

Looking at cannabis use through art



by looking at the visual history of cannabis we can tell a great deal about social attitudes, what those were in the past, how they've changed, and also an understanding of where our current viewpoint comes from.

Shennong as depicted in a 1503 painting by Guo Xu

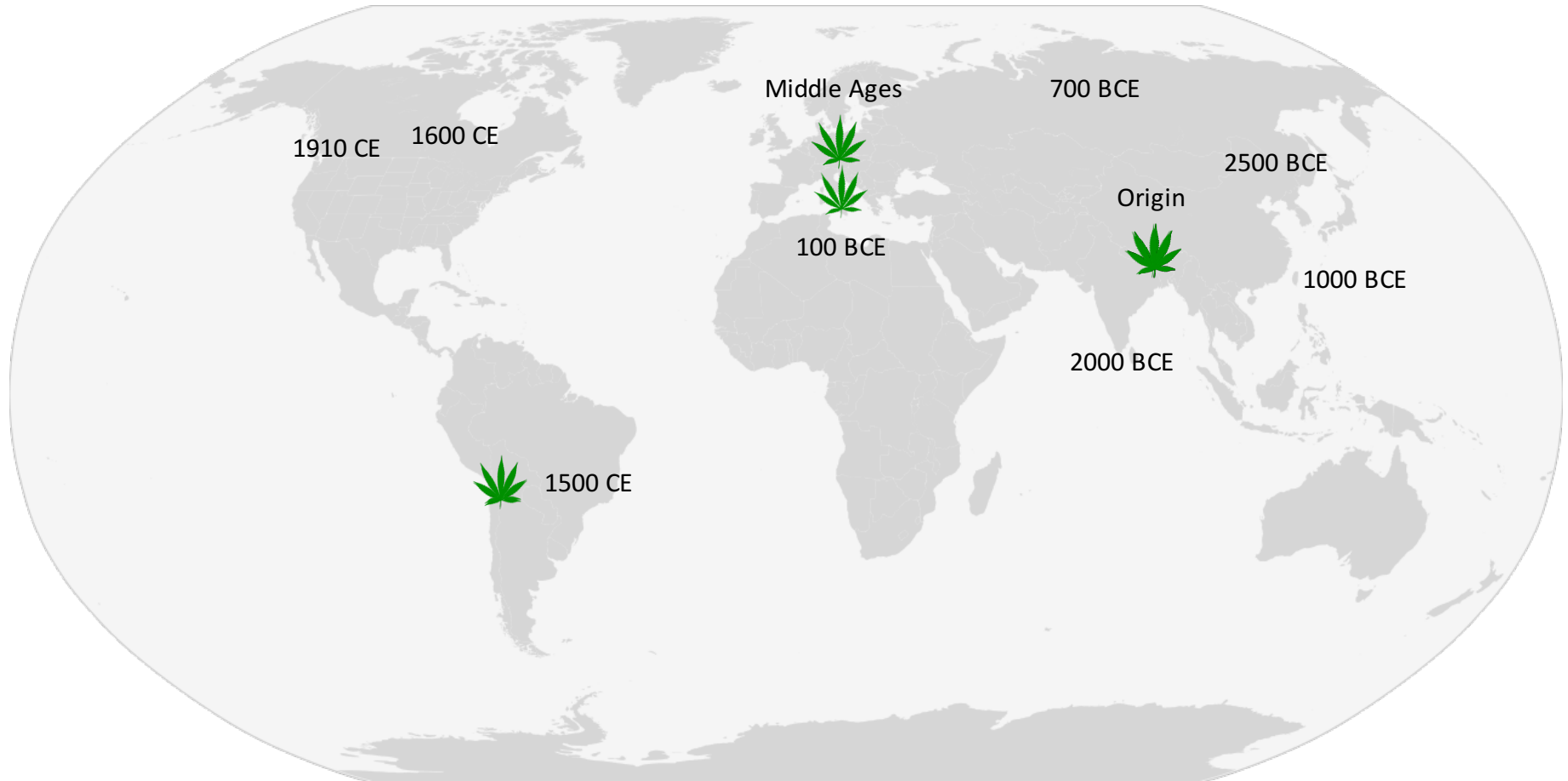
Cannabis is a plant native to Central Asia that has spread all over the world



Shennong is said to have taught the ancient Chinese not only their practices of agriculture, but also the use of herbal drugs, including cannabis.



