A surreal, psychedelic illustration of a forest. The scene is dominated by large, glowing mushrooms in shades of orange, yellow, and purple. The background features a complex, wavy, and swirling pattern in dark blue and purple tones, creating a dreamlike atmosphere. The overall style is reminiscent of classic psychedelic art.

REWRITING THE PSYCHEDELIC STORY

Doctoral Workshop on Altered States of Consciousness and Literature

Presentation by David Elmiger

05.06.2024

THE HISTORY OF PSYCHEDELICS

- **Psychedelics** were used ceremonially for thousands of years
 - For spiritual, religious and healing purposes
 - Aztecs, Mayas, ancient Greeks...
 - Evidence from cave paintings, fossils, burial sites up to **9000 years ago**
- **Psychedelic plants** abundant around the world
 - Psychedelic use potentially predating modern humans
- **90% of societies** practice **ASCs** (of 488 societies)

Sources

Guerra-Doce et al. (2023)

Guerra-Doce et al. (2015)

Bourguignon et al. (1977)

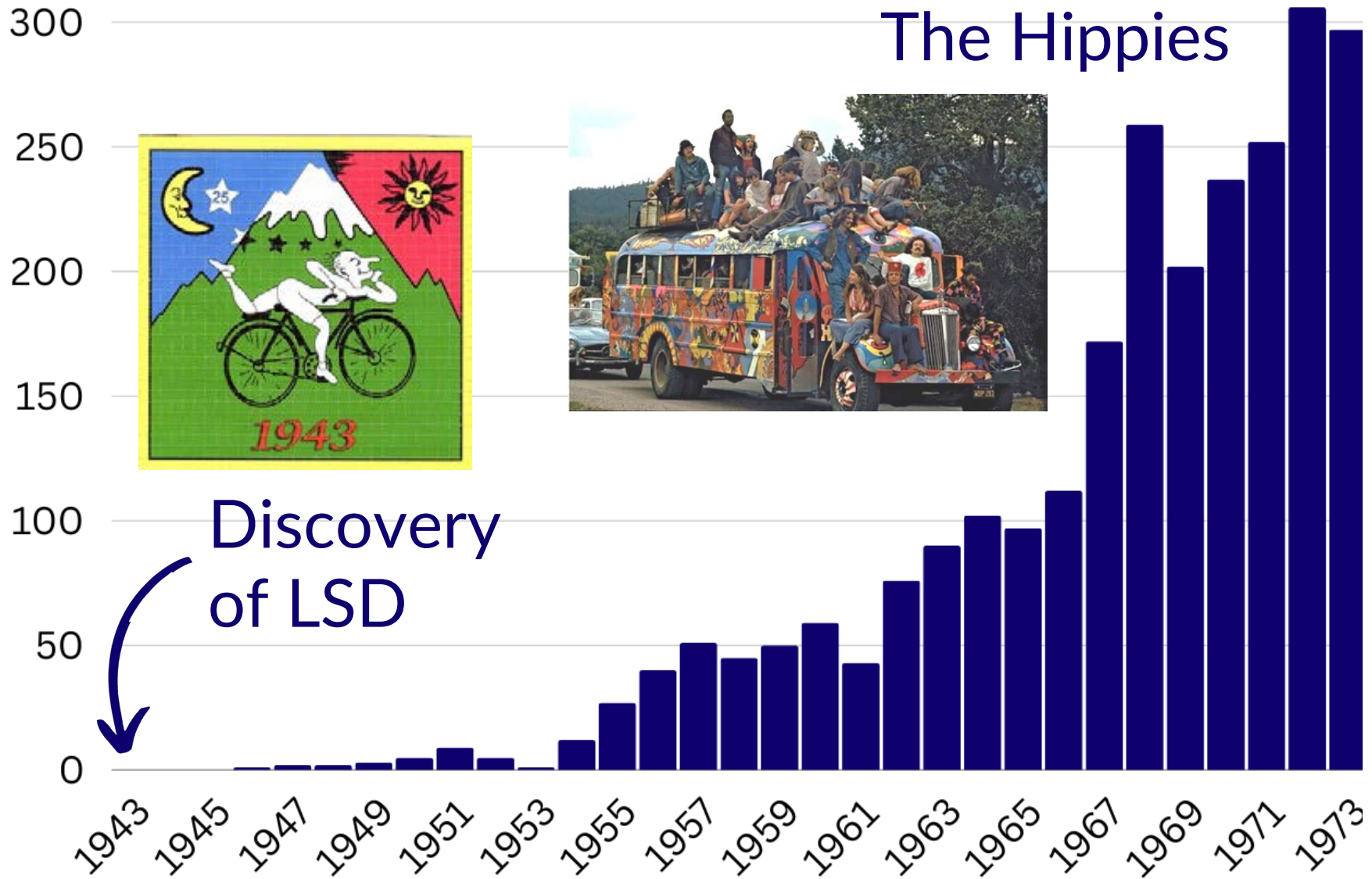
THE HISTORY OF PSYCHEDELICS

- Discovery of mind-altering effects of **LSD** by Albert Hofmann in **1943**
 - Intensive **research** and **use in clinical practice** in 50s and 60s
 - Tens of thousands of patients treated
 - Mainly for depression, alcoholism and end-of-life anxiety

Sources

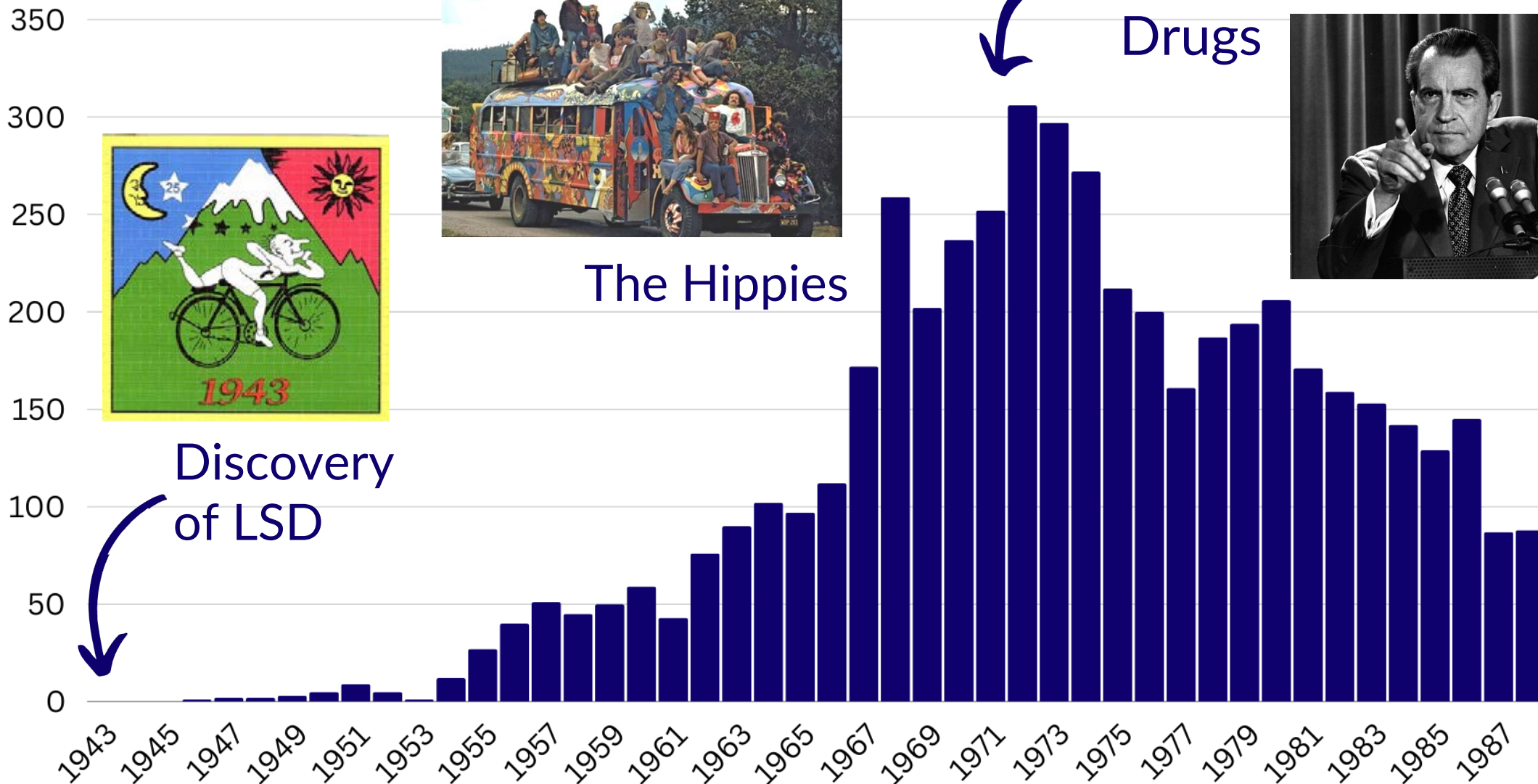
Carhart-Harris & Goodwin (2017)

