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Cannabinoids are nature's healthcare plan

Humans, and all animals, make and use internally produced cannabis-like products (endocannabinoids) as part of the evolutionary harm reduction program.

2005 Harm Reduction Journal

An Illinois State Senator once remarked she was having a hard time considering “marijuana” as medicine. Of course she couldn't. She couldn't get past the word marijuana and all of its meanings next to the word medical. They don't go together in word flow, especially since one has a million negative images and the other is generally positive.

Harm reduction – the cannabis paradox was the title for the journal article quoted above. After reading this book, you've probably noticed how much things keep changing in this war. One month there is speculation of a CB3 receptor: the next month there's new research from the white-coats saying they've found the receptor. It's been like that for years now.

The paradox mentioned is found in our politics not our cannabinoids. This is one of the evolutions in cannabis thinking. Cannabis has gone from good to bad, to harm reducer, to good and now great. That's the power of science and it's not a moderate approach. Neither is the right to be let alone, to self-medicate or to pursue happiness. No one would call Life and Liberty moderate concepts either.

What happens next? That's a common question at the end of a political book. People want to know what to do, thinking it can all change in one quick burst of energy.

No. This is a political action. We have to be better informed. We have to know ourselves and our opposition. We have to know what is at risk. The clearest move is an action against Nixon's law, the Controlled Substances Act. **Repeal it.** Like Nixon, you can't reform something corrupt – **the CSA must go.**

Okay, that's the objective. The war on cannabis will not end until the CSA is repealed and replaced by a law respecting nature, i.e. the CS. In some funny way, eliminating the prohibition of cannabis is a victory for science and against ignorance. It surprised us. We began thinking all we had to do was explain the evils of the war and people would listen. We thought things would change if they only knew that cannabis relieves the pain of glaucoma and remyelinate nerve damage, or that minorities were being arrested disproportionately for it. We thought we would just let the world know and then reason would win out.

Well, it's more complicated than just the facts. That's when it crosses over into politics.

We the People possess a great opportunity: by holding the patent on the neuroprotective qualities of cannabinoids, we have prohibition right where we want it. We have an opportunity for cannabis clarity. To an advocate for *Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness*, the role of cannabinoids is unambiguous. The ideas formed by the word "Marijuana" have historically ranged from madness to hilarity.

Today the theory that cannabis is a harm reduction agent is accepted by the white-coats and activists – anyone who begins to understand the role of the CS in health. The 2005 abstract quoted at the opening of this essay closed with this summary:

More specifically, endocannabinoids homeostatically regulate all body systems (cardiovascular, digestive, endocrine, excretory, immune, nervous, musculo-skeletal, reproductive). Therefore, the health of each individual is dependent on this system working appropriately.

Great change is challenging. Once individuals start acknowledging and using the evidence about cannabinoids, political groups will form. With such a new beginning one opens the pathway of science. The inscrutable path, our present path of the omnipotent CSA and its reliance on discredited science, is dogma. A cannabinoider avoids dogma because it is based on belief.

Faith is an act of the mind and body. It is biological. Politics built on dogma traditionally suffer from a lack of adaptability. In the future, which officially begins now, marijuana dogma is being replaced and defeated by cannabinoid science. – Good thing we're ready for it.

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Search terms

Homeostasis of endocannabinoids and the cardiovascular, digestive, endocrine, excretory, immune, nervous, musculo-skeletal and reproductive systems; cannabinoids and osteoporosis.

Research and selected readings

2011: Y Sun, et al, *Target-dependent control of synaptic inhibition by endocannabinoids in the thalamus*, Neuroscience, June 2011:31(25):9222-30.

2011: T Yoshida, et al, *Unique inhibitory synapse with particularly rich endocannabinoid signaling machinery on pyramidal neurons in basal amygdaloid nucleus*, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA, February 2011:108(7):3059-64.

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2009: I Bab, et al, *Cannabinoids and the skeleton: from marijuana to reversal of bone loss*, *Annals of Medicine*, 2009:41(8):560-7.

2009: J Galligan, *Cannabinoid signaling in the enteric nervous system*, *Neurogastroenterology and Motility*, September 2009:21(9):899-902.

2009: M Roloff and S Thayer, *Modulation of excitatory synaptic transmission by Delta 9-tetrahydrocannabinol switches from agonist to antagonist depending on firing-rate*, *Molecular Pharmacology*, April 2009:75(4):892-900.

2005: R Melamede, *Harm reduction – the cannabis paradox*, *Harm Reduction Journal*, September 2005:2:17.