One of the earliest recorded mentions of cannabis is medicinal



The spread of cultivated cannabis

So what was cannabis used for?

Bhang use in India begins around 2000 BCE



made of milk and marijuana **it was used as anesthetic or anti-phlegmatic.**



Shenung reportedly recommended the use of marijuana, or “ma” as it was referred to, for over a hundred different ailments including **female weakness, gout, rheumatism, malaria, constipation and even absent-mindedness.**

Apothecary jar from Egypt around 1500 BCE contained traces of cannabis



Egyptians Use Cannabis for Glaucoma, Inflammation, and Enemas

70 CE Dioscorides, a physician in Nero’s army, lists medical marijuana in his Pharmacopoeia.



He suggested using cannabis to treat earache and to suppress lust.

In ancient Greece, cannabis is used as a remedy for earache, edema, and inflammation.



The famous Greek historian Plutarch speaks of the Thracian use of hemp and cannabis—as does Pliny the elder in his “Natural History” written in the first century AD.



Published in 1633 by John Gerarde the Herball describes a confusing amount of cannabis plants and their potential theraputic uses including using Cannabis to Treat **Depression**

The long history of medical marijuana



2700 BCE (reportedly) Cannabis was referred to, for over a hundred different ailments including **female weakness, gout, rheumatism, malaria, constipation and absent-mindedness.**

1213 BC - Egyptians Use Cannabis for **Glaucoma, Inflammation, and Enemas**

1000 BC - Bhang, a Drink of Cannabis and Milk, Is Used in India as an **Anesthetic**

600 BC - Indian Medicine Treatise Cites Cannabis as a **Cure for Leprosy**

200 BC - Medical Cannabis Used in Ancient Greece

In ancient Greece, cannabis is used as a remedy for **earache, edema, and inflammation.**

70 - Roman Medical Text Cites Cannabis to Treat **Earaches and Suppress Sexual Longing**

1500 - Muslim Doctors Use Marijuana to **Reduce Sexuality**

1621 - Popular English Mental Health Book Recommends Cannabis to Treat **Depression**

1840 - Medical Marijuana Comes to United Kingdom via William O'Shaughnessy and Reportedly Used by Queen Victoria for **Menstrual Cramps**

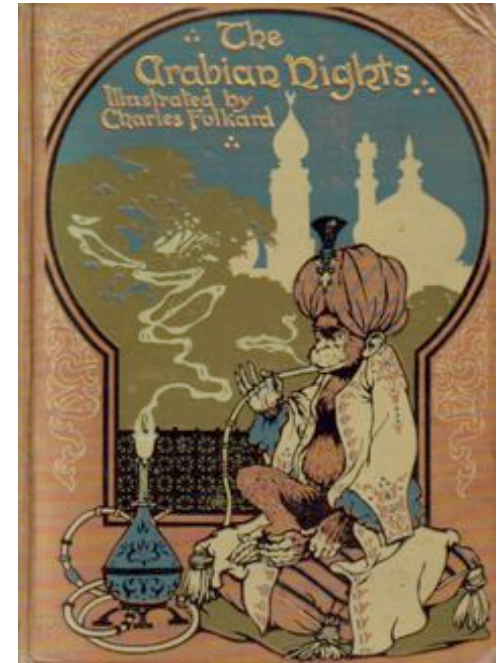
What did people think of cannabis use?

Greek historian Herodotus wrote detailed accounts of Scythian vapor hotbox rituals around 450 BCE.



“The Scythians take cannabis seeds, crawl in under the felt blankets, and throw the seeds on to the glowing stones. The seeds then emit dense smoke and fumes, much more than any vapor-bath in Greece. The Scythians shriek with delight at the fumes.”

1200 CE: Hashish figured prominently in several of the folk tales of 1001 nights



In the story of the Hashish Eater a man eats hashish, makes a fool of himself, and gets thrown in jail after waking up in the morning naked and aroused in front of strangers at a public bath.

17th century Dutch
“Genre” paintings



**Adriaen Brouwer,
Smokers in a tavern,
1628-30**



**David Teniers the Younger,
Smokers in a Tavern, 1660**



**Hendrick Martensz Sorgh, Smoking and
drinking farmers in a tavern, ca. 1650**



**Adriaen van Ostade, Two men
smoking in an interior, 1660-80**



Joos van Craesbeeck “The Smoker” 1635

Basho the Haiku Master writes:

The cannabis- How wonderful it is!
The summer drawing room.
Trees and stones, just as they are.
Ah, how glorious!
The young leaves, the green leaves,
Glittering in the sunshine!



