

January 13, 2019

S. Khaula Saad
Editor-in-Chief/Co-CEO
The Daily Targum & Inside Beat Magazine
204 Neilson St.
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear Ms. Saud,

I submitted a letter to you on October 19, 2018 about several inaccuracies and distortions in an article in the *Daily Targum* regarding the forum “Problems with Marijuana” held in early October at Rutgers. You did not want to publish the letter, feeling my points better belonged in an Op-Ed piece. I then wrote an Op-Ed piece as requested, but it was not published either.

I was disappointed, but having recently read your own opinions, published in a *Daily Targum* editorial “Marijuana will soon be legalized” on October 16, 2018, I now I think I understand why you did not publish my letter or opinion.

Whether you publish this letter or not, I want to address two issues here, just for the sake of clarity and accuracy.

First, in your October editorial you again repeat “...the American College of Orgonomy (ACO), *an anti-marijuana group*, held an event at Rutgers...”

You obviously know nothing at all about the ACO. What is especially irritating is that *you were not even at our presentation*, and got your information from your reporter Mr. Stiesi, *who was not at the forum either*, but quoted another article that had a number of distortions and inaccuracies by a reporter who was there for less than half of the forum. My friends who are professional journalists found this disturbing as well.

The truth is that the ACO is not an “anti-marijuana group.” I am sorry that we may have played into the simplistic perception of us as an “anti-marijuana group.” In truth, the ACO is a nonprofit organization that educates the public and trains professionals in both the medical and social realms to help people have more satisfying work and love lives.

I would encourage you and your mislead readers to explore our website to see first-hand all the good work, training of various professionals, public education and scientific work being done by the associates of the ACO. Here is that website: <http://www.orgonomy.org/>

If you prefer to think of the ACO as “anti-something,” here is a more accurate picture: We are “anti” the various forces in life that compromise, disrupt, damage or even destroy the healthy lives of individuals and functioning of social organizations such as families, schools and businesses. The organization works to prevent the disruption of healthy development and functioning in people of all ages so that they can have pleasurable and prosperous functioning in the domains of love, work and knowledge.

My second points concern your opinions about marijuana. I wish we could have a respectful give and take conversation about these complex issues, and have no illusions that my words here will change your beliefs and opinions about marijuana. But for now:

It is inaccurate at this point to refer, as you do, to “marijuana” as if it was one homogeneous substance. There are profound differences in effects between high-potency THC cannabis and DAP now being smoked or vaped, and the low-THC, higher CBD cannabis that is more and more available. While the research is sometimes confusing, two things have emerged that are crystal clear: 1) High-potency THC marijuana can have destructive effects on individual functioning. And 2), this is especially true for young people, who are most vulnerable to its disruptive effects due to their ongoing development.

Especially for those most vulnerable, marijuana has a long list of potentially harmful effects; these include disruption of neurological and emotional development and functioning. It is a research-proven fact that over time frequent users’ brains actually get less blood flow, oxygen and energy. Frequent use of high-potency marijuana disturbs accurate self-perception, and this effect can persist even after use has stopped. It is a fact that marijuana acutely affects memory and judgment, and disrupts the ability to tolerate and modulate anxiety and act thoughtfully. It is a fact that people - and even more young users – can become emotionally dependent or even addicted to marijuana.

These are not just my whacky anti-marijuana sentiments. You must not have seen recent articles on this subject in the *New Yorker* and *Wall Street Journal*:

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/marijuana-is-more-dangerous-than-you-think-11546527075>

https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/01/14/is-marijuana-as-safe-as-we-think?utm_medium=10today.ad1.20190107.421.1&utm_source=email&utm_content=article&utm_campaign=10-for-today---4.0-styling

There are dozens more scientific reports and articles on the problems marijuana can cause, but one has to want to find and see them.

A specific way the ACO is “pro-marijuana”: Regarding CBD, there is hope that there can be medical applications for CBD; however, the data is still out, though as often happens the politics, policy, and distorted opinions/beliefs are way ahead of the science. We hope that careful scientific research, as is done in developing other medicines, will determine what doses, frequency and methods of dispersal of medical (CBD) marijuana would be most helpful - and for precisely what medical conditions it can be used safely and effectively. Despite the current CBD craze, in my opinion it has not been adequately enough studied to justify recommending it as a treatment for medical conditions, especially for most young people.

I was also disappointed to read in your editorial, “One benefit of legalization is the state tax revenue that would come as a result.” It always amazes me how money can pull one’s thinking off a rational path. If raising revenue is the primary criteria, and all other public health concerns

should be secondary if not ignored altogether, why not generate revenue with legalization of prostitution, or the sell of cocaine and heroin?

Finally, you state, "In the end, the legalization of marijuana will be a very positive event in New Jersey's history. A new age is beginning." I agree that marijuana will (likely) soon be legalized. However, I do not share your near-mystical positive anticipation of the results. I do not think the results thus far have been positive in terms of public and individual health, and making it easier for young people to access high-potency cannabis is unlikely to improve things.

In the end, we shall see.

Thank you,

Dee Apple, Ph.D.
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