



海外インタビュー

マリファナ・スモーカーに聞く

James MacKenzie
Peter Smagorinsky

Hello. My name is Pete Smagorinsky. I'm a reporter for English today magazine on American trends presently operating out of Chicago. This month's topic is the use of marijuana in the United States and this afternoon I'm going to be discussing this subject with a graduate student at the University of Chicago. Our talk will center on current use of marijuana in the United States, attitudes towards it and speculation on its future. Of course, while the views of one person do not necessarily reflect the views of all Americans, I think that we can use this person's opinions as a barometer for the majority of American's under 30 years of age who do smoke marijuana.

Pete : To start off the questioning, I think that our listeners would like to know when exactly you did start to smoke marijuana.

James : Well, I began when I was in my second year of college. But most of my friends started smoking marijuana when they were in high school, usually around their junior, senior year. But I know lot of kids who started when they were in junior high school and there have even been kids in elementary school that have been found smoking pot.

Pete : That's very young — elementary school. For those listeners who are familiar with elementary school, that's students who are twelve years old and under. Do you think this is a bad trend that such young people are starting to smoke pot?

James : Well, it really depends on whether you look at pot smoking as a good or a bad thing. I look at it as simply just a way to enjoy

myself. I smoke pot and it's very relaxing. It's a way to just have a good time and sit back¹. It's especially nice listening to music. The problem is though that I can't smoke very often because it tends to make me very tired the next morning and sort of lethargic². I don't want to work that much. I have to really force myself to get started the next day doing things. And I think that's really one of the big problems with smoking pot. Heavy users, people that are smoking five or six times a day, just really don't care a lot of times what they're doing. They tend to just sit back and let life go by. I guess this would be the most serious problem too with younger kids because they start smoking pot and they get in this habit and it very much retards their social and their intellectual development. They keep to themselves. They're very distracted in school. It's hard for them to get involved, to concentrate enough to do school-work. So, in that sense I would say, yes it is bad to a certain degree.

Marijuana smoking, I think, should be treated very much the same way as alcohol — you can't buy it unless you're eighteen or nineteen. Although this doesn't stop kids from getting a hold of it, it would at least give some kind of a more control sort of distribution of marijuana. As it is now it's sold on the streets and it's probably much easier for anybody to get hold of³ if they want it, and they want to get hold of it, especially the younger kids.

Pete : Now, in terms of quality control, do you think that the fact that it would be sold under

federal supervision would increase the quality of what is generally purchased?

James : The marijuana that you buy on the street, you really have no idea what it's like. Somebody says, well this is really good stuff and you pay more for that and then a lot of times you get stuff that's just terrible and it's even treated a lot of times with other drugs. I suppose this is one of the big dangers of marijuana. It's that it can be treated with speed⁴ or other drugs like that to give you a different kind of a high. And if the government took over they could get a very uniform standard for the quality of pot. That would be a lot better in itself.

The actual cost of marijuana and the price that you pay for it on the street, the difference is just enormous. And the government could realize a huge profit and at the same time destroy one of the largest black market items in the Country today so that it would be economically a very sound⁵ kind of thing to do since it seems as if it is around here to stay.

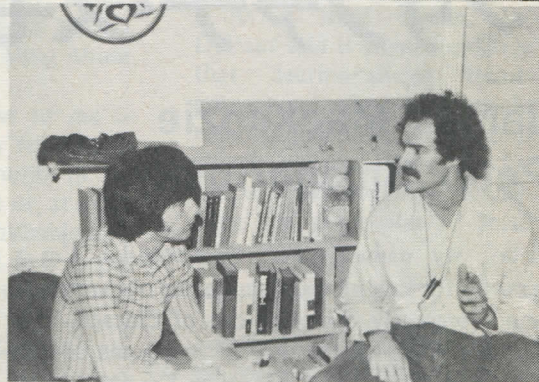
Pete : Yes, that's true. It's a very peculiar industry in that marijuana is nothing more than a weed that grows wildly in a lot of areas and just has these remarkable powers to alter one's perception of reality.⁶

As I understand it if you are in a country such as Colombia you can purchase one kilo which is equivalent to two and a half pounds of pot for perhaps ten dollars but by the time it gets to the United States it costs 40 to 60 dollars for just one ounce. This is an incredible difference in prices. I think that the government would be wise really to take a cut of this.⁷

Didn't you say that the reason you smoke it is to escape reality?

James : Well, it's really just a way to relax, a way to enjoy yourself. And the problem is that there is sort of a separation from reality in the sense that you tend to want to isolate yourself. And in that way I guess it is a bad thing. In a certain sense, you have to be careful.

Pete : It seems to me then, that if you have nothing really, no concrete experiences to relate this removal from reality⁸ to, it can be bad. If you just have this unreal experience to relate to, then you are hurting yourself. Is that what you're trying to say?



James : Yes, in a sense, I think you really are.