Shimizu Taima Shukaku “Hemp Harvest” 1929



Geisha smoking cannabis.

Marijuana is exotic and romantic



Gaetano Previati: Las Fumadoras De Hachis. (Women Smoking Hashish, 1887)



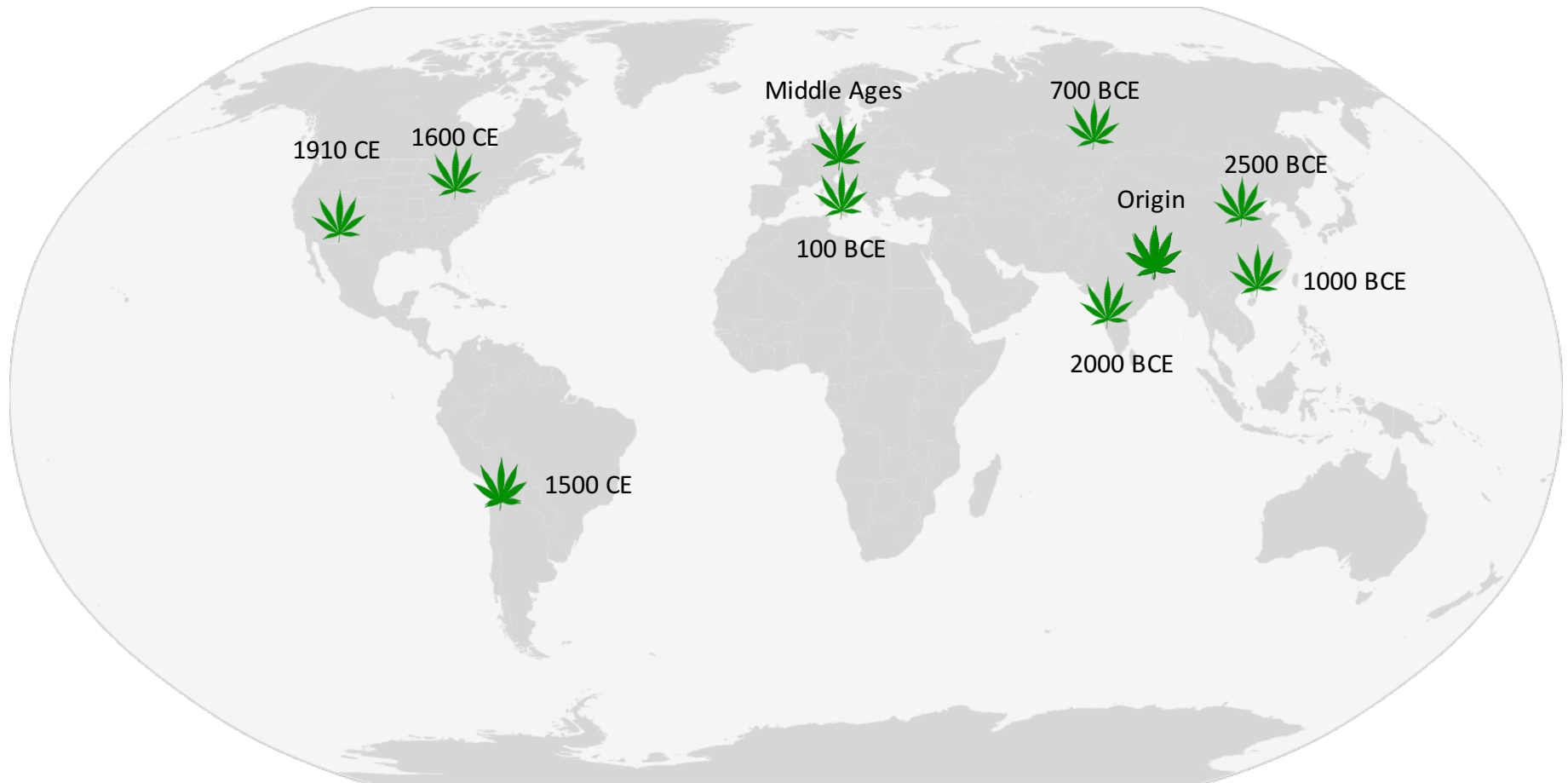
Men smoking hash. Published in Frank Leslie's Historical Register of the United States Centennial Exposition, 1876

At the 1876 world exhibition in Chicago, a hash bar was installed as part of the Turkish presentation.

