

# the drug dealer:

the life and times  
of a salesman  
with a conscience

all photos this issue  
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If it's drugs you're looking for, Tom's your man. Of course it's not his real name. Drug dealers have an aversion to their names in the newspaper. That's right, he sells drugs for a living.

Drugs. They can be smoked, snorted, swallowed, skin-popped or shot.

The place to buy them is from a dealer. So, assured of anonymity, Tom scratched at his black bread and talked about his life and times as a drug dealer.

Tom said he began dealing while he still lived in McCook. He called the situation there a "cooperative" thing. Someone would go to Denver for drugs to supply their McCook friends. According to Tom, he's been dealing drugs ever since. But it wasn't until he moved to Lincoln to go to school that he got heavily into dealing.

"I was dealing mostly marijuana at that time," he said. "You see, for a student without much money to keep a good supply of marijuana you go out and buy a pound. You sell some of it and smoke about a quarter of it. I started out with a partner I'd known for my whole life and our idea was to have as much dope and turn on as many people as we wanted to.

"Which we did. Which I hope I'm still doing."

He is well-read, particularly in research done on drugs. Sometimes he pointedly talks about an article he's read, other times it becomes evident from his conversation that he does know more about drugs than most people who take them.

In fact, he suggested that everybody should research the drugs they take, "there's lots of good information around. Find out what you have; set up ways to get it tested pharmaceutically."

He is, admittedly, something of a lone bird in his "profession" because he constantly rejects the capitalistic lure of dealing. He is, besides, conscientious and ethical about what he does.

"I deal mostly in smoke now," he mused. "If I deal a psychedelic I take it myself. I feel like if I'm going to sell a drug I ought to take it; I ought to be able to tell the person what it is. Like I say, I'm very sensitive to drugs. I have a history of diabetes in my family and most drugs operate on the blood-sugar level.

"So I can take mescaline, say, and the instant I come on I can tell you what it is."

He agreed that drugs are not the only answer to everybody's ills.

"What's happened is, because of a fluke in evolution, we're disconnected from about a third of our brain. And drugs allow you to tap into the potential your brain has. But there are a million ways you can do the same thing—knowledge, love, ritual, all kinds of things.

"I think there are certain drugs that,