

oted passion in student hearts

Time to move away from marijuana myths and fears

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What turns a "drug" into a "bad drug"?

Is it the mind-altering effects that have the user seeing flying badgers sailing through burning hula hoops while screaming, "Throw the cat up here; he can fly too!"? Is it because the user develops bad habits causing him to be "shady," a thief and a murderer?

What makes a substance that has been put on the market to help people deal with pain, anxiety and other health problems transform into a substance that has you "tripping balls" while popping acid.

After years of pondering this very question, my

Ignorant abusers ... that's another story. Just like the downside of every goddamn thing we do in this world, there is some poor schmo who hasn't figured it out that maybe, just maybe, one is not invisible and that this world has a kaleidoscope of things that kick you on your ass without a hesitation. These users are the ones giggling like "school girls" in the corner, reeking of cologne and distrib class.

This is where the propaganda comes in (to be fair, on both sides).

"Propaganda A" - America's favorite slogan, "Don't do (fill in the blank), it will kill you!" Really? Do you really think a drug like marijuana is more likely to kill than a common household drug like Advil?

"There are hundreds of alcohol overdose deaths each year, yet there has never been a marijuana overdose death in history," claims SAFERchoice.org

Granted, too much of anything could overload our already delicate system and the abundance/abuse of anything (including food) could shut it down and we would die. However, I'm not naive enough for the government to convince me that "smoking a bowl" with some friends will have us falling over dead.

Another propaganda ploy was a movie called "Reefer Madness" that was filmed to "enlighten" the public and inform the youth of the dangers of "Marihuana." As far as propaganda goes this was the most poorly put together, yet ironically, somehow most effective piece funneled into the American homes. The movie shows how after a few puffs from a joint of this "violent narcotic" will turn the user into a paranoid, raping murderer.

Another well versed anti-marijuana myth is "Marijuana is a gateway drug." People, please. Marijuana is not something that is going to drown the brain in some mind control hogwash that makes



the user say, "Hey, you know what? I've had so much fun with my Mary Jane, I think I'm going to go fuck with Crystal now, because damn it, Mary is just not hardcore enough for me." The user who wants to play with methamphetamine is probably already an abuser and is looking for the next thrill. A user is going to know their limits and stick to that.

Even the Drug Policy Alliance Network admits that "Marijuana does not cause people to use hard drugs."

DPA Network continues to state, "What the gateway theory presents as a causal explanation is a statistic association between common and uncommon drugs, an association that changes over time as different drugs increase and decrease in prevalence.

Marijuana is the most popular illegal drug in the United States today.

Therefore, people who have used less popular drugs such as heroin, cocaine and LSD, are likely to have also used marijuana. Most marijuana users never use any other illegal drug. Indeed, for the large majority of people, marijuana is a terminus rather than a gateway drug."

"Propaganda B" - The other side of the fence. This is where I'd classify dealers who feed lines to the teetering possible consumers. An example would be, "Smoking marijuana while pregnant will actually help the baby become smarter" or any of those outrageous claims that can be cast like a net over the unsuspecting and reel them in along with some of their friends.

However, a "good dealer" is rarely a user or abuser. They are shrewd business men or women and/or propaganda masters who know more about the consumer and how they tick than the consumer knows about him or her.

But abusers and propaganda artists won't just go away with some silly ban or outlaw of the drug; rather the better plan of action is legalizing it. Or we can take the route that Amsterdam did.

Amsterdam.info states the uniqueness of Amsterdam laws, "It

is directed by an idea that every human being may decide about the matters of its own health."

If marijuana was legal, we could treat it like alcohol, regulate and tax it. In fact, when it comes right down to it, alcohol has more damaging effects on the brain than marijuana.

It is Amsterdam.info that I return to make this point. In Amsterdam they have strict laws that limit the quantities of the soft drugs such as marijuana. There are also conditions of sale and use. And just like alcohol, driving under the influence of the soft drugs is taken seriously.

It's like picking your "poison" in this life. Everyone develops a vice that hinders the ability to function the ideal way in society, whether that is drugs, relationships, eating disorders or a "freaky fetish" and unless we want to be living automations manipulated by the clever artist, let's stop the slander and let us teach our youth how to have moderation in our vices. After all, it's not the gun; it's the hand that pulls the trigger.

answer is propaganda and abusers.

You can give me all the sad, sappy, terrible, you (fill in the blank) stories you want, but the point that remains is when it comes to drugs, it won't effect you the same way as the living, breathing carbon life form sitting right next to you. This is the reason why we have competent users and ignorant abusers, and no, they are not the same.

Competent users can sit down, use the drug, let it run its course and then get up and be productive again without bumblng up the non-user's day. These kinds of users currently keep their affairs low to the ground and quite possibly have already come to class without you even knowing that they are "high."