



Pot party in San Francisco: Turning on and dropping out of a 9-to-5 world

The Marijuana Problem

Pot is going middle-class—with profound effects

It used to be the magic grass of the Negro ghetto, or the jazz world, or—more recently—the hippie community. But now it is entering the bloodstream of U.S. middle-class life. Marijuana, it seems, is becoming a widespread weed of dissent, a symbol of revolt, a turn-on (or cop-out) for young people who want to enlarge their experience—or escape it.

Bright students from Berkeley to Princeton smoke it as a normal part of the college experience—to escape from the deadening routine of exams, to heighten esthetic experience, to learn more about themselves or, in some cases, simply to do it because square adult society says it is taboo. Respectable types in big cities—lawyers, college instructors, advertising-copy writers, journalists, fashion designers, artists, TV producers and writers—gather at small parties to smoke and socialize, to turn on and drop out temporarily from their 9-to-5 world. Middle-aged doctors, businessmen and corporate executives cross to the other side of the generation gap to try to find out if they are missing anything. And even teen-agers have begun to tune in—if not turn on as yet—to the psychedelic messages of the Beatles' "A Day in the Life" and the Rolling Stones' "Something Happened to Me Yesterday." It's not that every youngster wants to smoke marijuana, or would if he could. It's more a matter of, why not? "If you drink three Martinis before dinner," young people are asking their parents these days, "then why can't I take some pot?"

'Inner Trip': It is a question that will be repeated for some time to come. Some observers profess to see in pot smoking the signs of a permanent shift in Ameri-

can social habits rather than a temporary aberration. "The inner trip is the new response to the electric age," says media master Marshall McLuhan. "For centuries man has taken the outer trip, Columbus-style. Now he has turned inward."

No one knows for certain how many Americans have taken this trip. Health officials in Washington, guessing in the dark, estimate that 20 million Americans may have tried pot at least once and that anywhere from 300,000 to 4.5 million smoke it regularly.

Whatever the true figure, this new mode of travel has set off wide alarms—and even wider confusion. "It's the clinical version of should we stay in or get out of Vietnam," says one Health, Education and Welfare Department official. And, in fact, the full medical verdict on marijuana is still not in (story, right). But so many myths about marijuana as the "killer weed" have been spread in the past that young people tend not to listen, preferring to find out for themselves. "One of the reasons so many youngsters are taking drugs," observes Bruce Jackson, a junior fellow at Harvard who helped compile a drug study for the President's Crime Commission, "is that they have discovered this is one of those areas the older generation has made it a point to lie about consistently."

Prohibition: The current demand is not just to be able to smoke pot, but to smoke pot legally. Recently, The New Republic called for the repeal of marijuana laws, adding a voice of the liberal establishment to a drive already started on college campuses. In Washington, the President's Commission on Crime strongly urged that present penalties on marijua-

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THE MEDICAL VIE

Clear away the clouds of sociological, philosophical, emotional and gene- tional smoke that surround the grow- ing use of marijuana in the U.S., and the issue narrows to some questions of medi- cal fact. Pot is not, as its strongest oppon- ents charge, a menace that leads to drug addiction, sexual promiscuity and vio- lence. But neither is it, as its most de- voted advocates believe, an innocent re- creational diversion with no psychic sig- nificance. The key medical facts:

History: The drug comes from the dried flowers and tops of the female *Cannabis sativa*, or hemp plant, which grows in just about any soil and was used as painkiller in China as far back as 27 B.C. The nearly pure resin of the her- plant and flowers produces hashish, which was smoked in the eleventh cen- tury by a North African band known as Assassins. Their murderous ways gave Cannabis its reputation as a stimulant violence. Cannabis came to the U.S. from Mexico as marijuana (Mexican for Ma- Jane) around 1920. The variety avail- able in the U.S., however, is only one- fifth to one-eighth as potent as hashish, according to Dr. William McGlothlin, Rand Corp. psychologist and drug exper-

Medical Status: Legally, marijuana now classified as a narcotic, along with heroin and morphine. But scientific evidence fails to support marijua- classification as a hard drug. Marijua- most experts agree, does not result in physical addiction. Unlike the heroin user, the pot smoker does not develop tolerance to marijuana and demand in- creasing doses for satisfaction. With- deprived of marijuana, the user does not suffer the intense craving, chills and na- sea typical of withdrawal from hard nar- cotics. The drug, most researchers agree, is more accurately described as habit- forming, since heavy use can, as with tobacco and liquor, produce a psycholog- ical dependence.