The Hippies



Discovery
of LSD

Published studies including search term "psychedelic" on PubMed

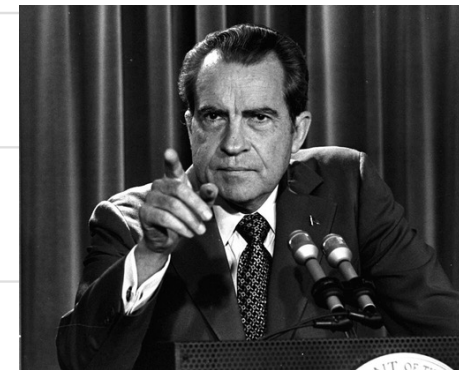


Discovery of LSD



The Hippies

War on Drugs



Published studies including search term "psychedelic" on PubMed



Stories told around psychedelics during...

THE WAR ON DRUGS

PSYCHEDELICS IN THE NEWS: ~1970

LSD can be 'Hiroshima' drug, says Navy

LSD Users Lose IQ's

The DOCTOR Says
Harm Outweighs Any
LSD Use 'Benefits'

SAN FRANCISCO (UPI)—**LSD** users are generally more intelligent than the average person, but their IQ slips every time they take the drug, according to one of the nation's leading experts on hallucinogenics.

ical Association Tu
Cohen said man
LSD users were "n
dazed, bewildered, v
ory gaps and parti
iented.' But the or
tion of permanent i
was in the ability

Sources

California Digital Newspaper Collection

Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections

PSYCHEDELICS IN THE NEWS: ~1970

LSD Can Damage Body Genetically

Today's juvenile LSD-ly inexpensive and easy to get malformed newborns" Glanz than a year ago because of heroin addicts" Rogers said
users could be the par- "because they are absolutel
ants 10 years hence of convinced they won't hurt us

Evidence LSD Causes Cancer, Deformities

WASHINGTON (UPI) —A doctor told Congress today a high dose and then repro- duces certainly has a high

COMPARED TO THALIDOMIDE

Child Of Mother Who Took LSD Born With Deformed Leg

IOWA CITY, Iowa (UPI) — drug — four times, including facts apparanelly were caused
The first documented case of during the seventh week of by a chromosomological
a child born deformed after pregnancy. The amount taken breakdown in the mother,
its mother had taken LSD was enough for her to super transferred to the child. He

Sources

California Digital Newspaper Collection

Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections

PSYCHEDELICS IN THE NEWS: ~1970

Know your enemy...

Drugs	Common Names	Methods of Use	Signs of Use	Effects of Overdose
LSD	Mickey Mouse, Acid, Microdot, Blotter Acid, Paper Acid	Oral	Illusions and Hallucinations Poor Perception of Time and Distance	Longer, more intense "Trip" episodes Psychosis Possible Death "Awake" coma Bizarre Behavior Violence
Mescaline and Peyote	Mesc, Buttons, Cactus	Oral, Injected		
Amphetamine Variants	2, 5-DMA, PMA, STP, MDA, Ecstasy, Adam & Eve	Oral, Injected		
PCP	PCP, Angel Dust, Hog	Oral, Injected, Snorted Smoked (Usually with Marijuana)		
Other Hallucinogens	Psilocybin, DMT, DET	Oral, Injected, Smoked, Sniffed		



Sources
Virginia Chronicle

PSYCHEDELICS & HEALTH

- No association of lifetime or past year use of psychedelics and mental health disorders (~130'000 participants)
 - In a few cases associated with better mental health
- **Lifetime use of psychedelics associated with less stress and lower suicidality** (~190'000 participants)
 - For other illicit drugs association is usually opposite
- **No physical addiction and physically harmless**
- Less side effects than antidepressants

Sources

Krebs und Johansen (2013)
Hendricks et al. (2015)
Nichols (2016)
Carhart-Harris et al. (2021)

