

The Life and Work of Jack Herer

Transcript of an Interview Frenchy did with Dan Herer, the son of cannabis activist Jack Here, published in Skunk Magazine in December 2019

Frenchy: Ok, thanks a lot Dan. My first question is about the generation gap. There is a whole generation or two of young people that are not familiar with the work of your father. He was really at the epicenter of the whole cannabis legalization, but he was really totally apart in his quest. As much as Denis Peron brought back awareness of the whole medical properties of cannabis to the world, your dad reminded the world of the potential of cannabis as a natural resource, how it all really started, and he devoted so much of his life to it. Can you please give me some background on your father and his work?

Dan: Wow, well for my father it started in 1969, when he first tried and used cannabis for the first time when he was 30 years old. It was, you know, one of those almost movie moments where something that happens in your life that completely transforms what your future would be. And that was the experience that my father had when he understood that cannabis was completely different than everything he had ever learned prior to that point. It was a real transformational moment. Not only did he experience cannabis in ways that changed his life, it changed where he thought his future would go because he knew that there was such a lie that was perpetrated upon not just the American people but the world at large. He started to go down a path of introspection as well as a historical journey. This historical journey that he went on did not just take him into the past; it showed him what cannabis could be. He started to go down a path of introspection, as well as, I want to say a historical journey, but this historical journey that he went on didn't just take him into the past. It brought the realization of what cannabis could be, so it was quite a powerful time in his life when he first got high.

Frenchy: He wrote a pretty amazing book about it, *"The Emperor Wears No Clothes"*. For me as much as the appearance of the book wasn't really, how would I say that inviting, it is literally one of the few books that changed my vision of the story in the first place, and it is the first time that I realized that the plant was a trinity. It was also a natural resource, and it had so much impact on history. Can you give me a little background of your father's research to write that book? To find the movie that the U.S. Government brought back during World War II to ask farmers to grow hemp again, like that campaign of eradication of data that the U.S. Government did, it must have been an amazing journey for your dad to bring back historic fact, to the awareness of the world basically.

Dan: Well, it started off as with anything with research. It starts off with bits and pieces. And it was really an accumulation of both his own studies and many, many individuals. During the early 1970s as my father was starting to realize what cannabis was and what the cannabis community was, what the hip community was, what the counter-culture community was, and through his interaction with this community and with this

plant, from the early 1970s when he wrote his first book called, *Grass*ⁱⁱ. He was still at that time understanding just what getting high was and what it meant. He would meet people that would bring him bits and pieces of information that he would then go and research.

Then he realized after 1972, Proposition 19, which was the first cannabis initiative in the United States since prohibition, he realized that there was a greater need for understanding of this plant and a mission to continue year-after-year not just in an election year. There needed to be some level of collection of information, collections of energies, within the cannabis community that he was becoming part of. And he started basically a political action group that was a part of every cannabis initiative up until the time of his death in 2010 - in 1976, I was a young boy only 14, in 1980, when I was finally old enough to go out and collect signatures with my father. The undertaking back then, everything my father did in his life, the money that he made from jobs that he did or companies that he had all of that money went into proposition support. So, he was either the proponent of or a supporter of the documentation that was going to be submitted to State for possible voting on by the people.

And it was during this time in 1980, that he was, I should say we were, the group of individuals that were out collecting signatures and educating folks around California were lovingly referred to as "Reefer Raiders." We would go into neighborhoods, we would go into the event areas, we would go into social community areas like Westwood Village, or we'd go to the Rose Parade and collect signatures amongst the folks that were at the Rose Parade. We would do everything we could to utilize access to mass gatherings to collect signatures.

There was a time in 1980 that Ronald Regan had just been elected president, and we were protesting in Westwood Village outside the Federal Building. We had basically staked a tent there on the lawn with 1,000 other protesters. We stayed there for almost 90 days. During that time, Ronald Regan left his home in Bel Air, which was just a couple of miles from the Federal Building, and he was going for a pre-inaugural haircut at the Federal Building. At least that's the story that I am aware of. He saw all these protesters on the lawn of the Federal Building and when he asked the security when he arrived because his motorcade literally went right past us as we were protesting on the lawn. When he pulled up to the security at the Federal Building, he said to them, "Why are all the Canadians so upset with us that they would be protesting?" The Security told Ronald Regan that those were not Canadians, those were marijuana protesters because he had mistaken the marijuana leaf for the Canadian maple leaf. And he said, "Can we not get rid of them?" And they said, we filed a complaint and took them to court, and they won the right to be there so no we can't get rid of them. He was overheard to have said, "Well, I will be sworn in as president in the next couple of weeks; let me see what I can do." And it was shortly after that my father and a couple of other activists were arrested on Federal Building property.

