scientific research on LSD is now being conducted throughout the world, and Silicon Valley executives openly talk about taking micro-doses of LSD to spur creativity. The founder of Apple even claimed publically that he would never have come up with his tech breakthroughs without the help of psychedelics.

Blowing America's Mind warps back fifty years to expose some of the very first

psychedelic research ever conducted – and shows dramatically just how strange the early years of psychedelic and hypnotic research became. In addition, our account of the untold student culture of Princeton in the late sixties aims to probe deeper – into a dramatic rendering of the core issue of what consciousness is and how we can manipulate it – for better or for worse.

When first trying to work together to make sense of our Princeton/MK-ULTRA experiences, we felt passionately that this unique Princeton story, and especially the account of our MK-ULTRA misadventures at the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute's Bureau of Research, had to be revealed for public scrutiny. However, our early years of sporadic writing became overwhelmed by a tsunami of books and films all purporting to be the ultimate 1960's story of 'Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out' ... it all blurred into a media-distorted tapestry.

While we were still struggling to make sense of our Princeton experience through writing, the Vietnam War ended and society moved on to new obsessions – computers, wealth accumulation, women's and gay rights, cell phones and the Internet. We always felt, however, that our true story had something important to offer that differed from all the other 1960's material. We aimed to capture what it was really like, from the inside-out, to be caught up in MK-ULTRA's grip.

The New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute had several aspects. On the one hand, there were incurably psychotic permanent residents in buildings on part of the grounds. However, there was also a Department of Experimental Psychology which was headed by Humphry Osmond, MD, and Bernard S. Aaronson, Ph.D, the men who co-authored *Psychedelics: The Uses and Implications of Hallucinogenic Drugs*. At this research institute, both LSD and hypnosis were being used to explore altered states of consciousness – but when we became involved, we certainly were never told that we were being used as subjects in the CIA's highly-classified MK-ULTRA mind control project. MK-ULTRA had supposedly ended a few years prior to our misadventures, but later research established that it definitely had not been terminated, and we were two of the guinea pigs.

That news of MK-ULTRA broke for the first time in 1977, almost a decade after our involvement. Headlines blazed about the participation of both Princeton and Columbia University in CIA mind-control research. Media exposure got the overlords at the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute removed from their positions, along with several complicit professors at Princeton University.

However, before this was all exposed, as unwitting college students we underwent a great many hours of deep hypnosis, and also micro-dose LSD sessions, in order to explore the 'outer and inner reaches' of consciousness, from the expanded perceptions of psychedelic euphoria to the dark, demented recesses of schizophrenia. The stated purpose of these studies was to distinguish mind-contracting experiences like schizophrenia and paranoia from mind-expanding perceptions induced by psychedelics. Humphry Osmond's deeper intent was to demonstrate that

psychedelics (a term coined by Osmond) did not bring on states of insanity, but rather a sort of temporary super-consciousness.

Needless to say, as young vulnerable students our lives were shaken by participating in such radical research. The idyllic aspects of our Ivy League life were seriously disrupted by our involvement in 'surfing the chaos' as Timothy Leary liked to say.

After graduating, we got together on the west coast and roughed out the first draft of this book. Then we went our separate ways – Paul Jeffrey Davids into the world of television and film in Los Angeles, and John Selby into an adventurous life of travel, research, teaching and writing books. Several times over the years we rewrote our story, but it has never previously been released. We're pleased at this late date to publish this book, without concern for the wounds these old memories may inflict upon Princeton or the CIA – they'll survive the publication of our account. As for our title, we're using part of a 1977 editorial headline from the Los Angeles Times titled: "The CIA: Blowing America's Mind."

John Selby & Paul Jeffrey Davids
Los Angeles, California / August, 2017

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 1: MUSIC FOR ZEN LOVE (716 words)

"Can I hear more about the hypnosis?" Anne asked.

"Like what?" said Jonathan.

"I don't care. It just interests me."

"Well our research out at the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute is sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health, part of NIH. We use the trance state to induce all kinds of altered awareness, including mystical states, even temporary nirvana."

"No, sorry -- you can't just hypnotize someone and have them attain enlightenment."