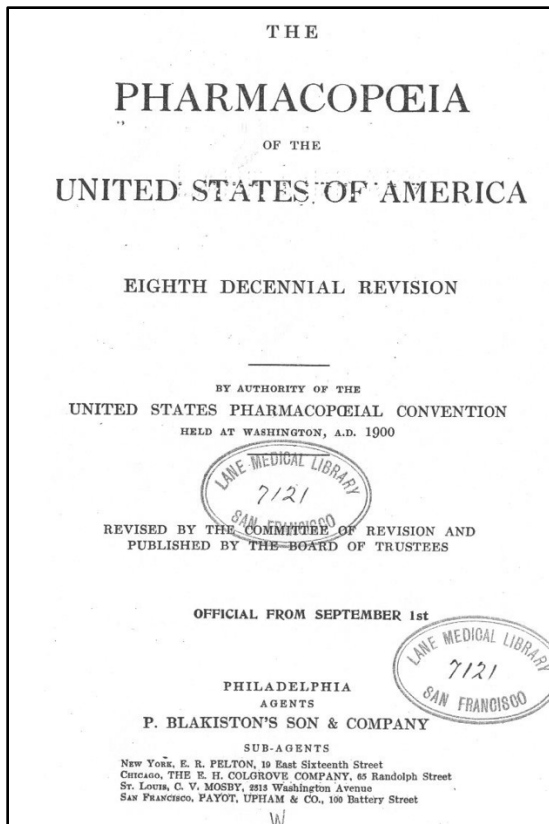
Sidney Sime Illustrated "HASCHISCH HALLUCINATIONS" by HE Gowers which was published in *The Strand Magazine* for December 1905

"A servant brought him a cup of coffee. He says the cup seemed a huge tankard, beautifully chased all over with dragons that extended all round the world. The girl appeared to stand for an hour smiling"

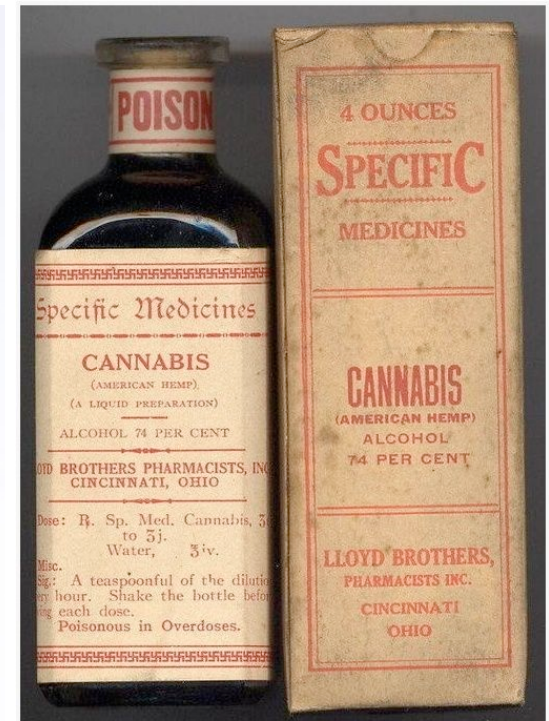
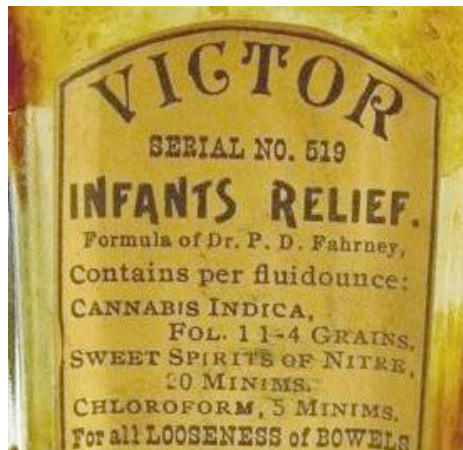




The spread of cultivated cannabis



In 1850 cannabis is added to the US Pharmacopeia, it listed marijuana as treatment for numerous afflictions, including: neuralgia, tetanus, typhus, cholera, rabies, dysentery, alcoholism, opiate addiction, anthrax, leprosy, incontinence, gout, convulsive disorders, tonsillitis, insanity, excessive menstrual bleeding, and uterine bleeding, among others.