My father was in the 1950s, a Korean War participant, and he was a military police officer back then. When he was being arrested or about to be arrested from the Los Angeles Police Department for the violation of the Sedition Actⁱⁱⁱ, my father was like, why are you arresting us? The officer said, you are in violation of the Sedition Act. My father, being Military MP, knew what the Sedition Act was, which means that, it's an archaic law that was put in the middle of the last century that says during times of war citizens not allowed to be on Federal Property after dark essentially. So, my father said, the Sedition Act, but we're not at War so the Sedition Act would not apply. The Officer poked my father in the chest and said, "We are at war with you!" My father was arrested along with a couple of other protestors for registering voters to vote on Federal property after dark.

My father being a man of great principle knew that this was wrong, knew that we were not at war, but in the political climate of the 1980s the courts were not very favorable. Are the courts ever very favorable to anybody in cannabis?! For this, and especially for one of the loudest or the loudest voice as an activist protester and advocate of cannabis, they were certainly not going to support my father's ideas that he was within his rights to be there. He lost in court. They said look, you can pay the five-dollar fine and be on your way. The other protestors paid the five-dollar fine and were excused. My father being a man of great principle, said he would not pay a five-dollar fine and proceeded to lose in court. He appealed for multiple years, and by 1993-1994 he had appealed to the State Superior Court at which time lost and was sentenced to spent time in Federal Prison for registering voters to vote because he refused to pay a five-dollar fine.

It was that time, this was the early 1980s, for the first time in 14 years he wasn't overwhelmed with places to be and events to be at and protests to run and signature gatherings to collect, business to run. He was a prisoner. One of the things that he has always been a great thinker and writer. He requested from the family, pencils, and papers so he could write down his thoughts. It was then, in Federal Prison, that he started outlining the book *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*. Now, he didn't write it there, but it was the moment that he realized that there needed to be documentation of all of the things that he had learned and that there needed to be a place for it to go. He felt that he could put that in the form of a book. That outline started because the President who created the *Just Say No Program* along with his wife Nancy Regan had had my father incarcerated into Federal Prison for registering voters to vote because he was an activist against the prohibition of cannabis. In a sense, Ronald Regan, in large part, had a great part in my father writing that book. It was because of this one moment in time that he thinks he's going to shut up an activist. That activist, while he is incarcerated, at the will of Ronald Regan, wrote a book that would unravel prohibition as we know it around the globe.

Frenchy: Wow! Your father, his whole life, he was an ex-military, and then he became a hero to the cannabis community while he was also ostracized by the rest of the

society. You were pretty young at that time when it all happened, and it must have been difficult for you to go through all that?

Dan: I was only 20 years old. It was pretty normal. We had a very odd life, but it was my normal life. When I look back on my life with my father, our family's life with my father - not traditional, for sure. For me, growing up and going through high school, I was the kid with the good pot. For that, at some levels, in some circles, that was a good thing. My father's craziness from an outside perspective would have been something very odd. From inside my life, we had always been doing things within this industry even when I was 10, 11, and 12. My father's first written book was called "Grass", which became my coloring book as a child. When it was published, the publisher forgot the publication page, the Published By page in the printing. We had to get these stamps, and our job was as we unpacked the books from their cases, that we would take these rubber stamps and stamp the Publisher's name in each one of the books before it went out for sale. These were like normal things in our lives. We were selling paraphernalia back in the 70s. That paraphernalia, the sales for that went to support cannabis initiatives. Everything about our family's life from that time all centered around either paraphernalia industry or back in the day they would say the drug paraphernalia industry and being a social advocate for the end of prohibition and the legalization of cannabis. It wasn't odd for me. I was just the odd kid out in most neighborhoods. I was always appreciated for the cannabis I had access to as a teenager and a young adult.

Frenchy: Your dad even treated his mom, your grandma with cannabis when she had early symptoms of Alzheimer's by having her smoke or eat cannabis "morning, noon and night (not once in a while)"^{iv}.

Dan: I remember that. It may have even been her last visit to California before her death.

Frenchy: You had a very good understanding that it was a medicine at the same time because you actually experienced it in your life with your grandma.

Dan: When my grandmother was going through this, I don't even think that my father was, I don't think we looked at it the way we looked at cannabis' medicinal value today. We had heard things that could improve x, y, and z. Whether it was appetite, or stimulation or something introspection because sometime when you smoke cannabis, there are things that are affected in your mind that bring back memories that maybe you haven't thought about in fifteen or twenty years. It sort of opens your mind up, and it makes you think about every little thing. It makes you think about sometimes the last breath that you took, and that's why some people get a little bit of anxiety. They start thinking about breathing instead of letting the breath be. When you start analyzing every little thing that is going on around you, your mind is opening up, and you are starting to process all of these things. I think it is really something like that, it could possibly be a contributing factor to how it affects Alzheimer's. It opens up neuronal