"Well last year, Dr. Humphry Osmond, who runs the place, recorded the EEG readings, you know, brainwave stuff, of three Zen monks in meditation and identified their brain patterns – it's mostly a particular segment of alpha, and the same alpha patterns can be induced through a particular hypnosis condition. The procedure isn't perfected yet, but –"

"Are you telling me that you've been hypnotized and actually attained nirvana?"

"Well, it's hard to say. We get post-hypnotic conditions after each session to erase our memory of what happened."

"They erase your memory?"

"Just of the hypnotic condition."

"Why'd you let them do that?"

"It's part of the research paradigm that Bernie and Dr. Osmond developed. Bernie

Aaronson is the psychologist I work under at the Institute – he's my hypnotist, actually. Bernie is in charge of the hypnosis program, and Humphrey Osmond is the psychiatrist who is head of the entire Bureau of Research. From what I hear, the Institute was set up mostly by the Kennedy family through NIH – Bubby Kennedy took LSD twice out there, guided by Dr. Osmond – but as Bernie tells it, Lyndon Johnson's daughter freaked out on acid in the White House one night and Johnson immediately shut down all seven federal LSD research centers – so we supposedly had to shift to using hypnosis to induce the same states. Between you and me, Humphry and Bernie still have plenty of high quality Sandoz acid that was never turned in, and sure, occasionally we use an off-the-record assist from psychedelics. That's a term that Dr. Osmond invented – it means 'mind manifesting.' Dr. Osmond guided Aldous Huxley on Huxley's first trip with mescaline -- Huxley wrote a whole book about it, *The Doors of Perception*."

"My brother read that book," said Anne. "But I'd be afraid to let anyone or any drug tamper with my mind. I mean, it's definitely interesting. I love psychology, my father's a psychologist – but psychedelic drugs sound like a freaky thing to get into. A friend took me down to Haight Ashbury one night and somehow it didn't appeal to me – too many vacant stares and scared girls. I don't think anybody could hypnotize me – they say some people can't be hypnotized."

"Everyone's susceptible, some people just take longer to go under. You want me to show you?"

"How do I know you're not out to control me?"

"Why would I want to do that?"

"Why hypnotize somebody other than to control them?"

"Hypnosis just helps you get into a state you'd attain anyway if you meditated for ten years. It's a tool, a shortcut."

"So then, what do I have to do?" she said.

"Just lay down on my bed on your back."

She smiled. "Ah, the old line."

He smiled back. It did sound like 'the old line' when he thought about it. But in this case, nothing was farther from the truth. "You don't trust me?" he asked.

"Well, are you trustworthy?"

"I do my best."

"Alright then." She made a graceful move with her whole body and stretched herself out on the bed. Jonathan turned off the music and pulled up a chair beside her. She smoothed out her skirt and crossed her bare legs.

He could feel himself getting excited in spite of himself. Hey, down boy, he ordered. "Okay now, just close your eyes, let yourself feel the softness of the bed ... begin to relax all the muscles in your body ... first your feet, your knees, your pelvis, your arms and hands, your throat,

your tongue, your jaw, and your eyes. I'll just take you down a little bit this time, just breathe deeply, that's good. Feel yourself inhaling, exhaling, your body relaxing ... go ahead and feel a warm soothing sensation of total peace coming into your whole being ..."

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 2: RORSCHACH INKBLOTS (736 words)

At the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute, Jeffrey was cooped up in a small room on the second floor of a large brick building that seemed as though it might have once been somebody's private estate. He kept glancing out the window, feeling distracted as he struggled with a battery of questionnaires, divulging his likes, dislikes, habits, aims, preferences, ideals and opinions.

The window looked out on the expanse of acreage of the Institute grounds and a long, inviting lake. It was a much more beautiful environment than he'd expected when he decided a few days before to apply to be a deep hypnosis subject. Then again, he hadn't known what to expect.

The inside of the building was cozy but old and sort of dusty, and most of the walls seemed to need a fresh coat of paint. The hardwood floors had lost their shine long ago and creaked. He could even make the floor creak right now, just by pushing down with his foot.