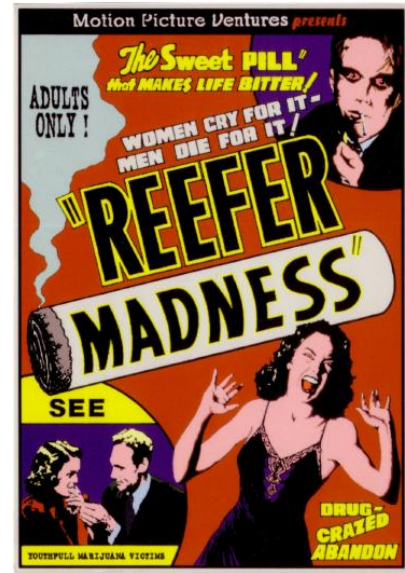
Anti Marijuana sentiment in the 1930's and 40's



Loss of inhibitions

Poor decision making

Insanity



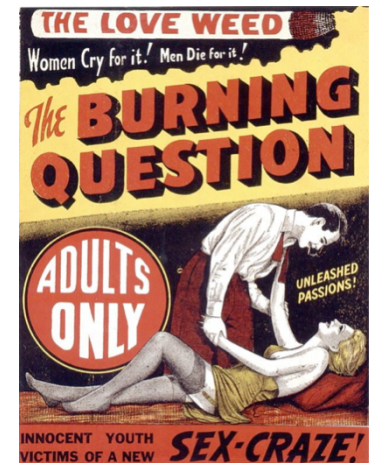
Delusions and
hallucinations



"How many murders, suicides, robberies, criminal assaults, holdups, burglaries and deeds of maniacal insanity it causes each year, especially among the young, can only be conjectured...No one knows, when he places a marijuana cigarette to his lips, whether he will become a joyous reveler in a musical heaven, a mad insensate, a calm philosopher, or a murderer..."

HARRY J ANSLINGER

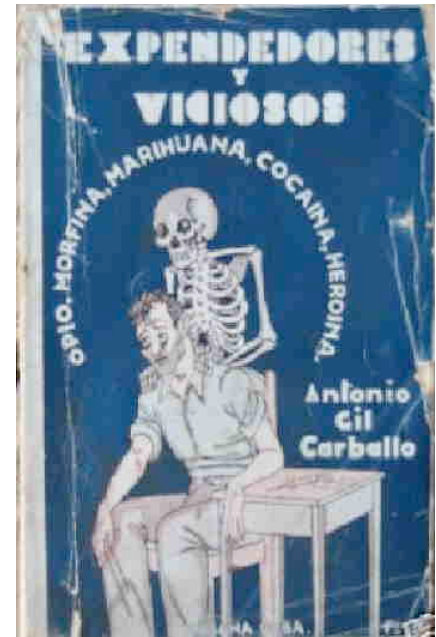
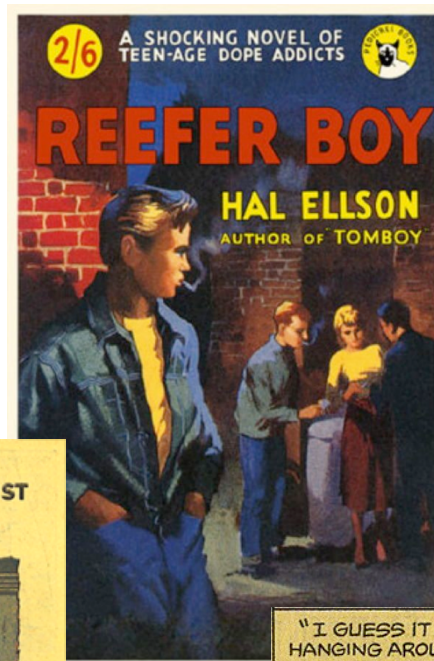
Commissioner of the US Bureau of Narcotics
1930-1962



Enhanced sexual appetite

In books and magazines...