pathways in the brain, like memories, like experiences, a doorway you haven't gone through in a while. I think for my grandmother when she smoked cannabis with my father back in the 80s, that's possibly what happened with her. She had this experience where pathways in her brain opened up for the first time. She was such a hypochondriac. She was on so many drugs from so many different doctors back then. She literally carried a case, like people carry a cosmetic bag. For her, it was fifty different medications that she was on. I couldn't imagine anybody's brain working well under those circumstances. But with cannabis, she started remembering things and conversations and times with my father that she had not been able to experience for a long time. I think for my dad, it was a very powerful moment with his own mother that allowed them to be closer for that moment. And I think that was probably a realization at that time that the benefits of cannabis medicinally, even if it were only for moments could be extraordinarily powerful.

Frenchy: It's fascinating because your dad is really known for his work on hemp, and about bringing the truth about Prohibition. His whole advocacy has helped the legal environment. Today there are still groups that are dedicated to your dad's message.^v

Dan: Yep, but here's also a misunderstanding. Most people think my father was all about hemp. There is a great deal about my father's book that is about hemp - the industrial applications of and its use. The reality is that my father was a cannabis advocate. The right to be able to use it, the right to be able to grow it, to smoke it, possess it. And, eventually, the right to be able to sell it. He believed in this plant in all of its uses. After he started putting this book together in earnest, being able to catalogue it in a way that could be expressed through this book and understood by those who read it, cannabis was the symptom of an excuse not just to make marijuana illegal, effectively to make hemp illegal. When you start making the natural process illegal you start destroying the possibilities of what can happen on this planet with regards to regenerative growing, when you talk about ecologically responsible companies - all of the different things that hemp could have interacted with and supported to develop new industries, to prevent the synthetic cycle from destroying what is happening now, today around the world. It became a focus for him through the 90s.

Cannabis was still important to make legal, which is why he was the proponent of every initiative since 1972. He believed that if you were going to get people to get on board with the legalization of cannabis that you had to understand that #1. Hemp is Cannabis, #2. The utilization of hemp would change how we live on this planet. It wouldn't just give us the opportunity to live on this planet but to thrive on it. His book gives multiple examples of industries that benefited from prohibition.^{vi} And other examples of how if industry embraced cannabis, we could change our futures. I think that ecological change, the opportunity for us to take control of our future through a natural plant would resonate with folks that read his book. That would resonate even deeper in communities that were struggling to be farmers, growing crops that were not as profitable or not as usable as cannabis. I think that the message through his book,

through all of this, became that hemp would be the savior of the world if we would allow it. And I think that is where the distinction for many people to describe my father as The Godfather of Hemp or the Godfather of Cannabis, that he was this Hemp Leader, but you know all cannabis is just as important. The one thing that hemp was, or I should say the many things that hemp is - everything we could use to make our lives better. I think his book tries to portray that in a way that ignites people's conscious. And help to elevate them to find their voices within their communities to demand access and the ability to use this plant to make their communities better, to make the world better, to make humanity, to give us a possibility of a real future.

Frenchy: 30 years ago, it was pretty visionary. We don't have a choice.

Dan: You say visionary. I say crazy.

Frenchy: Well, at the time but if you look at it now his vision of the potential of that plant, that knowledge of history that he that had he could really project it into the future. I mean, it is fascinating for me to know that he was so involved with the other aspects of the plant but that message today, I would rather talk about that than hash to tell you the truth because we don't have a choice.

Dan: Coming from you, that is extraordinary.

Frenchy: Lately, that is what I have been writing about. I tell everyone that your mom is offering the book online^{vii} for everyone to read. I've been asking a lot of people in Europe to please read the book because that whole argument about CBD vs. THC, and CBD is hemp, and then the whole potential of hemp is totally forgotten. It's a very dangerous approach to talking about the plant because it is so much more than that.

Dan: Very much so. And just a clarification. Jeannie was my father's fourth wife and not my mother. It is a shame that more people are concerned about the potentials of CBD, and therefore are accepting it, and not remembering that there is much, much, more than just CBD. But, the issue with that is from an industrial standpoint, when you think about all things hemp, the opportunities with industrial hemp are there, but to be able to monetize that in a society that is driven by money and greed and success and an easy pathway to a financial future, that the focus on CBD is problematic, as beneficial as it may be as a molecule and a part of cannabis. It is still not the engine that will take us into the future with regards to how do we save the planet, save ourselves as humans.

Frenchy: Especially, when you grow hemp as cannabis Sativa flower, and nobody uses the stalk or any other part of the plant. They just extract CBD.

