

The Messenger and the Message — Terence McKenna Transdisciplinary. Full Treatment, Validity Audit, Reinterpretation

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Finding Z5: every stage of this path removes modality, and none adds any. What circulates at the end is McKenna in a form in which he never spoke: apodictic. The reception did not falsify the author by attributing sentences he did not utter — it falsified him by omitting the qualifications he uttered alongside them. That is the methodological core of U5.

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Finding V.14: all three analogies generate usable questions and unusable answers. That is the cascade in miniature and the empirical basis for E3.

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Anyone wishing to adopt only one of the two halves should therefore adopt the favourable one — because it is the less well supported and carries the audit task with it.

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The Messenger and the Message

Terence McKenna Transdisciplinary — Full Treatment, Validity Audit, Reinterpretation

Abstract

Terence McKenna (1946–2000) left a body of work that cannot be saved as a theoretical corpus and has aged well as a research agenda. This work separates the two. It audits twenty central claims against the state of knowledge in 2026, sorts them into a four-zone validity scheme, and finds that the hit rate on *answers* is low while the hit rate on *questions* is high. From this follows the principal contribution E3 — McKenna is to be treated historically as a

hypothesis generator, not as a theorist, and the case establishes a category of its own: the productive false, with three admission conditions that prevent the category from becoming a licence.

The second contribution E2 anchors the case in the master theorem FORSCH-0083. Examining the disposition over psilocybin practice yields a four-phase arc with a datable beginning. In **Phase 0** (until 1955), disposition and risk are coupled in Mazatec healing practice: whoever disposes over the practice also bears its consequences. The decoupling is not a natural state but an event — R. Gordon Wasson’s publication in *Life* of 13 May 1957 and its consequences for María Sabina, who bore the costs of a disposition she no longer held. Thereafter disposition moves twice more — diffusion from 1976, re-concentration from around 2000 — without risk following either movement. Thesis E2: **disposition can diffuse and re-concentrate without risk following either movement; risk is the inert term in both directions**. McKenna marks the turning point of the diffusion phase, not as its cause but as its most visible carrier — and as the carrier of an internal tension, because he distributed disposition while accumulating interpretive authority.

The work is a full work with eight planned sub-papers, anchored as a domain instance under FORSCH-0083. It delimits itself explicitly from the substance work `forsch-0361`: there the substance, here the person, the work and the history of science.

Part I — Task, Delimitation, Method

I.1 Task

Complete transdisciplinary treatment of Terence McKenna’s work and effect: all writings, lectures, positions and reception strands; audit against the state of research; reinterpretation; linkage into the existing body of work.

The task contains a difficulty that must be named before any substantive work. “Complete treatment” presupposes a delimited object. McKenna’s work is not delimited: it consists predominantly of lectures circulating in varying, mostly unedited versions, and its effect consists to a considerable extent of material cut from those lectures after his death and reassembled. Completeness here is therefore not achievable as coverage of all utterances, only as coverage of all *types of claim* and all *paths of effect*. That is precisely the cut of this work.

I.2 Delimitation against existing works

Work	Object	Delimitation from this work
<code>forsch-0361</code> (psilocybin reference book)	Substance: pharmacology, clinic, botany	There the substance, here the person, the work, the history of science. No duplicated content; U3 and U6 refer to 0361 rather than repeat it.
<code>struktur-des-undergrunds</code> (orig. 0272)	Free tekno, underground rave, psychedelics as a research field	There the scene and the enclosure cycle, here the individual figure. U5 is the seam (McKenna’s rave reception).
<code>huxley-vollwerk</code> (PROV0415)	Aldous Huxley, psychedelic strand included	Parallel author study, different generation and reception situation. Comparability is an open point (O10), not a duplication.
FORSCH-0083	ρ/δ master theorem	This work is a domain instance, not a competing frame.
FORSCH-0199 (consecration asymmetry)	Valorisation from below	Connection in U5: McKenna’s posthumous consecration through podcast culture.
<code>alpine-ethnopharmakologie</code>	Regional ethnopharmacology with a psychoactive strand	Methodologically related (handling of transmitted knowledge), geographically and materially separate.

I.3 Protective logic (HART)

The *Magic Mushroom Grower’s Guide* (1976) is here an **object of analysis, never a source of procedure**. No cultivation, dosing or preparation information is reproduced, reported or reconstructed — not in paraphrase, not in historicising form. What is analysed is solely the *fact* of publication, its timing, its mode of distribution and its effect on the disposition situation.

Clinical dose figures appear only as trial parameters within the context of published protocols — as a description of what a licensing study examined, not as instruction. The same separation applies to the entity literature: what is described is what surveys have established about the frequency and structure of experiences, not how such experiences might be brought about.

The protective logic has a consequence for the architecture: U4, the sub-paper on the Grower’s Guide, is the only one

working exclusively through effect and reception without opening its object. This is a restriction the paper can carry, because its question — what happens when production knowledge becomes free — does not require the content of that knowledge.

I.4 Method

1. Primary corpus before secondary literature. With McKenna, lectures are a primary source with a status of their own: most of the work is oral and exists in varying versions. Every attribution names the carrier medium and the version problem.

2. Validity audit before interpretation. Every claim is classified for testability before it is assessed on content. The order is not arbitrary: whoever interprets first will find, for every claim, a reading under which it holds.

3. Evidence grades. [G] primary-sourced (DOI/PMID/archive reference), [S] secondary-sourced, [O] open — marked in running text. The marking is not a formality: for an object whose reception consists almost entirely of unsourced claims, the evidence grade is the single most important piece of information in any sentence.

4. Biological and evolutionary analogies are audited explicitly. They are central in McKenna and simultaneously the main source of his fallacies; Part V.14 treats them separately.

5. No rescue, no demolition. Both stances are over-represented in the literature, and neither explains the most interesting feature of the case: the asymmetry between the quality of the questions and the quality of the answers.

6. Priority is audited alongside. For every held claim, the question is asked whether McKenna was originator, transmitter or merely describer. The reception skips this question systematically, and it decides the work's place in the history of science.

I.5 Structure

Part II establishes the sources and the version problem. Part III gives the outline of the work's history along six epistemic caesuras. Part IV develops the four-zone validity scheme (E1) and applies it to twenty core claims. Part V runs the disciplinary cascade across fourteen axes. Part VI develops the p/δ anchoring (E2) in a four-phase model. Part VII grounds the hypothesis-generator thesis (E3) and the category of the productive false. Part VIII rejects what must be rejected. Parts IX to XI give the architecture, the open points and the node structure. Parts XII to XIV supply chronology, glossary and sources.

Part II — Sources

II.1 Primary corpus (writings)

Year	Work	Status in the corpus
1975	<i>The Invisible Landscape</i> (with Dennis McKenna)	Theoretical core: genesis of the Timewave, La Chorrera. Central to U1. [G]
1976	<i>Psilocybin: Magic Mushroom Grower's Guide</i> (as O. T. Oss / O. N. Oeric, with Dennis McKenna)	A disposition event, not a theory. Central to U4. Contents not reported. [G]
1991	<i>The Archaic Revival</i>	Culture-diagnostic essays. Central to U5. [G]
1992	<i>Food of the Gods</i>	Principal source of the evolutionary claims ("Stoned Ape"). Central to U2. [G]
1992	<i>Dialogues at the Edge of the West</i> (with R. Sheldrake, R. Abraham)	Dialogue form; borderline between primary and secondary source. [G]
1993	<i>True Hallucinations</i>	Narrative version of La Chorrera; origin of the phrase "machine elves". [G]
1998	<i>The Evolutionary Mind</i> (with Sheldrake, Abraham)	Late version of the novelty position. [G]

The list is short, and that is a finding. An author whose effect spans three decades left seven books, three of them in dialogue form and two co-authored with his brother. The ratio between written work and effect is unusually wide in McKenna's case — and it explains how the reception could travel so far from the testable texts.

II.2 Primary corpus (oral)

The larger part of the work consists of lectures, workshops and radio interviews, 1982–1999. Three properties of this material are methodologically decisive.

First, there is **no authorised complete edition**. What circulates are recordings of varying provenance and quality, some made by organisers, some by listeners, predominantly unedited and frequently without reliable date or place.

Second, the **modality** of the same statement varies considerably between versions. An argument that appears in one version as “one might imagine” stands in another as an assertion. For the validity audit this is grave: assigning a claim to Zone 3 (refuted) or Zone 4 (undecidable) hangs on exactly this modality. Citing a speculation as an assertion produces a refutation that does not exist; citing an assertion as a speculation withdraws it from testing.

Third, the material is **cuttable**, and it has been cut. Posthumous circulation consists predominantly of excerpts of two to six minutes in which the introductory qualifications McKenna regularly set in the full versions are absent.

From this follows a hard methodological requirement for all sub-papers: any citation from oral sources is worthless without a version reference. Where a version reference cannot be obtained, the statement is not cited but recorded as a reception finding — that is, as a statement about what circulates, not about what McKenna held.

II.3 Archive

Dennis and Terence McKenna papers, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections (1943–2016, approx. 2.5 cubic feet): unpublished manuscripts, field reports, journals of personal reflection, term papers, correspondence, photographs and article reprints. By the collection description, the materials document both brothers’ scientific and technical training as well as their philosophical beliefs about time, reality and existence. [G]

This is the only reliable access to non-oral, unpublished holdings and therefore the precondition for addressing the version problem in II.2 at all. Correspondence and dated manuscripts permit what recordings do not: a chronology of positional development with verifiable intermediate states.

Open point O1: review status, access conditions and degree of digitisation are unverified. Without that clarification the version caveat in VIII.2 stands for the whole work.