Uncontrollable violence



mortality



"Marijuana inflames the erotic impulses and leads to revolting sex crimes"
Daily Mirror (1924)

addiction

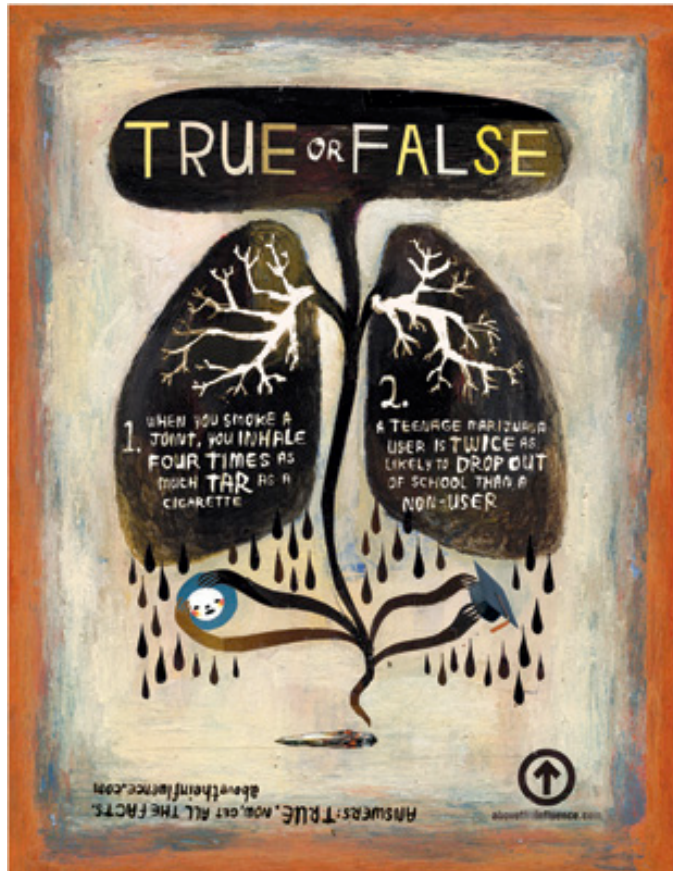
Even in the 70's and 80's!