600

400

200

0

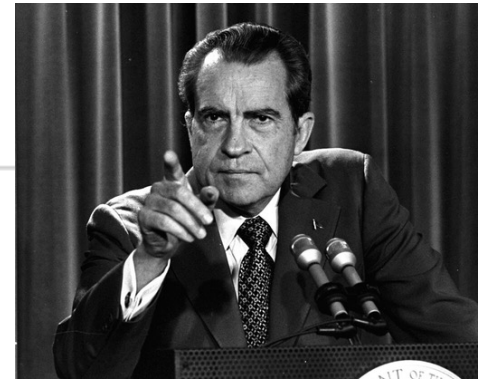


Discovery
of LSD



The Hippies

War on
Drugs



Published studies including search term "psychedelic" on PubMed

1200

1000

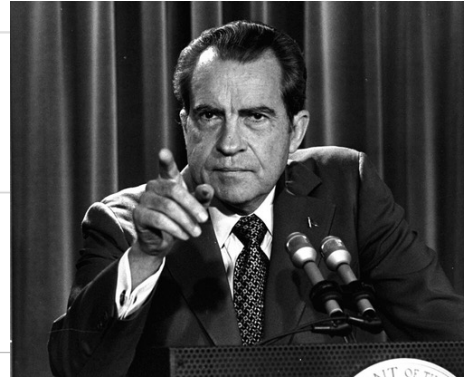
800

600

400

200

0



The Hippies

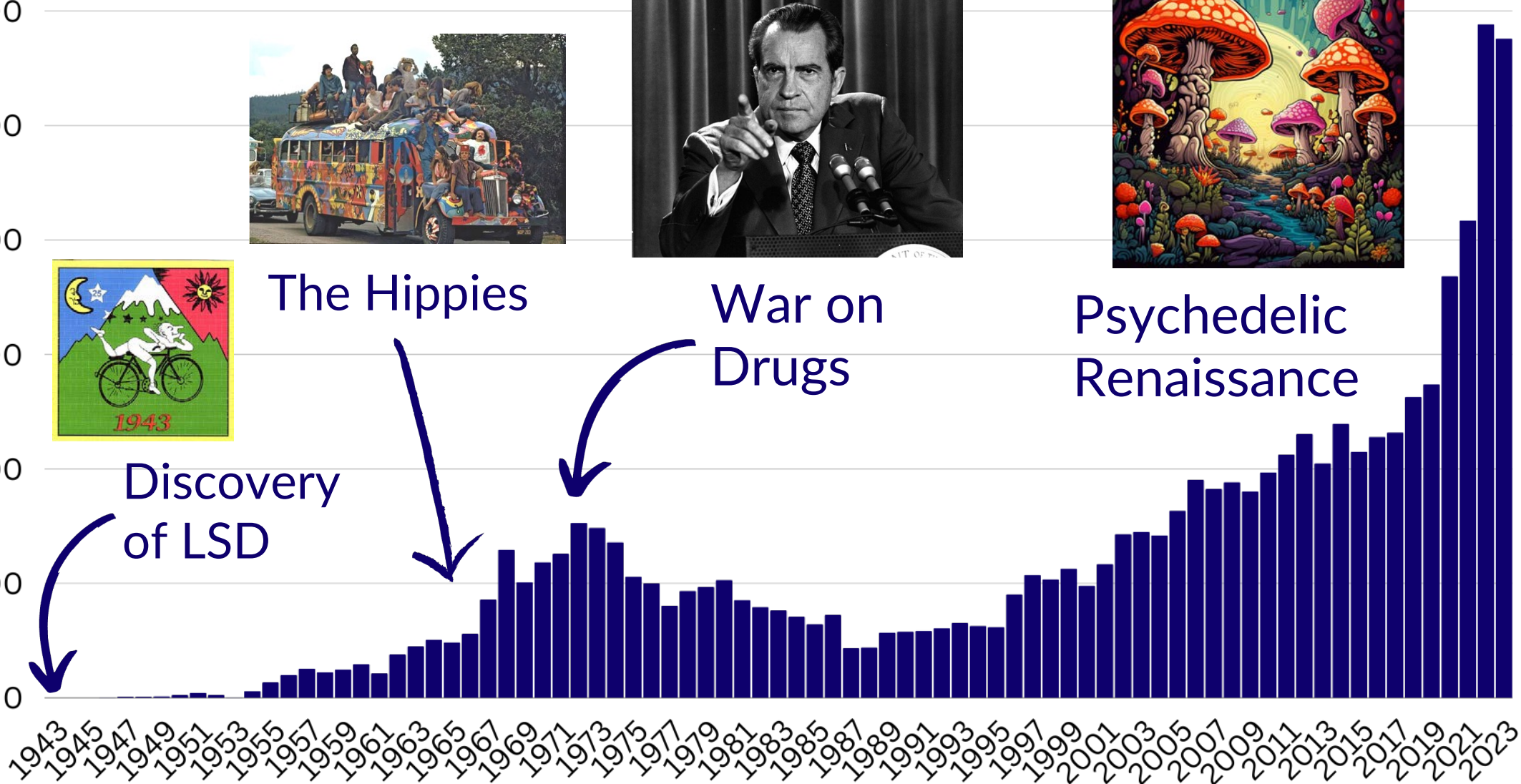
War on Drugs

Psychedelic Renaissance

Discovery of LSD

1943 1945 1947 1949 1951 1953 1955 1957 1959 1961 1963 1965 1967 1969 1971 1973 1975 1977 1979 1981 1983 1985 1987 1989 1991 1993 1995 1997 1999 2001 2003 2005 2007 2009 2011 2013 2015 2017 2019 2021 2023