II.4 Secondary literature — reliable core

Source	Type	Function here
Davis, Erik (2019): <i>High Weirdness. Drugs, Esoterica, and Visionary Experience in the Seventies</i> . MIT Press	Religious-studies monograph (doctorate, Rice University, Department of Religion)	To date the only book-length academic treatment of McKenna, alongside P. K. Dick and R. A. Wilson; supplies the religious-studies frame and the concept of the “weird” as a mode of cognition. [G]
McKenna, Dennis (2012, 10th anniv. ed. 2022): <i>The Brotherhood of the Screaming Abyss</i>	Memoir, participant source	The only second-order inside account of La Chorrera; explicitly qualified by its author as to the reliability of details. [G]
Watkins, Matthew (1996): <i>Autopsy for a Mathematical Hallucination?</i>	Mathematical critique, with an introduction by T. McKenna	Formal refutation of the Timewave construction procedure. Basis for U1. [G]
Marks, M. & Cohen, I. G. (2022): Patents on Psychedelics. <i>Harvard Law Review Forum</i>	Legal scholarship	Analysis of the patent situation; basis for Phase III in VI.2 and for U6. [G]
Magar, V., Robbins, M., López Fernández, Ó. M. et al. (2026): Indigenous Knowledge Systems & Psychedelic Science. <i>J Psychopharmacol</i> 40(1):179–188, doi:10.1177/02698811251387104	Position paper with Indigenous co-authorship	Basis for Phase 0 in VI.2 and for U7. [G]
Davis, A. K. et al. (2020), <i>J Psychopharmacol</i> 34(9):1008–1020, doi:10.1177/0269881120916143, PMID 32345112	Empirical survey, n=2,561	First large-scale survey of DMT entity encounter experiences. Test instance for B6/B7. [G]
Griffiths, R. R. et al. (2019), <i>PLoS ONE</i> 14: e0214377	Empirical survey	Comparison of “God encounter experiences” across substance classes. [G]
Compass Pathways: COMP005 (NCT05624268), COMP006 (NCT05711940)	Phase 3 registrations/results 2025–2026	Test instance for B9 and starting point of the p/6 re-concentration in E2. [G] with conflict-of-interest note, see Part XIV.

II.5 Excluded sources

Excluded under QUELLEN-SERIOSITÄT:

- **Podcast recordings without version provenance** as evidentiary sources. Admissible solely as reception evidence — that is, as evidence that something circulates, never that McKenna held it.
- **Forum and social media material**. Serves only as a private research trigger; never cited.
- **The body of published claims alleging intelligence-service entanglement on McKenna’s part**. Treated

separately in Part VIII and rejected with reasons — not ignored, because in this reception field silence is read as confirmation.

- **Third-party experience reports** as evidence for existence claims. They are data about experiences, not about the objects of experiences. That distinction is carried out in B6 and applies throughout.

II.6 State of research

The state of research on McKenna is thin and unevenly distributed. There is exactly one academic monograph that treats him seriously (Davis 2019), and there he is one of three cases. There is a mathematical critique of one aspect (Watkins 1996). There are student qualification theses on the Stoned Ape complex of varying reliability. And there is a large, predominantly non-academic publicistic literature divided between defence and settling of accounts.

What is missing: a history-of-science study of the reception path, an editorial-philological treatment of the oral corpus, a systematic audit of the individual claims against the respective state of each field — and a treatment of the question what place a work of this kind can occupy in the history of science at all. This work addresses the last three gaps; the first is referred to U8 as O2.

Part III — Outline of the work's history

Six caesuras structure the case. They are ordered not biographically but by epistemic function — by what they mean for the question of validity.

Z0 — Wasson, *Life*, 13 May 1957: the prehistory McKenna inherits

Before McKenna stands an event that makes his position possible in the first place and that the McKenna reception usually mentions as a mere prelude. R. Gordon Wasson, banker and amateur mycologist, published in *Life* of 13 May 1957 the article “Seeking the Magic Mushroom” on his participation in a Mazatec healing ceremony in Huautla de Jiménez. [G]

The healer who admitted him was María Sabina. Wasson initially used a pseudonym in the article but later disclosed her identity and location in his own publications. [S] From 1962 onward, visitors from the United States travelled to Huautla in large numbers. The documented consequences for María Sabina: suspicion of drug dealing by the authorities, brief imprisonment, ostracism by her own community, the burning of her house, the murder of a son. She died in poverty in 1985. Wasson himself expressed misgivings in the 1970s about the publicity he had generated. [S]

Epistemic function: none — Z0 supplies no theory. **Disposition-theoretical function:** the greatest in the case. Z0 is the datable moment at which disposition and risk are separated. Before 1957 the community holds both: it disposes over the practice and bears its consequences. After 1957 disposition — knowledge, access, interpretation, later substance and nomenclature — migrates globally, while risk remains with a person and a place that no longer command the migrated disposition. **María Sabina bore the costs of a disposition she no longer held.** That is the p/δ asymmetry in its formation, and everything later is continuation.

For the McKenna question this yields a placement the work does not make for itself: McKenna does not stand at the beginning of a movement but in its second generation. He inherits an already decoupled situation and reinforces the decoupling rather than noticing it.

Z1 — La Chorrera, March 1971: the origin in a non-replicable event

In the spring of 1971, Terence and Dennis McKenna travelled with a small group into the Colombian Amazon, to the region of La Chorrera, ancestral territory of the Witoto. The stated goal was *oo-koo-hé*, a DMT-containing preparation. The group called itself “The Brotherhood of the Screaming Abyss”. On 4 March 1971 the brothers carried out what they later called “the experiment at La Chorrera”. [G]

Every core idea that carries the work emerges from this event: the Timewave, novelty theory, the notion of communication with a non-human intelligence, the idea of a connection between fungus and human genetic material. Both brothers described the event at length — Terence in 1975 with Dennis in *The Invisible Landscape*, then narratively in 1993 in *True Hallucinations*; Dennis in 2012 in *The Brotherhood of the Screaming Abyss*. [G]

Dennis McKenna's account is the more important one for the validity question, because it explicitly limits its own reliability: he considers his brother's account broadly accurate but cannot vouch for every detail, because for much of the events he was either “lost in hyperspace” or overwhelmed by psychosis — depending on interpretation. [G] The formulation is precise and rare: a participant names the interpretive alternative instead of choosing one.

Epistemic function: the entire theoretical edifice originates in a single, non-replicable experience of two

people. It does not follow that the claims derived from it are false — context of discovery and context of justification are to be separated. It does follow that the claims cannot draw their justification from the event. Whoever wishes to test the Timewave tests the formal construction (U1), not the experience. And whoever wishes to test the experience finds nothing that could be tested.

Z2 — The Grower’s Guide, 1976: effect without theory

In 1976 a manual appeared under the pseudonyms O. T. Oss and O. N. Oeric making production knowledge broadly available. The authors were the McKenna brothers. [G]

Epistemic function: none. The book contains no thesis to be tested. **Disposition function:** maximal. It is the second threshold moment of the case after Z0 and the first McKenna brings about himself. Treated in Part VI.2 and U4.

Two observations for placement. First, publication was under pseudonym, which reduced the authors’ legal exposure while changing nothing about the exposure of users — an asymmetry never thematised in the work. Second, the practice was never turned into a thesis: McKenna never systematically formulated the obvious claim that free production knowledge withdraws a substance from state control (B18). It is contained in his conduct and not in his texts.

Z3 — The lecture years, 1982-1999: the change of carrier medium

From the early 1980s, McKenna’s production shifts from writing to speech. He speaks at conferences, in workshops, on radio; the books of the 1990s partly emerge from this spoken material or take dialogue form.

Epistemic function: ambivalent, and the ambivalence explains much of the finding in Part IV. Speech permits movements of thought that writing does not: association, open speculation, playing out a possibility without commitment. A considerable part of what is productive in McKenna — the questions in Part VII.1 — arose in this form.

The same form withdraws those movements from testability. A speaker marks modality by tone, context and expression; a transcriber loses all three. The result is a corpus in which the boundary between assertion and thought experiment can no longer be reconstructed — not because McKenna failed to draw it, but because the medium does not store it.

Here lies the reason for the high Zone-4 share in Part IV: a fifth of the audited claims is undecidable not because McKenna wished to evade testing, but because the carrier medium does not contain the information a test would require. That does not exonerate him — the choice of medium was his — but it shifts the diagnosis from intent to form.

Z4 — The Watkins confrontation, 1996: the only documented self-correction

In 1996 McKenna met the British mathematician Matthew Watkins at Palenque. Watkins had formally reconstructed the Timewave’s construction and concluded that the procedure contains an unjustified step at one point — a “half twist” for whose existence neither McKenna nor anyone else could give a reason. Without that justification, Watkins concluded, the Timewave cannot be what McKenna claims of it. [G]

The course of the exchange matters for assessing the person. By Watkins’s account, McKenna had grasped the problem by the end of their discussions and conceded that the theory appeared to have no basis in rational thought. He stated that he was interested only in the truth, and that a refutation was as much a relief to him as a confirmation. He proposed a joint piece under the title “Autopsy for a Mathematical Hallucination”. Watkins recorded that McKenna told him he was the first to approach him with a serious mathematical critique. [G]

McKenna subsequently published the text on his own website, with his own introduction describing Watkins’s critique as the strongest and most interesting made to that point. [G]

Watkins likewise recorded, however, that McKenna did not really let the theory go afterwards. [S]

Epistemic function: the only documented self-correction in the work — and it was largely not taken up in the reception. Two findings are to be separated here. The first concerns McKenna: he published a refutation of his central formal construct himself. That is scientifically correct conduct, and it appears almost nowhere in the reception. The second concerns the reception: the circulating material comes almost entirely from Z3 and not from Z4. **The discrepancy between documented concession and continued reception is itself a finding** and one reason this work treats the reception as an object of its own (U5) rather than as an appendix.