Nonetheless, narcotics officials argue that the marijuana habit fosters a crav- ing that ends in the use of heroin and other opiates. More than half the users of hard narcotics, they point out, once smoke pot. But in a report issued just a few weeks ago, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Admini- stration of Justice took exception to this *post hoc* reasoning. "There are too many marijuana users who do not graduate to heroin," noted the commission, "and to many heroin addicts with no known pri- mary marijuana use, to support such a theory."

Many such investigators believe mari- juana should be reclassified as a danger- ous drug, rather than defined as a narco- tic under the law. Indeed, there is talk in Washington now of transferring the reg- ulation of marijuana from the Feder-

NOT WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED

Narcotics Bureau to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Bureau of Drug Abuse Control. The bureau was established last year to enforce new laws governing such hazardous non-narcotics as the hallucinogens (LSD, psilocybin, mescaline), barbiturates (downies) and amphetamines (uppies). The addition of marijuana to BDAC's list, the experts argue, would lead to more realistic—and therefore less harsh—penalties for marijuana use.

Psychological Effects: Depending on the personality of the user, marijuana can be a mild hallucinogen. Researchers place it on the lowest rung of the psychedelic ladder, well below mescaline, peyote and LSD. When inhaled, the drug quickly passes into the blood stream and takes effect on brain centers in a matter of minutes. The main emotional effect is a sense of buoyant well-being;

for example, "it is not certain that the user will be moved to act." The effect of marijuana on behavior, Feinglass and other investigators believe, will depend more on the individual's own inclinations than on any sinister property of the drug. The drug, notes Dr. H.B.M. Murphy of McGill University, may release repressed feelings of hostility. Alcohol, he adds, will do the same. Similar reasoning seems to apply to claims that marijuana stimulates sexual aggressiveness. "What's the sex life of the users?" asks Dr. Richard Blum of Stanford's Institute for the Study of Human Problems. "That's the real question." Although there are persistent reports that marijuana highs may act to intensify sexual pleasure—for example, by prolonging orgasm—the drug isn't considered an aphrodisiac. In fact, Blum adds, sexual interest and capacity may often be dimin-

live in neighborhoods where narcotics are also available, these are the pot users most likely to graduate to heroin, the more pervasive eradicator of consciousness. Then there are the samplers and the chronic potheads. The sampler is usually a middle-class youngster who tries an occasional marijuana joint to see if the drug really does heighten his awareness and appreciation of music, philosophy, art—and people. The chronic pothead may come from the same background; he feels empty and alienated from the world around him. The pothead, says Columbia's Liebert, "takes marijuana regularly and compulsively. It fills a definite need to relieve intolerable tension and depression." And Rand's McGlothlin says persistent users "will be less achievement-oriented, less competitive."

Should It Be Legalized? Few physicians believe that the apparent safety of marijuana justifies legalizing its use. "Our society has opted for enough escape mechanisms already—liquor, caffeine, and cigarettes," says Dr. Donald Louria of New York's Cornell Medical College. "Why not let everyone have two barbiturates a day or two amphetamines? You have to draw the line." "We pay a pretty frightening price for the privilege of using alcohol legally," says a member of the American Medical Association's Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. "Seventy or 80 million people use it and 5 or 6 million cannot use it but abuse it." The committee will soon issue a comprehensive review, based on a year-long study, of the use of marijuana for the guidance of U.S. physicians who may meet pot users as patients. The committee, however, is expected to take no position on the question of removing marijuana from classification as a narcotic; nor is it expected to say anything about liberalizing pot laws.

