

## BOOK REVIEW

**Plants of the Gods:** by R. E. SCHULTES and A. HOFMANN.  
McGraw-Hill, New York, 1980. \$34.95.

The subtitle of this well-illustrated "coffee-table" book—"origins of hallucinogenic use"—and the two lists of plants (their identification, use, preparation and chemical components) would be sufficient in themselves to engender the interest of most phytochemists, especially since 40 of the 92 plants described have not been examined for their hallucinogenic constituents! However, there is much more, for this work is distinguished from most in its genre for having been written by two of the leading experts in the

field. As a result it is a rich mine of facts and data which are not easily obtained from the primary literature. Anyone with the slightest interest in the history of drugs and man should try to read it. I am not convinced that the non-scientist will enjoy the chemistry but I suppose it will provide somebody with the pleasure of one-upmanship to talk about  $\beta$ -carbolines or psilocybin in Scarsdale or Epsom! However, if they grasp the rest of the complex story outlined by the authors, then the book will have done a service.

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