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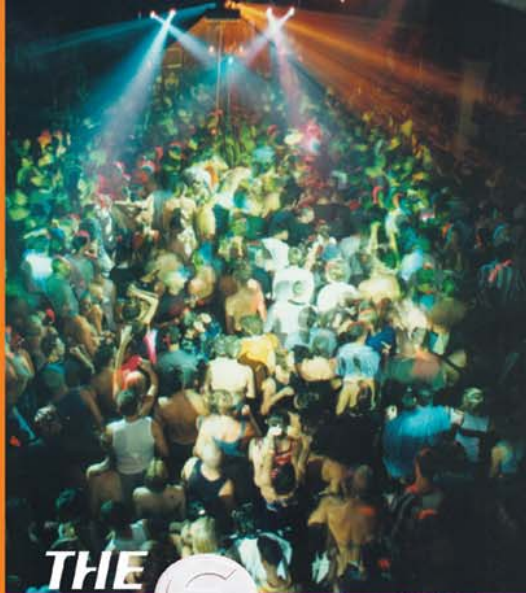


ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fanitsa H Zervogiannis is an educational and counselling psychologist in private practice. As a former secondary school teacher, she realised educators' need to be equipped with accurate information to assist young drug users. Zervogiannis combines field research done in South Africa with local and international findings on Ecstasy in a popular format.



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THE 'E' IN RAVE

A profile of young Ecstasy users and its implications for educators

Fanitsa Zervogiannis

ABOUT THE BOOK

Ecstasy – the popular Rave scene drug – is widely regarded as the 'friendly, happy' drug. In South Africa, more than 12 000 people ingest the drug weekly. Yet, up to now little research has been done on how Ecstasy is used and the nature of its effects.

This thoroughly researched, full-colour book sets out to remedy the situation. What emerges is a complex web of adverse side-effects and a drug that cannot be regarded as harmless in any terms.

The psychological and physiological effects of 'E' are investigated. Studies show that Ecstasy causes alterations in the brain, with the risk of brain injury remaining long after the high has worn off.

Raves and their culture are also analysed in depth. This is a key to understanding 'E' usage, since the Rave scene as such is symptomatic of the growing hunger among young people for relational connections and spiritual direction.

Usage patterns and reasons for using 'E' are discussed, as well as maximum reported dosages, their effects and concurrent drug use.

Zervogiannis takes a controversial, yet practical, stance on the use of Ecstasy: 'Since it is not a realistic expectation that ravers will stop using Ecstasy *en masse*, the best educators can hope for in place of total abstinence is responsible use based on informed decisions...'

She gives comprehensive information about harm-reduction drug education, and suggests proactive and supportive measures and intervention programmes that could be implemented. 'Harm reduction is potentially lifesaving information going out to young people,' states Zervogiannis.

The 'E' in Rave contains a wealth of information about Ecstasy not only for educators (including parents), but also therapists, health workers and the general public, so that people will be better equipped to manage the risks associated with using the drug.

THE FOLLOWING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ARE DISCUSSED:

Introductory orientation, problem analysis, objectives and definition of concepts

Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) ('Ecstasy')

A brief history and classification
Dosage and mode of use
Effects: psychological and physical
Role of polydrug use
How Ecstasy affects the brain
Testing

Raves and their culture

What is a Rave?
Why Rave?
Rave music, visual effects, drugs and the people
Philosophy of Rave (Peace, Love, Unity and Respect (PLUR))
Spirituality
The fall of the Rave

Findings of questionnaires on recreational ecstasy use

Research design
Measuring instrument, procedure, data analysis and results of the investigation
Evaluation of 'one to three-time' users and of 'multiple-time' users
Reasons for trying Ecstasy and participating in Raves
Ability to have fun without Ecstasy
Word associations linked to Ecstasy
Dependency and tolerance
Perceived risks
Influences on life in general

Conclusions, recommendations and implications

Identification of Ecstasy or drug use in adolescents
Teachers' influence on the adolescent's mental health
Recommendations
Documentation
Rapport between parents and teachers
School-bound and school-related services
Parent support groups and drug education
Adolescent discussion groups
Identifying drug use
Counselling: individual, group counselling and adolescent support groups
Drug education and prevention programmes
Harm-reduction approach
Implications for the adolescent, parents, teacher, schools and for the future
List of relevant contact numbers



THE 'E' IN RAVE