On 21 December 2012 the Timewave’s zero point passed without a discernible historical caesura. For the validity question this is secondary: the construction had been formally settled sixteen years earlier. For the reception question it is central, because the date — not the mathematics — determined public perception of the theory.

Z5 — Death in 2000 and posthumous second career from around 2010

McKenna died in April 2000 of a glioblastoma. His effect grew afterwards, carried by media forms that did not exist in his lifetime: podcast archives, sampling in electronic music, video platforms, later short-video formats.

Epistemic function: the posthumous reception is decoupled from the self-correction Z4. It is likewise decoupled from the modality of Z3, because each media stage removes context. The path runs from the lecture (60–90 minutes, with qualifications) via the podcast excerpt (10–20 minutes, qualifications partly) and the sample (30–90 seconds, no qualifications) to the short video (under 60 seconds, no qualifications, frequently without attribution).

Finding Z5: every stage of this path removes modality, and none adds any. What circulates at the end is McKenna in a form in which he never spoke: apodictic. The reception did not falsify the author by attributing sentences he did not utter — it falsified him by omitting the qualifications he uttered alongside them. That is the methodological core of U5.

Part IV — The four-zone validity scheme (E1)

IV.1 Why a separate scheme is required

The existing literature works with a two-valued logic — “confirmed” or “refuted” — that does not fit McKenna’s corpus. A substantial share of the claims is formulated such that neither value can be assigned: no procedure can be stated whose outcome would decide the claim.

The obvious response to this finding is, in the literature, the wrong one in both directions. The defending side treats untestability as protection: what cannot be refuted remains “within the realm of the possible”. The prosecuting side treats untestability as refutation: what is not testable is thereby settled. Both are wrong. **Undecidability is a defect of the formulation, neither a shield against testing nor a substitute for it.**

The scheme keeps the four possible situations apart and assigns each a consequence. It is not a rating scale — Zone 1 is not “better” than Zone 4 — but an order of jurisdiction: it states which discipline is responsible for which claim, and what is to be done with it.

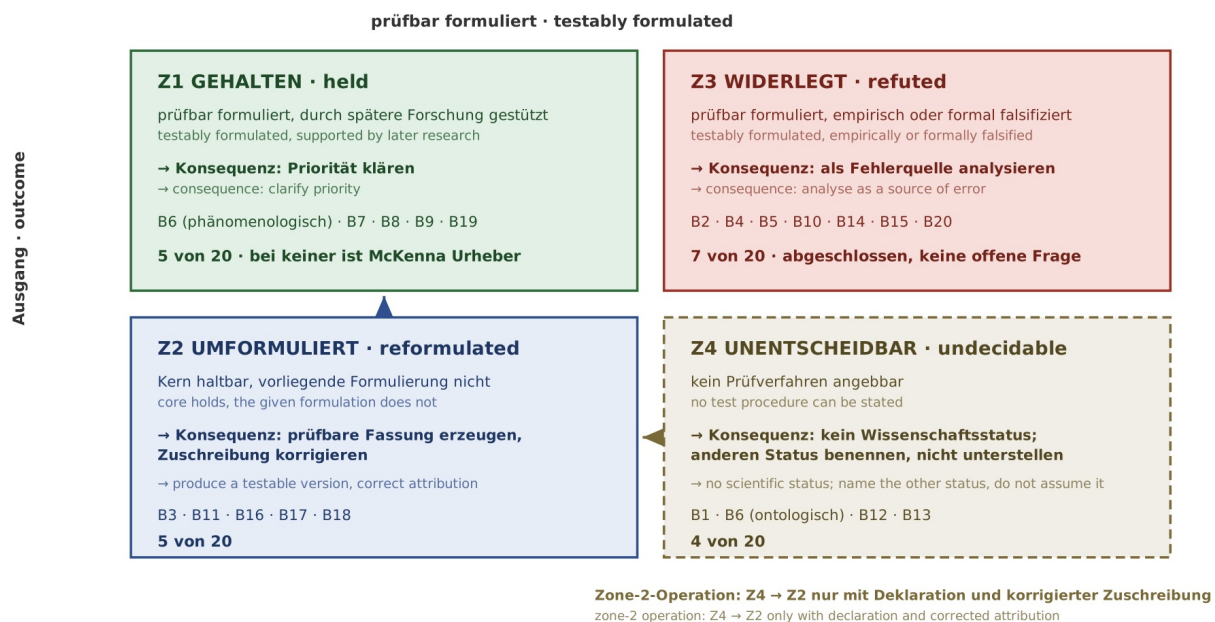
Zone	Definition	Consequence
Z1 HELD	Claim is testably formulated and was supported by later research	Connectable; clarify priority (originator, transmitter or describer?)
Z2 REFORMULATED	The core holds, the given formulation does not	Reconstruction task: produce a testable version, keep attribution honest
Z3 REFUTED	Testably formulated and falsified — empirically or formally	Closed; analyse as a source of error, do not continue as an open question
Z4 UNDECIDABLE	Not formulated such that a test procedure could be stated	No scientific status. Possible literary, heuristic or religious status — which must be named, not assumed

Two rules of application. **First:** a claim may be Zone 3 in one reading and Zone 4 in another. In that case it is carried twice (as with B1 and B6), not resolved into the more favourable reading. **Second:** the transition from Zone 4 to Zone 2 is the most productive operation of the scheme and simultaneously the most dangerous. It consists in turning an untestable formulation into a testable one. It is admissible only if the reformulation is declared as such and the attribution corrected: the testable version is no longer McKenna’s claim but one derived from it.

Abb. 2 — Das Vier-Zonen-Geltungsschema (E1)

Fig. 2 — The four-zone validity scheme (E1)

Zwei Achsen entscheiden, nicht eine: erst Prüfbarkeit, dann Ausgang der Prüfung.
Two axes decide, not one: testability first, then the outcome of the test.



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Fig. 2 — The four-zone validity scheme (E1) with the assignment of all twenty core claims.

IV.2 Validity table — twenty core claims

The selection follows the criterion “actually effective in the reception”, not “held central by McKenna”. Reason: the object of this work is work *and* effect; a selection by the author’s self-assessment would miss the second half.

#	Claim	Principal locus	Zone	Finding
B1	Psilocybin catalysed hominid cognition (“Stoned Ape”)	<i>Food of the Gods</i> 1992	Z4→Z3	In the given version no test procedure can be stated; in partial versions made testable, no palaeoanthropological evidence. The inheritance argument carries a Lamarckian residue. Audit in U2.
B2	Low-dose psilocybin sharpens vision and thereby hunting success	<i>Food of the Gods</i> 1992, citing Fischer et al. (1970)	Z3	The cited research programme measures no visual acuity. Hill & Fischer (1971) report that ergotropic arousal-inducing drugs including psilocybin lower spatial distortion thresholds and interfere with counter-adaptation to optical distortion — the direction runs against the claim. [G] The extrapolation from laboratory finding to hunting success under field conditions is additionally unsupported. Check report U9 §3.
B3	Psilocybin raises activity in language-forming areas and drove language emergence	<i>Food of the Gods</i>	Z2	The localisation claim does not hold in this form. Reformulable core: psychedelics measurably alter semantic network activation. The evolutionary conclusion does not follow.

B4	Time has a fractal novelty structure; zero point 21 Dec 2012	<i>The Invisible Landscape</i> 1975 / TWZ software	Z3	Watkins 1996: the construction contains an unjustified “half twist”; without justification the curve is not what McKenna claims of it. Date passed. McKenna published the objection himself. [G]
B5	The King Wen sequence of the I Ching encodes a structure of time	<i>The Invisible Landscape</i>	Z3	Refuted jointly with B4: the derivation from the sequence is not compelling but chosen.
B6	DMT entities (“machine elves”) exist autonomously	<i>True Hallucinations</i> , lectures	Z4 (ontological) / Z1 (phenomenological)	The existence claim is undecidable. The phenomenological claim — consistent, interpersonally similar, non-arbitrary experiences — is confirmed: Davis et al. 2020, n=2,561. [G] The cleanest separation in the corpus and the model for handling zone 4 generally.
B7	The experience durably alters fundamental ontological convictions	Lectures	Z1	Confirmed: Davis et al. 2020 documents a marked shift in self-identification as atheist before/after; Griffiths et al. 2019 adds a cross-substance comparison. [G] Priority: McKenna described, he did not demonstrate.
B8	Set and setting determine the effect	Lectures, throughout	Z1	Established — but not McKenna’s contribution . Taken over from the Leary/Zinberg strand. A standard error of the reception.
B9	Psilocybin has therapeutic potential in depression	Implicit, lectures	Z1	Confirmed at phase 3 level: COMP005 (n=258 dosed) and COMP006 (25 mg n=296 / 10 mg n=142 / 1 mg n=143) both met the primary endpoint on MADRS; COMP006 showed –3.8 points for 25 mg versus 1 mg (p<0.001), effect through at least 26 weeks. [G] Priority: McKenna did not show this, he asserted it.
B10	Endogenous DMT explains dreaming, near-death experience and mysticism	With Strassman, lectures	Z3/Z4	The pharmacological premise is doubtful: it is not established that endogenous DMT occurs at concentrations sufficient to produce effects. [S]
B11	Modernity is returning to archaic forms of consciousness (“Archaic Revival”)	<i>The Archaic Revival</i> 1991	Z2	Partly confirmed as a diagnosis of the period — rave, neoshamanism, the psychedelic renaissance. Useless as theory: no criterion could make the diagnosis fail. Reconstruction in U5.
B12	Culture is an operating system and hackable through language	Lectures	Z4	Metaphor without test procedure. Heuristically productive, theoretically empty. The case shows how a good metaphor acquires theoretical status by stealth.
B13	Language becomes synaesthetically visible under DMT	<i>True Hallucinations</i>	Z4	Experience report. Legitimate as such; not testable as a claim about language.
B14	Self-identity is a process of	<i>End of the Gods</i> , meditations	Z3	Not confirmed. Found

