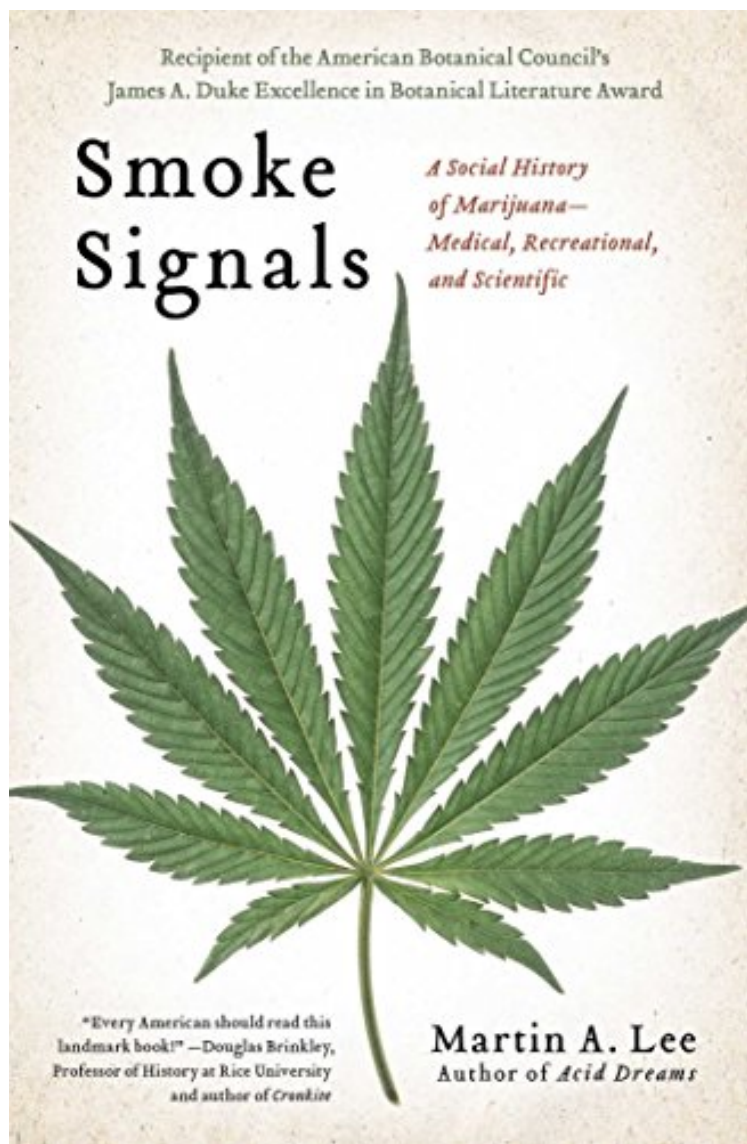


(Read free) Smoke Signals: A Social History of Marijuana - Medical, Recreational and Scientific

Smoke Signals: A Social History of Marijuana - Medical, Recreational and Scientific

Martin A. Lee

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Martin A. Lee : Smoke Signals: A Social History of Marijuana - Medical, Recreational and Scientific before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Smoke Signals: A Social History of Marijuana - Medical, Recreational and Scientific:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Excellent overview of the criminalization eraBy Malvin"Smoke

Signals" by Martin A. Lee is an excellent social history of cannabis in America. Mr. Lee's experience reporting on marijuana science and therapeutics serves him well as he writes with great insight about the many contradictions between the plant, culture and drug policy. Published prior to the historic 2012 vote for legalization, this well-rounded book might be the best single source into understanding America's confounding relationship with marijuana. Mr. Lee recalls how the herb was used by the working classes including innovative musicians such as Louis Armstrong until racial anxiety led to a wave of anti-marijuana laws in the 1930s. We learn how Harry Anslinger poisoned the minds of an entire generation with his government-approved anti-weed propaganda. The author does a great job describing how the Beats opened the door to the rebellious 1960s when marijuana use and antiwar activism were inseparably linked in a movement that challenged the legitimacy of Cold War authority. Mr. Lee discusses the conservative backlash and the unjust puritanical war that was waged against the American people while the government looked the other way as it engaged in illicit wars in Central America and Afghanistan. We see how every credible government study intended to justify marijuana's illegality has instead demonstrated its efficacy as a therapeutic. The author talks about how progressive-thinking people like Dr. Lester Grinspoon, Dr. Tod Mikuriya and Dr. Andrew Weil dedicated considerable time and effort to the cause of reason, sanity and humanity. Mr. Lee documents how the just say never 1980s gave way to the medical marijuana activism of the 1990s. As people progressed from blunts to ballots, state laws were changed but federal policy remained the same. Educating us about the science of cannabis, Mr. Lee is perhaps at his best when he writes about dozens of specific cases where patients benefited from weed after Big Pharma solutions had failed. However, it seems an entrenched military and law enforcement complex has done its worst to thwart the democratic process and deprive needy people of their medicine. Mr. Lee goes on to discuss the growth of the home-grown industry and the political struggles that have continued in the face of legalistic limbo. As he thoroughly shreds the few remaining justifications that stand in the way of legalization (such as the old canard that marijuana is bad for kids), the author explains how science can point the way towards a healthier future for people and society. I highly recommend this great book to everyone. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The will of the people perseveres By oatmeal A well-paced account of cannabis' relationship to modern society. It can be a frustrating read: By halfway through, you'll be tempted to chuck your book/device across the room. Not because of any issues with the writing, but from reading all the stories about the single-minded obsession and outright lies that prohibitionists embraced in their quest to abolish and demonize this plant. The momentum that started with one Depression-era Fed in search of a (racist) holy war kept growing and refused to die, even in the face of massive social upheavals sparked by cannabis. Only in the last couple of decades has that wall of ignorance and fallacy finally started to come down. And even now, as Jeff Sessions makes comments straight out of the reefer madness era, the federal government still seems to think its job is to enforce a law based not on science or the will of the people, but on stigmas and Puritan fantasies. It's up to the people to remember who serves whom in a democracy (at least in theory), celebrate the progress that's been made, and get up, stand up, stand up for our rights. Well worth a read to learn the recent history of this medicinal herb. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An excellent survey of the history of US cannabis policy and emergent cannabis therapeutics. By Old Tim I found this book to be very informative. The author covers a number of aspects of cannabis as the title suggests and interweaves them into one informative narrative. The author, who is the director of Project CBD, understandably has quite a bit of information about cannabis therapeutics and especially about the endocannabinoid system and Cannabidiols. I consider myself fairly well informed in this area but I learned a lot. A nit pick: the author makes some statements, though not of a scientific or medical nature, that have no attribution so I'm not sure if these are his opinions or can be substantiated. Having said this, I do not believe this takes anything much away from the value of the book. Some will say that the author has an agenda and so he does. But that agenda is to provide the reader with a rational and factual look at US cannabis history and policy and especially medicinal use. I recommend this book to anyone interested in cannabis policy and therapeutics.

Hallelujah and glory be to Smoke Signals, Martin Lee's bodacious new book. Lee chronicles everything and everyone worth chronicling in the annals of marijuana (High Times). This is the great American pot story, a dramatic social exploration of a plant that sits at the nexus of political, legal, medical, and scientific discourse. From its ancient origins, to its cutting-edge therapeutic benefits, to its role in a culture war that has never ceased, marijuana has evolved beyond its own illicit subculture into a dynamic, multibillion-dollar industry. Since 1996, when California voters approved Proposition 215, dozens of state and local governments across the country have circumvented federal authority to legalize marijuana for medical purposes. Mining the plant's rich botanical properties, medical researchers are now developing promising marijuana-based treatments for cancer, heart disease, Alzheimers, diabetes, chronic pain, and many other conditions. Martin Lee, an award-winning investigative journalist, examines this complex landscape where legal ambiguity meets scientific breakthrough in a panoramic, character-driven saga.

