



I would not like my name on this submission to be made public. My life has been made hard enough already by the draconian law and community stupidity.

Thank you

I am a 57 year old woman who has been a cannabis user since 1978.

I will not defend my choice to use cannabis unless it is to say that I feel I have done no wrong and caused no harm.

In every other aspect of life, I am law abiding and honest.

I prefer cannabis to alcohol and I used to smoke cigarettes but gave up this disgusting practice about 30 years ago.

I wish to discuss the problems associated with prohibition.

I have been busted and I feel that the police searching my house and looking through all of my personal possessions was a similar experience to being raped, as I have experienced that in 1980.

The disturbing fact is that the law allows the police to 'rape' me in my own home. For a perceived wrong where there is no victim.

My police record means that my employment chances are decreased and my opportunity to become the best person I can be is stifled beyond repair.

I am intelligent and honest and yet I am discriminated against, even in this day and age where discrimination is against the law. The law discriminates against me.

The fact that cannabis is incorrectly scheduled has a great deal to do with the issue. I am discriminated against when buying insurance and considered criminal alongside arsonists and rapists.

My ability to drive a car is in question even though I have never had an accident and the 'impairment' is completely misunderstood.

Alcohol by its very nature, suggests that the user is capable of doing things that they are really not capable of doing. Cannabis has the opposite effect and being very 'stoned' will lead to a more paranoid approach and the possibility of not doing things that you are in fact capable of.

"When I am drunk, I can hardly walk, when I am stoned, I can run like the wind."

Impairment in this case is as different as apples and bananas.

The perception in our society that 'drugs are bad' and that cannabis is somehow the same as 'ice', is also a problem. How can we educate our children if we are lying and continuing the situation that we have come to endure?

My experience is that whatever problems cannabis may cause, they pale into insignificance when compared to the issues that prohibition has brought us.

Many others suffer the same as myself and because of the demonisation and misunderstanding in the community, we are second class citizens who are treated like lepers and are too afraid to stand up for what is right because of the draconian and heavy hand of the law.

There is a misconception that people who use cannabis are no-hopers and lazy. This could not be further from the truth when in fact many users are functioning so highly that you will not spot them, and they will not stand up for fear of being discriminated against.

The fact is that cannabis is safer than alcohol and the double standard is enough to make me feel sick to the stomach. The unfairness of this resonates so deeply with me that I feel compelled to write this in the hope that it will shed some light on a subject that is long overdue for revision.

I will not touch upon the obvious fact that cannabis is a safer and more peaceful recreational tool than alcohol, as I feel that part of the subject has been well covered by others.

I need to expose the pain that prohibition has caused me. I have suffered unnecessarily and I am still traumatised by the 'rape' perpetrated by the police officers in my home that day. The court appearances, the urinating in a jar, the visits to the probation officer were all expensive for the state and to no avail. I still consume cannabis and I still suffer the discrimination and I feel nothing but hatred for a system that has expelled me and made my life extremely difficult.

I have much to give, but refuse because of the antiquated system that says I am a bad person for doing no harm to anyone and far less harm to myself than I am legally allow to do with alcohol.

I suggest that cannabis is re-scheduled to allow use by adults and that a test for IMPAIRMENT is created for fairness when driving.

Mostly, it is the perception that drug use is somehow different to partaking in alcohol that is causing the most problems. Alcohol is encouraged and is proven to be the most dangerous all drugs while any illegal drug is publicly used to blame all the problems of our society. It simply is not true and most of the public know it. It appears to be only the government holding onto the lies.

We cannot educate our children if we continue to lie and created untruths to protect the few who benefit from prohibition. (Alcohol industry, black market, pharmaceutical companies.)

To criminalise someone for using cannabis (especially for medical purposes) is simply evil.

Thank you for your time.