B14	psilocybin mushrooms are of panspermic origin	<i>Food of the Gods</i> , marked speculative	Z3	no evidence; fungal evolution is documented as terrestrial. McKenna marked the claim as speculation himself — the reception removed the marking.
B15	Loss of the mushroom cult produced patriarchy and dominance culture	<i>Food of the Gods</i>	Z3	Rests on an anthropological state of research (the Gimbutas/Eisler strand) that is no longer carried. Additional counter-examples: societies with ritualised psychedelic use and pronounced practices of violence. [S]
B16	Psychedelics dissolve loyalty to cultural models and are therefore politically subversive	Lectures	Z2	Partly operationalisable: associations between use and nature relatedness or value orientations are described; the causal direction is open (self-selection not excluded). [O]
B17	Institutionalisation and commercialisation would neutralise psychedelics	Lectures	Z2	Prognostically the most robust point in the work. Partly realised: proprietary formulations, protocol IP, clinical gatekeeping. No evidence of “neutralisation”, but clear evidence of a shift in disposition — the connection point for E2.
B18	Widespread cultivation knowledge withdraws the substance from state control	Practice 1976, never formulated as a thesis	Z2	Partly realised empirically, with an unnoticed side effect: disposition diffused, risk did not. Core finding E2.
B19	No gurus, no authorities, “find the others”	Lectures, throughout	Z1 (as a position)	The position is consistently documented. Its effect contradicts it: McKenna became an authority, against his own programme. This tension is analysable, not resolvable.
B20	Novelty increases monotonically over the course of history	TWZ, lectures	Z3	Refuted with B4/B5; in addition, the historical calibration rests on retrospective pattern assignment to selected dates.

IV.3 Distribution

Zone	Count	Share	Claims
Z1 held	5	25 %	B6 (phenomenological), B7, B8, B9, B19
Z2 reformulated	5	25 %	B3, B11, B16, B17, B18
Z3 refuted	7	35 %	B2, B4, B5, B10, B14, B15, B20
Z4 undecidable	4	20 %	B1, B6 (ontological), B12, B13

IV.4 What the table shows and what it does not deliver

The principal finding lies not in the distribution but in the priority column. Of the five Z1 positions, McKenna is the originator of **none**:

- **B6** (phenomenological): he described and named the experience. Establishing its consistency is an achievement of the survey, not of the description.
- **B7**: described, not explained and not demonstrated.
- **B8**: taken over from an older strand.
- **B9**: asserted, not demonstrated — it was demonstrated in a study design he would have rejected.
- **B19**: a stance, not a finding.

That is the finding of the table, and it is more uncomfortable than any individual refutation. As a theorist McKenna

delivers nothing that survives. The question that follows, and that Part VII addresses, is: why then does a work continue to act whose every tenable position came from others?

Three limitations must be marked hard.

First, the selection of the twenty claims is a decision. A different cut would yield a different distribution; in particular the Zone-4 share could be raised arbitrarily by finer subdivision of the lecture material. The percentages in IV.3 are therefore to be read as structure, not as measurement.

Second, the zone assignment for oral sources depends on the version problem (II.2). A different version of the same statement can force a different zone. Affected: B7, B12, B13, B16, B19 — five of twenty.

Third, the table makes no statement about the quality of the underlying *questions*. It assesses answers. Precisely there lies its limit, and from that limit Part VII arises.

Part V — The disciplinary cascade

Fourteen axes. Each asks the same thing: what does this field say about McKenna's claims within its jurisdiction, and what follows for the overall finding?

V.1 Ethnobotany and mycology (D1)

McKenna's field knowledge is real. He collected, identified and described plants and fungi in situ; his brother became an ethnopharmacologist and worked scientifically on *ayahuasca* and related preparations for decades. The botanical and mycological particulars in the work are largely correct and occasionally precise.

The break does not lie in the botany. It lies at the point where botanical observation is translated into evolutionary causation — that is, at the transition from D1 to D2. That transition is nowhere methodologically secured in the work; it happens linguistically, by analogy (see V.14).

For the architecture it follows that U2 need not dispute the botanical basis in order to dispute the evolutionary conclusion. That is an advantage — the audit can concentrate on the inference rather than the premises.

V.2 Palaeoanthropology (D2)

Here B1, B2 and B15 fail.

McKenna's starting point is well chosen: the increase in brain volume in the genus *Homo* requires explanation and remains the subject of competing hypotheses. Competition exists among nutritional explanations (access to energy-dense food, cooking), social explanations (group size, social cognition) and technological explanations (tool manufacture, fine motor control). None is regarded as settled.

McKenna's explanation enters this competition but does not meet its minimum requirements. It is not connected to fossil, isotope or habitat evidence; it names no selection mechanism; and it is not more parsimonious than the competition but less, because it presupposes an additional substance with an additional distribution assumption.

To this are added counter-examples at the cultural level that tell against B15: societies with ritualised psychedelic use do not consistently display the properties McKenna claims — neither low violence nor egalitarian structure. [S] That does not refute B15 on its own, but it withdraws the support it had.

U2 therefore has three tasks: to make the thesis testable, to set it against the fossil record, and to show why the obvious repair (cultural rather than genetic transmission) is not a rescue but a change of category.

V.3 Neuroscience and pharmacology (D3)

Mechanisms are described far better today than McKenna could describe them. The result is a clear two-part finding: **none of his mechanistic statements survives; several of his phenomenological descriptions do.**

This is not accidental but structural. Mechanistic statements require instruments McKenna did not have and whose results he did not wish to await. Phenomenological descriptions require attention and language — he had both to an unusual degree. Where he describes, his work holds; where he explains, it does not.

B10 is the borderline case: the endogenous-DMT hypothesis is a mechanistic statement whose pharmacological premise is doubtful. It belongs in the refuted half, although in the reception it is among the liveliest claims.

V.4 Clinical psychiatry (D4)

The demonstration of therapeutic efficacy (B9) was achieved without McKenna, in a design he would have rejected: randomised, double-blind, with standardised supervision, fixed dose levels and an endpoint on a depression scale.

This is part of the case, not an incidental circumstance. McKenna's position was that the experience resists standardisation and that the attempt to standardise destroys it (that is the core of B17). The phase 3 programmes have shown that a standardised version of the experience produces a measurable clinical effect.

Both sentences can be true at once, and whether they are is open. What the clinical demonstration does not show is that the standardised version is the same thing as the non-standardised one. It shows that it works. **Whether McKenna's objection was refuted or merely bypassed is an open and workable question** — it stands as O11 in Part X.

V.5 Religious studies and the study of esotericism (D5)

The most productive access, and the only one with an academic monograph.

Davis (2019) treats McKenna together with Philip K. Dick and Robert Anton Wilson as a case of religious innovation under conditions of technologised modernity — not as a failed scientist. The approach is simultaneously religious-studies and literary: it examines published and unpublished writings together with the experiences described and develops from the material a concept of the “weird” as an independent mode of engaging reality. [G]

This recategorisation explains more than any validity audit. It explains why the refutation of the Timewave did not end the Timewave's effect: because the effect never depended on its validity. It also explains why McKenna's own self-correction (Z4) remained without consequence — a correction acts only within the frame in which the claim was raised, and the frame of reception was not the scientific one.

For this work a clarification of its own procedure follows: the validity audit in Part IV is necessary, but it does not answer the effect question. Part VII and U5 address the difference.

V.6 Philosophy of science (D6)

The case is a demarcation case in the classical sense — and it is more than that.

The standard instrumentarium of the demarcation debate applies: the Timewave is a degenerating programme that responds to refutation with auxiliary assumptions rather than surrender; novelty theory generates no independently testable novel predictions; the historical calibration is retrospective pattern assignment.

What the standard instrumentarium does not capture is the coexistence: **in the same author, a degenerating programme (Timewave) runs parallel to an agenda that has proved progressive (entity research, clinic, critique of institutionalisation).** The demarcation debate is cut to theories and research programmes, not to persons; it has no tool for an author who runs both at once.

U8 takes this gap as its object. The category of the productive false (VII.3) is the attempt to close it.

V.7 Linguistics (D7)

B3 and B13. The language claims are where experience and theory fuse most strongly in McKenna: an experience of the visibility of language becomes a claim about language.

The separation is more urgent here than elsewhere and simultaneously harder, because the experience is itself described in language. The way out is the same as for B6: the phenomenological statement (people report, under certain conditions, a visual quality of linguistic processes) is separated from the factual statement (language has a visual quality); the first is surveyable, the second is not.

For B3 it additionally holds that the reformulable core migrates into a neighbouring field: the testable version is a neuroscientific statement about semantic network activation, not a linguistic one about language emergence. This is typical of zone-2 operations and a reason to declare them: the change of jurisdiction is part of the reformulation.

V.8 Mathematics (D8)

The Timewave is the only part of the work with fully decidable status. It has been decided.

The peculiarity lies in the course, not the result. Watkins did not claim the curve was miscalculated — he reconstructed the formula, its correctness was confirmed by a third party, and precisely thereby it became visible that a construction step is unjustified. [G] The refutation consists not in demonstrating a computational error but in

demonstrating a missing justification. That is the stronger form: a computational error is correctable, a missing justification is not.

U1 therefore has two tasks, of which only the first is discharged. The formal refutation has been documented since 1996. The substantive diagnosis — why did this error arise, and what does it say about the work's procedure overall — has not been performed. It leads to the acceleration analogy A3 (V.14).

V.9 Cultural and media studies (D9)

The effect exceeds the work, and it follows media logics.