Smoke Signals is an important, serious-minded look at the role cannabis has played in American history. He tackles the hard issues of marijuana prohibition with keen insight and righteous indignation. I agree with Lee's central premise that our marijuana laws are draconian. Every American should read this landmark book! (Douglas Brinkley, Professor

of History at Rice University and author of Cronkite)"A ripping read, thoroughly researched, Smoke Signals will help inform the current debate and hopefully hasten the demise of prohibition." David Bronner, CEO, Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps"[A] well-reasoned, entertainingly written, and passionate examination of the social and culture war that surrounds the drug."Booklist"In this accessible and well-researched analysis, Lee offers a cultural reckoning of cannabis in its many incarnations, spanning from its first recorded utilization in 2700 B.C.E. to the present...a compelling read and an excellent source of information on the topic."Publishers Weekly"Smoking a doobie isnt the worst thing a person could do...and Lee backs that thought up with social history aplenty, ranging from neolithic experiments down to the Kerouac-ian consumers of the Beat Era."Kirkus s"Leeimagines a bright, legal, lucrative future for weed.Business Week[E]xuberant, richly researched. (Boston Globe)"High but not dry...a lively and informative book. (Detroit Metro Times)This is a brilliant book . . . Smoke Signals is destined to be a classic. (Mikki Norris West Coast Leaf)As Martin A. Lee shows in Smoke Signals, his engaging and illuminating new history, marijuanas contraband status is a result of historical accident, racial prejudice, xenophobia, loads of cultural baggage, and an astonishing amount of ignorance. (Jacob Sullum, Reason)Lees new book is the precise educational tool that our country currently needs . . . Smoke Signals should be required reading in every high school history class. (David J. Brown, author, Mavericks of Medicine)[A] clearheaded survey that stretches from 2700 B.C. to the Obama administration. (James Hughes, Slate)[A] delightful surprise . . . impossible to put down. (Anna Diaz, Real Weedist)"[T]he best, most comprehensive account of the American marijuana movement(s) to date . . . Smoke Signals is a must read for anyone who wants to understand the contemporary marijuana movement." (Phil Smith Drug War Chronicle)Hallelujah and glory be to Smoke Signals, Martin Lees bodacious new book[Lee] chronicles everything and everyone worth chronicling in the annals of marijuana. (High Times)About the AuthorMartin A. Lee is the author of four books, including most recently Smoke Signals: A Social History of Marijuana Medical, Recreational and Scientific. He is the cofounder of the media watch group FAIR and the director of Project CBD, a medical science information service. He is also the author of Acid Dreams and The Beast Reawakens, and his writing has appeared in many publications, including The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, Harpers Magazine, Le Monde Diplomatique, Rolling Stone, The Nation, Salon.com, HuffingtonPost.com, and TheDailyBeast.com.Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Smoke Signals 1 HERBLORE Black and Blue Every Sunday in early nineteenth-century New Orleans, slaves gathered by the hundreds at Congo Square for an afternoon of song and dance. Uncoupled, limbs akimbo, some naked but for a sash around the torso, they gyrated to the beat of the bamboulas, the yowl of the banzas, shuffling, gliding, trance-stepping, crouching (a position that signifies vitality in Congolese culture), and mimicking the cries of animals. Some wore garments ornamented with ribbons, feathers, little bells, and shells. The dark-complexioned dancers were surrounded by men, women, and children patting Juba, an African-derived technique for tapping rhythmically against parts of the bodystriking their thighs, their chests, chanting, clapping their hands while others played drums, gourds, tambourines, makeshift marimbas, and banjo-like instruments. The Sunday swoon in Congo Square, or Place des Ngres, as it was also called, provided a much-needed respite from the dehumanizing grind of plantation capitalism. This rite was reenacted on a regular basis until slave-owners began to suspect that the complex percussive beats were sending secret, subversive messages to restive blacks. Several years before the Civil War, African drumming was prohibited throughout the South. But music persisted as an indelible aspect of the dynamic cultural legacy transmitted across the ocean and passed along to generations of slaves and their descendents. From the African dances of the old days would come the driving energy of modern jazz. Today Congo Square is an open area within Louis Armstrong Park, so named in honor of the jazz marvel, born and bred in New Orleans, who gained fame initially as a horn player and later as a vocalist, a musical ambassador, and a character of epic proportions. Although he lacked formal musical training, Armstrong rearranged the sonic terms of American popular culture and his innovations reverberated far and wide. More than anyone else, he taught the world to swing. Known affectionately as Satchmo and Pops to millions of adoring fans, he was a huge international celebrity. Before Bob Marley, before Muhammad Ali, Louis Armstrong was the original black superstar. Armstrong grew up dirt poor, a shy, fatherless child who picked food out of garbage cans and ran errands for pimps and whores. Initially, he was raised by his grandmother, a former slave, in a country where black people were still considered less than fully human. American apartheid was imposed by vigilante terrorism and Jim Crow legislation that codified racial inequality. Armstrong not only had to ride at the back of the trolley like all African Americans in pigment-conscious New Orleans, he bore the brunt of additional prejudice because his skin was very dark. For Armstrong, music was a siren call leading him out of misery. As a young man, he joined the great exodus of African Americans from the South who migrated to Chicago and other northern industrial cities in the 1920s, seeking jobs and a better life. Some bands in Chicago rejected Armstrong because his skin was so dark. But he was readily welcomed into the fraternity of marijuana-smoking musiciansthe viperswho gigged in the Windy City. During a break between sets at the Savoy Ballroom, the trumpet maestro inhaled his first stick of gage, one of the preferred nicknames for cannabis in jazz circles. He liked the sweet smell and taste. It calmed his nerves and lifted his spirits. I had myself a ball, he effused, adding: Its a thousand times better than whisky. Thus began Armstrongs enduring romance with Mary Warner. From then on, he smoked reefer daily, and it didnt appear to compromise his musical dexterity or work ethic (three hundred

concerts a year no slacker was he). Pops swore by cannabis and often touted the benefits of the herb, telling jokes, jiving, proselytizing, and kidding endlessly with his cohorts. We all used to smoke marijuana, a wistful Armstrong recounted years later. Yeah, its a thrill to think back to those beautiful times and wonderful cats who congregated to light up some of that good shuzzit, meaning, good shit. Stoned solidarity, the healing balm of community smoking grass made Satch feel like he was one of the gang. Thats one reason we appreciated pot, as yall calls it now, the warmth it always brought forth from the other person, said Armstrong, who confided: It makes you feel wanted, and when youre with another tea smoker it makes you feel a special sense of kinship. Armstrong made a point of blowing gage before he performed and recorded, and he encouraged his band members to get high with him. In December 1928, he recorded Muggles, another slang for Satchmos drug of choice and his best-known reefer tune. Showcasing solos by several musicians who passed the bluesy melody around like a burning marijuana cigarette from piano to trombone to clarinet to soaring trumpet this landmark instrumental signaled the transformation of jazz into an improvisatory art form with wide-open opportunities for individual expression. No one had ever made music like this before. The compilation known as the Hot Five and Hot Seven recordings, which included Muggles, had tremendous popular appeal and established Armstrongs reputation as a jazz genius and one of the most important figures in twentieth-century music. If ya aint got it in ya, ya cant blow it out, said Pops, who took Hollywood by storm, dazzling the likes of Charlie Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, and other cinema stars who flocked to see the jazz avatar, their ears avid for Armstrong. The Marx Brothers also shared a fondness for Satchmos favorite herb. Groucho Marx got his nickname from a so-called grouch bag he wore around his neck. In this bag, we would keep our pennies, our marbles, a piece of candy, a little marijuana, Chico quipped. Armstrong himself appeared in some sixty films singing, scatting, blowing his horn, and mugging for the camera. He was the first black American to be featured in A-list movies. His songs were broadcast every day on radio and listened to throughout the world. But Satchmos fame did not always protect him from the cops. In November 1930, Pops got popped by two Los Angeles narcs while smoking with Vic Berton, a white drummer, in the parking lot of the New Cotton Club. Vic and I were blasting this joint, having lots of laughs and feeling good, enjoying each others company, Armstrong recalled, when two big healthy Dicks came from behind a car nonchalantly and said to us, Well take the roach, boys. Both musicians spent nine days in the Downtown Los Angeles jail awaiting trial for marijuana possession. They were each convicted and sentenced to six months in prison and a thousand-dollar fine. Strings were pulled and the judge was persuaded to suspend the sentences with the proviso that Armstrong leave California. Although rattled by his close encounter with law enforcement, Armstrong continued to smoke pot for the rest of his life with little evidence of ill effect, according to Dr. Jerry Zucker, his personal physician. Armstrong couldnt understand why his beloved muggles was illegal. It puzzles me to see Marijuana connected with Narcotics Dope and all that kind of crap, he wrote. Its actually a shame. For Armstrong, cannabis wasnt just a recreational substance it was a nostrum, a tonic, an essential element of his life. We always looked at pot as a sort of medicine, he stated. Marijuana was part of Satchmos overall health regimen. He never used hard drugs or popped pills, preferring to self-medicate with various herbs and home remedies, a custom he learned from his mother, who emphasized the importance of being physics-minded. This practice, involving a mixture of African and Southern folk cures, was instilled in Louis during his impoverished childhood. His family was too destitute to see a professional doctor, so his mother would go out by the railroad tracks, and pick a lot of peppers grasses dandelions, etc., Armstrong remembered, and shed bring it home and boil that stuff and give us kids a big dose of it. What exactly did Satchmo mean when he referred to marijuana as a medicine? What, in his case, was cannabis a remedy for? Armstrong said he used reefer to unwind, to relieve stress, to ease the chronic pain of racism. Smoking marijuana helped him deal with the daily humiliation meted out by Jim Crow white societys relentless, sickening assault on his self-respect. As he told record producer John Hammond: It makes you feel good, man. It relaxes you, makes you forget all the bad things that happen to a Negro. Twenty years before Jackie Robinson swung a bat for the Dodgers, Armstrong slipped through whites-only portals, leaving doors slightly ajar behind him. A hero of his race, he became the first African American to host a national radio broadcast in 1937, the same year marijuana was outlawed by the U.S. government. Satchmo was one of few blacks to perform publicly with white musicians. Onstage, he was a megastar, but offstage Armstrong remained a second-class citizen of the United States. He and his band endured the indignities of touring in the South. They were harassed by police and barred from whites-only restaurants, hotels, and bathrooms. White supremacists bombed a theater in Knoxville, Tennessee, while Armstrong was playing for a racially mixed audience. Mob-controlled venues up north posed additional risks. Danger was dancing all around you back then, he remarked. Yet, despite all, Satchmo never abandoned his overriding belief that its a wonderful world. A few puffs of that good shuzzit helped him live and let live. As his fellow trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie put it, Armstrong refused to let anything, even anger about racism, steal the joy from his life. In the opening pages of Ralph Ellisons *Invisible Man*, the nameless narrator lights a reefer and listens to a recording of Louis Armstrong singing, What did I do to be so black and blue, a soulful lament that epitomized the plight of African Americans. Armstrongs voice of musk and cinnamon imbues the lyrics with poignant emotion. Ellisons protagonist, absorbing the smoke and sound, is propelled into an eerie reverie, a surreal space, the American Dream in blacklight. To be invisible was not just to lack acknowledgment other than scorn from the pale man; it was the fundamental condition of black people in

