



THE JOURNAL OF GLOBAL DRUG POLICY AND PRACTICE

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 3 - FALL 2015

Assessing the Impacts of Marijuana in America



In this edition, our theme is “Assessing the Impact of Marijuana in America.” The contributions include an original paper entitled, *Assessing Physicians’ Perspectives and Knowledge of Medical Marijuana and the Delaware Medical Marijuana Act*, by Barret Michalec, PhD, Laura Rapp, PhD and Tanya Whittle, MA, that examines physicians’ knowledge regarding marijuana as a treatment and how many physicians lack valuable knowledge of the policy.

The other original piece in this issue is authored by Dr. Bertha Madras of Harvard University Medical School and thoughtfully considers the flaws in a recent study that discusses the risks of marijuana use to adults. Her piece is titled, *20 Flaws in Study Finding No Health Problems in Adult Males Who Were Chronic Marijuana Users as Teens, Young Adults*.

The Journal is also republishing a piece from the *South Dakota Medicine 2015 Special Edition - Preventive Medicine: The Best Medicine for All Time*, courtesy of the South Dakota State Medical Association. With the advent of marijuana legalization efforts across the country, the authors, Shawn Van Gerpen, MD, Tamara Vik, MD, and Timothy J. Soundy, MD sound the alarm about psychiatric health risks to pot users, particularly youth. Diversion of marijuana from “legal” users to youth is a significant problem rendering increased individual and societal risks.

The commentary included in this edition, *A New Era of Reefer Madness*, by Eric Voth, MD, highlights marijuana proponents’ efforts to discredit the scientific approach addressing prohibition of pot by calling it “reefer madness.” He turns it around by suggesting that the highly potent forms of marijuana with 70-80%THC concentration are creating real life “reefer madness” in those that use it and calls for a systematic examination of public health data to address societal impacts and reduce marijuana use



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A New Era of Reefer Madness