The path is described in Z5: lecture → podcast excerpt → sample → short video. Each stage shortens, and the shortening is not neutral, because it systematically removes the same thing: modality, qualification, context.

From this follows a methodological consequence for U5 that reaches beyond the case. **The reception of an oral work is not to be examined as an interpretation of its statements but as a transformation of its carrier medium.** Whoever asks how McKenna was misunderstood is looking in the wrong place; the shift is not hermeneutic but material.

The connection to FORSCH-0199 (consecration asymmetry) lies here: McKenna was posthumously valorised by media that are not consecrating institutions in the classical sense. The question how valorisation functions without an institution is posed there and instantiated here.

V.10 Law and drug policy (D10)

The Grower's Guide is a drug-policy event without drug-policy intent. It contains no programme, no demand and no argument about the legal situation; it shifts a disposition situation by publication.

That makes it an interesting case for legal scholarship: one of the most effective drug-policy actions of the period is not a political action. It acts through availability, not through law — and the law responded with unchanged sanction threats, that is, with an instrument that does not engage the shifted variable.

For U4 this is the question: what does a sanctioning regime do when disposition over the sanctioned object diffuses? The answer — it continues to sanction, with a rising number of potentially affected persons — is the legal side of the E2 finding.

V.11 Economics (D11)

Between 2000 and 2026 a psychedelics industry has emerged whose structure can be read off its intellectual property.

Patented, per the analysis of Marks and Cohen (2022), are among other things: formulations of known substances, crystalline polymorphs, isolated enantiomers — and methods of administration, including features of the treatment environment such as room design, furniture and sound systems. [G]

The last point belongs directly to B8 and is the only one in which both movements — diffusion and re-concentration — bear on the same object. "Set and setting" is an insight from the 1960s that McKenna passed on without having produced it. In Phase III the same insight becomes the object of commercial property rights. **A practice rule that circulated freely for decades is converted into an exclusive right** — that is re-concentration of disposition in the narrowest sense and the empirical core of U6.

The authors additionally name the biopiracy problem: companies patent practices that Indigenous communities developed over centuries, without consent and without compensation. [G] With that, D11 connects to D12.

V.12 Ethnology and ethics (D12)

Access to Indigenous knowledge occurred without a return mechanism — from Wasson in 1957 via McKenna into the present research landscape.

The position paper of Magar et al. (2026) names the María Sabina case explicitly as an example: Western researchers published details of Mazatec practice without consent, which triggered flows of visitors and damaged the community. Comparable dynamics are described for ibogaine research in relation to Bwiti traditions. The authors record that of 59 psychedelic research centres, exactly one has Indigenous representation in its leadership. [G]

As mechanisms they propose, among others: co-development of research questions, Indigenous-led ethics boards, co-authorship, profit participation benefiting Indigenous health provision, and legal protection via the Nagoya Protocol. As gaps they name the unresolved tension between drug control treaties and Indigenous rights, and the absence of legitimate international convening processes. [G]

By present standards this is a finding, not an accusation across time — and it is treated as such here. The question is not whether Wasson in 1957 violated rules that did not exist, but what disposition situation his conduct created and who has borne it since. U7 works this out.

V.13 Sociology of knowledge (D13)

An axis missing from the literature and demanded by the case: how does an experience become a knowledge claim, and who authorises it?

McKenna's procedure is throughout the same. An experience is described; the description becomes a claim; the claim is authorised by lecture before an assenting audience. The third step replaces, in his case, what testing accomplishes in science. This is not deception — the process is public and visible to everyone — but it is a form of authorisation that does not disclose its own ground of validity.

McKenna rejects precisely this form in B19. The programme “no gurus, no authorities” is directed against authorisation by persons — and his own procedure produces exactly that. **The tension is not hypocritical but structural:** whoever publicly advances an untestable insight can attest it only through his own person, even if he rejects that.

V.14 Mandatory audit: the biological and evolutionary analogies (D14)

The rule requires that evolutionary analogies be audited explicitly rather than allowed to run along unexamined. In McKenna they are not ornament but the engine of the fallacies. Three patterns:

A1 — The Lamarckian residue. In B1 an experiential change (altered perception, altered communication) is converted into an inherited change without naming the selection mechanism. The later repair by third parties — that the effect was transmitted culturally rather than genetically — saves the claim only at the price of its no longer being an evolutionary-biological claim. That is not a rescue but a change of category; it must be declared as such. Whoever fails to declare it sells a cultural-studies statement under an evolutionary-biological flag.

A2 — Purpose located in the organism. The mushroom repeatedly appears in McKenna as an agent with intent — it “wants”, it “teaches”, it “seeks” a symbiosis. Analogically this is productive, because it generates the right question: what feedback exists between a substance and the development of a culture that uses it? Theoretically it is teleological and therefore unusable: an explanation that presupposes intent does not explain intent.

A3 — The acceleration analogy. Novelty (B4/B20) transfers a pattern from evolutionary history — increasing complexity in certain lineages — onto time itself and turns it into a quantity. The step from “complexity increases in certain lineages” to “novelty is a property of time” is not justified. **It is the substantive error behind the formal error Watkins found:** the unjustified construction step in the procedure corresponds to an unjustified transfer step in the thought. Whoever fixes only the formal error would have a different curve and the same problem.

Finding V.14: all three analogies generate usable questions and unusable answers. That is the cascade in miniature and the empirical basis for E3.

Part VI — ρ/δ anchoring (E2): the reversal of disposition

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VI.1 The cut

The domain is not “psychedelics” in general but the **disposition over a substance practice**: who decides on access, knowledge, interpretation and legitimacy (δ), against the question of who bears the consequences (ρ).

The cut is deliberately narrow. It excludes the pharmacological question (that belongs to *forsch-0361*) and likewise the cultural-historical one (that belongs to *struktur-des-undergrunds*). What remains is a history of disposition in four phases, spanning some seventy years and changing direction twice.

The thesis arises from an observation visible in none of the individual phases but only in their sequence: **δ has moved fundamentally three times, ρ not once.**

VI.2 Four phases

Phase 0 — Coupled disposition (until 1955)

In Mazatec healing practice, δ and ρ rest with the same instance. The community disposes over the practice: it decides who participates, on what occasion, in what form, under what interpretation. And it bears the consequences: social, medical, spiritual.

This is not an idealisation. Coupled does not mean just, and it does not mean low-risk. It means that decision and consequence lie with the same instance — the base case from which the ρ/δ asymmetry is the deviation.

María Sabina's later recorded observation marks exactly this state and its loss: before Wasson, nobody took the mushrooms simply to find God — they were taken to heal the sick. [S] The statement describes a binding of purpose, and binding of purpose is the form in which a community exercises disposition.

The decoupling: 13 May 1957

Wasson's *Life* article is the event at which δ and ρ come apart. Thereafter, disposition over the practice lies with: an American general-interest magazine, its readers, soon researchers, travellers, pharmaceutical companies. The risk continues to be borne, and now borne alone, by the community in Huautla, María Sabina above all.

The documented consequences are listed in Z0. For the theory, the structure is decisive: **she bore the costs of a disposition she no longer held**. That is the pure form of the asymmetry — not diffusion of δ and ρ , but diffusion of δ with ρ remaining.

With this, a point is gained that holds for the master theorem generally: **the asymmetry is not a natural state but an event with a date**. It arises when a disposition migrates and the burden of consequence does not migrate with it. Where the date is determinable, the question of who occasioned the migration is determinable too.

Phase I — Concentrated disposition (approx. 1957-1975)

δ lies with pharmaceutical manufacturers, state bodies and academic psychiatry. Access, purity, interpretive frame and permission are institutionally bound. ρ lies with trial subjects and early users.

With criminalisation, δ shifts additionally to law enforcement. ρ remains individual and grows heavier: to the medical burden is added the criminal one.

Phase I is the phase in which disposition is most concentrated — and it is simultaneously the phase whose end McKenna brings about.

Phase II — Diffused disposition (approx. 1976-2000)

The Grower's Guide is the threshold moment: production knowledge, and thereby access knowledge, is released from institutional binding. In parallel, interpretive authority diffuses — McKenna, the lecture culture, later the network. δ is distributed more widely than ever before.

ρ does not follow. Risk remains fully individualised and is additionally loaded: no substance control, no medical supervision, unchanged criminal exposure, no contraindication screening, no knowledge of psychiatric history.

The balance of this phase can be stated precisely: **the gain in disposition accrues to the collective, the increase in risk accrues to the individual**. That is the ρ/δ asymmetry in unmixed form — a diffusion of disposition without a diffusion of risk.

Here lies the blind spot of the work as well. McKenna saw the disposition side and welcomed it; the risk side appears in his texts as a question of individual prudence, not as a structural consequence of the diffusion he operated. B18 is therefore Zone 2: the core holds, the balance is missing.

Phase III — Re-concentrated disposition (approx. 2000-2026)

δ migrates back. The instruments are: proprietary formulations, patents on polymorphs and enantiomers, property rights over methods of administration including features of the treatment environment, approval pathways, clinical gatekeepers, standardised supervision. [G]

The phase 3 demonstration (B9) is scientific progress and, in terms of disposition theory, a return movement. Both hold simultaneously, and the simultaneity is the point: the re-concentration is not the consequence of an abuse but the consequence of a correctly conducted approval procedure. Whoever wants to make a substance available as a medicine must standardise it, and whoever standardises concentrates disposition.

ρ does not follow this movement either. It remains with those treated; it remains with those outside the approval regime, from whom the regime additionally withdraws interpretive authority and legitimacy; and two new bearers appear that occur in no approval dossier: ecosystems under wild harvesting, and Indigenous communities whose

knowledge enters the value chain without a return mechanism (V.12, U7).

VI.3 Thesis E2

Disposition over a substance practice can diffuse and subsequently re-concentrate without risk following either movement. Risk is the inert term in both directions.