white America. Louis Armstrong: Mary Warner, you sure was good to me (Courtesy of Frank Driggs Collection/Getty Images) Black and Blue was the centerpiece of Armstrongs performance at an outdoor concert in Accra, Ghana, in 1956. More than 100,000 people thronged the city stadium on a sweltering afternoon to hear Satchmo sing this song with such intensity that it brought tears to the eyes of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghanas prime minister, a moment captured on film. Louis Armstrong, the most visible of invisible men, traveled the world over, but this trip to the Gold Coast of West Africa was special. When he saw the women of Ghana, he recognized the face of his own mother. I know it now. I came from here, way back. At least my people did, Armstrong asserted. Now I know this is my country, too. The prodigal son, the grandchild of a slave, had returned to his ancestral homeland, a land where the ceremonial use of roots and herbs had long been linked to animist spiritual beliefs. A staple of African shamanism, cannabis and other consciousness-altering flora were revered as sacred plants that provided access to hidden knowledge and curative powers. Pollen samples indicate the presence of cannabis in sub-Saharan Africa for at least two millennia. Introduced by overland traders from the Arab Middle East and later by Portuguese seamen traveling from India, the herb quickly spread throughout the continent. Black Africans employed a variety of devicesclay pipes, gourds, bamboo stalks, coconut bowlsfor inhaling dagga, as marijuana was called by several tribes, who regarded it as a plant of insight. According to the Tsongas of southern Africa, Dagga deepens and makes men wiser.¹ Earth-smoking, which entailed sucking cannabis fumes directly through a hole in a dirt mound, was an ancient tradition among Pygmies in the equatorial forest. The Zulus ingested psychoactive hemp via steam baths and enemas in addition to smoking it for pleasure; they also smoked it to boost their courage before going into battle. A Bantu tribe in the Congo dispensed cannabis as a means of punishmentmiscreants were compelled to smoke a large quantity of marijuana until they either confessed to a crime or keeled over. Cannabis had a medicinal reputation in Africa that varied from region to region. Cultivated as a source of fiber as well as for its remarkable resin, the versatile herb served as a remedy for a wide range of ailments, including dysentery, malaria, diarrhea, typhus, and rheumatism. The Hottentots, who applied it as a salve for snakebites, deemed dagga more valuable than gold. Sotho women used marijuana to facilitate childbirth, and Sotho children were fed ground-up hempseed paste while weaning. In West Africa, from whence Armstrongs ancestors hailed, cannabis was utilized as a treatment for asthma. The roots of jazz and blues extend back through slavery to the collective rhythmic patterns of indigenous tribes in West Africa, where cannabis had thrived for centuries. Thrown upon bonfires, marijuana leaves and flowers augmented nocturnal healing rituals with drum circles, dancing, and singing that invoked the spirit of the ancestors and thanked them for imparting knowledge of this botanical wonder. It was only natch that Satch, the musical savant and dagga devotee, felt right at home as soon as he set foot on West African soil. After all, he explained, my ancestors came from here, and I still have African blood in me.

New World Hemp There is a general consensus among scholars that cannabis, a plant not native to the New World, as the Europeans viewed it, was introduced to the western hemisphere in the sixteenth century through the slave trade. Black captives brought cannabis seeds (and seeds of other plants) with them aboard slave ships that made the perilous passage across the Atlantic. These ocean vessels were outfitted with sails, rope, and netting made of hemp, marijuanas durable, nonpsychoactive twin, which doesnt easily rot or wear when exposed to saltwater. In an era when sea power was paramount, saltwater-resistant hemp fiber was a crucial, strategic substance. For hundreds of years, all the major European maritime powersthe English, French, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguesedepended on a quality hemp harvest to maintain their fleets. Christopher Columbus, Ferdinand Magellan, Sir Francis Drake, the Conquistadors, the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rockthey all sailed ships equipped with hemp products. So did an estimated eleven million to twenty million African slaves, who were transported under conditions so horrible that up to a third died en route to North and South America. The Portuguese were among the first Europeans to enslave Africans and bring them en masse to the Western hemisphere. This is how cannabis took root in Brazil, a Portuguese colony, in the early 1500s. Linguistic evidence in this case speaks volumes: nearly all the Brazilian names for cannabismacumba, diamba, liamba, pungo, and so onare African words from dialects spoken by the original slaves (many from Angola, where natives typically smoked cannabis in water pipes). Cannabis cultivation initially took hold on newly established sugar plantations in northeast Brazil. Black slaves seemed to handle the heat and fieldwork better when they smoked the fragrant herb, so Portuguese plantation owners allowed them to grow cannabis between rows of sugarcane. The word marijuana may have come from mariguango, Portuguese for intoxicant. After they came in contact with African slave laborers, some South American Indians began to puff marijuana. The aboriginal peoples of the New World were familiar with an array of psychoactive plants, which they used for religious rites, spirit journeys, divination, and therapeutic purposes. Thus, it was an easy transition for Native Americans to adopt cannabis and include it in their ceremonies. It was only a matter of time before fishermen and dockworkers in the coastal cities of Brazil also were smoking pot, a practice that slowly spread through the northern half of South America, across the Panamanian isthmus, and into Mexico. As cannabis proliferated geographically, so did its medicinal applications in Latin America and the Caribbean. Tea made from boiled marijuana leaves was brewed to relieve rheumatism, colic, female troubles, sleep disorders, and other common complaints. Marijuana purportedly had an analgesic effect on toothaches when packed on the gums near the painful area; leaves soaked in alcohol and wrapped around swollen joints were said to help arthritis. The European colonial powers were less interested in the medicinal potential of cannabis than in the

