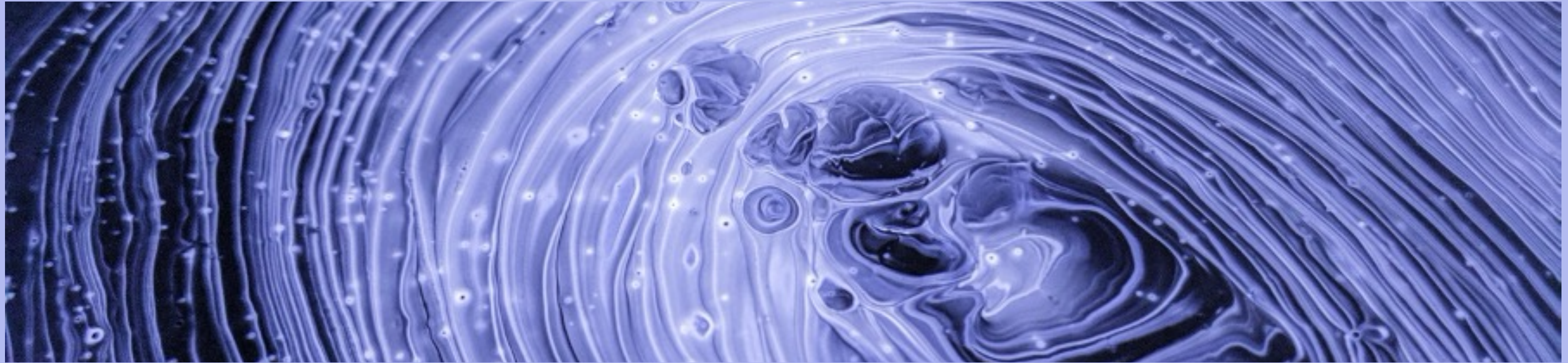


# PSYCHEDELICS



## An emerging technology with a conflicted identity

Michaela Barber, A/Prof Adrian Carter and Dr John Gardner  
(Monash University)

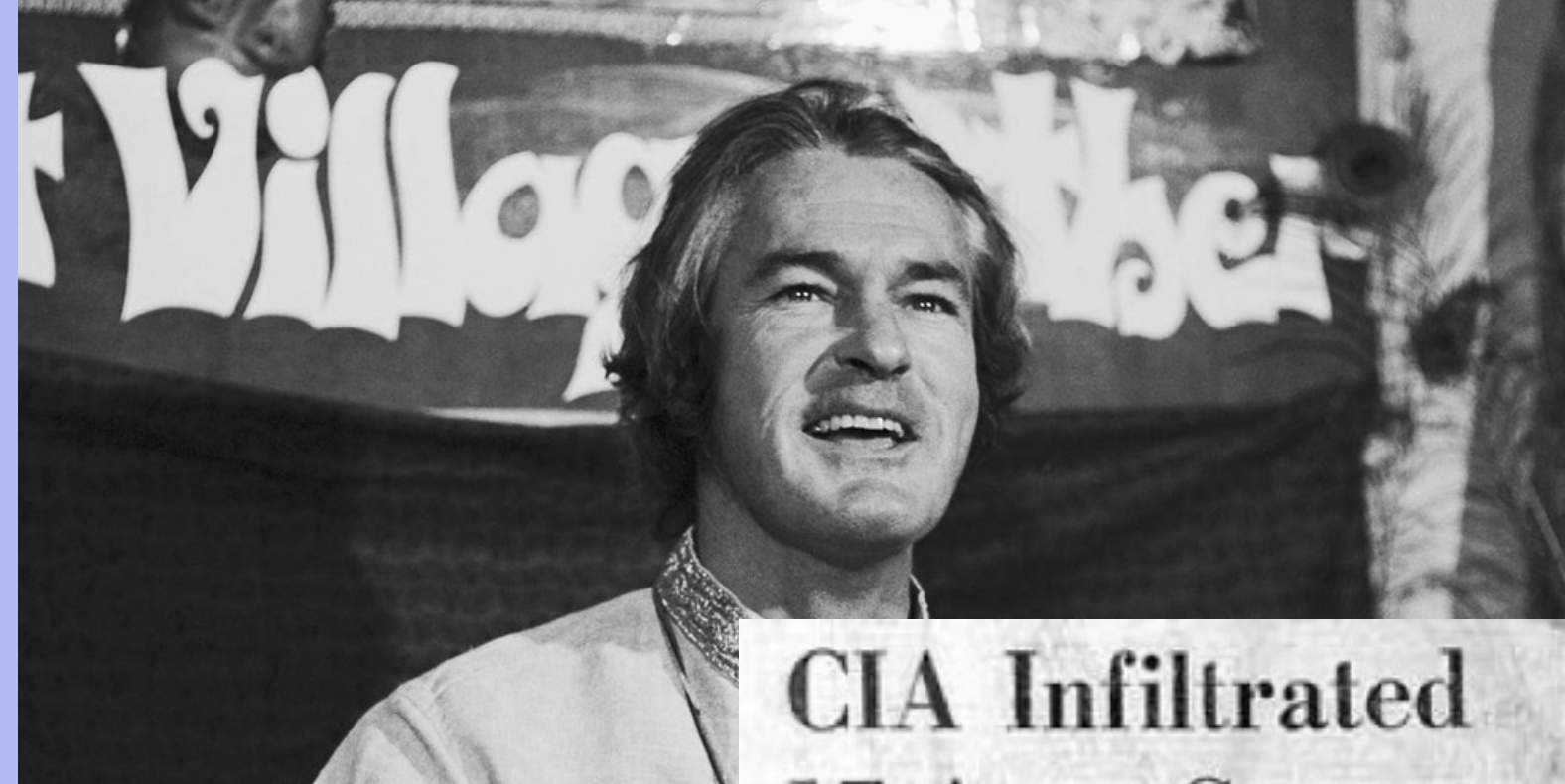
Approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. Disclosures: None



# PSYCHEDELICS

Stigma, over-enthusiasm,  
methodological challenges,  
uncertain therapeutic  
mechanisms.

How are psychedelics  
understood and what is  
expected of them?



## CIA Infiltrated 17 Area Groups, Gave Out LSD

Suicide Revealed

District the Focus

By Thomas O'Toole  
Washington Post Staff Writer  
A CIA employee of the Department  
of the Army reportedly took LSD as part

By Bill Richards  
Washington Post Staff Writer  
Agents working for the CIA were in-  
structed to infiltrate and monitor at least  
17 Washington area ethnic groups.







# TECHNOLOGY IDENTITIES

Gardner et al., 2017; Ulucanlar et al., 2013



What qualities are being attributed to psychedelics?

Relationship to understandings of mental health and the imagined future of research and clinical practice.



- 14 Australian researchers
- In-depth interviews
- Thematic analysis

# Psychedelics as

Transformative  
agents of  
change



## Invoked

Relational, cultural, spiritual, and philosophical understandings of mental health and wellbeing.

## Challenged

The direct relationship between drug effects and behaviour.



Innovative  
neuro-  
technologies

## Invoked

Structural brain changes, manipulation of consciousness, and behaviour modification.

## Challenged

Knowledge and perspectives on psychedelics from outside of western science and medicine.

# Implications

- Reflective of the varied ontological heritages of psychedelics (e.g., biomedicine, transpersonal psychology)
- Conflicting world-views can co-exist (with some tension)
- Each technology identity foregrounds a different innovation pathway:

Transformative  
agents of change



Innovate the frameworks to fit  
the technology



Innovative neuro-  
technologies

Innovate the technology to fit  
the frameworks