Dan: People are more focused on the immediate low hanging fruit of a molecule that can be derived from this plant than the tens of millions or hundreds of millions of

dollars that it will take in infrastructure here in America or in any other country to utilize hemp to its full properties. So, when we are talking about creating hemp paper, there is a whole infrastructure that needs to be in place for that to become an economic engine, unlike what is happening with CBD. CBD you run it through a process, it does need some infrastructure but the money coming back because of the market that has been created, it's profitable for those who have put in that infrastructure because at this point it's almost an immediate return on investment. When you talk about industrial application, real industry, you know clothing, plastic, paper - all those things and all of these by-products, that infrastructure will take extraordinary amount of investment. Now, looking at that is one thing, then looking at how do you feed an industry that is industrial in nature when it comes to scaling a paper company that is hemp, a plastic company that is hemp, a clothing company that is hemp. And, knowing that you would have to grow tens of thousands of and even millions of acres of hemp to make anyone of those a profitable global business. But, on the CBD side, you can do that in thousands of acres or even tens of thousands of acres, much more achievable which is why the acceleration of CBD is so prevalent, and these others are being forgotten.

When investors are coming in, they are saying, 'well, we are going to be putting in tens of millions of dollars, when do we get our money back?' You have to go back to people like Ben Dronkers^{viii}. When he created HempFlax^{ix} in the early 1990s, he made no profits for more than 17 years. Today an investor is not going to go through what Ben went through in order to create HempFlax. And yet today, HempFlax is making and looking into plastics. They are making parts for the automobile industry. The application of his hemp that he has created over these twenty-plus years has started to change the industrial side, implementation of investment. But that is still small scale in compared to what does the world need achieve more equality with petrochemicals and other products that are being made outside of the hemp world. It's going to take a long time and a great deal of investment to really change that narrative to where we as a community. Because all of what we are doing, Frenchy what you have done, what Skunk magazine has done, all these people that are in the community that we are in, the space that we share with growers both hemp and cannabis, processors that make hash to distillates, we are in this community but from a global standpoint we are still very, very small compared to how do we impact the world at a level that is meaningful and changes what we do. I think that we are still a bit away from that. Hopefully, there will be some multi-billionaire that will decide instead of dying with his money he's going to invest some of it into transforming the way we live in the future and comes to the cannabis community and puts down roots where he is not savagely taking people's dreams away from them to make a profit but joins us in a way that perpetuates us as a species and gives us an opportunity to change the direction of mankind in a positive way by using the money and influence that they might be able to provide to this industry. I am hopeful somebody like, or multiple somebodies like that will decide to step up and play a part in the transformation of us as a species, as humanity, how we are going to live into the future, not have to think about the silliness of living on another planet anytime in next hundred years. We need to start thinking today about how to envision this.

Even outside of those types of investors coming in, there are people within this industry are already forward-thinking. They are already looking at biodegradable plastics, even on a small scale. The fact that these folks are following their dreams and following their hearts, whatever voices may or may not be in their head that push them to go forward in the face of extreme difficulties that they are able to still focus on doing things that if they are not viable today, that the hopes and viability of these processes and technologies will be there for when we are ready to take those next steps. And I am so grateful to call many of them my friends.

One of the greatest things I think I have realized in the last ten years since my father's passing, but looking back over the last forty years since he became an advocate, people come up to me and they say, Dan, what a legacy you have that your father has left you and you get to share. I don't look at myself as my father's legacy. I am in the cannabis space. I am in the hemp space. I speak about cannabis and hemp. What I have realized is my family is not the legacy of my father. The legacy of my father is things I get to see every day in the people that he influenced. The people who have taken an idea because of something that they read or a conversation that they had with my father and that has pushed them down a road that they may have never had gone on had it not been for him. When I look at people that are growing cannabis in the mountains of Humboldt or in the Emerald Triangle or in Santa Rosa or Santa Cruz, all of these people or when I go into industry events, I walk into Las Vegas and go to the MJ Biz Con, or the event the Emerald Cup just had in London^x, and you walk in and see people in the business of cannabis or hemp commerce and I look to all of them as that is my father's legacy. These people who have achieved influenced, that have changed their communities, that have changed their lives, that have changed how we are going to live in the future. It's not me. It's them. They are the true legacy of my father's work. I am humbled every single time I go to an event, big or small that there are people that are creating jobs, creating hope, creating a possibility for a future. I get to witness the influence of my father through them even if they don't know who my father was.

Frenchy: So true. Let's talk a bit, my last question - tell us what you do now on your side, what you do now because as you say you are not the legacy of your father. You are creating your own legacy among us, so can you tell us a little bit about what you are doing?