annual plants tough fiber. In 1533, King Henry VIII commanded English farmers to grow hemp for its fibrous content or risk paying a stiff fine, an edict reiterated by Queen Elizabeth thirty years later. Similar measures were enacted in England's North American colonies. In 1619, eight years after colonists first planted hemp in Jamestown, the Virginia assembly passed a law requiring every household in the colony to cultivate the plant because it had so many beneficial uses for making fabric, paper products, cord, and other items. Some of the earliest pioneers in North America were contracted to grow fiber hemp in exchange for safe transit to the New World. It was one of the first crops cultivated by Puritan settlers in the rich soil of New England, where hemp grew twice as high as in the British Isles. Hemp farming and processing played an important role in American history. Its legacy is evident in the names of numerous towns and hamlets from the Atlantic coast to the Midwest: Hempstead, Hempfield, Hemp Hill, and variations thereof. Early American farmers and their entire families wore garments made from hemp, wiped their hands with hemp towels and hemp handkerchiefs, inscribed words on hemp paper, and sewed with hemp yarn. Hemp was considered so valuable that it served as a substitute for legal tender in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America. Several of the Founding Fathers, including George Washington, grew hemp or tried to and they urged other colonial farmers to do likewise. Among those heeding the call was Robert King Carter, an ancestor of President Jimmy Carter and a big-time hemp grower from Virginia who provided much of the fiber needed to make uniforms for Washington's soldiers. Washington learned from firsthand experience that the sturdy stalk wasn't the easiest crop to process, and supplies of retted hemp never kept up with a voracious demand. One problem was the lack of a cultivation manual to assist colonial farmers. Such a manual had been printed in Italy (where hemp was referred to as *quello delle cento operazioni*, the substance of a hundred operations), but it was written in an Italian dialect and the prestigious hemp guilds of Venice preferred not to share inside information with foreign competitors. It was not until ten years before the American Revolution that an English-language guidebook for raising hemp became available in the colonies. The author of this how-to pamphlet, *A Treatise of Hemp-Husbandry*, was Edmund Quincy, a cousin of John Adams, the first vice president and second president of the United States. George Washington was a close friend of the Quincy-Adams clan and he surely knew of the grow guide. Quincy's treatise was published in 1765, the same year that Washington wrote in his diary about planting and harvesting hemp at Mount Vernon. The entry for May 12/13 states, *Sowed Hemp at Muddy hole by Swamp*, and the notation on August 7 reads, *Began to separate the Male from the Female hemp . . . rather too late*. Pot partisans have seized upon this statement as proof that Washington was trying to grow high-quality cannabis, the psychoactive kind, which entails separating the sexes to prevent pollination, thereby increasing the potency of unrequited, resin-oozing females. *Ipsa facto*, Washington must have smoked pot. Otherwise why would he be so concerned with separating male and female plants? Sexing the plants would become standard practice among growers of high-potency sinsemilla seedless marijuana in California two centuries after the American Revolution. But seedless hemp was likely the last thing George Washington wanted. He was obsessed with increasing the yield of hemp seeds and saving them for next year's crop. Washington made several references to hemp in his diaries, including comments to his gardener, urging him to save the seeds. *Make the most of Indian hempseed. Sow it everywhere*, Washington implored. When Washington noted that he had separated male and female plants rather too late, he was regretting his failure to follow directions that called for removing the male plants after pollination in a timely fashion so that the seed-bearing females had more room to bask and mature in the sun. *The remainder [of female plants] is to stand till the seed be ripened*, Quincy's manual instructed. In no uncertain terms, Quincy indicated that the males were to be separated from the females after seeds had been set on the latter. This is just the opposite of what sinsemilla cultivators strive for. Washington was growing hemp for seed and fiber, not for smoke. There are no references in his diary to smoking any of that good shuzzit. Washington and other American revolutionaries were notorious boozers, not puffers. Washington not only didn't smoke pot, he didn't know pot could be smoked, concluded Michael Aldrich, who, as a doctoral student at the State University of New York in Buffalo in the 1960s, researched Washington's hemp-growing efforts. Why was Washington so keen on maximizing hempseed production? To develop a home supply, Aldrich explained, so the colonies would not have to rely on another country, particularly England, for such a critical substance. This was a national-security issue. The Founding Fathers didn't have to read tea leaves or hemp leaves to predict that war with Britain was approaching. Prior to the much-celebrated Boston Tea Party, hemp had already become a source of tension between the colonies and the mother country. One of the first ways the Americans asserted their independence was by refusing to send raw hemp fiber back to Britain. Instead, the Americans began to process hemp themselves in defiance of the Crown, which offered a lucrative price for every bale delivered from the colonies. Thanks, but no thanks, hemp entrepreneur Benjamin Franklin told the British ever so diplomatically: the Americans needed all the hemp they could get their hands on. Franklin owned a mill that converted hemp pulp into paper that American patriots used to propagate their seditious ideas of liberty. Thomas Paine hyped hemp in *Common Sense*, his influential clarion call for independence that persuaded many Americans to support the revolution. Paine cited the fact that hemp flourishes in the colonies, providing a homegrown source of paper, clothing, rope, linen, oil, and other essentials, as an argument to convince the colonists that they could successfully secede from Britain. Without enough hemp, revolutionary forces would not have prevailed. Patriotic wives and mothers organized spinning bees with hempen thread to clothe the revolutionary army. The first American flags were made from hemp cloth. Thomas

Jefferson penned the original draft of the Declaration of Independence on Dutch hemp paper. Jefferson's second draft, also inscribed on hemp paper, was ratified on July 4, 1776, and then copied onto animal parchment. Jefferson not only raised and praised hemp (which he strongly favored over pernicious tobacco as a cash crop), he went to great lengths, unbeknownst to the British, to procure different varieties of hempseed from abroad. The greatest service which can be rendered by any country is to add a useful plant to its culture, wrote Jefferson the hempseed smuggler. In 1803, President Jefferson presided over the Louisiana Purchase, one of the largest land deals in history, whereby the United States paid France approximately \$15 million (two and a half cents per acre) for more than 800,000 square miles of North American territory. At the time, Napoleon, the French emperor, desperately needed money to finance a military thrust to cripple the British navy by cutting off hemp supplies from Russia, then the world's leading exporter of this hardy fiber. British designs on securing access to hemp were also a factor in the War of 1812. Long before oil wars, nations fought over hemp, the plant that fueled international maritime trade and imperial expeditions by providing the best raw material for sails to harness wind power. The domestic hemp industry prospered during the early days of the American republic in large part because black slaves were utilized to plant, harvest, and process the crop. It was arduous, backbreaking work uprooting the hemp, pounding the tenacious husk, extracting the slippery raw fiber, and making it usable. So prized was hemp that some plantation owners even paid wages to slaves to encourage production. As the frontier moved westward, farmers established vast hemp-growing operations in Missouri, Mississippi, and especially Kentucky, where hemp was known as a nigger crop because of its association with slaves who worked the land. After serving two terms as president, Jefferson retired to his Virginia estate in 1809 to raise fiber hemp, among other crops, with the help of his slaves. He eventually abandoned this project because it was too labor-intensive. Hemp is abundantly productive and will grow forever in the same spot, he acknowledged after his 1815 harvest, but breaking and beating it, which has always been done by hand, is so slow, so laborious, and so much complained of by our laborers, that I have given it up. By mid-century, hemp was America's third-largest crop, exceeded only by cotton and tobacco. Seeking to boost his fiber-making capacity, John Augustus Sutter, a Swiss migrant, acquired a hemp-threshing machine from Fort Ross, a Russian trading post in Northern California. Gold was subsequently discovered at Sutter's Mill by the American River in California on land where hemp grew. The news touched off an overnight stampede in 1849, as prospectors rushed in, manic for mineral wealth. Some made the journey overland to the Pacific in horse-drawn wagons covered with hemp canvas. In America's Wild West, lynch mobs dispensed frontier justice using the hemp collar otherwise known as the hangman's noose. More than one hundred years later, cannabis cultivation would precipitate another gold rush of sorts in Northern California as marijuana, the high-resin type, blossomed into the Golden State's most lucrative agricultural crop, boasting a multibillion-dollar annual yield despite its proscribed status. Hemp was well established as a fiber crop in North America long before European settlers and their descendants discovered the psychoactive properties of cannabis. As new technologies, most notably the cotton gin and the steamship, eclipsed the urgency for hemp fiber, the resilient plant appeared in another guise as a medicine for a wide range of infirmities. When the American Civil War began in 1861, fiber hemp had already begun to decline in commercial value, while the plant's reputation as a curative was surging. Elixirs and Tinctures The dual role of hemp as a healing herb and a source of fiber had deep roots in European culture. Hemp festivities were common throughout the continent long before Columbus set sail under the Spanish flag. Farmers, hoping for robust growth, sowed hempseed on days associated with tall saints. Peasants jumped for joy and danced in fields of hemp to usher in a bountiful harvest, and they plucked flowers from the venerable plant to protect themselves from the Evil Eye. The French had a saying, *Avoir de la corde de pendu dans sa poche* To have hemp in your pocket which meant to have luck on your side. Young women in the Ukraine and England carried hempseed as an amulet to attract a mate and hasten their wedding day. When a bride entered her new home after a Slavic marriage ceremony, well-wishers sprinkled her with hempseed for good fortune. According to peasant folklore, the vapors from smoldering hemp possessed cleansing qualities that protected against disease. But given the low levels of psychoactive tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) typically present in northern strains of hemp, it's doubtful that many Europeans were getting stoned from inhaling the smoke. Unlike high-THC plants in India, Africa, and the Middle East, the variety of hemp that grew best in Europe's cooler climates didn't deliver much by way of euphoria. Nevertheless, European folk traditions still considered hemp a medicinal and magical plant, attesting to what twenty-first-century scientists would eventually confirm: THC is not the only therapeutic compound in cannabis, and certain nonpsychoactive compounds prominent in fiber hemp are powerful healing agents. Cannabis sativa illustration A familiar ingredient in European folk remedies, hemp served as a multipurpose medicine for quelling fevers, soothing burns, relieving headaches, and dressing wounds with a disinfectant paste made of hemp flowers, wax, and olive oil. The curative powers of hempseeds, roots, leaves, and sap were well known in Germanic regions, where midwives placed sprigs of the mighty fiber over the stomach and ankles of pregnant women to prevent convulsions and difficult childbirth. It was customary to honor Freya, the German fertility goddess, with hemp as a pagan sacrament. In the twelfth century, Hildegard von Bingen, the legendary German folk healer, wrote about hanaf (hemp) in her *Physica*. The first written European reference to the medicinal use of hemp smoke appears in the *Kreuterbuch*, the massive sixteenth-century herbal compendium by Tabernaemontanus, a German doctor in Basel, Switzerland. Linked to witches' unguents and potions, hemp was