But again, I think it's very much like alcohol or like anything else. You can abuse⁹ it if you are really not careful about the way you use it, and the times you use it. You certainly wouldn't go drinking before you went into a lecture or something, or a class. And it's the same thing with marijuana. It doesn't make sense to do that.

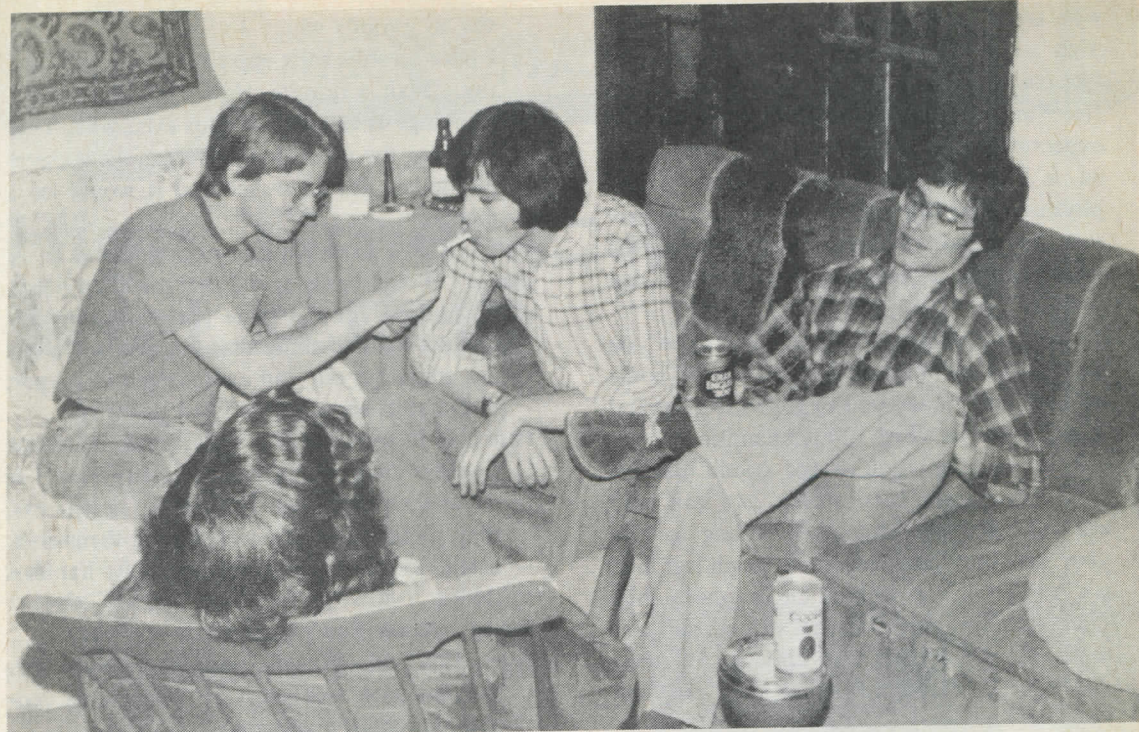
Pete : I agree with you very much there. But from what I understand from speaking with you here and from what I've read in the papers about the great number of young people who smoke it so often, people who get up out of bed and smoke a joint first thing, why do so many people abuse it?

James : Well, I think that originally people started smoking marijuana because it became very much a cult thing.¹⁰ And in the sixties and maybe a little bit earlier than that, it was the kind of thing that you did if you were really trying to break away from¹¹ the capitalist society and all those other terms that came up in the sixties, and people used it as a way to identify themselves with a group. And as it gained in its popularity and gained in its general use and acceptance, more and more people started smoking it and it's the kind of thing that if you don't have any direction, if you don't have any drives, if you're not sure



where you're going people in the Country know where they comes an easy escape to worry about what again, I think relation I have with It is an easy way decisions, to avoid can smoke it a doing anything not doing anything heavy smokers juana, it's that a direction and have to come "Well, I'm going wanna go some

Pete : O.K., yes the area of undergoing They're not But how would so many people body smoke elementary school kids, if they is and they do you th



where you're going (which is what so many people in the Country are — they really don't know where they are going), marijuana becomes an easy escape, an easy way to not have to worry about where they're going. And this, again, I think relates back to the one qualification I have with it.

It is an easy way to avoid having to make decisions, to avoid doing things because you can smoke it and feel fine and feel fine not doing anything, and not feel bad that you're not doing anything. So that the problem with heavy smokers is not so much in the marijuana, it's that they sort of, I think, don't have a direction anyway and this helps them not have to come to terms with this and say, "Well, I'm gonna do something with myself, I wanna go somewhere."

Pete : O.K., yes. I think this is certainly true in the area of middle class whites who are undergoing this pretty big identity crisis.¹² They're not quite sure what they are doing. But how would you account for the fact that so many people do it, I think the problem is much more acute¹³ in the cities where everybody smokes all the time. You go into an elementary school these days and just all the kids, if they don't smoke it they know what it is and they know lots of people who do. What do you think accounts for this excessive use

in our cities?