Dan: Well, I may not feel that I am that legacy when I go to events like I just previously described but the company I have created is based on my father, in many cases, my THC-cannabis company is called *The Original Jack Herer*. It is because my father was probably the only person who couldn't participate in the use of his own name within the space because it would have been too dangerous for my father to become a big grower or to put a product out there. I think he always hoped for cannabis commerce. I'm not sure that he knew what that was going to look like. I don't think that he could have envisioned what is happening today in cannabis commerce. I think for him when

he was looking at the legalization of cannabis, was the freedom of people to not be held back by their belief that this plant is something they should engage with or should be able to choose to engage with. That is much different than creating a cereal aisle in a grocery store where you go down and you have Kellogg's on one side, and you have Fruit Loops on the other side and Raisin Bran on this side, and you have Quaker Oats on this side, and you have all these different brands. I don't think he ever envisioned that for cannabis. I think that for him, people should be able to grow if they wanted to sell an ounce to a friend that that shouldn't be a problem. I don't think he envisioned what capitalization, and the real market of cannabis would be.

So, since my father's passing, it struck me funny that this family was not part of the same community that my father helped to create. I felt even more sadness that there were so many people that would use my father's name in commerce without the benefit to my father. I decided that through my family, I would no longer just stand back and allow that to happen. So, I created the *Original Jack Herer Brand*. I wanted to make sure that the product that was in this jar, in this package, in this cart, in this bag - that if it had my father's name on it, that it was connected to my father, connected to this family. That if that product made money, the money from that would go to this family that carried that name. I made sure that the flower I have been producing with the help of some very talented, very dedicated, passionate growers was indeed exactly what it should be. That if it had my father's name on it that it was what it should be. That it represents the legacy what my father was, the legacy that my father has left. That legacy from a commercial standpoint is this family. This product that I produce, with the support of my family, is something that we can all be proud of, that I can stand behind. The genetics that we work with today are more than 20 years old. They are grown with great love and respect and commitment to what it is. Every time we put out a product it, doesn't just say the name, Jack Herer. It shows the face of my father, the man who literally gave his last dying breath on stage fighting for this plant, fighting for our right collectively to grow and possess and create an industry.

Folks like Dennis Peron^{xi}, folks like Gatewood Galbraith^{xii}, folks like Wayne Justmann^{xiii}, folks like Steve D'Angelo^{xiv}, folks like Ed Adair^{xv}, who was my father's partner in life, and his greatest supporter throughout the 70s and 80s and into the 90s. If it were not for these folks, the foundation, they are the foundation for which we are all trying to build our futures on now. And for me, now being a part of this cannabis space, in a way where I function without fear. I am dedicated to making sure that the Jack Herer brand represents what it should be, and that is my father's legacy to the space, my father's relationship to my brothers and sisters and to this family. It shall always remain a conscious effort to maintaining dreams and the ideas of everybody in cannabis. Not just the Herer name. All of the farmer's names that are growing a plant on their property. Whether it is Humboldt or whether it is down in San Diego. There are so many farmers that have given their lives and souls. That have risked everything for decades, even their lives and generations. That these farmers, these individuals, that their ideas and that their dreams and their sacrifices don't end at the end of a dollar when they have to sell their dreams to some investor to an equity stakeholder who now

snatches their dreams from them and turns it into something else. And eliminates the people who actually created the legacy of cannabis out of cannabis. I want to be able to make sure the small farms we deal with have opportunity to survive. Even larger farms up in Northern California or Southern California when grow a product that they have the ability to take that product to market without having to dilute their own dreams just for the sake of capitalization. There has to be some level of responsibility from all of us as an industry to do that, and I hope that I am able to do that through my brand, through my father's image, through my father's teachings to me. Through the influence and love that he still has within an industry that is changing so rapidly.

Industrial hemp side of this is another opportunity to continue to make change. After my father's death started the Jack Herer Foundation. I will say up until now I have had a very rough go at it. Unfortunately, there are so many things happening in this space, in California and around the globe, I can't be as vocal as I would like to be. It's just too expensive when there is not enough money coming in to be able to fund ideas. The foundation has been slow to grow but we are just now starting in earnest the very first Jack Herer Foundation fund-raiser to create a national touring vehicle, an educational vehicle and museum to go around the country and not just go to cannabis-centric events. But go into communities that have been pushing back their whole lives because they are ignorant and unwilling to understand what its possibilities are. My father went on the road for 30 years of his life to educate folks, and I think that that is still absolutely necessary for the future of cannabis and hemp. There needs educational platform that goes into these communities, that lifts their ideas up, that changes the narrative, takes the blocks, and bricks out of the wall that has been built and allows them to see cannabis and hemp is already part of their future. It is part of their communities today. It is part of what is going to change how and where and why we live on this planet. These new ideas to them will come across as these are old ideas that we are now just resurrecting because they were eliminated from our history. They were eliminated from our vernacular. That the stories of cannabis and the demonization created to eliminate competition of a commercial product not to suppress something that was dangerous to humanity, but it was something that was disruptive to the commercial viability of polluting type products around the globe. When people start realizing that the Founding Fathers of this country looked to cannabis for health, wealth and security of this country and be able to show them in real-life documents and letters, statements and products that were created by those that are represented on the dollar bills. On our currency it shows all of our Founding Fathers. On the back of our currency, it shows all the ideas that are America, what it is that our values are, what it is that America stands for are depicted on the back of our dollar bills. When you start looking at cannabis, everybody wants to have a financial dream of being independent, in 1914 showing cannabis farming in America on the back of American currency. This is a very powerful statement. And something that will resonate with somebody who has no understanding. But when they see for themselves that our own department of Treasury represented cannabis on a dollar bill that represents a country, that changes minds immediately. It takes bricks out of the wall immediately. The Foundation is one way of continuing my father's work. Between the products that I make and produce