outlawed as heretical by papal fiat in 1484. Though forbidden by religious authorities for such purposes, the continued use of hemp as a medicament, lubricant, and anointing oil, and as a focal point for rural ritual was widely known. But few spoke of it openly so as not to arouse the wrath of the Holy Inquisitor. Pope Innocent VIII's demonization of cannabis was a continuation of the Church's war on pre-Christian traditions. François Rabelais, the French Renaissance doctor, author, and humorist, referred cryptically to the good herb pantagruelion, by which he meant hemp, in his satirical masterpiece *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, published in 1532. This early novel devoted three chapters to an allegorical plant that was used for making medicine as well as sails, cord, and hangman's nooses. Apparently his writing was not cryptic enough, for Rabelais's books were banned by the Roman Catholic Church. William Shakespeare and several of his contemporaries often wrote in coded language to address topical social issues during a particularly volatile era in English history that was marked by intense religious and political strife. Professor Francis Thackeray, a South African paleontologist and a Shakespeare aficionado, suspected that the Bard may have been alluding to hemp when he mentioned the noted weed and compounds strange in one of his sonnets. It sounds like someone had the munchies in this couplet: Like as, to make our appetites more keen, With eager compounds we our palate urge. Was Shakespeare obliquely extolling the virtues of the heretical herb? Did he actually smoke the noted weed? In 2001, Thackeray enlisted the aid of South African police forensic scientists, who used gas chromatography equipment to analyze two dozen clay pipe fragments that were excavated from the area of Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon residence in early seventeenth-century England. Lo and behold, several of these fragments tested positive for hemp, a plant that had been cultivated in the British Isles at least since AD 400. Not surprisingly, tobacco residue was also found, along with traces of other curious substances. Smoking tobacco was a new phenomenon in Shakespeare's time, having recently been introduced into English society. It was America's gift to Britain, part of a transatlantic swap: Hemp found a home in the New World while tobacco traveled in the other direction. The highly addictive nicotine habit spread like wildfire across Europe. Concerned that tobacco was undermining the social order, several European states imposed draconian punishments on smokers (such as the slitting of nostrils in Russia and the death penalty in Ottoman Turkey). In seventeenth-century England, puffing tobacco was initially equated with plotting against the state. But the tobacco craze was unstoppable. After trying unsuccessfully to ban it, the British monarchy decided that smokers should pay with their money instead of with their lives. Tobacco commerce was heavily taxed, quickly filling the state treasury. To maintain their profit, merchants in turn raised the price of tobacco, which became worth its weight in silver to an addicted populace. And if the drug dealers of yore were anything like those of today, it's a safe bet that some cut their tobacco with less pricey leaf to boost their earnings. This could explain how traces of hemp, as well as coca leaf from Peru, ended up in the pipes found in Shakespeare's garden. Shakespeare never explicitly mentioned pipes, smoking, or tobacco in any of his plays or poems. There's no proof that he smoked weed, noted or otherwise. But forensic science has shown that Shakespeare's neighbors and perhaps the Bard himself were inhaling some odd herbal mixtures that included hemp. And they may not have known exactly what was in those mixtures. English-language accounts of hemp's utility as a medicine first appeared in 1621, five years after Shakespeare's death. The English clergyman Robert Burton cited hemp as a remedy for depression in his book *Anatomy of Melancholy*. Nicholas Culpeper's *Complete Herbal*, the standard work on medicinal herbs for more than three hundred years after it was first published in mid-seventeenth-century England, recommended hemp for treating burns, gout, bowel problems, parasites, and skin inflammation, and as a general painkiller. (Culpeper remarked in his compendium that hemp was so well known among English housewives that he did not bother to indicate all its medicinal uses.) The *New London Dispensary* of 1682 added coughs and jaundice to the list of conditions for which hempseed decoctions were indicated, but warned that large doses had a side effect of filling the patient's head with vapors. The explorer Thomas Bowrey was the first Englishman to write about the recreational use of cannabis after he drank some bhang, a milk-based beverage infused with gunjah leaf and seed, while visiting India in the late seventeenth century. Referring to cannabis as the admirable herbe, Captain Bowrey recorded in his journal: In less than half an hour, its Operation will shew it selfe for the space of 4 or 5 hours. Bowrey indicated that his crewmen reacted to Indian hemp in different ways; the experience largely depended on the personality of the imbiber. Carl Linnaeus, the father of modern botany, named the plant *Cannabis sativa* (*sativa* means cultivated) in 1753. In his *Dissertation on the Sexes of Plants*, the eminent Swedish scientist describes growing cannabis on his windowsill, an experience he greatly enjoyed. In the month of April, I sowed the seeds of hemp (*Cannabis*) in two different pots. The young plants came up plentifully . . . I placed each by the window, but in different and remote compartments. In one of them I permitted the male and female plants to remain together, to flower and bear fruit, which ripened in July . . . From the other, however, I removed all the male plants, as soon as they were old enough for me to distinguish them from the females. The remaining females grew very well, and presented their long pistilla in great abundance, these flowers continuing a very long time, as if in expectation of their mates . . . It was certainly a beautiful and truly admirable spectacle, to see the unimpregnated females preserve their pistilla so long green and flourishing, not permitting them to fade, till they had been for a very considerable time exploded, in vain, to access the male pollen . . . Erasmus Darwin, the mid-eighteenth-century English physiologist, doctor, inventor, and poet, experimented with breeding methods to maximize the size of his cannabis specimens. A founding member of the Lunar Society, a

discussion group of innovative industrialists and natural philosophers, he was also the grandfather of Charles Darwin. Charles was a contemporary of William B. OShaughnessy, the Irish scientist and physician who introduced cannabis to modern Western medicine. Dr. OShaughnessy conducted an extensive study of Indian hemp while serving with the British East India Company in the 1830s. A man of many talents, he oversaw the construction of the first telegraph system in colonial India, a 3,500-mile endeavor for which he was knighted by Queen Victoria. OShaughnessy also taught chemistry and practiced surgery at the Medical College of Calcutta. His interest was piqued by the Indians widespread use of ganjah, as he called it, for therapeutic, religious, and recreational purposes. Almost invariably . . . the inebriation is of the most cheerful kind, he observed. Seeking the advice of native doctors and scholars, OShaughnessy traveled to Nepal, Afghanistan, and Persia, where four or five people often shared cannabis smoke from a hookah.² In the popular medicine of these nations, we find it extensively employed for a multitude of affections, OShaughnessy reported. He watched Ayurvedic healers mix ganja resin with ghee (clarified butter), creating a green, gooey remedy that was administered as a nerve tonic in India. After testing ganja tincture on animals and sampling it firsthand to better understand its effects, he decided it was safe to undertake scientific experiments with human subjects. OShaughnessy investigated the drugs impact on various maladies and validated many of the folk uses of cannabis. He gave an oral extract to some of his Indian patients who suffered from rabies, cholera, tetanus, epilepsy, rheumatism, and other conditions that were very difficult to treat. The data he gathered from these clinical trials formed the basis of a groundbreaking forty-page monograph on the medicinal applications of Indian hemp. Published in 1842, it was the first modern medical article about cannabis to appear in a British scientific journal and it raised eyebrows on both sides of the Atlantic. OShaughnessy noted the general effects of Indian hemp perpetual giggling, ravenous appetite, a sensation of ascending, mental exultation and emphasized its efficacy as a painkiller, a muscle relaxant, and an anti-convulsive remedy of the greatest value. In his paper, OShaughnessy also discussed ganja experimentation among his students that was not, strictly speaking, undertaken with a therapeutic intent. After swallowing the spiritous tincture, a retiring young Scottish pupil behaved like a rajah giving orders to his courtiers and expounded upon scientific, religious and political topics with astonishing eloquence. Likening his students behavior to the trance channeling of the Delphic Oracles, OShaughnessy wrote that it would be difficult to imagine a scene more interesting. One of the curious characteristics of this powerful and valuable substance, OShaughnessy observed, was the contrary qualities of medicinal hemp, its stimulant and sedative effects. He found that hemp possessed in small doses an extraordinary power of stimulating the digestive organs [and] exciting the cerebral system, while larger doses induce insensibility or act as a powerful sedative. OShaughnessy expressed concern that the incautious use of hemp preparations could trigger a peculiar form of delirium. Too strong a dose, he warned, might produce just the opposite of the desired medicinal outcome. The concluding sentence of his seminal study advised: My experience would lead me to prefer small [emphasis in the original] doses of the remedy in order to excite rather than narcotise [sic] the patient. OShaughnessy was describing what would become known in modern pharmacological parlance as the biphasic effect, whereby smaller amounts of a particular substance pack a potent therapeutic punch while larger doses have the opposite effect. (A large dosage might even make matters worse by exacerbating onerous symptoms.) The less-is-more dynamic intrinsic to the curative properties of cannabis dovetailed in significant ways with homeopathic medical practice, which, strange as it may seem, utilizes remedies that are diluted to enhance their impact. This notion conflicts with the assumptions of the allopathic school that would come to dominate Western medicine. Allopathic logic maintains that if low doses of a drug act as a stimulant, then a larger dosage should stimulate even more. But thats not how cannabis functions. OShaughnessy respected the pioneering work of Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), the German founder of homeopathy, an alternative current within modern Western medicine. Hahnemann recommended microdoses of cannabis for certain people with nervous disorders. Drawing upon his analysis, the homeopathy journal *American Provers Union* published the first U.S. report on the medicinal effects of cannabis in 1839, the same year OShaughnessy presented his initial scientific findings to the Medical and Physical Society of Bengal. In 1842, OShaughnessy returned to England with a stash of Indian hemp. He gave some to Peter Squire, a London pharmacist, who developed and refined an alcohol-based tincture under OShaughnessys supervision. Soon physicians in Europe and the United States were prescribing Squires Extract and other cannabis concoctions for a variety of conditions, including nausea, delirium tremens, epilepsy, and painful spasms. Doctors often turned to cannabis preparations to treat ailments for which there were no known cures. The U.S. Pharmacopeia first listed Indian hemp in 1854, along with a cautionary heads-up regarding the variable potency of cannabis products. By the end of the nineteenth century, more than a hundred articles had appeared in medical and scientific journals, documenting the benefits of this new wonder drugor so it seemed at the time to many people. The introduction of psychoactive hemp as a widely used therapeutic substance coincided with major changes in American medicine. Manufactured pills with precise dosages were replacing hand-me-down elixirs. And mom-and-pop apothecaries were becoming retail outlets for Eli Lilly, Parke-Davis, Squibb, and other fledgling U.S. pharmaceutical firms eager to sell their own cannabis cures along with a dizzying array of over-the-counter concoctions (including mixtures of cocaine, morphine, and Indian hemp). While the herb was usually ingested as a tincture, Grimault Sons marketed ready-made cannabis cigarettes as an asthma remedy in the late 1800s. Indian hemp was a staple in most mustard plasters, poultices, and muscle