He tried to concentrate once again on the questionnaire. Did he like sweets? Sure. He could stuff himself with chocolate, ice cream and popsicles. What did he think of long hair? On girls it was fine. Was the United Nations a viable force for creating peace in the world? With the war still raging in Vietnam, it obviously wasn't doing too stellar a job. So should he answer 'no' or 'sometimes?' His head was swimming in circles.

He even had to write an essay about what he thought of life at Princeton. Jeffrey had nothing but respect for the university, but it was hard to ignore the fact that there were 3,500 male undergraduates and zero females, a fact that contributed to all sorts of unspeakable pressures in the groin. If he'd known it was going to be so hard to meet girls, he probably would have gone to a college with a more plentiful surrounding of bountiful bosoms.

Of course, he wasn't about to admit that in his essay, which he filled with platitudes and clichés. Then Mike Kerner, the bearded young psychologist administering the tests, had him write another essay on why he wanted to be a hypnotic subject. That was hard to answer honestly. On the one hand, he usually felt uptight whenever the opportunity came up to ask a girl for a date (which wasn't all that often), and it seemed logical that hypnosis might teach him to relax. Possibly improve his sex life. He wasn't too keen on remaining a virgin much longer. But there were other things influencing him, too, and some of it had to do with the claims of Dr. Timothy Leary, the former Harvard psychology professor who proclaimed the virtues of LSD and other psychedelic drugs and states of what Dr. Leary called expanded consciousness. Jeffrey had read Dr. Leary's claims in a lengthy interview in *Playboy*, and he had a natural curiosity about all

of that – LSD as the ultimate aphrodisiac and putting you in touch with the hidden intelligence that supposedly is dormant in billions of cells of your brain that aren't used in everyday waking consciousness. His curiosity was raised all the more when he learned that actor Cary Grant also extolled the benefits of LSD as a form of psychotherapy.

Jeffrey had heard rumors that some of the hypnosis subjects at the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute were given the opportunity to try LSD under clinical conditions. He wasn't sure where he first heard those rumors. Probably it was informal talk over at the Psychology Department building, and he was planning on majoring in Psychology. In any event, he figured, why not begin at the Institute by trying hypnosis, and maybe other opportunities for exotic mind experiences would flow from there.

To help him write the second essay, Jeffrey took a flyer from his shirt pocket and unfolded it to read it again:

N. J. NEURO-PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE
Subjects Needed for Deep Hypnosis Experiments

The Bureau of Research in Neurology and Psychiatry of the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute needs subjects willing to undergo deep hypnosis. Subjects will be paid during an initial training period and then will participate in a series of experiments. You must be willing to make a long-term commitment. If accepted, you will undergo hypnosis several times a week and may make an important contribution to our understanding of human consciousness.

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 5: DUSTING THE DIENCEPHALON (397 words)

Nassau Hall is one of the places they show everyone on the guided tour of Princeton. Visitors learn that during the Revolutionary War it served as military headquarters for George Washington for a time, and later it became the temporary Capitol of the United States. Outside the main entrance, two stone tigers stand poised for attack, guarding the historic building from undesirable spirits.

Jonathan walked up the ancient stone steps, worn down about two inches from being trod upon by so many famous patriots. He had been summoned to Nassau Hall for a private meeting with the President of the University, Robert F. Goheen, because last semester, under Dr. Aaronson's guidance, Jonathan had conducted a questionnaire survey of Princeton students using marijuana and psychedelic drugs. It had been funded by the National Institutes of Health who also funded Dr. Osmond's research. Jonathan had analyzed the data and discovered a number of

facts that had shocked the Board of Trustees of the university - using the Psychology Department's computer to cross-check his statistics, he'd proved that students who adopted the 'psychedelic lifestyle' defined in his research paper were sporting higher grade averages than 'straight' students.

He'd at first agreed to keep his findings confidential, the University definitely wanted to hush up his findings, which disproved the media and government myth that marijuana and psychedelic use ruined one's chances of success in life – in fact they seemed to do the opposite, at least at Princeton, and Jonathan felt that the world had a right to know. He'd been brought up to be honest and not hide the truth, so in typical impulsive Jonathan mode, he'd shared his research with a college friend whose dad worked on the New York Times - and they'd immediately done a front-page article on the use of marijuana and LSD at Princeton. Jonathan had been quoted several times in the article, expounding on Humphry Osmond's theories about altered states of consciousness.