Published studies including search term "psychedelic" on PubMed





PSYCHEDELIC RENAISSANCE

Rewriting the psychedelic story...

PSYCHEDELICS IN THE NEWS: TODAY

*The Psychedelic Revolution
Is Coming. Psychiatry
May Never Be the Same.*

PSYCHEDELICS IN THE NEWS: TODAY

*The Psychedelic Revolution
Is Coming. Psychiatry
May Never Be the Same.*

Psychedelic Breakthrough:
MDMA Revolutionizes PTSD
Treatment

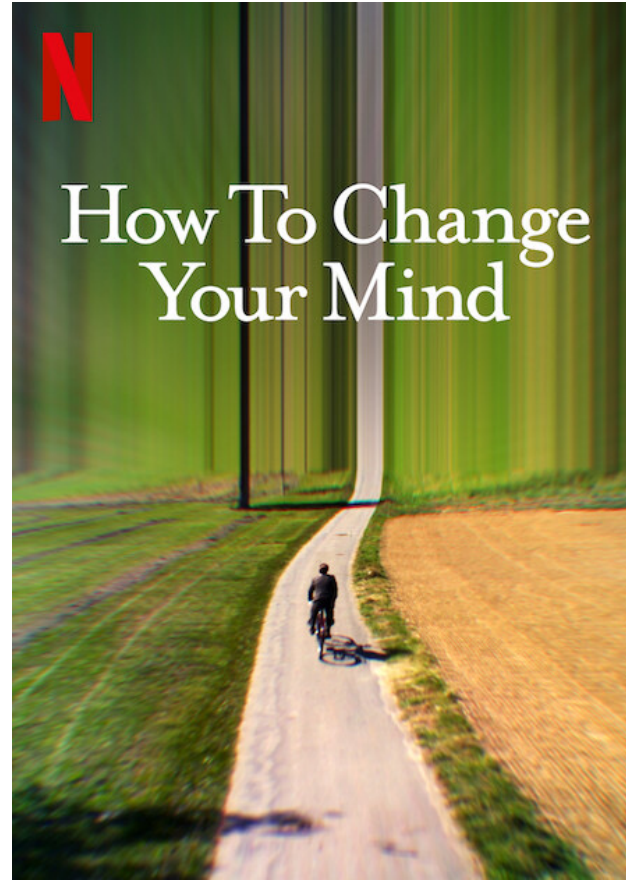
**Microdosing LSD increases the complexity
of your brain signals**