ointments available in the United States. It was also a key ingredient in dozens of unlabeled patent medicines. In 1860, the Ohio State Medical Society conducted the first official U.S. government study of cannabis, surveying the medical literature and cataloging an impressive array of conditions that doctors had successfully treated with psychoactive hemp, ranging from bronchitis and rheumatism to venereal disease and postpartum depression. The use of cannabis as an analgesic was so common that medical textbooks and journals identified several types of pain for which it should be administered. No less a figure than Sir William Osler, often called the founder of modern medicine, endorsed cannabis as the best treatment for migraine headaches. (In addition to easing headache pain, cannabis inhibited the nausea and vomiting associated with migraines.) And Sir John Russell Reynolds, Queen Victorias personal physician, prescribed hemp tincture to Her Majesty to relieve painful menstrual cramps. He also recommended the herb for insomnia. When pure and administered carefully, it is one of the most valuable medicines we possess, Reynolds asserted. High on Hash Dr. Jacques-Joseph Moreau de Tours, a trailblazing French psychiatrist, first learned about the mind-altering qualities of cannabis while traveling through the Middle East in the 1830s. In Egypt, a French colony since Napoleon invaded the country in 1798, Moreau was struck by the absence of alcohol and the prevalence of hashish (compressed cannabis resin), which Muslims from all walks of life consumed. The custom was particularly widespread among poor Arabsthe word hashishin became a pejorative for lower-class hashish usersyet few habitus seemed to suffer adverse consequences from the drug. Moreau concluded that hashish was a very safe substance: [W]ine and liquors are a thousand times more dangerous. Noting that many of the diseases plaguing Europe were rare among Egyptians, he surmised that their indulgence in hashish and abstention from alcohol had a beneficial impact on their health. But French colonial authorities in Cairo thought otherwise. They were so disturbed by the scale of hashish consumption among the native population that they tried to impose a ban on its use. Their alarm grew as French soldiers posted in Egypt partook of the habit in increasing numbers, despite regulations forbidding such behavior. After their tour of duty, some troops returned to France with hashish in their pockets. It was another example of how the use of cannabis in Western societies came from the colonized and the enslavedthe subject peoples of Europe and America. Dr. Moreau also brought hashish back to Paris, where he sought to unravel the mysteries of madness by administering it to mental patients and studying how they reacted. Hashish seemed to calm them down, the doctor noted: Some hospitalized insomniacs were able to sleep well thanks to cannabis and the bleakest moods of a few depressed patients seemed to lift. But the results were inconsistent and, more often than not, fleeting. Still, Moreau felt that hashish could be a significant asset in treating mental illness and he urged doctors to avail themselves of the experience. Its greatest benefit, he maintained, was in enabling psychiatrists to gain insight into the mental worlds they were trying to comprehend and treat. Walking the talk, as it were, Moreau found himself rapt in a thousand fantastic ideas after eating some hashish paste. Yet he never lost his lucidity or forgot that he had taken a drug. He was able to reflect upon his experience as everything unfolded, straddling a kind of double consciousnessstoned yet rationalwhile under the spell of cannabis. To understand the ravings of a madman, one must have raved himself, but without having lost the awareness of ones madness, he wrote in Hashish and Mental Illness. Published in 1845, this landmark exposition postulated that insanity was caused by a chemical alteration of the nervous system rather than by physical damage to the brain. A large dose of hashish, according to Moreau, produced a model psychosis that temporarily mimicked symptoms of real mental illness.³ J.-J. Moreaus Parisian hashish experiments were instrumental in catalyzing the development of psychopharmacology as a field of study. But it was outside the scientific milieu where Moreaus project had a more immediate impact. He fed the cannabis-laced confectionary to poets, painters, sculptors, and architects, who were eager to explore the mental effects of hashish. Honor de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Gustave Flaubert, Eugne Delacroix, Gerard de Nerval, and several other luminaries met each month at the elegant Htel Pimodan on le Saint-Louis in Paris. They gathered beneath vaulted ceilings in an ornately decorated room with plush velvet curtains framing the door and tapestries on the walls. Dr. Moreau, the self-styled master of ceremonies, gave everyone a spoonful of greenish jelly paste made of pistachio, cinnamon, nutmeg, sugar, orange peel, butter, cloves, and, last but not least, hashish. After everyone had eaten the green fudgeknown as dawamesc in Arabic, which means medicine of immortalitythey sat down for dinner. Some members of Le Club des Haschischins, as it was called, wore costumes with turbans and daggers, lending an exotic ambience to the conclave. Dr. Moreau, outfitted in Turkish dress, played the piano. By the end of the meal, they were feeling the effects of the hashish. Before long the dining hall was filled with laughter a sure sign that the medicine was working. The Hashish Eaters Club was founded in 1844 by Moreau and his principal collaborator, Thophile Gautier, the French novelist best known for coining the bohemian battle cry: Art for arts sake. Gautier wrote a famous essay, Le Club des Haschischins, which described the proceedings in vivid detail. Gautiers baroque raptures generated wide attention among French intellectuals and artists. Before long, the Hashish Eaters Club was the toast of Paris. After the convulsive gaiety of the beginning, Gautier wrote of his initiation into hashish, an indefinable feeling of well-being, a boundless calm took over . . . I was like a sponge in the middle of the ocean. At every moment streams of happiness penetrated me, entering and leaving through my pores . . . I had never been so overwhelmed with bliss. Freed from his ego (that odious and ever present witness), he was seeing sounds and hearing colors. Soon the magic paste was completely digested and acted with more force in my brain, he reported. I became completely mad for an hour. Every kind of gigantic dream-creature passed through my fantasies:

goatsuckers, fiddle-faddle beasts, bridled goslings, unicorns, griffons, incubi, an entire menagerie of monstrous nightmares fluttered, hopped, skipped, and squeaked through the room. The effects of cannabis, as Gautier discovered, could be quite capricious, especially when high doses are consumed. Whereas inhaling a few puffs of herb often produces a soft, dreamy, swimmy-headed high, eating hashish in sufficient quantities could precipitate a full-blown hallucinogenic experience more akin to magic mushrooms or LSD with fast-moving kaleidoscopic imagery, physical rushes, flashes of insight, and, in some cases, intense anxiety and paranoia, although such feelings usually fade before the visions have run their course.⁴ Portrayed as a magic carpet ride to a boundless beyond within, hashish had a mystique that fascinated the French reading public. Alexandre Dumas, a notorious hashish eater and the most popular writer of his day, introduced the green jam to thicken the plot of his classic novel *The Count of Monte Cristo*. The enigmatic count, who calls himself Sinbad the Sailor, offers a morsel of green paste to a wary visitor. Taste this, Sinbad implores, and the boundaries of possibility disappear, the fields of infinite space open to you, you advance free in heart, free in mind . . . Taste the hashish, guest of mine taste the hashish . . . Open your wings and fly into superhuman regions. Sinbad's obliging initiate is transformed by the drug: His body seemed to acquire an airy lightness, his perception brightened in a remarkable manner, his senses seemed to redouble their power, the horizon continued to expand . . . The hashish triggers a Dionysian gusher, an onrush of visual, musical, and erotic epiphanies, and when the dream passes, Sinbad's guest awakens to find himself stuck in a dark cave on a remote island, yearning to return to that tumultuous zone of enchantment. The longing for the infinite and the use of drugs to satisfy this perennial urge were prominent themes in the poetry and prose of Charles Baudelaire. Although he lodged for a while at Htel Pimodan, Baudelaire did not regularly attend meetings of Le Club des Haschischins. Yet today Baudelaire is recalled as the writer most closely associated with the French hashish eaters. His books *On Wine and Hashish* and *The Artificial Paradises* are among the most admired of nineteenth-century drug writings. Baudelaire praised the superior sharpness of his senses, the glorious radiance, and the keen appreciation of music that he experienced under the potent sway of hashish. It is as though one lives several lifetimes in the space of an hour, he mused. It is like living some fantastic novel instead of reading it. But Baudelaire was ultimately critical of the moral and social implications of consuming the green paste. Although he says there are no dangerous physical consequences from hashish, he contends that the psychological risks are serious: You have scattered your personality to the four winds of heaven, and how difficult it is now to recover and reconstruct it. Referring to hashish as a very tricky substance, Baudelaire said it acts like a magnifying mirror that reveals nothing to the individual but himself. Hashish is psychodynamic, amplifying what already exists and drawing forth what is latent in the mind; thus it is important to be of sound mind and body, the poet advised, when embarking upon such an adventure. Each man has the dream he deserves, according to Baudelaire, who concluded that hashish is nothing miraculous, absolutely nothing but an exaggeration of the natural. What did Baudelaire see when he gazed into the mirror of hashish? A pathetic syphilis-infected figure who botched a suicide attempt, an opium-addicted alcoholic whose overbearing mother, a devout Christian, was obsessed with Original Sin. Filled with self-hatred, Baudelaire projected his loathing onto wretched hashish, that chaotic devil, which he denounced after finding its effects too disturbing. I would have thought it better if you hadn't blamed hashish and opium, but only excess, Gustave Flaubert wrote in a letter to Baudelaire. Flaubert noted in the same letter that psychoactive hemp preparations, mostly in the form of alcohol-based tinctures, were on sale at French pharmacies, which meant that those enthralled by the literature of hashish could easily obtain the drug for experimental purposes. Such a prospect dismayed Baudelaire, who argued, If by means of a teaspoonful of sweetmeat man can instantly procure all the blessings of heaven and earth, then he will not be prepared to earn one thousandth part of the same by hard work. In the end, he condemned the use of hashish as a doomed attempt to avoid requisite suffering. While a growing number of French physicians utilized cannabis tinctures to treat patients stricken with various ailments, Dr. Francois Lallemand viewed the healing potential of hashish in broader social terms. A pioneer neuroscientist and Hashish Eaters Club member, Lallemand was the first person to study the frontal lobes of the human brain and link them to language cognition and speech. He also wrote a utopian novel, *Hachych*, which was quite popular in mid-1800s France. The narrative begins at a dinner party where a doctor, just back from Egypt, feeds hashish to his guests, who experience political ecstasies and visions of a perfect society. Prefiguring the countercultural upheavals of the 1960s, Lallemand depicted hashish as a mental detonator, a catalyst for revolution, an anarchist weapon against the bourgeoisie. Arthur Rimbaud, the enfant terrible of French arts and letters, didn't use cannabis until twenty years after Le Club des Haschischins dissolved and most of its members had passed away. A child prodigy with a gift for verse, Rimbaud was the rebel incarnate, the wild-eyed mystic, a desperate vagabond forever in search of Christmas on earth. He ran away from home and joined the Paris Commune in 1871, but fled shortly before the bloody crackdown that put an end to the great working-class insurrection. I had to travel, divert the spells assembled in my brain, the teenage renegade declared in *A Season in Hell*. Sleeping in the gutter, filthy, famished, and lice-infested, he took hashish and other drugs, including absinthe, the very strong, very bitter, and very addictive green liquor made from anise and wormwood. For Rimbaud, hashish was at best a circuit-scrambling means to an end, not an end in itself. The poet, he explained, makes himself a visionary through a long, prodigious and systematic derangement of all his senses. The notion of some pie-in-the-sky paradise in a mythical afterlife elicited scorn from the young Rimbaud he was all about

the urgent here and now, the trials and tribulations of the flesh. Hell hath no power over pagans, he proclaimed. Rimbaud got drunk and stoned with reckless abandon until he reached the point where he could say: Finally I came to regard as sacred the disorder of my mind. Rimbaud stopped composing poetry at the tender age of twenty, but his feverish verse, along with provocative accounts from first-generation French hashish eaters, would continue to entrance the literary world for many years to come. These evocative authors employed literary license to articulate some of the stranger aspects of the high-dose hashish experience. Through their writings, a large audience in modern Europe first learned about hemp's psychoactive properties. Around the same time, an awareness of cannabis as an inebriant was also starting to percolate in the United States, where homegrown hashish-swilling scribes were spinning a few yarns of their own. Sex, Drugs, and the Occult

One morning in the spring of 1854, a precocious seventeen-year-old student named Fitz Hugh Ludlow sauntered into his favorite hangout, Andersons Apothecary in Poughkeepsie, New York. Reeking of all things curative and preventive, the hometown pharmacy was an aromatic invitation to scientific musing, said Ludlow, the son of an Abolitionist preacher. Anderson took a liking to the young man and allowed him to rummage through the store for hours on end. Ludlow had already sampled several psychoactive compounds, including ether, chloroform, and laudanum, an alcohol-based opium tincture, when Anderson informed him that a new product had arrived, something called Tildens Extract. It was made from *Cannabis indica*, otherwise known as Indian hemp or hasheesh. Ludlow picked up a vial of the odiferous, olive-brown elixir and sniffed its contents. Tilden Co., the U.S. subsidiary of the Edinburgh-based Smith Brothers (widely known for its cough medicines), was among the first to market solid as well as liquid hashish preparations. The company catalog touted *Cannabis indica* for hysteria, chorea, gout, neuralgia, acute and sub-acute rheumatism, tetanus, hydrophobia and the like. But Fitz Hugh Ludlow, a quirky bookworm, was more interested in self-exploration than in using cannabis to cure a particular illness. He recognized that Tildens Extract was, in essence, the same drug that he had recently read about in a story by Bayard Taylor, an American diplomat and travel writer, in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Taylors account of eating a generous lump of hashish in Damascus was the first article in a popular U.S. magazine that discussed the psychoactive effects of cannabis. I was encompassed by a sea of light . . . a vista of rainbows, Taylor rhapsodized. But after glimpsing paradise he got the willies and sank into an awful funk. Yet he did not regret trying hashish, for it revealed depths of rapture and suffering which my natural faculties never could have sounded.⁵ Ludlow took a cue from Taylor, whose experimentation with hashish was motivated not by hedonism but by a quest for knowledge, the desire to delve into unknown realms. For six cents, Ludlow purchased a box of Tildens Extract from Andersons; no doctors note was necessary. Twice he swallowed the bitter potion to little effect. So Ludlow upped the dose substantially, and the third time worked like a charm at least it started out that way. He was smitten by the hashish thrill as by a thunderbolt. Sparing no hyperbole, Ludlow waxed euphoric: A vision of celestial glory burst upon me . . . I glowed like a new-born soul. But his mood quickly shifted. He suddenly noticed that the room was shrinking. People looked strange. Insane faces glared at him. The wallpaper came alive with satyrs. Panic set in. He oscillated wildly between deep beatitude and uncontrollable terror. Still awestruck the next day, Ludlow vowed to conduct additional experiments with the amazing extract. At the time, few people in the United States knew anything about cannabis, which was neither a narcotic nor an anesthetic but a substance of a whole different caliber. Ludlow had no one to guide him through the seductive labyrinth of hashish. Relying on his own devices, he took the drug frequently through the summer of 1854 and experienced a prolonged state of hasheesh exaltation. Ludlow wasnt trying to mitigate pain or overcome illness; he was trying, perhaps impetuously, to gain insight into himself. Occasionally after ingesting a modest dose of *Cannabis indica*, Ludlow felt an overwhelming universal benevolence, which he referred to as a catholic sympathy, a spiritual cosmopolitanism. He maintained that during high-dose hashish benders he underwent metempsychosis, the movement of the soul out of the body, and seemingly traveled to far-off lands without physically going anywhere. After scouring the astral depths and suffering the agonies of a martyr, he decided to experiment with the drug of sorcery no more. Ludlow embellished his stoned adventures in his book, *The Hasheesh Eater*, which was published anonymously in 1857 when he was twenty, although subsequent editions included the authors name. The book was well received among critics and inquisitive readers, from London literary salons to California gold camps. Some impressionable youth felt inspired to try the drug after reading Ludlow, including Brown University student John Hay, who later served as Abraham Lincolns personal assistant, and secretary of state under Teddy Roosevelt. (Lincolns widow was prescribed a cannabis tincture for her nerves after his assassination.) An instant curiosity, if not a classic, *The Hasheesh Eater* became the preeminent nineteenth-century American statement on the subject of mind-altering drugs. Ludlow was the first American scribe to stake his reputation on the claim that certain substances, especially cannabis, can enliven consciousness and arouse creativity a belief that many young people would embrace with fervor in the 1960s. But Ludlow also warned of overindulgence with hashish and all drugs. A rising star in the American literary firmament, Ludlow moved to Manhattan to pursue a career as a freelance journalist. He befriended a group of bohemian writers who hobnobbed at Pfaffs, a downtown restaurant, sharing tables with the likes of Walt Whitman and Mark Twain. Louisa May Alcott, the soon-to-be-famous author of *Little Women*, also caroused at Pfaffs. In 1869, Alcott wrote a short story called *Perilous Play*, which depicts the recreational use of cannabis. The story opens with a pronouncement by Belle Daventry, an attractive socialite: If someone does not propose a new and