That publicity had gotten him in very hot water out at the Institute – Bernie almost fired him on the spot. And now President Goheen had called him in for a one-on-one talk. Jonathan went through the imposing oak doors of Nassau Hall, ambled across the spacious lobby in his worn boots and paused in front of the receptionist.

"I'm here to see President Goheen," he said.

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 11: ENDLESS VOID (1099 words)

That had been one hell of a hypnotic condition, thought Jonathan as he drove up the long Institute driveway through the rain. But wait – why was he starting to remember those conditions, when he was under a post-hypnotic condition not to remember?

He exhaled with a loud rushing pulse of air – he didn't care why anything was happening. Something inside made him want to remember – remember! This was a life or death situation ... but even now, that memory was fading again – everything was now fading away into the loud patter of rain on his canvas top as he drove into the Institute parking lot, killed the engine and hurried out of the chill of the rain into the eagerly-awaiting building.

Upon entering the Institute, it was almost habitual that Jonathan went first into the kitchen for some seriously-needed coffee. Jeffrey was already there, hanging out like an old pro with Bernie, Mike, Linda and two other subjects. Jonathan wanted to check with Bernie on how his draft deferment looked for the next year, but he could see that Bernie was into one of his off-center hocus-pocus mumbo-jumbo trips, talking with gregarious enthusiasm about the trail-blazing Zen implications of the Institute's revolutionary hypnosis research.

Jonathan noticed that Bernie was turning his most enthusiastic vibes toward Jeffrey, who was rising to the bait like an adolescent trout to a colorful fake fly. Having heard the same

Institute party line on consciousness-expansion about a hundred times before, Jonathan told Jeffrey he'd meet him downstairs when Jeffrey was ready, took his cup of coffee and made his escape.

He went down the basement hall to his hypnosis room. Even after he lit some incense and a candle and sat down and did some deep breathing exercises, he still felt out of harmony, bummed out about life in general. Last year and the year before, it had always been Pok who'd helped him up when he felt down. Pok would remind him that after all, the whole world was nothing more than a miniscule speck of dust spinning through an infinite endless void – so what was the sense of taking life so seriously? But even though what Pok had said was basically true, recently Jonathan couldn't help but take life seriously.

Suddenly Jeffrey walked in.

"Guess what?" he said, his loud excited voice disturbing the tranquility of the room. "Bernie just told me that I can be a subject once a week in the EEG experiments."

"Are you sure you want to get into that?" said Jonathan.

"Sure I'm sure. Bernie said it won't interfere with our hypnosis work at all. It sounds fantastic. He says that in less than six weeks I'll be able to control my alpha state completely at will, so that whenever I want to, no matter what's going on, I can just close my eyes and go right into a meditative alpha state – just like that!" He snapped his fingers. "Have you been trained to do that yet?"

"Uhm, I gave it a try last year, but I decided that meditation wasn't the kind of thing I wanted to have programmed into me like I was one of Pavlov's dogs or something."

"But Bernie says that you can achieve the same alpha states in six weeks using his equipment that it takes Zen Masters twenty years to attain."

"Well, Jeffrey, as far as I'm concerned, you can interpret those results any way you want. Mike has logged about a hundred hours on that instant satori machine, and he's hardly what you'd call an enlightened Bodhisattva."

"What's a Bodhisattva?"

"Well, in the Hindu tradition, and also to some extent in the Mahayana and Ch'in Buddhist traditions, a Bodhisattva is a person who attains total enlightenment, who transcends the material human sphere altogether. A Bodhisattva is free of all mortal karmic restrictions but he chooses, through his infinite love and compassion, to return to the earth and work for the spiritual advancement of humankind. Or something like that."

"Wow."

Twenty minutes later Jeffrey was once again in a deep hypnotic trance. There, Jonathan said to himself. Got him all the way down. Breathing regular and deep. No signs of any eye movement – definitely stage-four sleep. What to do? Tell him that when he wakes up, he'll be a toad? Or give him a condition to wake up into the great blank void? Wake him up as a

Bodhisattva? Or the Bogeyman?