**How cannabis and psilocybin might help
some of the 50 million Americans who are
experiencing chronic pain**

Published: May 10, 2024 2.28pm CEST

Sources
New York Times
Newsweek
Neuroscience News
The Conversation

PSYCHEDELICS IN THE NEWS: TODAY



VIEWS OF PSYCHEDELICS TODAY

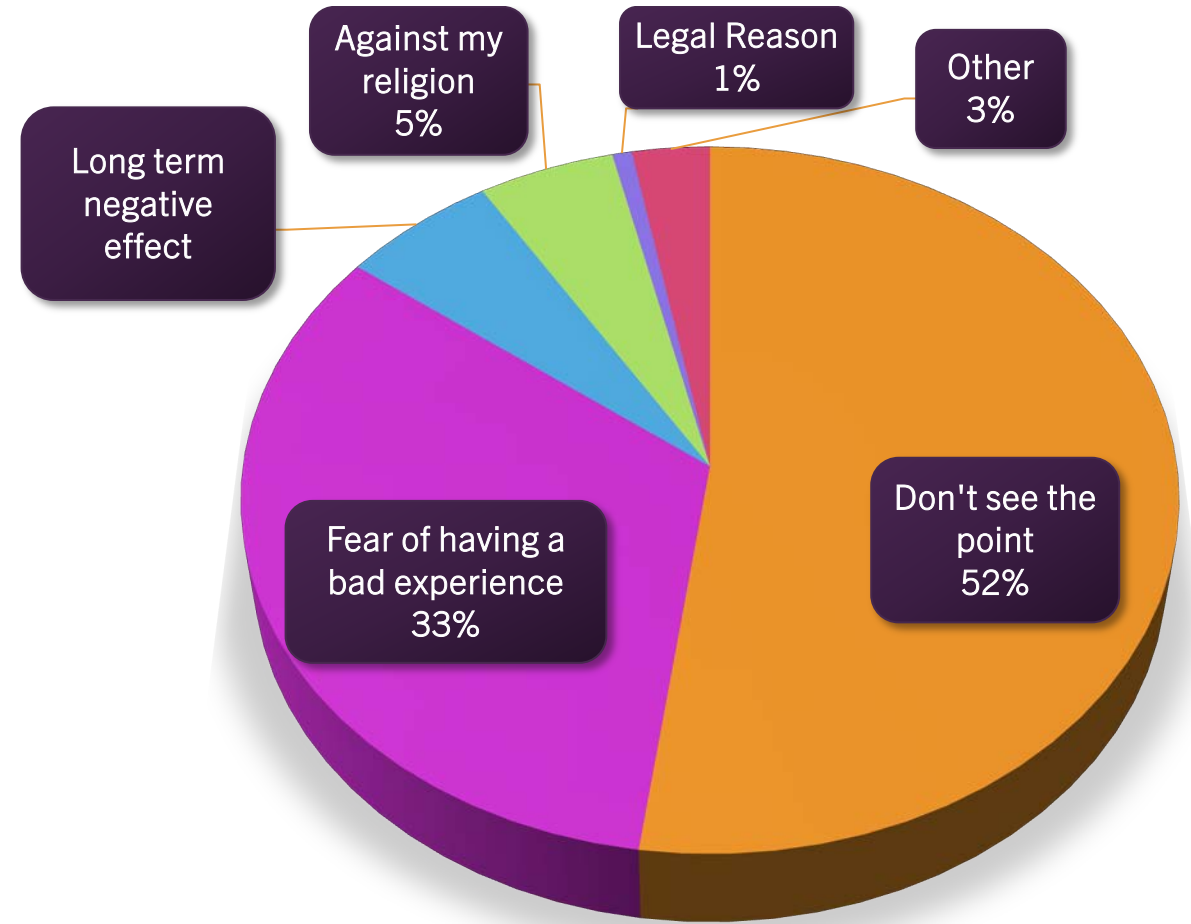
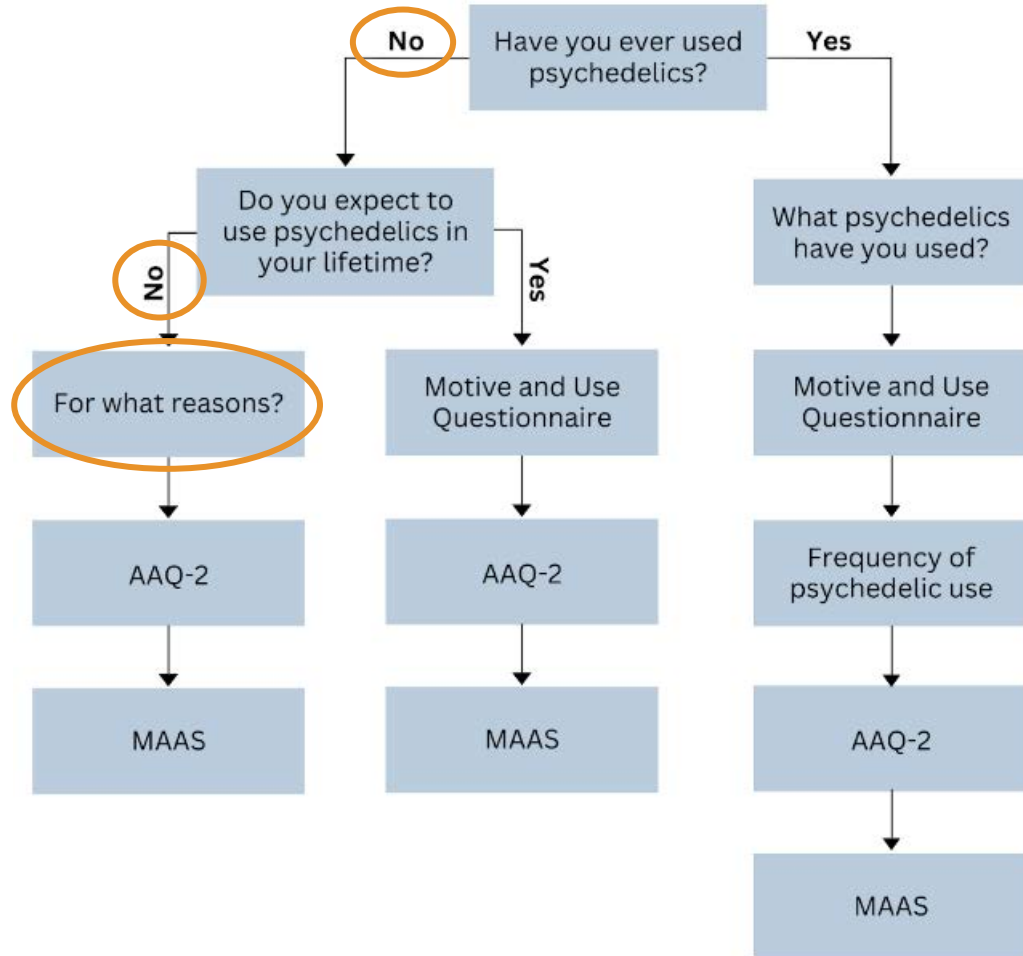
- **Psychiatrists' views** (survey with over 300 psychiatrists)
 - Psychedelics perceived as **potentially hazardous** and **appropriately illegal**
 - Younger psychiatrists **more optimistic** about therapeutic potential
- **Patients' views** (study with 99 patients)
 - 59% of patients supporting psilocybin as medical treatment
 - ~20% viewed psychedelics as **addictive** and **unsafe** even under medical supervision
 - Younger patients and previous psychedelic experiences -> more positive attitudes
 - **Main concerns: fear of adverse effects, lack of knowledge**