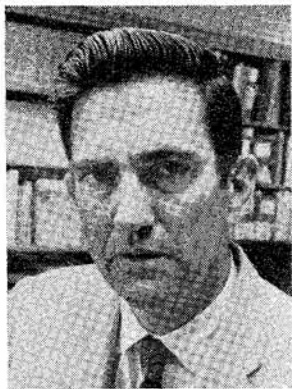
The Need for Research: No one has yet found just where pot acts in the brain and what it does to nerve cells. One reason so little research has been done, of course, is the legal red tape involved in obtaining pot for laboratory use. But interest has been aroused recently by Dr. Raphael Mechoulam of Hebrew University, Jerusalem. Mechoulam this year learned to synthesize one of the active ingredients of marijuana resin, and showed that it produced marijuana effects in volunteers. Currently Mechoulam and Dr. Edward C. Taylor of Princeton are working on the synthesis of other pot ingredients, research that could eventually increase supplies for laboratory research. And the National Institute of Mental Health has sponsored \$625,000 in marijuana research in the U.S. during the past fiscal year, and plans to increase the amount in the next year. "Advocates of legalized pot," says NIMH director Stanley Yolles, "are going a little too fast without any real fundamental information about its pharmacological effects."



Newsweek—Robert R. McElroy



James D. Wilson



Newsweek—Bob Grosh

Louria, Powelson, McGlothlin: Still a lot to learn

ideas become disjointed and flow freely.

The drug can cause deep anxiety and panic, again depending on the user's personality. A high dose may produce vivid hallucinations similar to an LSD trip. Even normal doses of marijuana can bring out underlying psychotic symptoms or psychological instabilities: feelings of paranoia may be increased under pot.

As a stimulant to the creative drive and profound thought, marijuana is possibly overrated. Many marijuana users are convinced that they attain new insights under the influence of pot. "But," says Dr. Robert S. Liebert, psychiatric consultant at New York's Columbia University, "when I talk to a kid who is 'turned on,' I have the sense of relating through a glass partition."

Most researchers have found little reason to blame marijuana for crimes or violent behavior. Many reports linking criminal acts to marijuana come from the defendants themselves and, therefore, may only be pretexts. "Even if marijuana does release inhibitions," says Dr. Sanford Feinglass of the University of Cali-

ornia Medical School, "it is not certain that the user will be moved to act."

Physical Effects: Marijuana typically causes a slight increase in pulse rate and a slight reddening of the membranes around the eyes. Although users sometimes become nauseated, the drug characteristically increases the appetite. Death, from the depressant effect of extremely large doses, has rarely been reported; by contrast, cirrhosis of the liver, heart conditions and other disorders brought about by alcoholism claim some 20,000 lives in the U.S. every year. "If I had to choose between alcohol and pot," says Dr. David H. Powelson, chief of psychiatric services at Berkeley, "I'd choose pot." Still, marijuana can hinder the individual's ability to function. Even small doses produce unsteadiness. Since spatial perception, as well as coordination, is affected, a marijuana user may be as dangerous as a drunk behind the wheel.

Who Uses It: Pot smokers nowadays comprise three broad groups. First there are the prisoners of the ghetto, who turn to marijuana to escape the grinding despair of their circumstances. Since they

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na use be eased. And in Great Britain, the marijuana trial of Rolling Stones singers Mick Jagger and Keith Richards attracted such straight journals as the *New Statesman* and *Spectator* to the cause of more permissive laws. The laws dealing with marijuana, the *Spectator* notes, should be "essentially legislation of control and not modeled on the legislation of prohibition."

Indeed, the prohibitive laws against marijuana in America today, like those against alcohol in the 1920s, have not significantly diminished its use and, in fact, may have increased it. Under Federal law, sale or importation of marijuana carries a minimum sentence of five years for the first offense, ten years for the second, while first-offense possession carries a penalty of two years. State laws are equally severe, although, in practice, judges often suspend sentences on first offenders charged with possession. These laws have driven the whole pot culture underground where there are no firm statistics on the number of users only on those caught. Marijuana arrests in the U.S. more than doubled from 7,000 in 1964 to 15,000 in 1966. In New York City alone, the amount of pot seized by the Narcotics Bureau doubled in two years from 817 pounds in 1964 to 1,680 pounds last year (a pound yields as many as 1,000 joints, or cigarettes). But these

statistics reflect only an infinitesimal part of the pot picture, since most middle-class smokers, exercising a modicum of discretion, are never arrested.