An image came to Jonathan's mind of Jeffrey heading through the hypnotic conditions like a calf headed down the long wooden chute back home at the cutting corrals. The calf could look ahead and see light at the end of the chute and he'd assume that as soon as he hit the light he'd be in the clear again – but the celestial joke was that at the end of the long dark chute, right where the light opened up, the chute would squeeze tight with three men on the metal levers, ready to slam the gates shut both behind and in front of the calf.

Back home, Jonathan thought to himself, the youngster calf was branded, earmarked and then rolled onto his side and castrated. Here at the Institute it was a little different. Jeffrey was running down the hypnosis chute with his eyes on the great light ahead, expecting hypnosis to magically enlighten him. But as soon as he started with the actual test conditions, the guiding light could go out at any moment.

Jonathan looked intensely at Jeffrey. This was his very own subject, hypnotized and open to experiencing anything that Jonathan cared to suggest to his unconscious. This was exactly how the Institute had also had Jonathan on a psychological choke-leash, for way over a year.

But wait – what am I supposed to be doing here, Jonathan said to himself, pulling his mind back to the work at hand. What condition today as an exercise for Jeffrey? Well, there was the condition Bernie had given – yes, he was remembering it now – strange, the way the conditions were creeping back into his memory, refusing to cooperate with Bernie's past commands. This one was the condition when Jonathan had awakened and felt as though he were six inches tall – a classic schizophrenic perceptual distortion, and Jonathan had freaked out as predicted. But ... sometimes he still became momentarily panicked that somebody was going to step on him. So aha, that was where that anxiety came from! Bernie must not have completely erased it – or maybe erasing a condition sometimes simply didn't work.

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 16: THE ROYAL WAY (847 words)

Jeffrey parked down the street a few houses so as not to give the neighbors any idea that he was a constant companion of Linda. As he walked up the sidewalk, he saw two men under a lamp post, one sort of tall, the other shorter and chubby, almost fat. They were quickly walking toward him on the sidewalk. They came to a stop right in front of him so he had to stop too.

"Jeffrey, we'd like a few words with you," the tall one said and flipped a badge right in his face. Jeffrey tried desperately to read what the badge said, but the man tucked it away with lightning speed before Jeffrey could make out anything. Two words flashed through Jeffrey's mind again and again, as his heartbeat accelerated: Plainclothes cops.

Jeffrey stood there stunned. He knew that Linda had marijuana right inside her house. Were these guys from the State Narcotics Division?

"Are you, uhm, police?"

"You saw my badge," said the tall one. "Did it say police?"

"You pulled it back so fast I didn't even see it. Can I see it again?"

"No. But I'd be happy to read you your rights if that will make this more official."

"What?" Jeffrey's heart rate was accelerating by the second. "What's this about?"

"Don't play innocent with us, and don't talk shit," said the short, chubby one in somewhat of a high voice. "We know all about you. But let's talk about your friend."

"Which friend?"

"I said don't talk shit with us," the short one repeated.

"Jonathan?"

"We'll start with him, yeah," said Shorty.

"He's not in trouble, is he?"

"You like that shithead, right?"

"You mean Jonathan? Well, we work together, and he's my friend. C'mon – what is this all about?"

"You do know what treason is all about, don't you?"

"Treason?" Jeffrey's blood pressure at that moment would have aroused alarm from those in the medical professions.

"That's where someone like Jonathan participates in secret government research and then gives the data to the enemy."

"Jonathan would never do something like that."

"He already has – and you're definitely implicated."

"Me?" said Jeffrey, with a little squeak in his voice. "Implicated?" Jeffrey could already hear what his mother and father were going to say about this, when they realized he'd been arrested. They'd say, 'Boots, Jeffrey, it all started with those boots. And that hypnotist of yours. That Institute. And growing your hair long. You didn't listen to us, did you? You had to do things YOUR way.'

"But we might go easy on you," said the tall one. "We have a proposition for you."

"What kind of a proposition?" asked Jeffrey, as his suspicions about these two were rising.

"Once a week, on Wednesday at eight a.m., you're going to call this number and leave a message. You're going to tell us if Jonathan is walking the straight line, or if he's leaking stuff about the Institute research to the press."

"Or TV," said the short one.

"Why would he do that?" Jeffrey asked.

