## **CONTENTS**

A(	CKNOWLEDGMENTS	xvii
In	troduction	1
P	ART I MARIJUANA AND PROHIBITION	
1	What Is Marijuana?	5
	What does "marijuana" mean?	5
	What is marijuana legalization?	5
	How does it feel to get high?	7
	What are the active ingredients in marijuana?	7
	What are the varieties of the cannabis plant?	8
	What are the varieties of marijuana products?	9
	What is industrial hemp?	10
	What are the alternatives to smoking?	11
	Has marijuana been getting more potent?	12
	Is higher potency bad?	13
	How long does intoxication last?	14
	How long after use can marijuana be detected?	15

## viii Contents

	Is medical-marijuana the same as illegal marijuana?	16
	What is synthetic marijuana (Spice or K2)?	17
	Additional Reading	18
2	Who Uses Marijuana?	19
	How many people use marijuana?	19
	How has marijuana use changed over time?	20
	How have marijuana policies changed in the past half century?	21
	How much marijuana do users consume?	23
	Can marijuana use lead to dependence or addiction?	24
	How common is marijuana use in the United States?	25
	What are typical patterns of marijuana use?	27
	To what extent do heavy users dominate consumption?	29
	Has heavy use become more common?	30
	How much do users spend on marijuana?	31
	Additional Reading	33
3	What Are the Risks of Using Marijuana?	34
	Why is it difficult to measure the consequences of marijuana use?	34
	How do researchers study the consequences of marijuana use?	36
	What is the likelihood of becoming dependent on marijuana?	38
	How bad is marijuana dependency compared to dependency on other drugs?	40
	How many users enter treatment for marijuana?	40
	Does marijuana treatment work?	41
	Can users experience a fatal overdose from marijuana?	43
	Can users experience a nonfatal overdose from using too much marijuana?	44
	Does marijuana use cause emphysema and other respiratory problems?	45

Contents ix

## x Contents

5	What Are the Medical Benefits of Marijuana?	78
	Is marijuana medicine?	78
	But isn't smoking unhealthy?	79
	What did the 1999 Institute of Medicine report (really) say?	80
	What is the state of the medical-marijuana literature today?	81
	Does marijuana have legally recognized medical value in the United States?	84
	Why isn't marijuana available as a regular prescription drug in the United States?	85
	What is happening with medical-marijuana outside the United States?	87
	If there are pharmaceutical cannabinoids, is there any reason to use plant material?	88
	Additional Reading	90
6	How Stringent Is Marijuana Enforcement in the United States?	91
	Does it make sense for marijuana to be a Schedule I substance?	91
	Who gets arrested for marijuana possession?	93
	What happens after those possession arrests?	96
	How harshly are marijuana producers and traffickers punished?	98
	How many people are in prison for marijuana offenses?	99
	Additional Reading	100
P	ART II NATIONAL LEGALIZATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES	
7	What Are the Pros and Cons of Legalization Generally?	103
	What does it mean to legalize a drug?	103
	What is the essential tradeoff between legalization and prohibition?	104
	What are the shades of legalization?	105

Why have drug laws in the first place?	107	
Why even consider legalizing a substance whose use creates harm?	108	
Wouldn't the result of a policy that treated marijuana like alcohol be an improvement over the current mess?	110	
But wasn't alcohol prohibition in the United States a complete failure?	111	
How much of the increase in consumption after legalization would reflect increased heavy use rather than increased casual use?	112	
Can't the effects of marketing be reined in by regulations and taxes?	113	
What about legal availability without free trade? Couldn't that work?	114	
Isn't it impossible to make someone better off by coercing behavioral change?	114	
If people choose to harm themselves with drugs, why is that anyone else's business?	116	
But isn't everyone with an addictive personality already addicted to something?	118	
If the results of legalization are uncertain, why not just try it out, and go back to the current system if legalization doesn't work?	119	
Additional Reading	120	
How Is Legalization of Marijuana Different from Legalization of Other Drugs?	121	
How does legalizing marijuana compare to legalizing all drugs?	121	
Isn't marijuana known to be safe?	122	
If marijuana accounts for half of all drug arrests, would legalizing marijuana free up half of our prison cells?	122	
How much drug-related crime, violence, and corruption would marijuana legalization eliminate?	124	
Would legalization increase marijuana use and dependence by as much as legalization of crack and other drugs would increase their markets?	125	
Would more marijuana use lead to more alcohol abuse, or less?	126	
Would more marijuana use lead to more or less abuse of other substances?	127	
If alcohol is more dangerous than marijuana, what's the logical justification for one being legal and the other illegal?	128	

