

Specialized marijuana-related sites

www.nowonline.com/marijuana/do_dance.html (Weed-lovin' authors)
<http://members.xoom.com/seedlink/index.htm> (Seed banks)
<http://directory.netscape.com/Society/Issues/Drugs/ProLegalization/Marijuana> (Marijuana search engine)

General interest marijuana sites

www.grandpaspotbook.com/
www.marijuana-hemp.com/cwd/index.html
www.angelfire.com/fl2/dmcguire/index.html
www.newscientist.com/nsplus/insight/drugs/marijuana/thedop
www.marijuanamagazine.com/

was released, dispelling the myth that its use caused violent crime or aggression, anti-social behaviour or mental breakdown. The report, called the Wootton Report, was not well publicized at the time of its release, and the results got very little attention.

These misconceptions were perpetuated by anti-drug campaigns that portrayed marijuana users as criminals and junkies, and the message that only losers smoke pot

"People who know nothing about pot, who have never smoked it, have a bad impression of it because of what they were told," said Dalhousie University student Rory Tweedie. "They rely on old propaganda, like [the movie] *Reefer Madness*, that made pot look like a harmful drug that changed people into something bad."

The concept of a marijuana overdose has also been proven impossible. The Wootton Report calculated that it would require about a pound and a half of cannabis to cause someone to fatally overdose.

A report by the World Health Organization (WHO) determined that marijuana not only was less of a health hazard than cigarettes and alcohol, but that someone that used pot on the same scale as alcohol or tobacco would suffer less medical repercussions, according to NewScientist.com. The report, which was the first report on cannabis done by the WHO since 1984, also highlighted instances where violence and crime could be directly linked to alcohol — a legal substance — whereas no cases were linked to cannabis — an illegal substance.

But despite all the evidence that cannabis is not the brain-killing monster it was once thought to be, the opposition to legalization in any degree is huge. In the US, opposition has arisen from anyone from religious groups to First Ladies. Nancy Reagan made a concentrated move against drugs, including marijuana, with her Just Say No campaign, which is still being repeated in the US.

One of the problems expressed by opposition to legalization for medicinal purposes is the argument that smoking marijuana — one of the most effective methods of consumption — is too detrimental to the respiratory system to justify medicinal use. However, several companies are presently in the process of developing inhalers similar to that of asthma inhaler, designed specifically for marijuana consumption.

The problem with weed as seen by some is when it becomes another substance to abuse. It is felt that while occasional smokers pose no threat to themselves or others, but chronic smokers are doing irreparable damage.

"It is a form of substance abuse. Abuse, beyond use, is detrimental physically and mentally," said Const. Peter Keirstead of the RCMP Drug Awareness force. "Public awareness is the best way to deal with weed, to give good information so that people can make educated decisions for themselves. People who want to just legalize [marijuana] don't look at both sides."

The wide-scale popularity of the drug also insures that its availability remains relatively constant. "[Large seizures in Halifax] don't really make much of a difference," said Keirstead. "The demand for [marijuana] means it will just come from somewhere else."

So where does the war on pot go from here? With such a divergence in opinion and lack of sufficient education, who knows? The benefits of medicinal marijuana need to be looked at without the stigmatized perception of its effects before our culture will be able to look at legal recreational drug use.

Even living examples are of little use. The Dutch, for one, legalized small amounts of personal possession of marijuana in 1976, and even have designated places for consumption, but whether or not this has a negative or positive effect has never been agreed upon. There are those who feel that the Dutch have opened themselves up to a barrage of harder drugs, claiming that marijuana is a 'gateway' drug, leading to other, more harmful drugs. There are also those that feel that the legalization of pot has made the Netherlands a more pleasant, relaxed atmosphere, and has opened their culture to a more profound development.

The present situation has to change, however. The illegality of pot means nothing other than the people that are consuming it, for the most part, are being labelled criminals.

Pot-related movies

Half Baked
All Cheech and Chong
Homegrown
Easy Rider
Dazed and Confused

Pot-references in TV

That 70 Show
The Cosby Show
Degrassi High
The Wonder Years
WKRP

Musicians for pot

Crypress Hill
Tom Petty
Dr Dre
Willie Nelson
Bob Marley