The four-phase arc adds a statement about the asymmetry’s origin:

The inertia is not original. It begins with a datable decoupling event in which a disposition migrates and a burden of consequence remains behind.

Three testable derivations follow:

E2-a: diffusion of disposition lowers individual risk only if risk infrastructure diffuses with it — substance testing, contraindication knowledge, emergency access. Absent that, diffusion raises aggregate risk. *Testable on:* comparison of jurisdictions with and without established drug checking, at comparable disposition levels.

E2-b: re-concentration of δ lowers individual risk inside the regime and leaves it unchanged or raises it outside, because the regime withdraws interpretive authority and legitimacy. *Testable on:* the ratio of approved to non-approved use after an approval, and on uptake of unregulated offerings.

E2-c: whoever holds δ determines not only which risks are counted, but which of the counted risks are permitted to touch the outcome.

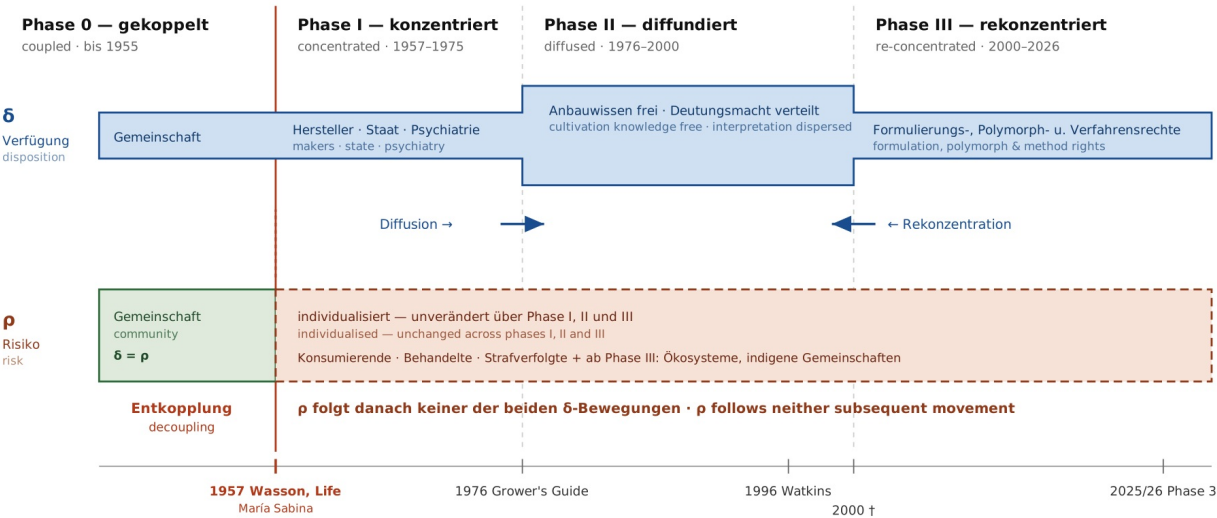
This version replaces a weaker one as of v1.2. The original asserted that ecological and Indigenous risk-bearers appear in no approval dossier. The document check (U9 \$5) did not confirm that: the environmental risk assessment is a mandatory part of the application — but its result cannot prevent the authorisation. Source communities appear in a separate regime with no power over the authorisation. The asymmetry therefore lies not in the absence of the category but in **presence without consequence** and in **separate regime**. The new version is the stronger one: a gap can be closed by adding a category without anything changing. *Testable on:* the category lists of regulatory procedures — which affected groups are provided for as objects of reporting and which are not.

Abb. 1 — Die Verfügungsumkehr (E2)

Fig. 1 — The reversal of disposition (E2)

δ = Verfügung über Zugang, Wissen, Deutung, Legitimität · ρ = Träger der Folgen

δ = disposition over access, knowledge, interpretation, legitimacy · ρ = who bears the consequences



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Fig. 1 — The reversal of disposition (E2): four-phase arc with the decoupling event of 13 May 1957. δ moves three times, ρ not once.

VI.4 McKenna’s place in E2

He is not the cause of the diffusion — that had material and technical grounds and was prepared by Z0. He is its **most visible carrier** and simultaneously the carrier of an internal tension.

His programme was anti-authoritarian (B19); his effect was authority-forming. He distributed disposition over the substance and simultaneously accumulated disposition over its interpretation. This is not an accusation but the reason the case, as an instance of the master theorem, shows something other instances do not:

Diffusion and accumulation of disposition can occur simultaneously in the same person, if they concern different kinds of disposition.

McKenna diffused production disposition and accumulated interpretive disposition. Both belong to δ , but they move independently. For the master theorem this is a differentiation reaching beyond the case: **δ is not a scalar**. At least four components are to be distinguished — access disposition, production disposition, interpretive disposition, legitimacy disposition — and they can run in opposite directions.

VI.5 Transferability

E2 is not substance-specific. The pattern “disposition diffuses, risk does not follow; disposition re-concentrates, risk again does not follow” is testable in at least three further domains:

Domain	δ diffusion	δ re-concentration	ρ -bearer that does not migrate
Free software	Open source, free licences	Platform binding, cloud services, supply-chain control	Operators and end users, for liability and security incidents
Additive manufacturing	Design data, machine access	Material binding, certification duties, producer liability	Users, for product responsibility and conformity
Generative models	Open weights, local execution	Access barriers, terms of use, rights enforcement	Users, for copyright and liability exposure

Derivations E2-a to E2-c are formulated so as to remain transferable. The differentiation of δ into four components (VI.4) is the key: in all three domains, production disposition runs differently from legitimacy disposition.

Part VII — The hypothesis generator (E3)

VII.1 The asymmetry

From Part IV: 35 % of the audited claims are refuted, 20 % are undecidable, and in none of the five held claims is McKenna the originator. As a theorist the balance is negative.

Now the same table read the other way round — not on the claims but on the **questions** they raise:

Question behind the claim	Later the object of controlled research?	Evidence grade
Are entity encounters consistent or arbitrary? (B6)	Yes — Davis et al. 2020, n=2,561	[G]
Does the experience durably alter fundamental convictions? (B7)	Yes — Davis et al. 2020, Griffiths et al. 2019	[G]
Does psilocybin work against depression? (B9)	Yes — COMP005/COMP006, phase 3	[G]
Do psychedelics alter semantic processing? (B3)	Yes	[S]
Do they alter values and relatedness to nature? (B16)	Yes, with causality open	[O]
What happens when the practice is institutionalised? (B17)	Partly — as a regulatory and economic question	[G]
What happens when production knowledge becomes free? (B18)	Barely — an open gap	[O]
Does time have a novelty structure? (B4)	No — the question itself is unusable	[G]
Did psilocybin shape hominid cognition? (B1)	Barely — the question can be made testable but is largely unworked	[S]

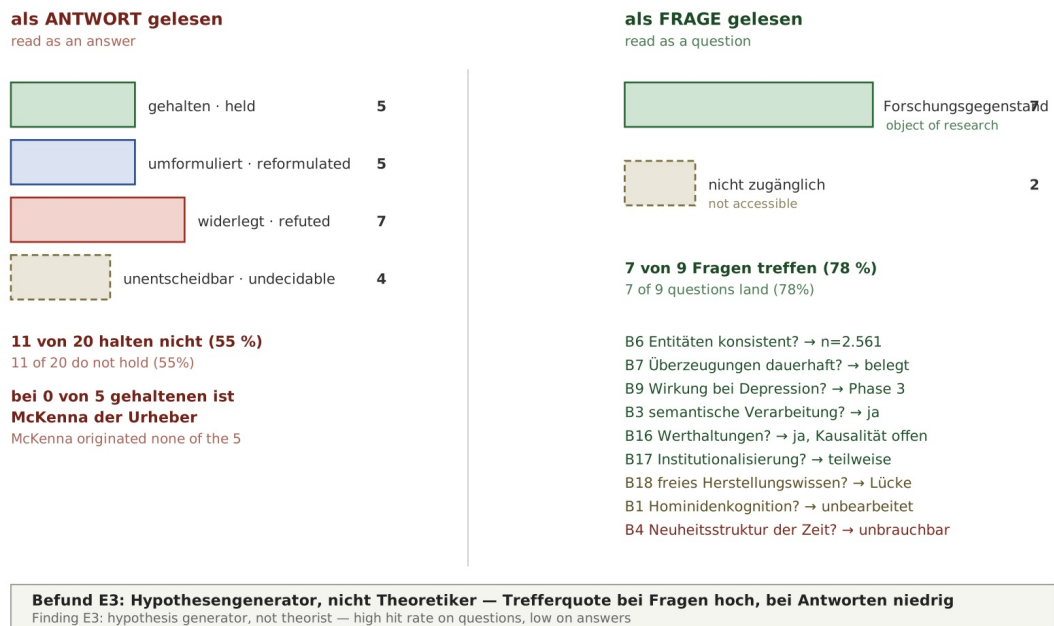
Seven of nine questions are today objects of research or demonstrably accessible. Two are not.

This juxtaposition is the core of the work. **The same sentences that mostly fail as answers mostly land as questions.**

Abb. 3 — Die Frage-Antwort-Asymmetrie (E3)

Fig. 3 — The question-answer asymmetry (E3)

Dieselben Sätze, zweimal gelesen: als Antwort und als Frage.
The same statements, read twice: as answers and as questions.



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Fig. 3 — The question-answer asymmetry (E3): the same statements read as answers and as questions.

VII.2 Thesis E3

McKenna's work has a high hit rate in selecting questions and a low one in answering them. His place in the history of science is that of a hypothesis generator, not a theorist.

This is not a rescue, and the qualifications belong in the same paragraph as the thesis.