Marijuana is a gateway drug



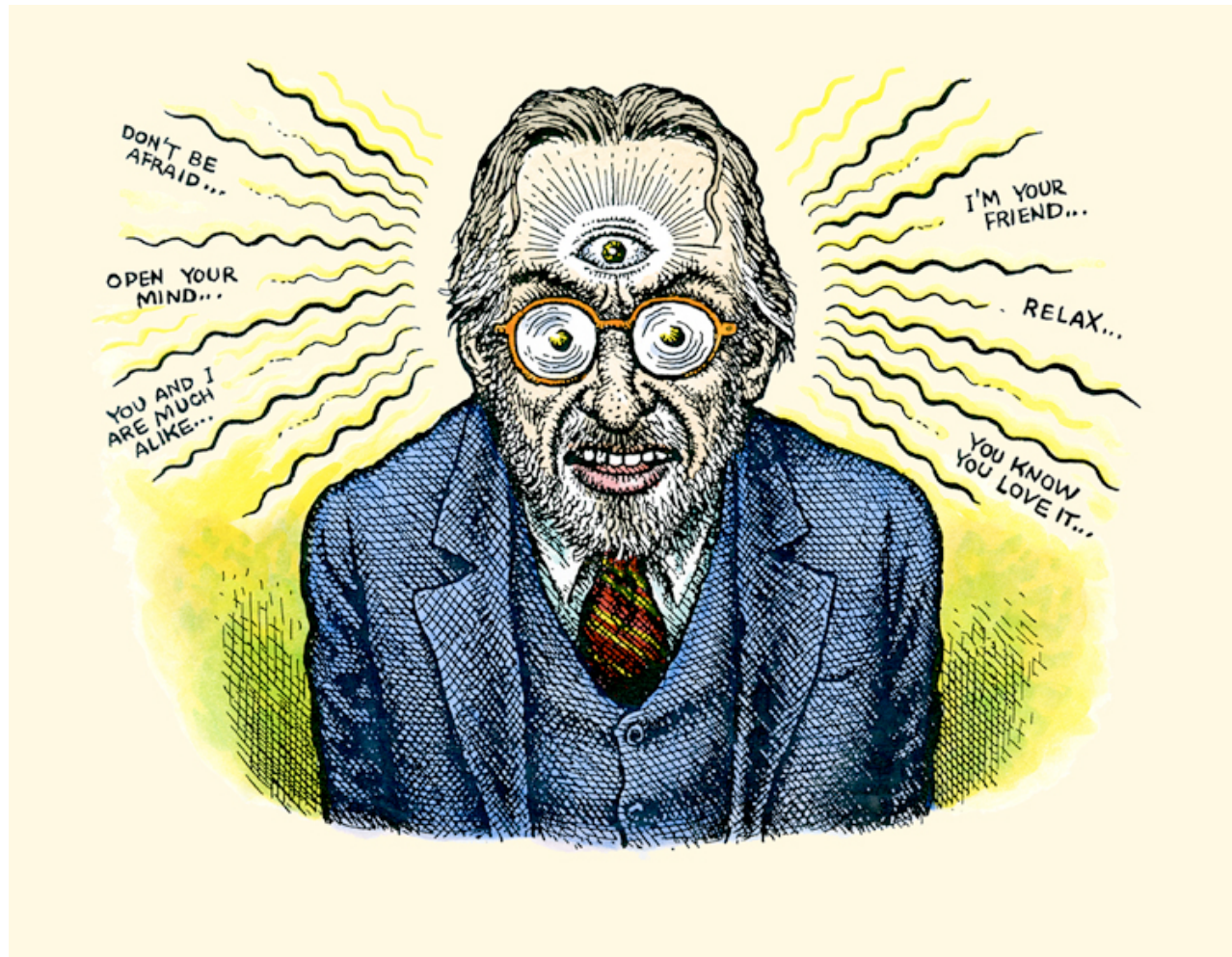
Even today



What properties do all of these ads, books, movies etc... attribute to cannabis?



Marijuana and creativity?



" When you return to this mundane sphere from your visionary world, you would seem to leave a Neapolitan spring for a Lapland winter - to quit paradise for earth - heaven for hell! Taste the hashish, guest of mine - taste the hashish! "

Alexander Dumas, 'The Count of Monte Cristo', 1844

Jazz and Marijuana



Thelonius Monk



Louis Armstrong



Cab Calloway

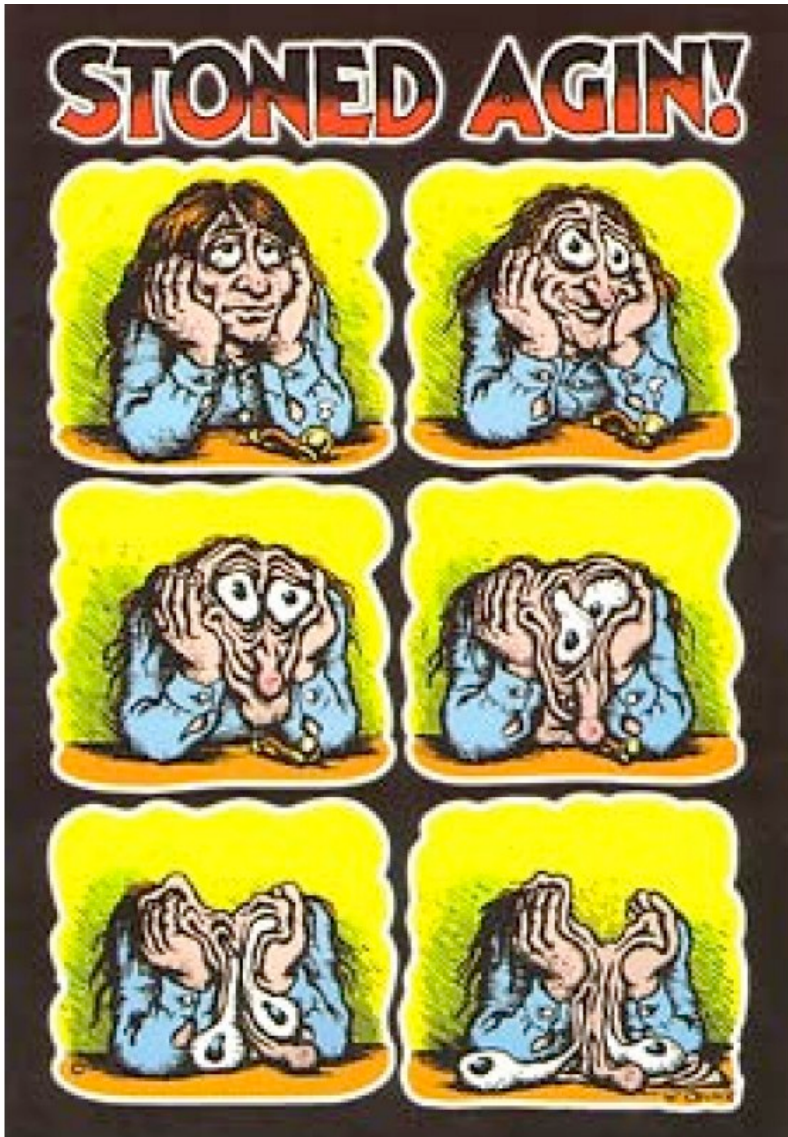
“We always looked at pot as a sort of medicine, a cheap drunk and with much better thoughts than one that’s full of liquor.” *Louis Armstrong*