8

	Could it be reasonable to support legalizing marijuana while keeping some other drugs illegal?	129
	Can two reasonable people sensibly disagree about marijuana legalization?	130
	Additional Reading	130
9	What if We Treated Marijuana Like Alcohol?	131
	What special regulations could apply to legal marijuana?	132
	Could advertising be restricted in the United States?	134
	How could marijuana be taxed?	136
	Would regulations and taxes in practice approach the public health ideal?	137
	How much enforcement would regulation and taxation require?	138
	How many marijuana-related arrests would there be after legalization?	139
	What would happen to marijuana prices after national legalization?	140
	How many people would be employed in marijuana growing?	144
	What would the pretax retail price be for unbranded marijuana?	145
	What would the after-tax retail price be for unbranded marijuana?	146
	What would the retail price be for branded and other forms of marijuana?	148
	Would some businesses give legal marijuana away free?	150
	How much would consumption increase?	151
	Would legalization reduce drug violence in Mexico?	153
	Does legalization pass the benefit-cost test?	153
	Additional Reading	158
0	How Would Alcohol-Style Legalization Affect Me Personally?	159
	How would legalization affect me if I'm a typical regular adult user?	159
	How would legalization affect me if I'm already dependent on marijuana?	161
	How would legalization affect me if I'm an occasional marijuana user?	161
	How would legalization affect me if I'm not currently a marijuana user?	162

	How would legalization affect me if I'm a medical-marijuana patient?	163
	How would legalization affect me if I'm a marijuana grower?	164
	How would legalization affect me if I lead a Mexican drug trafficking organization (DTO)?	165
	How would legalization affect me if I'm a taxpayer?	165
	How would legalization affect me if I'm an employer?	165
	How would legalization affect me if I'm a parent of a teenager?	166
11	Between Marijuana Prohibition and Commercial Legalization: Is There Any Middle Ground?	169
	Are there options in between prohibition and commercial legalization?	169
	What has been learned from decriminalization?	170
	What about legalizing marijuana the way Portugal did (not)?	172
	What about imitating the Dutch approach?	174
	What about just allowing home production?	175
	What about user co-ops and collectives?	177
	What about a very liberal medical-marijuana system?	179
	Couldn't users go to physicians for nonmedical-marijuana?	180
	What if the government had a monopoly on the industry, or on retail sales specifically?	181
	What if the market were limited to nonprofits, "for-benefit" corporations, or other socially responsible organizations?	182
	What about limiting the quantity any user can buy?	183
	Why have a middle path for marijuana but not for alcohol?	185
	Additional Reading	185
PA	RT III THE CRAZY QUILT OF CONFLICTING POLICIES TODAY	
12	Where Are We, and How Did We Get Here?	189
	How many states have legalized or decriminalized marijuana?	189
	How did we get to the current crazy quilt of conflicting policies?	191

	How has support for legalization in the United States varied over time?	193
	Who supports and who opposes legalization in the United States?	194
	Who votes for legalization?	195
	Who is funding the legalization movement?	196
	Additional Reading	198
13	What's Really Happening in Medical-Marijuana States?	199
	When did medical-marijuana get started in the United States?	199
	Where does medical-marijuana come from?	201
	How medical is medical-marijuana?	203
	Are CBD laws really about marijuana?	205
	Was there a "Sanjay Gupta" effect?	206
	What is the federal government doing in states that allow medical-marijuana?	208
	Who recommends medical-marijuana to patients?	209
	Was medical-marijuana invented as a wedge issue to open the gates for full legalization?	211
	Do medical-marijuana laws increase nonmedical-marijuana use?	212
	What are the other population-level consequences of medical-marijuana laws?	213
	Additional Reading	215
14	What Is Happening in Colorado and Washington?	216
	If Uruguay, Alaska, and Oregon have all legalized, why focus on Colorado and Washington?	216
	What are the key provisions common to Colorado and Washington?	217
	Are revenues from taxes making a difference in state budgets?	218
	Have black market sales disappeared in Colorado and Washington?	219
	Are Colorado and Washington exporting marijuana to other states?	219

What about the reverse: If the federal government legalized marijuana,

243

could a state still prohibit it?

	What could the federal government do in response to a state legalizing manjuana?	244	
	Could federal noninterference be formalized?	246	
		246	
	Would marijuana legalization violate international law?		
	Does Dutch policy violate these international conventions?	248	
	What are the consequences of violating international conventions?	248	
	Could these international treaties be changed?	249	
	Should there be international treaties on drugs at all?	250	
	Additional Reading	252	
PAI	RT IV THE FUTURE OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATIO	N	
17	What Might the Future Hold?	255	
	Why isn't the status quo stable?	255	
	Are high state taxes sustainable in the long run?	257	
	How much depends on 2016?	258	
	Will alcohol-style commercial legalization beat out more moderate approaches?	259	
	How long will it take to see all the effects of legalization on the industry?	260	
	How long will it take to see all the effects of legalization on use and dependence?	262	
	Will other countries legalize?	263	
	What is the chance all of our predictions will prove correct?	264	
18	What Do the Authors Think Ought to Be Done About Marijuana?	265	
ADI	DITIONAL READINGS	269	
IND	DEX	277	