and sell in within the cannabis or hemp space, the Foundation is probably the strongest, most important thing I can be part of.

Frenchy: Yes, possibly. Education is going to be vital to the future.

Dan: If your understanding is only money then we have already lost.

Frenchy: On a positive note, can you share a favorite memory of your father with me?
22:40

Dan: There are so many, there are so many. I grew up, my dad was a pretty, from the time I was ten, prior to that my dad was pretty strict before he got stoned for the first time. In the 70s I spent a lot of time with my dad on the road. I loved driving around with him as he was selling his products up and down the state of California. I got to travel with him down to San Diego and up into Oregon. We got to spend a great deal of time driving together. You didn't really want to fly up and down the coast of California when it was so beautiful to drive.

This is a moment not related to California, but the business side was related to California. We had a products company back in the 70s. There was a trade show that was in New York City. 1976 we flew to New York City. We stayed at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. And we stayed on the 13th floor. There weren't many people on the 13th floor. They didn't want to be on the 13th floor, but the hotel had a 13th floor. We went there for a trade show for these paraphernalia that we had. It was the first time I had really seen seedless cannabis back in the 70s. It was just becoming more popular. Everything up until then had seeds whether it was Columbian, Oaxacan, Thai Stick. We got this one big giant bud from Maui, and it was literally the size of my arm. We had it in this glass jar. After the show, working the show in New York, we invited people back to the room to come and see this beautiful flower. As people would come off of the elevator, we were smoking cannabis in the hotel, even in the 70s. My father was not one to fear many things. When the door of the elevator opened up the smoke from the hallway would waft into the elevator. It was quite the scene. I remember vividly.

That evening we were invited to event from High Times which was at Studio 54 back in the day. I was 14 years old, just about coming up on 15. My father took me to Studio 54 to this High Times event back in the day, and I remember walking into the club and just being really overwhelmed with what I was seeing visually - how people were dressed, the music, the women. Of course, I was in my young adolescence, coming up through puberty and all that to see these beautiful half-naked women dancing on the floor, it was something not to forget.

Frenchy: Man, thank you so much. You're living in L.A.?

Dan: I live in L.A. and the company that I started, The Herer Group, in Santa Cruz.

Frenchy: I met some of them at The Emerald Cup last year.

Dan: Yes, we came to the New West Summit last year. We spent some time there. We met with some folks. I met you for the first time even though you don't remember. I reminded you of the event when I just saw you in London. You were a little busy. You had a very, very large hash pipe (Actually it was a 6-hose, 32-cup hookah) going in the middle of the upstairs. You were like a, I don't want to say, like a witch doctor. You had this whole ceremonial kind of energy that was going on with regards to how this hash was being smoked. It was incredible to watch and be a part of for a few minutes. It was so smoky up there.

Frenchy: Now I have a new fancy, hi-tech, French hookah bowl that you will experience at the Emerald Cup, I hope.

Dan: The one thing getting back because it's really difficult for me to talk about myself, it's much easier for me to talk about my dad. With the products that we put out that have the Herer name, the fact that it has my name on it, when we created the products that are put into it, we never skimp. If we can make something better, we will. It's not about the profit; it's about the product. I think this is one of the reasons why we've been successful. It's not something that there is ever compromised on. I hope that the readers who potentially try our product, I hope it resonates with them. That they do experience the love and passion that we put into and that represents my father.

Frenchy: In a way you almost have no choice. The story is so strong. In a way you need a great brand with a great product. You cannot have it all if it doesn't combine. The best gift you can give your father is to keep a dedication to quality and never compromise for anything. Money comes when you have quality. It's not a problem. For us, it is being able to protect the small farmer. You have the ability to protect them through the name of your dad. It's pretty amazing.

Dan: My father's legacy I see every day in the lives, the ability, the passion, and the compassion of the folks that are in this industry. I am humbled ever day at the love, respect, and remembrance of my father and his good work. How they have affected other people's lives and the stories that they share with me, their experiences with him. I am blessed every day to be a part of this community and to be able to see the good things for the future because of the hearts and souls that are part of everything that is built. Frenchy, I don't know you well. I know stories of you more than I know you at this point. Julie, who I just met last year, and the community that you all surround yourself with. I am humbled to be invited to speak with you and to share my story in your magazine and to be a part of the community for which I love and believe in every day.