More revealing are campus surveys at Princeton, Yale and Caltech that put the number of undergraduates who have at least experimented with marijuana at about 25 per cent. "They are a small but talented minority," says Yale psychologist Kenneth Keniston. "They are generally very bright, hard-working students who maintain A and B averages." Beyond the surveys, the badges of a whole subculture attest to the pervasiveness of marijuana. Besides the pop songs that invite their young listeners to "turn off your mind, relax and float downstream," there are the buttons ("Legalize Pot"), the psychedelic posters with their shimmering colors and the head shops with their water pipes and "roach" holders (photo). One smoker, noting the sale of 400 packages of roll-your-own Zig-Zag papers at a San Francisco psychedelic shop, observes: "There just aren't that many cowboys in this town."

Hip on the Square: Pot circulates freely. It is smuggled into the U.S. across the Mexican border in the pockets of college students, in the trunks and hollow side panels of automobiles, even through the mails. Says a television director in Boston: "You don't have to go to Harvard Square dressed in a black cape at mid-

night. You can get a joint easier in the great state of Massachusetts than you can bum a cigarette."

The lurid antimarijuana posters of the '30s pictured pot parties as debauches. In reality, most resemble quiet cocktail parties—small evening gatherings among friends. For the casual (once or twice a month) smokers, these parties offer an alternative many prefer to the drinking party. "Alcohol dulls your sensitivity to your environment," a 30-year-old Los Angeles real-estate man argues. "Pot heightens it." For the regular (once or twice a week) smoker, the party scene may be orchestrated to heighten the high. Rock music and Indian raga assault the ear. Psychedelic posters and homemade stroboscopes trick the eye. But, casual or contrived, pot parties tend to be relatively tranquil affairs, not simply because too much noise might alert the police, but because the drug itself usually leads to a withdrawal into the world of the senses. For many, this is the best of all possible worlds. Says a brokerage-house assistant in New York: "It's more entertaining, cheaper and cleaner than movies, less degrading than alcohol, less dangerous than tobacco and much more enlightening than television. It's the workingman's answer to all the nonsense in the world today."

Whether or not marijuana really lives up to these ardent endorsements, a great

KEEPING ON THE GRASS

Reporter Kate Coleman, a 1965 graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, interviewed grass (marijuana) dealers and regular and part-time pot smokers on the technology of marijuana. This is what she found:

Potheads say that marijuana, like wine, comes in different varieties—some superb, some good, some terrible. But, because only a few kinds are readily accessible, most pot smokers have only sampled the more common types of grass that find their way into this country through the Mexican-American border. Just as grapes grown in different climates and soil produce different wines, so too with marijuana. The staple for American heads is green Mexican grass of reputedly ordinary quality. Worse than ordinary by all accounts is the polluted grass grown in window boxes by economical New Yorkers, but some people will smoke anything.

Generally, Mexican grass grows up to 5 feet, with the potency concentrated in the top buds. A dealer named Peter claims that the all-time supersmoke is the top cut of Mexico's vintage grass, called *Acapulco Gold* (there was a re-

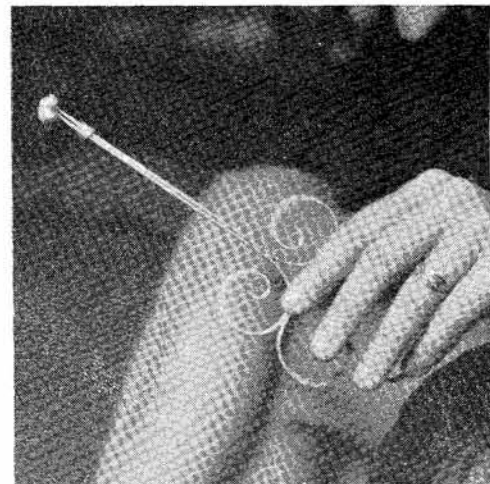


Rolling and roaching: 'It just won't be as much fun if its legal'

cent hit record entitled "*Acapulco Gold*").