“There are 100,000 total marijuana smokers in the U.S., and most are Negroes, Hispanics, Filipinos and entertainers. Their Satanic music, jazz and swing, result from marijuana use. This marijuana causes white women to seek sexual relations with Negroes, entertainers and any others. ... The primary reason to outlaw marijuana is its effect on the degenerate races. Marijuana is an addictive drug which produces in its users insanity, criminality and death.”

-Henry Anslinger

Counterculture



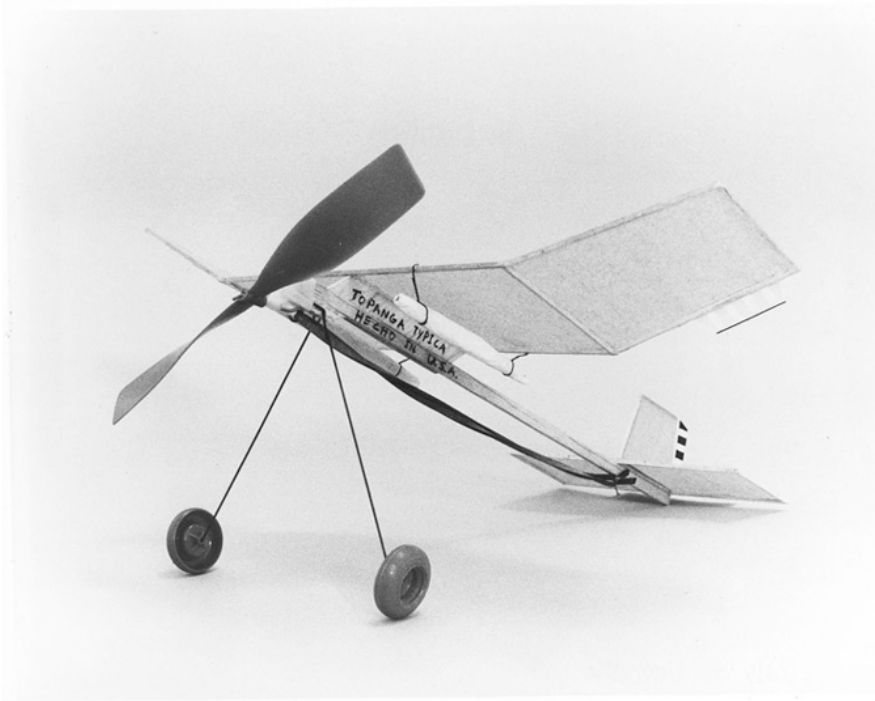
Robert Crumb "Stoned Again" 1966



"Robert Arneson" California Artist , 1982

Marijuana as subject matter

In 1978 the performance artist Chris Burden flew model planes carrying joints over the U.S.-Mexico border



Chris Burden, *Coals to Newcastle*, 1978



Fred Tomaselli, *Super Plant*, 1994. Psychoactive plant material, acrylic and resin on wood panel, 74 x 54"

Under the influence



Bryan Lewis Saunders

Marijuana (G13)



Marijuana (Kine bud)



Pot Brownies



Marijuana Resin



Potential effects of Cannabis

Altered consciousness
Perceptual Distortions
Memory Impairment
Delusions and hallucinations
Increased appetite
Nausea relief
Rapid heart rate
Reduced blood pressure
Drowsiness
Pain reduction
Reduced tremor
Reduced spasticity
Impairment to memory
Impaired coordination
Anxiety and panic
Reduced anxiety
Pain Modulation
Blocking of traumatic memories
Reduced hostility
Increased sensitivity to smell, sight, sound, texture.

Motor Cortex

Voluntary motor function

Sensory Cortex

Body sensation (pain, heat, cold.)

Parietal Lobe

Important for calculation, spelling, spatial perception, and body sense/position.

Frontal Lobe

plays a role in working memory, 'executive function,' social decision making

Hypothalamus

Governs metabolic processes such as appetite

Amygdala

Plays a role in emotions

Hippocampus

Memory storage and recall

Brain stem

Basic functions such as arousal, heart rate, vomit reflex, breathing, and blood pressure.

Cerebellum

Governs balance and coordination