Frenchy: I am really the legacy of you dad at the highest level. In my generation for me it's like being a full revolutionary, you are ready to do anything for your beliefs. There

are not that many people in any domain in the history of humanity that have gone so far and risked so much for a plant.

Dan: My father had so many opportunities to grow cannabis in the 80s and 90s and even in the 2000s for his own profit. And I don't mean for his own profit. Anything my father ever made he always gave back to the community which he loved. But he also knew that if he was a grower, he would put himself at great risk. He was always Public Enemy Number One. His value was better served being the voice and the face of a movement to help others to find their voice than for him to produce a product for sale.

Frenchy: He would have never found the time anyway to do both.

Dan: I think that he thought he would have probably ended up in jail for the rest of his life because of the voice that he was. For him to risk that as opposed to elevating other people's consciousness through his teaching, through his writings, through his studies, through his documentation. I think that he choose to be that face instead of that martyr.

Frenchy: And when you have family, it must dictate your choice a little bit. At the time, selling paraphernalia wasn't well seen either.

Dan: Being a voice was just as dangerous for him as being a grower.

Frenchy: You know the next generation they will never believe us when we tell them those stories, how prohibition was. When we tell them the stories, I am sure they are going to think that we exaggerate the stories like crazy.

Dan: It's hard to believe it even now. You know, you and I are all living within this time of great change. It is hard to understand the acceleration that is happening around us. And at the same time there is equal amounts of frustration due to the same things that created prohibition. The same laws that created prohibition is the same framework that they used for legalization. And it is not even legal. To me cannabis is not legal. Right now, we have payed access. If we don't pay the State and the City money, we have no access.

Frenchy: That's called racketing in my country.

Dan: It's call extortion.

Frenchy: When you want to sell and illegal drug on the market and the Big Boss of the Hood lets you sell on his turf it's called racketing. But when it's at the State level it's different.

Dan: If we are still creating pathways to prison, if we are still not letting every single person who has been persecuted, prosecuted and incarcerated - these are the same

things that I am able to do right now today - grow cannabis, sell cannabis, distribute cannabis and it's ok but the same people who did this ten years ago, twenty years ago, thirty years ago, are still paying the price. This is not ok.

Frenchy: And the people who put them in prison are now investing in cannabis.

Dan: For States and Cities to still use the fears and lies of prohibition in order to use those as the framework for legal access, it's bullshit. How do you build the future on a foundation of lies? If you are legalizing cannabis, then you need to understand it. If you are legalizing cannabis, then you cannot be out there spreading fears.

Frenchy: The problem is that it is still on Schedule I^{xvi}. It's an illegal drug that has no medicinal aspect (according to the DEA's Schedule I).

Dan: But here's the thing, it's Schedule I because of a lie. What I am saying is that it is not the fact that it is Schedule I, even the Schedule I is a lie. It's all still based on a lie. Everything about cannabis is a fucking lie except what us, this community, this industry talks about.

Frenchy: Until they un-schedule. That's the only way for the plant to be really legal.

Dan: And how do you un-schedule it? You have to un-schedule it through education.

Frenchy: It's the government. Everybody knows the whole aspect of cannabis. It's no more addictive than coffee. And it is less of an impairment to your health than wine. Both of them are agricultural products that are on no schedule whatsoever. The plant is mild like crazy.

Dan: If you ask me sugar should be Schedule I.

Frenchy: I have a hard time quitting sugar, oh, I know. I know.

Dan: There are more adverse health effects from sugar than cannabis.

Frenchy: That's what I mean, they can't Schedule it. It's such a mild, psychoactive, and relaxant that is therapeutic on top of it that it shouldn't be on any Schedule when you compare it to tea or coffee and a lot of stuff that we are taking on a general basis. It is the fear that is still among us about how bad it could be.

Dan: Well, honestly, education is still the future. My father knew it. This industry knows it. This community knows it. But the only problem is that we are so busy fighting for our lives and our own existence at the moment that we are forgetting that our voices are still necessary. And, that education is still the only way out. It's not through litigation in the courts. It is through education of the masses. Once people are educated then the laws that were enacted to keep cannabis from becoming what it needs to become, we

are still going to have trouble. We need to continue education. Hopefully we can stop fighting so hard just to survive in the economic world so that we can start speaking about the truth of cannabis again.