Potheads say there is good *Gold* and great *Gold*, but never bad *Gold*. The higher the smoker gets, as a rule, the higher the price. In New York, where an average ounce of pot sells for \$15 to \$25, *Gold* is \$50 an ounce, but then, *Gold* smokers claim, you need to smoke only half as much for a much better high. Other prime grass is *Panama Red*. Those who smoke the *Panama* stuff—which sells for \$30 an ounce—call it "smooth, almost like hashish."

Because grass is much more plentiful on the West Coast, California "joints" are rolled much fatter than they are in New



York. New York users say that they roll skinny joints because it is a more economical way to smoke—that is, they get more of a high from a thin joint because it burns more slowly and wastes less smoke. Also, in California, "roaches" (the butts of a joint) are carelessly tossed away. In New York they are scrupulously saved for a rainy day. The true head, however, saves roaches for another reason: he believes the potency "gathers" in the roach so that one gets higher from the last third of a joint.

Most pot smokers dislike handling roaches because they are small and hard to hold without burning the fingers. But

many lawyers, legislators, judges and prosecuting attorneys agree that the penalties for smoking pot ought to be softened. "There is no question that the laws are too stiff," says Judge Francis McCarthy of San Francisco County, where a second marijuana conviction can carry a tougher sentence than first-degree armed robbery or forcible rape. "If some youngster is convicted of having a cigarette, he is a felon and there is nothing a judge can do." "I know from my own trial experience what a marijuana conviction can do to a young man or woman," says Illinois State Assistant Attorney Charles Leary, who prosecutes the marijuana cases but is puzzled by the laws. "They face much the same problems as guys who are convicted for robbery. They will probably have trouble getting jobs. The boys may not be able to get into the military. It's not easy to live with a police record." But most policemen and narcotics agents believe that the present laws are necessary. "Marijuana," says Lt. Norbert Currie, head of San Francisco's narcotic section, "changes the whole pattern of life of these kids, gives them antisocial attitudes. They become nonexistent people."

Both sides will have their day in court this September, when a 37-year-old maverick Boston attorney named Joseph Oteri plans to challenge the constitutionality of Federal and Massachusetts state

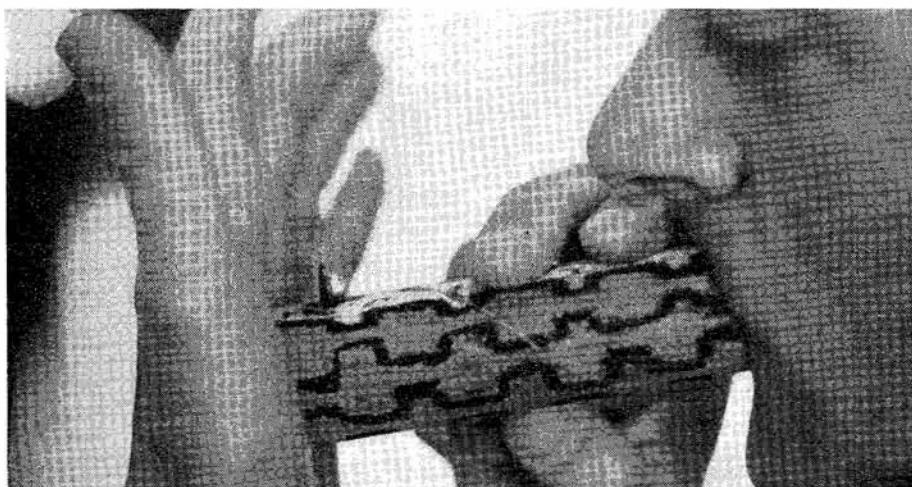
laws against marijuana. "If we can show that pot is not harmful to the body, behavior and mind," says Oteri, a former Marine Corps captain, "then no one has the authority to regulate pot any more than they can bananas and Wheaties." Also this fall, Michigan State Sen. Roger Craig of Dearborn will be introducing two bills striking marijuana from the state's narcotic laws. "I am convinced," says Craig, "that this stuff does not belong in the same classification as heroin. Perhaps it more rightly belongs with glue sniffing as a misdemeanor."