A hypothesis generator without testing discipline produces as many unusable as usable questions and supplies no criterion for distinguishing them. The distinction is made only by the research he did not conduct. Whoever praises him in hindsight for the usable questions does so with knowledge he himself neither had nor wished to obtain.

The costs are real. The Z3 and Z4 claims circulate to this day and bind attention that the Z1 questions could use. The Timewave occupied for years a reception that could in the same period have worked on the entity question. And the authority that the programme B19 rejected delayed testing, because authority substitutes for testing.

VII.3 The category of the productive false (E3-b)

The case establishes a category in the philosophy of science lying between “false” and “fruitful”, poorly occupied in the standard literature:

A claim is **productively false** if it is itself refuted or undecidable, but marks a testable question with sufficient precision that the later testing would have begun later or not at all without it.

Without conditions this would be a licence with which any refuted claim could be retrospectively ennobled. Three conditions are to be required:

Condition 1 — Demonstrable marking performance. The question must not have been asked before, or not in this form. *In the case:* met for B6 and B17; **not** met for B8 (taken over) and B9 (the question had already been posed in the research of the 1950s and 60s and was interrupted by criminalisation, not by ignorance).

Condition 2 — Demonstrable reception path. There must be a documentable connection to the later research, not merely temporal succession. *In the case:* **[O] open.** Whether the large-scale surveys of entity encounters would have

arisen in this form without the vocabulary McKenna shaped is a question in the history of science, workable through citation traces, questionnaire wording and interviews. It has not been worked. **This is the principal audit task of U8, and without it E3 remains a plausible, not a demonstrated thesis.**

Condition 3 — Cost balance stated openly. The misallocation of attention produced by the false claim must be counted in. *In the case:* partly achievable. The Timewave reception is estimable from publication and circulation volume; the work thereby not done is naturally not. The balance remains reliable on one side only — the costs are more visible than the forgone yield.

VII.4 Reach of the category

The category is not made for McKenna and should not be. It describes a position in the scientific enterprise that occurs more often than the demarcation debate suggests: authors whose claims do not hold and whose questions endure.

Its use lies in the jurisdiction question. Whoever treats such an author as a theorist arrives at a uniformly negative verdict and does not explain his effect. Whoever treats him as a visionary explains the effect and withdraws the claims from testing. The category permits both at once: full testing of the claims and serious examination of the effect.

The three conditions are the safeguard against misuse. Condition 2 in particular is strict: it demands a documented path, not a plausible narrative. That it is open in the present case is the most honest sentence in this work.

Part VIII — Rejected material and source criticism

VIII.1 The intelligence-service claim

A published strand alleges a connection between McKenna and intelligence services. It satisfies the requirements of QUELLEN-SERIOSITÄT at no point: no archival evidence, no verifiable primary sources, an argumentative structure built on association and temporal coincidence.

It is **rejected here with reasons** and not pursued further. Explicit rejection replaces silence, because in this reception field silence is read as confirmation.

At the same time the strand is itself a legitimate object — not as a statement about McKenna, but as a reception phenomenon. The question why a figure of this kind regularly attracts suspicion narratives belongs in U5 and is to be connected there with the consecration finding: suspicion narrative and veneration are two forms of the same attribution of significance.

VIII.2 The version problem

Every statement in this work about “McKenna’s position” is as reliable as the version it rests on.

For the written works this is unproblematic: they exist in stable, datable editions. For the oral works it is a structural caveat to be carried in every citation, and only archival work (II.3) can resolve it.

The caveat affects five of the twenty core claims (IV.4). It is therefore not marginal, but neither is it dominant: the principal findings E2 and E3 rest predominantly on positions documented in writing and on external empirical work.

VIII.3 The hagiography trap and the demolition trap

The existing literature divides largely into defence and settling of accounts. Both forms share one error: they treat the work as one thing that either holds or does not.

The four-zone scheme (Part IV) exists to exclude that error formally. It forces a decision per claim and thereby makes visible the mixed situation both camps obscure.

VIII.4 This work’s own position

Disclosure requires naming one’s own stance. This work reaches an unfavourable verdict on McKenna’s theories and a favourable one on his questions. Both verdicts are bound to criteria stated in the text and open to checking; the unfavourable one rests on the validity table, the favourable one on a condition that is **not currently met** (VII.3, condition 2).

Anyone wishing to adopt only one of the two halves should therefore adopt

the favourable one — because it is the less well supported and carries the audit task with it.

Part IX — Architecture of the work

WERKSTRUKTUR cascade: **full work with sub-papers** (level 2).

A full work alone would be too broad, because D8 (mathematics) and D12 (ethics/ethnology) demand methodologically incompatible test procedures. Separate strands would be wrong, because E2 and E3 require all axes: E2 rests on D10, D11, D12 and D13, E3 on all of them.

ID	Title	Discipline	Core	State
Main work	The Messenger and the Message	transdisciplinary	E1 four-zone scheme, E2 reversal of disposition, E3 hypothesis generator	present
U1	The Half Twist — formal analysis and error diagnosis of the Timewave	mathematics, philosophy of science	Reconstruct the Watkins objection; name the substantive error behind the formal one (A3)	complete , 1,073 w
U2	The Ape That Does Not Stand — Stoned Ape as a palaeoanthropological control	palaeoanthropology, mycology	B1/B2/B15 against fossil, isotope and habitat evidence; Lamarckian residue A1; reconstruct the Fischer miscitation	complete , 1,136 w
U3	From Anecdote to Measurand — entity encounter as a research object	neurophenomenology	B6/B7; the ontological/phenomenological separation as a generalisable procedure; link to forsch-0361	complete , 1,229 w
U4	1976 — A Manual as a Drug-Policy Event	sociology of knowledge, legal history	Diffusion of disposition without diffusion of risk; strictly without procedural content	complete , 939 w
U5	Archaic Revival and the Second Career — rave, sampling, podcast	cultural and media studies	B11; media stages and loss of modality; suspicion and veneration as one attribution; link to struktur-des-undergrunds , FORSCH-0199	complete , 1,029 w
U6	The Re-concentrated Disposition — psychedelics economy 2000–2026	economics, regulation	Phase III from VI.2; patent and protocol landscape; property rights over the treatment environment as enclosure of B8; test E2-b and E2-c	complete , 1,234 w
U7	Without Return — Indigenous sources, appropriation, benefit sharing	ethnology, ethics, law	Phase 0 and the decoupling of 1957; Nagoya framework; ρ-bearers absent from every dossier	complete , 1,187 w
U8	The Productive False — a philosophy of science of the hypothesis generator	philosophy of science	E3-b; the three conditions; testing condition 2 via citation traces	complete , 1,257 w
U9	Check Report — four open points worked	method, revision	O12, O9, O6, O2 against primary sources; E2-c corrected ; limits of testability named	complete , 1,852 w
U10	The Work Itself — catalogue and proportions	bibliography	Eight book titles, recorded corpus, software, collection; the solely authored prose is three books from 25 months	complete , 1,035 w
U11	What Was Built on It — lines of continuation	science studies	Five lines by continuing/testing/replacing; the citation chain to 2026; E3 by a second route	complete , 1,328 w

State as of 28 Sept 2026: all eight sub-papers are written and present in the bundle under [werk/teile/](#), bilingual in a single source each. Together 8,690 words German and 9,084 words English. The recommended order below stands as

a reading order.

IX.1 Recommended order

U3 → U1 → U6 → U7 → U2 → U5 → U8 → U4

- **U3 first**, because it is the only axis with a complete data situation and supplies the ontological/phenomenological separation procedure the others need.
- **U1 next**, because it is closed: the formal refutation exists; only the error diagnosis remains.
- **U6 and U7 as a pair**, because both work Phase III and Phase 0 material respectively and meet at the patent/benefit-sharing problem.
- **U2 and U5** middling priority, both demanding in source work.
- **U8 late**, because it presupposes the results of the others — condition 2 can only be tested once the individual findings exist.
- **U4 last**, because the protective logic requires additional groundwork and the paper must work without procedural content.

IX.2 Against duplication

Three delimitations are to be carried in every sub-paper:

1. **U3 ≠ *forsch-0361***. U3 treats entity encounter as a methodological problem (how anecdote becomes measurand), not a pharmacological one. Substance effects are referenced, not presented.
2. **U5 ≠ *struktur-des-undergrunds***. U5 treats the reception of *a figure*; 0272 treats the scene. The point of contact is the rave context, not the object.
3. **U7 ≠ *alpine-ethnopharmakologie***. Methodologically related in the handling of transmitted knowledge, geographically and materially separate.