"Because he's a pinko fucker, or at least leaning in that direction. And we want you report on his friend Pok. He's a suspect, too."

Jeffrey took the business card he was handed. It said Society for the Investigation of

Human Ecology. And there was an 800 number. No name.

"Human ecology? What is this? Are you guys really cops? Or are you a couple of fakes who are trying to steal Bernie's research – is that it? That's it, isn't it?"

"October 6, 1966," said short and chubby.

"October what?" Jeffrey stammered.

"October 6, 1966 – that's a date you'd better remember. That's when LSD went from being a Schedule I drug to being completely illegal for any purposes whatsoever. There's major danger with all this LSD proliferation everywhere, and all this Timothy Leary 'Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out' stuff. He's going to end up in prison for sure, that Leary asshole. And as for your buddies, those yellow chicken-liver acid-heads, you'd better watch out or you'll all be busted. And here's some more advice – keep our little meeting here quiet, even from the squeeze you're playing with in there. It didn't happen. You got that? Say you got it."

"I got it," said Jeffrey, but he didn't really get it at all.

"We know you smoked pot with Pok."

How the hell did they know that, wondered Jeffrey? Unless Jonathan's dorm room was bugged.

"If you want to stay out of jail, we'd better hear from you at that 800 number – leave a message every Wednesday at 8 a.m. Miss one Wednesday and your ass is kaput."

"But – but wait a minute – that's crazy – you can't expect me to –"

They were already walking away and didn't hear him. Jeffrey was trying to catch his breath. Was it all a joke? Why hadn't that guy actually let him read that badge?

Maybe the badge was bullshit. So now he was supposed to believe that Jonathan was a spy?

EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER 17: SWALLOWING TIME (526 words)

Pok had been urging Jeffrey to try one of Pok's LSD sugar cubes ever since the night Jeffrey had first smoked pot. Pok regularly sang praises to LSD, claiming that it was the ultimate cure for the sickness of modern civilization – the ultimate cure for everything in fact – even the fear of death. To hear Pok explain it, taking LSD was like dying a temporary death of the ego. When Jeffrey had pressed him to explain what that meant, Pok had said: "Hey, it's not explainable – we're talking about the ineffable, about the subtle force of intelligence that lies behind all existence. How can you put any name at all on that, except nirvana?"

While watching Pok play pool one afternoon when Jonathan was off somewhere with Anne, Jeffrey listened to him describe his latest LSD trip which he said had blown him past all reality, he was now entirely free -- no longer needing to play any of society's games at all, and particularly not Princeton's pseudo-aristocratic Ivy League games. Not that he had done much

Ivy League game-playing before that trip, he added – but now he had stopped turning in class assignments, and furthermore he refused even to worry about it.

“Worry is the biggest waste of time ever invented by man,” he stated while chalking his tip. “It’s future-based and the future, even time itself, is just one big illusion,” he explained. “A prof might give me a bad grade on a paper just because it’s late, but like the bard himself said, ‘Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.’”

He surveyed the lay of the colored balls on the table, aimed and fired. “On LSD,” he continued while deciding on his next shot, “things become clear beyond all the sound and fury, the deepest levels of perception into life itself open up. So what are you waiting for, man?” Pok said, pausing to stare at Jeffrey through his World War I pilot goggles. “I offered to guide you on your first trip – what do you have against experiencing nirvana?”

“I’m excited about taking an LSD trip, I really am,” said Jeffrey, “but I’m also worried about it being illegal.”

“That’s no excuse,” said Pok. “Just repeat the pledge after me: ‘I will not let the retrograde laws of the United States of America stunt my spiritual development’.”

“Come on, Pok, I’m serious. And besides, I’m not sure I know what you mean by nirvana.”

“Nirvana – the ultimate mode of consciousness, merging with the Non-self, experiencing infinite being-ness. It’s total awareness of all things here and all things to come.”

“Well sure, I really want to experience that, I really do. But you know it’s against formal Institute rules for a subject to take any psychedelic. I mean, pot’s one thing, but LSD is in a different category, isn’t it? And I don’t want to mess up the research data.”

“Hey, how is one little acid trip going to mess up their research? And told I’d be your guide, I can absolutely ensure you a most beautiful flight path.”

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