interesting amusement, I shall die of ennui! Dr. Meredith comes to the rescue, offering hashish pastries to Belle and her friends. Eat six of these despised bonbons, he promises, and you will be amused in a new, delicious and wonderful manner. When queried about the bonbons, the good doctor reassures her, I use it for my patients. It is very efficacious in nervous disorders, and is getting to be quite a pet remedy with us. Hashish was quite the pet remedy for Paschal Beverly Randolph, a mercurial mulatto intellectual, unstable occultist, bathtub chemist, and self-proclaimed master of sex magic. A firebrand on the mid-nineteenth-century speakers circuit, Randolph bequeathed hashish to the twilight world of American spiritualism. He touted the drug as a wondrous means of inducing clairvoyance and astral travel. It will burst upon you like the crash of ten thousand thunders, he exclaimed, and for hours you will be the sport of imaginations turned to realities of the queerest, strangest and weirdest, and perhaps terrific kind. Randolph first tasted the medicine of immortality while traveling in France in 1855. He became a regular user and an enthusiastic proponent of hashish, claiming it was food for the soul, a replenisher of vital forces. But the true recipe for the green paste was known only by adepts, according to Randolph, and it just so happened that he had access to an authentic source. At one point before the Civil War, Randolph was probably the largest importer of hashish into the United States, his biographer, John Patrick Deveney, reports. Randolph was also the founder of the first Rosicrucian sect in North America. (Credited with being a repository of esoteric knowledge, the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross debuted in Middle Europe in 1614 and has been the subject of conspiracy rumors ever since.) While ministering to his secret society, Randolph developed a formula for an Indian hemp concentrate and he created several patent medicines with cannabis as a key ingredient. During spirited lecture tours, he hawked his homemade hashish elixirs as invigorants and sex tonics for the erotically unfulfilled. In large part due to Randolphs efforts, hashish experimentation became de rigueur within spiritualist circles in the United States and abroad. Russian-born mystic Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the mesmerizing grande dame of occultism, was a dedicated hashish imbiber. Hashish multiplies ones life a thousand-fold . . . It is a wonderful drug and it clears up profound mystery, she enthused. In 1875, the year Randolph committed suicide, Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society, headquartered in New York City, which would attract a worldwide following of eclectic spiritual seekers who were interested in everything from Eastern mysticism and vegetarianism to Freemasonry and trance mediums. At times under the influence of hashish, Blavatsky wrote lengthy tomes filled with esoteric lore, introducing such concepts as karma, yoga, kundalini, and reincarnation to a Western audience. Replete with pagan legends, her books (*The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled*) did not win over Bible Belt America. But Blavatsky, the most famous spiritualist of her age, was a big hit among U.S. and European devotees of the occult. She had a significant following in Paris, where a group of hashish-eating daredevils, under the leadership of Dr. Louis-Alphonse Cahagnet, had been experimenting with monster doses (ten times the amount typically ingested at the soirees of Le Club des Haschischins) to send the soul on an ecstatic out-of-the-body journey through intrepid spheres. It was via Parisian theosophical contacts that the great Irish poet and future Nobel laureate William Butler Yeats first turned on to hashish. An avid occultist, Yeats much preferred hashish to peyote (the hallucinogenic cactus), which he also sampled. Yeats was a member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and its literary affiliate, the London-based Rhymers Club, which met in the 1890s. Emulating Le Club des Haschischins, the Rhymers used hashish to seduce the muse and stimulate occult insight.⁶ Another member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, Aleister Crowley, was a notorious dope fiend and practitioner of the occult arts. Crowley conducted magical experiments while bingeing on morphine, cocaine, peyote, ether, and ganja. He translated Baudelaires writings on hashish into English and published excerpts in *The Equinox*, his occult periodical. Dubbed the wickedest man in the world by Britains yellow press, Crowley came to the rather sober conclusion that a persons reactions to mind-altering drugs were specific to the individual and influenced by cultural variables. This was the gist of an essay he wrote, *The Psychology of Hashish*, which quoted Fitz Hugh Ludlows evocative comment about how hashish loosens the girders of the soul. Crowley and H. P. Lovecraft, the American writer of supernatural fiction and another fin-de-sicle hashish eater, both greatly admired Ludlows book. The occult revival in the late 1800s was nourished by widespread insecurity over rapid changes in Western society and persistent anxiety about the future of humankind. The industrial revolution had reshuffled the deck economically and psychologicallythe means of production and consumption were transformed, communication quickened, geographical distances shrank, populations shifted, and the working poor demanded a more equitable distribution of goods and resources. It was a period of profound uncertainty, as many people struggled to adapt to a new environment in which traditional human relationshipsas well as ones place in the cosmoswere called into question. Doomsayers of every stripe had a field day. Occultists gleefully anticipated that a terrible joy, in the words of Yeats, would soon overturn governments, and all settled order. Believing that the end of civilization was imminent, Madame Blavatsky prophesied that a global catastrophe would usher in a Golden Dawn, after which the world would be governed by a beneficent psychic elite. Whereas Blavatsky imagined a wondrous New Age emerging from the chaos, her contemporary Friedrich Nietzsche saw nothing but storm clouds of nihilism gathering on the horizon. Soon the ill winds of fascism would start to blow in Europe. Nietzsche, the German visionary, bemoaned the pervasive sense of alienation in modern society and the attempt by many to overcome it through intoxication, hedonism, disembodied mysticism, and the voluptuous enjoyment of eternal emptiness. But Nietzsche, who called alcohol and Christianity the two great European narcotics, was not averse to the therapeutic use of cannabis. To escape

from unbearable pressure you need hashish, Nietzsche wrote. For all its sociopolitical and metaphysical contortions, the nineteenth century was an era of great personal freedom with respect to psychoactive substances. There were no laws against using hashish in Europe and North America, where any respectable person could walk into a pharmacy and choose from a range of cannabis tinctures and pastes. After the U.S. Civil War, Gunjah Wallah Hasheesh Candy (a most pleasurable and harmless stimulant) was available via mail order from Sears-Roebuck. The average American pretty much was at liberty to use any drug that he or she desired. Initially disseminated through medicinal channels, hashish was embraced by prominent writers on both sides of the Atlantic. Irish playwright Oscar Wilde wrote about cannabis, and a hookah-smoking caterpillar graced the pages of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Robert Louis Stevenson (*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*) also experimented with psychoactive hemp. And so did Jack London, who described a hashish-filled evening: [L]ast night was like a thousand years. I was obsessed with indescribable sensations, alternative visions of excessive happiness and oppressive moods of extreme sorrow. Inspired by first-person literary accounts and facilitated by local apothecaries, recreational use of cannabis among U.S. citizens slowly emerged during the patent-medicine era. In 1869, *Scientific American* reported, The cannabis indica of the United States Pharmacopeia, the resinous product of hemp, grown in the East Indies and other parts of Asia, is used in those countries to a large extent for its intoxicating properties, and is doubtless used in this country for the same purpose to a limited extent. Cannabis was on sale at the Turkish Hashish Pavilion, which generated a buzz during the American Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. Within a decade, there would be discreet hashish dens operating in every major American city. All visitors, both male and female, are of the better classes . . . and the number of regular habitus is daily on the increase, H. H. Kane wrote of a New York City hashish parlor in *Harpers Magazine*. Published in 1883, the article depicted well-heeled patrons lounging in luxurious, dimly lit rooms, munching on cannabis edibles, smoking hashish, and drinking coca leaf tea. For the most part, psychoactive hemp products were eaten in nineteenth-century America and Europe, not smoked. The growing number of hashish users in the West as the 1800s drew to a close was partly attributable to the belated realization that they could achieve a milder, quicker, and more manageable high by inhaling cannabis fumes instead of guzzling a tincture or chewing a pastry. Adopted by urban America's bohemian set, smoking hashish was not viewed as habit-forming or as an inducement to violence, addiction, or antisocial behavior; on the contrary, it was considered stylish and elegant. There was no stigma attached to cannabis and no cause for alarm until U.S. prohibitionists targeted marijuana, the alien scourge, during an early twentieth-century upsurge of nativism, scapegoating, and political repression.