Part X — Open points and research gaps

ID	Point	Status	Responsible
O1	Purdue archive: review status, access conditions, degree of digitisation	[O] unverified — precondition for resolving the version problem VIII.2	Main work v1.1
O2	Reception path McKenna → large-scale entity surveys (condition 2 from VII.3)	worked and quantified, U9 §6 and U11 §5 . The citation chain is evidenced across four steps to 2026: the expression “machine elves” reaches the specialist literature attributed to a 2022 paper, not to McKenna ; there it stands at 8% of category assignments, behind deities (17%) and aliens (16%). [G] The lexical inheritance is real and marginal. Strong form (frame imprinting) still untested → U9-O4	U8, U9, U11
O3	German-language reception: Nachtschatten circle, Sterneck anthologies, Rätsch strand	[O] partly physically present in the holdings, not catalogued	U5
O4	Version comparison of identical arguments across the lecture years (modality drift)	[O] methodologically new, no prior work known	U5, presupposes O1
O5	E2-a empirically: aggregate risk in jurisdictions with vs. without drug checking	[O] data situation to be checked	U6
O6	E2-c: category lists of regulatory procedures — which p-bearers are provided for?	closed, U9 §5 — with a correction to the derivation . The environment is provided for [G] but without consequence [S]; source communities sit in a separate regime [S]. E2-c recast. Remainder → U9-O2, U9-O3	U6, U9
O7	Relation McKenna ↔ Wasson/Hofmann/Schultes: priority and dependence	[O] relevant to B8, B14, Phase 0	U7
O13	Open up the recorded corpus — it is	[O] presupposes O1; without it the	U10

	the bulk of the work, not its margin (U10 §5)	majority of the object stays unaudited	
O8	Economic magnitude of posthumous exploitation (publishers, platforms, sampling)	[O]	U6
O9	Switch COMP360 evidence to peer-reviewed full texts	closed for phase 2b, U9 §4: Goodwin et al., <i>NEJM</i> 387(18), 1637–1648, DOI 10.1056/NEJMoa2206443. [G] Not closable for phase 3 — COMP005/COMP006 exist only as company announcement and conference poster. [S] → U9-O5	U6, U9
O10	Comparability with huxley-vollwerk: shared frame or separate works?	[O] decision for Tom	Body of work
O11	Did the clinical demonstration refute B17 or bypass it? (V.4)	[O] can be made precise by comparing standardised and non-standardised settings	U6
O12	Fischer et al. (1970): obtain the original and test McKenna's citation against it	closed as to direction, U9 §3: Hill & Fischer (1971), <i>Agents and Actions</i> 2(3), 122–130, DOI 10.1007/BF01966750 — psilocybin interferes with visual adaptation. [G] B2 stays Z3, now primary-sourced. Narrow citation check → U9-O1	U2, U9

Part XI — Node structure

FORSCH-0083 (p/6 master theorem) - isInstanceOf — bote-und-botschaft [this work, FORSCH-PROV0462] - relatedTo — forsch-0361 (psilocybin reference book) ... substance vs. person - relatedTo — struktur-des-undergrunds (orig. 0272) scene vs. individual - relatedTo — huxley-vollwerk (PROV0415) parallel case, 010 open - relatedTo — FORSCH-0199 (consecration asymmetry) posthumous valorisation - relatedTo — FORSCH-0125 (sacred/profane sound) ritual frame - relatedTo — alpine-ethnopharmakologie transmitted knowledge, other region - plannedHasPart — U1 .. U8

Feedback into the master theorem. Two findings of this work are not domain-specific and belong as a proposed extension to FORSCH-0083:

1. **δ is not a scalar** (VI.4). Access, production, interpretive and legitimacy disposition move independently and can run in opposite directions.
2. **The asymmetry has a beginning** (VI.2). Where a decoupling event is datable, the question of responsibility is determinable.

Both are marked as proposals, not as changes: a continuation of 0083 is a decision for Tom.

Part XII — Chronology

Date	Event	Function in the work
until 1955	Mazatec healing practice, Huautla de Jiménez	Phase 0: δ and ρ coupled
13.05.1957	Wasson, “Seeking the Magic Mushroom”, <i>Life</i>	decoupling event
from 1962	Visitor flows to Huautla; consequences for María Sabina	ρ remains, δ has migrated
approx. 1957–1975	Institutional binding, then criminalisation	Phase I: δ concentrated
04.03.1971	Experiment at La Chorrera	Z1: origin of the theoretical edifice
1975	<i>The Invisible Landscape</i>	Timewave genesis
1976	<i>Magic Mushroom Grower's Guide</i> (pseudonym)	Z2 / threshold to Phase II
1982–1999	Lecture years	Z3: change of medium, loss of modality
1985	Death of María Sabina in poverty	balance of the decoupling
1991	<i>The Archaic Revival</i>	B11
1992	<i>Food of the Gods</i>	B1. B2. B14. B15

1993	<i>True Hallucinations</i>	B6, B13; “machine elves”
1996	Watkins confrontation, Palenque	Z4: only documented self-correction
April 2000	Death of Terence McKenna	end of Phase II
approx. from 2000	Formulation, polymorph and method property rights	Phase III: δ re-concentrated
approx. from 2010	Podcast, sampling and video reception	Z5: posthumous second career
21.12.2012	Timewave zero point passes	reception-relevant; validity settled since 1996
2019	Davis, <i>High Weirdness</i> (MIT Press)	first academic monograph
2020	Davis et al., entity survey n=2,561	B6/B7 confirmed (phenomenological)
2022	Marks & Cohen, patent analysis	Phase III evidence
06/2025	COMP005 meets primary endpoint	B9
02/2026	COMP006 meets primary endpoint	B9
2026	Magar et al., Indigenous Knowledge Systems	Phase 0 evidence, U7

Part XIII — Glossary

Evidence grades [G]/[S]/[O] — [G] primary-sourced via DOI, PMID or archive reference; [S] secondary-sourced; [O] open, i.e. not verified within this work.

Decoupling event — The datable moment at which disposition over a practice migrates without the burden of consequence migrating with it. In the present case: 13 May 1957.

Version problem — The circumstance that statements from oral sources exist in versions with shifted modality, so that assignment to a validity zone depends on the version chosen.

Modality drift — The shift in the assertive force of the same statement across versions and media stages, regularly in the direction of stronger assertion.

Productively false — Property of a refuted or undecidable claim that nevertheless marks a testable question with sufficient precision that the later testing would have begun later or not at all without it. Attributable only under three conditions (VII.3).

ρ (rho) — Risk: who bears the consequences of a practice.

δ (delta) — Disposition: who decides on access, knowledge, interpretation and legitimacy of a practice. Per VI.4, to be divided into four independently mobile components.

ρ/δ asymmetry — Condition in which disposition and burden of consequence lie with different instances. Object of the master theorem FORSCH-0083.

Four-zone scheme — This work’s order of validity: held / reformulated / refuted / undecidable (Part IV).

Zone-2 operation — The reformulation of an untestable into a testable version. Admissible only with declaration and corrected attribution.

Part XIV — Sources

Primary (writings)

McKenna, T. & McKenna, D. (1975): *The Invisible Landscape. Mind, Hallucinogens and the I Ching*. — Oss, O. T. & Oeric, O. N. [McKenna, T. & McKenna, D.] (1976): *Psilocybin: Magic Mushroom Grower’s Guide* (object of analysis; contents not reported). — McKenna, T. (1991): *The Archaic Revival*. — McKenna, T. (1992): *Food of the Gods. The Search for the Original Tree of Knowledge*. — McKenna, T., Shelldrake, R. & Abraham, R. (1992): *Dialogues at the Edge of the West*. — McKenna, T. (1993): *True Hallucinations*. — McKenna, T., Shelldrake, R. & Abraham, R. (1998): *The Evolutionary Mind*.

Archive

Dennis and Terence McKenna papers, 1943–2016, Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, approx. 2.5 cubic feet. Collection description: unpublished manuscripts, field reports, journals, term papers, correspondence,

photographs, article reprints.

Secondary

Davis, E. (2019): *High Weirdness. Drugs, Esoterica, and Visionary Experience in the Seventies*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. — McKenna, D. (2012, 10th anniv. ed. 2022): *The Brotherhood of the Screaming Abyss. My Life with Terence McKenna*. Synergetic Press. — Watkins, M. (1996): *Autopsy for a Mathematical Hallucination?* With an introduction by T. McKenna and footnotes by P. Meyer. — Marks, M. & Cohen, I. G. (2022): Patents on Psychedelics. The Next Legal Battlefield of Drug Development. *Harvard Law Review Forum*. — Wasson, R. G. (1957): Seeking the Magic Mushroom. *Life*, 13 May 1957, pp. 100–102, 109–120.

Empirical

Davis, A. K., Clifton, J. M., Weaver, E. G., Hurwitz, E. S., Johnson, M. W. & Griffiths, R. R. (2020): Survey of entity encounter experiences occasioned by inhaled N,N-dimethyltryptamine. Phenomenology, interpretation, and enduring effects. *Journal of Psychopharmacology* 34(9):1008–1020. doi:10.1177/0269881120916143, PMID 32345112. — Griffiths, R. R., Hurwitz, E. S., Davis, A. K. et al. (2019): Survey of subjective “God encounter experiences”. *PLoS ONE* 14:e0214377. — Magar, V., Robbins, M., López Fernández, Ó. M. (Lobo Blanco), Ali, I. L., Anderson, B., Grob, C., Henningfield, J. E., Kryskow, P., Kuiper, H., Loizaga-Velder, A., Rush, B., Volat, M. & Iron Rope, S. (2026): Indigenous Knowledge Systems & Psychedelic Science. Towards Ethical and Reciprocal Collaboration. *Journal of Psychopharmacology* 40(1):179–188. doi:10.1177/02698811251387104. — Compass Pathways: COMP005, ClinicalTrials.gov NCT05624268; COMP006, ClinicalTrials.gov NCT05711940 (result states 2025-06 and 2026-02).

Evidence grades and conflicts of interest

[G] primary-sourced · [S] secondary-sourced · [O] open. All assignments are marked in the text.

Conflict-of-interest note, COMP360: the sponsor of trials COMP005 and COMP006 is simultaneously the approval applicant and the rights holder of the tested formulation. The figures used in this work derive from company communications and conference posters, not consistently from peer-reviewed full texts. Before publication these must be switched to the full publications — **audit task O9**.

Conflict-of-interest note, patent analysis: Marks & Cohen (2022) argue recognisably for strengthening the public domain. The factual statements reported (patent objects, granted rights) are independently checkable; the evaluation is marked as the authors’ position.

Conflict-of-interest note, position paper: Magar et al. (2026) is a position paper with Indigenous co-authorship and a declared reform aim. The factual statements reported (the María Sabina case, the share of Indigenous representation in research centres) are marked as the authors’ statements; the reform proposals are position, not finding.

Rejected: podcast recordings without version provenance as evidentiary sources; forum and social media material; the body of published claims on intelligence-service entanglement (grounds in VIII.1).