'Our Thing': The legal battle over marijuana is just a small skirmish in the much larger war between the mainstream of American society and a disfavored minority mainly under 30. Marijuana has become for some of this new generation a symbol of its discontent with basic American values, with the goals and life style of the older generation. The 28-year-old folk singer Judy Collins, in fact, refers to her peers as the "marijuana generation" and their parents as the "alcohol generation." Pot, they feel, is their thing, uncorrupted by the adult world, their drug in a society already saturated with drugs. "Many of us would not be alive at all if we were not living in a sense in a drug culture," says Dr. Humphrey Osmond, psychiatrist at the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute in Princeton, N.J. "We use aspirin for our

headaches, penicillin for our infections, and the middle class has always had its psychic drugs—alcohol, cigarettes, coffee. The atmosphere of the present is supercharged with stimulation, and pot is the drug that youth believes fits its present needs."

"Ten years ago," says Howard Becker, a sociologist at Northwestern University who studied the marijuana culture in the 1950s before it came "downtown," "it was a big step for a college person to smoke pot. His main source of information was scary stories in the press. Now it is a personal decision, about the same as the question of sex for college girls; ten years ago, it was an open-and-shut case—nice girls remained chaste. Now both are regarded as something that is sometimes right and sometimes wrong, without hard and fast rules. It is a question left up to the individual."

Frightening Scene: As the medical evidence indicates, the effects of marijuana vary with the individual personality and the "scene" setting. Some young people find it a disappointment, a mild pleasure much exaggerated by their friends. One attractive, young New York girl, with a private-school background, found her first experience frightening and her second pleasurable. The first time she smoked with people she didn't know well in a seedy room; the second was among old friends in an ele-



Steamboating: 'Call it a steam roller. Man, it really flattens you'

the American underground has solved that problem with various kinds of "roach-holders." One favorite roach-holder is made from a common domestic item, the empty toilet roll. This little contraption is called a steamboat because the roach looks like the smokestack on a steamboat (photo). But, as one head says: "They should call it a steam roller, man, it really flattens you!" Another favorite is the jeweled roach-holder sold by hippie jewelers in silver and brass.

If there are numerous kinds of grass, there are just as many kinds of papers to roll it in. The most famous are white Zig-Zag papers with the well-known bearded

face that is now reproduced on pop posters, T-shirts and buttons.

Some marijuana smokers swear by pipes, arguing that it's a better way to smoke and that they don't waste pot this way. Still others are devoted to the water pipe, and the underground market is glutted with all kinds of water pipes—from a simple chemistry lab contraption of glass tubing and bowl to an ornately decorated Oriental hookah design. Water pipes are considered pleasurable because they "cool" the smoke, supposedly making it less harsh on the throat.

Because the pot field is open for experiment and design—e.g., the steamboat

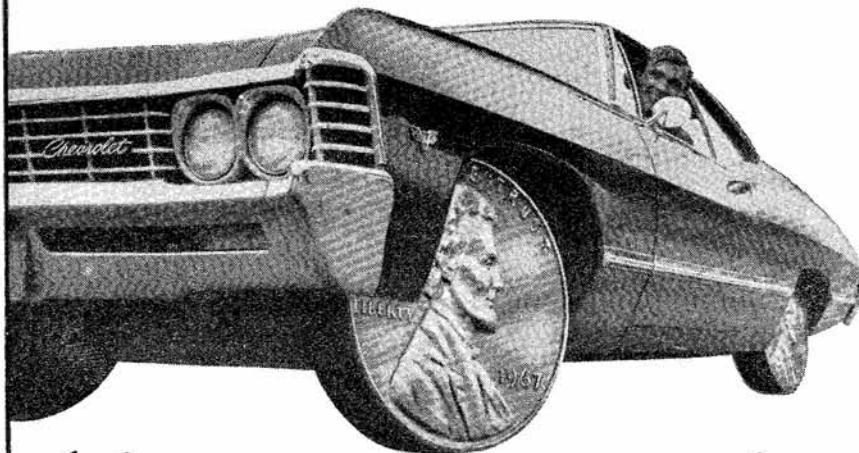
—a high degree of participation is involved. It is what McLuhan would call a "cool" medium. Maybe this is part of the reason why smokers report taking such delight in an innovational holder. If pot could be bought ready-made in cigarettes, heads would no doubt still get high, but it seems the "fun" of making one's own smoke would be gone. Similarly, even when it is not economically necessary to conserve the grass, some people like the ritual of passing the joint from hand to hand.