Sources

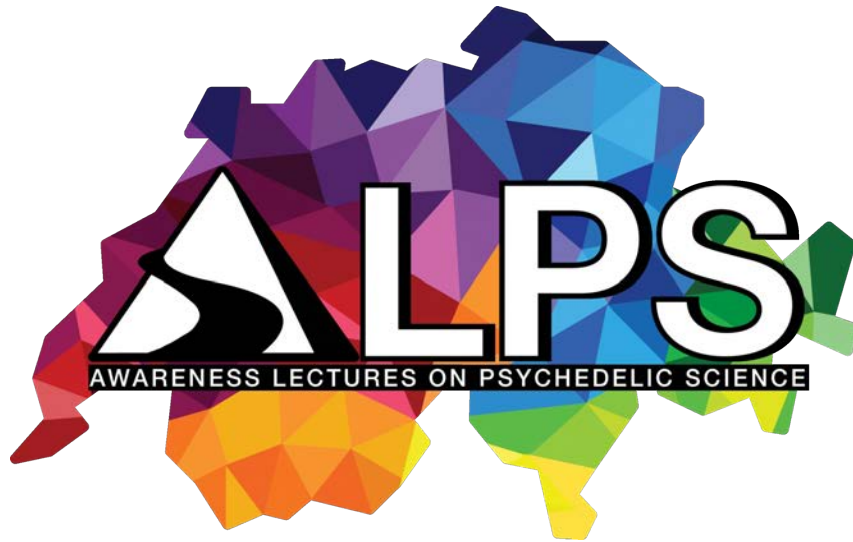
Barnett et al. (2018)

Corrigan et al. (2022)

VIEWS OF PSYCHEDELICS TODAY



REWRITING THE PSYCHEDELIC STORY





**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!**

Questions?

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