James : Well, I think one of the problems is that in so much of the city there is such great poverty and the environment they're in is so ugly. I really can't say what it's like myself because I've never experienced it but I think that real poverty has to be a very painful thing in so many ways. And so if they smoke pot and it sort of relieves that pain, that gives them an escape from it, then it's something that I can see why they want to do it, why they would do it often.

Pete : Seen in that light, I think it is very understandable even though we might not approve of it, I think we can certainly understand why it happens.

O.K. I'd like to talk about marijuana as it's related to law enforcement. It seems that you read about a lot of pot busts¹⁴ in the paper. But I don't know if pot is the most dangerous drug if you even care to call it that. It seems there are a lot more harmful things that go on that the law enforcement people should concentrate on. Could you expand¹⁵ on this?

James : I think you're very right in saying that they're spending an awful lot of energy arresting people who are simply caught smoking marijuana. It seems what they're doing is that they're trying to get at the source of the whole thing by picking out the little people

特集

High おかし

High Times はア
一誌 (特にドラッグ
る。いまでは駅の売
手に入れることがで
表紙の写真では分
されたたいへん美し
Surrealism-The
など、独特の視点か
本文は長いうえに
マリファナに関する
介しよう。

Watergater Frank Stur

High
April 77

Surrealism
The Art of Dreams

Dope in Cinema. II

Commander Cody's
Homegrown

Furry Freak Bros.

Book Bonus:
Snowblind



who are at the bottom. And the real problems with street dealing and stuff are with drugs like cocaine and heroin, drugs that are addictive¹⁶ and that are harmful. The average life expectancy of a heroin user, once they started, is five years. And heroin causes a severe physical addiction and it's very, very expensive. To support a habit, once you've started taking heroin, it costs a hundred dollars a day or more.

Pete : Yes, I understand. That's the price you pay for the heroin itself, but in order to come up with that money you've got to steal several hundred dollars worth of merchandise.

James : Sure. When you've got goods that are hot,¹⁷ that have been stolen, you can only ask for whatever anybody's willing to give you. And they give you much, much less than it's worth. It's a vicious circle where they get involved in all this crime, stealing all these things just trying to get enough for their "fix"¹⁸ and the addiction is very real and they can't help it.

They would even kill their friends. I mean it's a very serious kind of thing when you get down to the heroin users¹⁹ who are addicted, and who are badly addicted. Whereas, marijuana has no addiction at all, marijuana is not an addictive drug.

Pete : I once had a friend who told me that though pot is not addictive, it's certainly habit forming.²⁰

James : O.K. There is a sort of psychological addiction. You get used to it and then it's hard to stop, but it's not impossible to stop. And I've gone through my own phases where I've smoked almost nothing and then I've got-

ten to periods where I've smoked a lot. And I have to step back every once in a while and say, "Wait a minute. How much pot are you smoking? Is this right?" But even when I was smoking the most that I ever smoked, I spent 30 dollars for an ounce and it would last a month.

Pete : That's a very significant thing there.

James : You'd easily spend that much on liquor, you know, for the same period of time. It's not the kind of thing that marijuana smokers are gonna go out and cause crime to support their habits because that's just not true.

Pete : And from what I understand, marijuana smokers are very much more introverted²¹ as far as their activities. They're not destructive, they prefer to sit and talk among themselves, listen to music, and do basically harmless things.

James : Again, that's true.

Pete : O.K. Would you care to provide our listeners with some sort of overview on your opinions about marijuana?

James : Sure. I've really come to the conclusion that smoking marijuana is not dangerous if it's used in moderation, just like anything else, you know. You've got to be careful with it. But they've shown in many studies that it's not addictive, although it does have some sort of psychological addiction, that's something you can deal with. It's not harmful in any of the other ways. So it is not a dangerous drug. It could be dangerous if you were very heavily into using it all the time. But that's more, I think, a social danger and a danger to your intellectual development than an actual physical danger.

1. sit back くつろぐ, 休む

2. lethargic ぼんやりした

3. get hold of 手に入れる

4. speed 麻酔剤の一種

5. sound 確実な

6. alter one's perception of reality 現実を違った風に見せる

7. take a cut of this 米国に入ると値段が高くなることを規制し, 政府にお金が入るようにする

8. removal from reality 現実から逃れること

9. abuse 乱用する

10. cult thing 一時的な流行

11. break away from ~ ~から逃れる, 脱出する

12. who are undergoing

.....crisis 自分自身が一体何物であるかを見きわめよう, と試みている人たち

13. acute 深刻な

14. pot busts マリファナ喫煙中に警官に踏み込まれること

15. expand (議論などを) 展開させ

る
16. addictive 常用癖を起こさせる

17. hot 盗んだ

18. fix 彼らの必要としているもの
—この場合ヘロイン

19. get down to the heroin users
ヘロイン常用者に話題を移す

20. habit forming 習慣的なこと

21. introverted 内向性の