High Risk: Most users report that there is little legal risk in smoking with known friends, but in buying, the risk is tripled. Buyers' rule No. 1: you must know whom you are buying from. Usually heads find a dealer through a friend. Their second rule: never buy pot from the petty dealer of "nickel and dime bags" (\$5 and \$10 packets of grass); he sells in cafés or coffee shops and is easily spotted by the "narc" or "fuzz."

These days, potheads have a new worry. With more and more middle-class "straights" joining the ranks of pot smokers, heads fear that it means the end of their underground culture. "It just won't be as much fun if it's legal," says one user. It may well be true that squares who smoke pot will make pot more square.

Most pot smokers, however, want pot legalized and the jail penalties removed. Despite misgivings, they proselytize for pot even among squares, explaining that the more people who turn on, the better the chances for more liberal laws.

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gant apartment where she felt at home.

Most users claim marijuana enables them to heighten inner experience. "The older generation," says Father Carlo Weber, a Jesuit priest and psychologist at Los Angeles's Loyola University, "lives in an achievement culture, zeroed in on alcohol and symbolized by the cocktail party where people go to become anonymous and dip into a great cloud of escape. The new generation doesn't want to run away. It wants to look at the ultimates." The University of California sociologist Edgar Z. Friedenberg, author of "The Vanishing Adolescent," adds: "Alcohol primarily relieves anxiety and promotes optimism. It makes the society and what one has to do in society okay. Pot



Suffolk Sun

Pot bust: 'Ruined for life'

on the other hand, turns you inside yourself. Imagine a 25th college reunion with pot, not flasks." But Joel Fort, former director of San Francisco's Center for Special Problems, scoffs at all the paeans to pot. "If marijuana were not called terrible by society," says Fort, "everyone would find it is a mild drug that has little effect except to stimulate the appetite, slow down the time sense and create a mild euphoria, and that would be that. Then we could go on to the bigger problems of facing life as it is." Yale psychologist Keniston agrees: "There isn't any evidence that people are any smarter or more beautiful or wiser taking pot, but there's a lot of evidence that they feel that way."

"What worries me," says Keniston, "is the state of the nation where the most exciting thing available to the brightest young people is marijuana. After all, pot is a pretty poor kick, a poor substitute for real, active, exciting, meaningful experience. My complaint with marijuana is not that it hurts the smoker physically, but

Newsweek, July 24, 1967

WHY THEY DO IT

The author of this article is a 21-year-old graduate of an Ivy League college, where he was a Newsweek correspondent.

BY ANDREW GARVIN



Like many of my college friends, I first smoked marijuana as an experiment. It was parallel to the excitement of my first cigarette, my first drink, my first sexual experience. Physically the experience was disappointing. I was only dimly aware of any increased sensitivity to sights and sounds; holding the smoke in my lungs made me dizzy.

In the next year I smoked grass about a dozen times; the sensations were not extraordinary. For me, marijuana induced a pleasant feeling of relaxation, a light-headedness, an increased awareness of colors, a more acute ear for music. In others, the reaction is sometimes much more intense.

I am not a pothead or a hippie. My hair is comparatively short, my dress conservative. The friends who passed me that first experimental pipeful of grass were surprised that I would even consider such an indulgence. Now, it may be an occasional, pleasant diversion, physically provocative and esthetically rewarding. But smoking grass did not alter the course of my life or uproot my mind. It is simply a casual facet of existence, comparable to other engaging distractions such as skiing.

Desire for Experience: Let me clear up one point: smoking grass may not be a social norm among my contemporaries, but it is certainly acceptable behavior. A recent survey at one Eastern college showed 35 per cent of the undergraduates had used marijuana. The reason, of course, is that our generation doesn't believe there is anything immoral, or antisocial, or inherently objectionable about pot. The sudden increase in the use of marijuana is, in part, the reflection of a new spirit, based on the expression of tolerance, love and integrity, and on the desire for authentic, individual experience. To be sure, peripherally it is also a means of escape from the day-to-day rat race.

