

*The Cannabis Papers:
A citizen's guide to cannabinoids (2011)
By Publius*

Lady Ella
I want to be happy

I want to be happy
But I won't be happy
Till I make you happy, too

Life's really worth giving
When we are mirth-giving
Why can't I give some to you?

When skies are gray
And you say you are blue
I'll send the sun smiling through

I want to be happy
But I won't be happy
Till I make you happy, too

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Lady Ella, citizenship and cannabis

Freedom is one of the deepest and noblest aspirations of the human spirit.

POTUS 40 Reagan

When I get low I get high.

Ella Fitzgerald

Ella Fitzgerald, also called *The First Lady of Song* and *Lady Ella*, was awarded the *National Medal of Art* by POTUS 40 Reagan and the *Presidential Medal of Freedom* by POTUS 41 Bush. She collaborated with Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie and Duke Ellington. She lived an American life and yet was a citizen of the world.

The most innovative of ancient Greek city-states did humanity a favor by creating the status of citizen and the practice of citizenship. Of course, the citizens of antiquity hardly constituted an inclusive class. It wasn't until the last century, after much social struggle and sacrifice, that our predecessors won an application of citizenship closer to universal. When Ella's life started, she had two obstacles blocking her from full voting rights – gender and race. Within her lifetime, both obstacles were legislated away.

When it comes to voting rights, even individuals holding US citizenship can have that right taken away. In all states but Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts, felons serving time are stripped of their voting rights. In ten states those rights are never reinstated, even after individuals have completed their sentence.

One of these felony offenses at the federal level is the possession and/or the production of cannabis in any amount. Quite a number of prominent elected officials from over the years – our citizen-leaders who are fully participating in the governance of our society – are un-convicted federal cannabis felons. If you ever possessed cannabis, that's a federal felony. It doesn't matter if you were caught – like a line from a movie – "*Convicted? No, never convicted.*"

We'll just use their numbers and names to make our point: POTUS 40 Reagan, VPOTUS 41 Quayle, POTUS 42 Clinton, VPOTUS 42 Gore, POTUS 43 Bush, and POTUS 44 Obama.

Aspirants for the highest job in the land are no longer automatically excluded for their past cannabis use. The former Governor of New Mexico and 2012 presidential candidate, Gary Johnson, used medical cannabis to heal a back injury. Though protected by state law, he was in violation of the Controlled Substances Act – making his state use and possession a federal offense. That kind of thinking is absurd as well as harmful.

Let's go to the un-absurd world, the world of science. Here things have to add up or they become trash – tossed on the pile of discredited theories – the pile of *The World is Flat*. Yes, cannabinoids offer a Copernican view of the world – one that is properly placed in science.

The body does not play politics. Biological systems work out their differences and find homeostasis – or they don't. When they don't, we start talking of failed systems: disease. That's the role of cannabinoids: to modulate the workings of other systems and to create homeostasis. Here are a number of the systems modulated:

Skeletal, muscular, circulatory, respiratory, immune, lymphatic,
endocrine, nervous, urinary, digestive, excretory, reproductive, dopamine,
GABA, serotonin, histamine, nicotinic, hypothalamic, pituitary, adrenal

...

Cannabinoids influence the headspace of pain and perform vital biological actions such as repairing the blood-brain barrier and remyelinating nerves. Cannabinoids help heal what ails you – to include the root cause of ill health, inflammation:

**STRESS → INFLAMMATION → ILL HEALTH →
DISEASE → LOSS OF FUNCTIONING
LOSS OF FUNCTIONING =
LOSS of *Pursuit of Happiness***

There is a genetic path *away from stress* in the body. It is a sense of well-being, of holding space, of a lived conscious awareness that one's mind, body and entouraging chemicals create the love and highs of life. Love is a high just as happy citizens are high citizens, not low. If a citizen's cannabinoid system isn't able to cope with the stress of modern life by itself, then supplementation is in order. That's what the research and my lived experience suggests. Healthy moods help maintain healthy bodies – and healthy bodies are important for fully-functioning citizens.

Every system is fundamental to our health just like the idea that the well-being of every citizen is fundamental to the good of society. By ending this war we can begin to renew our belief in citizenship. This would be good for cannabinoiders and also for the health of our society as a whole. Peace is the medicine we need now.

Publius
(2011)

Search terms

Ella Fitzgerald; POTUS pot use; stress, inflammation and cannabinoids; Mauro Maccarrone; Matthew Hill; Daniele Piomelli; cannabinoids and physiology/biology; International Cannabinoid Research Society (ICRS).

Research and selected readings

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