ⁱ *The Emperor Wears No Clothes* by Jack Herer, 12th Edition, November 2010, AH HA Publishing, full digital copy. This is the book that started the cannabis hemp revolution. Jack wanted this information to be available to everyone, so he published the text of the book here for free. <https://jackherer.com/emperor-3/>

ⁱⁱ *G.R.A.S.S., Great Revolutionary American Standard System, The Official Guide to Assessing the Quality of Marijuana on a scale of 1 to 10 Scale*, by Jack Herer and Al Emmanuel, Primo Publications, 1973

ⁱⁱⁱ The Sedition Act of 1918 (Pub. L. 65–150, 40 Stat. 553, enacted May 16, 1918) was an Act of the United States Congress that extended the Espionage Act of 1917 to cover a broader range of offenses, notably speech and the expression of opinion that cast the government or the war effort in a negative light or interfered with the sale of government bonds. It forbade the use of "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" about the United States government, its flag, or its armed forces or that caused others to view the American government or its institutions with contempt. Those convicted under the act generally received sentences of imprisonment for five to 20 years. The act also allowed the Postmaster General to refuse to deliver mail that met those same standards for punishable speech or opinion. It applied only to times "when the United States is in war." The U.S. was in a declared state of war at the time of passage, the First World War. The law was repealed on December 13, 1920. Source: Wikipedia

^{iv} www.jackherer.com/alzheimers/, "I was just beginning to write a book called "The Emperor Wears No Clothes" about the history of hemp, including the medical history of cannabis. I had read many reports about diseases being treated with cannabis, including the first reports on Alzheimer's disease and dementia. One report said that if you smoke marijuana morning, noon, and night you won't have a problem with Alzheimer's. It won't go away, but it won't progress and may even go backwards a little bit."

^v <https://jackherer.com/initiative/>, The wording of the initiative Jack tried to get on the ballot before he passed away in 2010. He had been working on this since the 1970's. If you are an activist in a state that allows the initiative process, please consider using this as an example for YOUR state. Thanks!

^{vi} <https://jackherer.com/emperor-3/chapter-4/> See, A Conspiracy to Wipe Out the Natural Competition

^{vii} *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*, free digital copy: <https://jackherer.com/emperor-3/>

^{viii} Ben Dronkers, Ben Dronkers is the founder of the Sensi Seed Bank, HempFlax, and the *Hash Marihuana & Hemp Museum*. <https://sensiseeds.com/en/info/company/about-sensi-seeds/sensi-seeds-family-company/ben-dronkers/>

^{ix} <https://www.hempflax.com/en/> HempFlax was founded in 1993 by Ben Dronkers with the aim of restoring the age-old crop to its former glory. In the process, HempFlax has grown from 140 hectares of industrial hemp fibre in 1994 to 2500 hectares in 2017, and we expect to cultivate no less than 3500 hectares in 2020.

^x Project Earth, www.productearthexpo.com

^{xi} Dennis Peron, (April 8, 1945[1] – January 27, 2018) was an American activist and businessman who became a leader in the movement for the legalization of cannabis throughout the 1990s. He influenced many in California and thus changed the political debate on marijuana in the United States.

^{xii} Louis Gatewood Galbraith, (January 23, 1947 – January 4, 2012) was an American author and attorney from the U.S. Commonwealth of Kentucky. He was a five-time political candidate for governor of Kentucky. Galbraith supported the legalization of recreational marijuana use, arguing that the framers of the US Constitution "did not say we have a Constitutional right to possess alcohol. They said we have a Constitutional right to privacy in our homes, under which fits the possession of an extremely poisonous alcohol. Now this is the law in Kentucky today. In fact, it is these rulings that keep the Kentucky State Police from kicking down the doors of people possessing alcohol in Kentucky's 77 'dry' counties right now and hauling their butts off to jail. Now Marijuana is a demonstrably less harmful substance than alcohol and presents far less of threat to public welfare. So, it also fits in a person's right to privacy in their home. It's beyond the police power of the state as long as I don't sell it and it's for my own personal use."

^{xiii} Wayne Justmann, The Godfather of Weed, Wayne Justmann, and the LGBTQ+ community paved the way for medical cannabis. "If it were not for AIDS in San Francisco. If it were not for the gay people who had this disease. If it were not for the people who supposed these people, we would still have cannabis," he explained. "But we would not have the respect that medical marijuana joined together, because San Francisco is a small area.

^{xiv} Known as the "Father of the Cannabis Industry", Steve is a national cannabis leader, speaker, activist, advocate, entrepreneur, and educator.

^{xv} "Captain" Ed Adair, a fellow head shop owner, <https://www.wweek.com/potlander/2017/04/18/the-story-of-one-of-the-greatest-cannabis-advocates-who-ever-lived-and-the-strain-that-bears-his-name/>

^{xvi} <https://www.dea.gov/drug-scheduling>, Schedule I drugs, substances, or chemicals are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse. Some examples of Schedule I drugs are: heroin, lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), marijuana (cannabis), 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (ecstasy), methaqualone, and peyote.