Without the 30-year-old laws, pot would be a nonissue, because few members of the younger generation really care if their friends smoke grass or not. Ours is a tolerant generation, asking for the tolerance of the society in which it lives. It is particularly strange that a society which easily tolerates cigarettes and alcohol simultaneously condemns marijuana. Since grass is usually smoked at

small, private gatherings, its use seldom affects anyone but those individuals who choose to participate, and most potheads believe the objections of the adult generation are due to an unfamiliarity with the drug scene in general. I was once told by one of my elders that smoking marijuana would cause heroin addiction, mental aberrations, and sexual licentiousness. I have absolutely no desire to use any other drugs, my mind is still sound, and no one has yet proved that pot leads to free love, although a few of my friends report an increase in sexual pleasure (as distinguished from "urge").

Personal Morality: The attitude of the new generation was exemplified at a recent meeting of a student society. The discussion turned toward "the moral implications of smoking marijuana," and everyone rapidly agreed that smoking pot was, above all, a matter of individual choice and personal morality. Society, the group agreed, could not define the immorality of marijuana, except when the drug could contribute to cases of criminal negligence, e.g., driving under its influence. At the end of the meeting, the fifteen members voted to have a pot session (only five had previously smoked). One member later declined to participate, but his decision was not derided, and he did not condemn the others.

The solution to the "pot issue" is of course obvious: the outdated and outmoded laws must be revamped. To the new generation, the future legalization of marijuana appears an inevitable result of current trends, and student leaders such as Strobe Talbott, chairman of the Yale Daily News, have exhorted society to modify or repeal the existing regulations. Unfortunately, that society—perhaps obsessed by its fears of a "new" drug—has so far chosen to do very little.

Means of escape from the pressures of modern life are continually being devised. In America, alcohol has been the traditional after-hours lifter. Now, an additional method of diversion is being accepted—more personal and intense perhaps, but no less valid. Even if smoking marijuana only leads to a different form of drunkenness, its legalization should be as desirable as the official sanction of alcohol. The nation is not going to flip out because I choose to smoke grass on a particular evening.

that it turns this bright young person away from society and robs society of his talents and energies."

Yet it is this very disbelief in the possibility of meaningful experience in society that has turned so many of the new generation inward. In the past, restless young Americans often found ways to express their idealism in a variety of outlets—the frontier, the war to make the world safe for democracy, the New Deal, the Kennedy summons to action. Today too many such avenues seem closed. While most young people still find the challenge of their studies and their jobs worthwhile, sociologists and educators note among a significant minority a sense of boredom with their routines. Unlike the children of the Depression, today's youth doesn't have to scramble for a place on the economic ladder. The products of unprecedented affluence, the middle-class young assume there will always be bread and jobs.

Politically, too, there are signs of frustration—about LBJ and the war in Vietnam, about the black-only policy of the militant civil-rights movement, about the seeming futility of political activism. Even the old alternative of dropping out of school to think things over has been cut off for some by the draft. Instead, they drop out temporarily with pot.

Searching: Still, the number of young people who begin by dropping out occasionally and end up as chronic potheads is small—probably less than 5 per cent of the total number of Americans who have tried marijuana. And most doctors and sociologists believe that full-scale legalization would not swell these numbers alarmingly. Says Dr. David H. Powlson, chief of psychiatric services at the University of California, at Berkeley: "The question of what would happen to society if everyone used pot assumes that if some people use it, everyone will use it. It's always been generally available, and still only a few use it."

For all the anguished wringing of hands about the new hedonism and irresponsibility of American youth and the degeneration of American values at the hands of drugs, most young people are still sufficiently turned on by the more traditional pleasures—the first encounters of love, the magnet of travel and the satisfactions of learning and creative work. And, if the young don't realize it, their parents can point out that youth in itself can be the greatest "turn-on." From this perspective, marijuana is only one wave length in the spectrum of experience.

Indeed, the marijuana revolution may prove to be essentially no different from the alcohol revolution among young people in the 1920s and the sexual revolution on American campuses in the 1940s and 1950s. It is an expression in the 1960s of the continuing impulse in every new generation to test and sample new and often forbidden experience. In this sense, pot is indeed the intoxicant of a new generation—not necessarily a lost one, but one that is searching.