

# HOW BIG MARIJUANA HAS MANIPULATED THE PUBLIC TO BELIEVE CANNABIS IS SAFE – PART 2 OF 2

By a News Weekly contributor / November 21, 2025

**Dr Phillip Drum, PharmD, is a clinical pharmacist and oncology specialist who earned his doctorate from the University of California, San Francisco, in 1986. Over his career, he has worked extensively with cancer and AIDS patients, gaining direct experience with the therapeutic use of dronabinol (synthetic THC).**

**Since the death of his sister in 2012 in a car crash caused by a driver who was under the influence of marijuana, Dr Drum has dedicated himself to public education on the risks of cannabis use, addressing schools, law enforcement and professional forums across the United States.**

**Dr Drum was in Melbourne in October to address the Youth Forum Breathtaker Series organised by the Drug Advisory Council of Australia (DACA). In this second part of his conversation with *News Weekly*, he continues his account of the marijuana industry's gradual weakening of the laws against cannabis and describes some of the dire social repercussions of the normalisation of its presence in society.**

## **Dishonesty in Advertising**

So, our marijuana industry then started creating Delta-8, Delta-10, THC-O products from hemp and they're allowed to sell it anywhere. You can go to a gas station and buy these products from hemp. Because they sold it under the guise that CBD is not psychoactive. Very dangerous.

But the states are now reacting. State governments can ban it in their states. In California, for example, they prohibited advertising on the roadways. They slipped into the bill that they couldn't put a billboard on any freeway that crosses the state border. So, if a freeway only runs within California, they could put cannabis billboards all over the place.

Then they tried passing a bill saying, well, within 10 miles of the border. That was found to be illegal by a judge, who said, no, the public said anywhere on that highway.

We have something called I-5, Interstate 5, that goes from Mexico to Vancouver, Canada. So it goes all the way up California. They can't put advertising on the I-5 because it crosses into Oregon. They can't put it on the I-80, which goes from San Francisco to Maryland, all the way across the United States.

So, those were the types of things that we got the billboards banned from. But it's nothing compared to all the other freeways that are in California.

Proposition 64 (the act that legalised recreational cannabis in California in 2016) also allows that your city and county can refuse to have marijuana drug dens, as I call them. They like to call them dispensaries; I call them what they actually are.

Immediately over 60 per cent of the cities and counties banned it.

So, the marijuana industry went back to the California legislature and got it to approve Uber and Lyft and other transport companies to courier cannabis in to people that live in the cities where it's banned. The legislature is now firmly on the side of the marijuana industry.

They've now gotten rid of the taxation. Because the fantasy was that, when you legalise marijuana, the illegal market, they tell you, is just going to get up and walk away. Well, 80 per cent of the sales in California are now estimated to be illegal sales.

California supplies 40 per cent of the marijuana in the nation. It's federally illegal, because marijuana is still a Controlled Substance, which means that it has no medical indication, has a high propensity for addiction, and you suffer withdrawals. That's a CS1 drug. Marijuana fits all that criteria. And a CS1 substance cannot be moved across state lines. But it's happening.

You can see in the Rocky Mountain HIDTA (High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) reports how many times they were catching it going through the mail, how many times the police have caught tonnes of marijuana. Same in Oregon. It's astounding how much Oregon marijuana has been grown because, again, it's a very rural state, except for Portland.

Mendocino County up in the northwestern corner of California has been notorious as a major marijuana grower since the 1960s because they hide it among the trees.

I had a good friend in the California Highway Patrol (state police). When they would go to make these drug busts in California, they would send the state police.

So, he was sent up to Mendocino County. One case he told me about, it was astounding! He said, we were on the floor of the forest, looking for the marijuana. A helicopter overhead was flying around and trying to direct them to where they saw from above the marijuana plants. And they had GPS; so they were saying, OK, at this coordinate and this coordinate, you're going to find a big marijuana grove.

My friend was on the floor in the forest, walking around, looking, going, we're at this coordinate. We don't see anything. Until they looked up.

**And when they looked up into the trees, the marijuana was being grown up into the trees. They had the marijuana up on planks, and they had water systems watering those plants.**

So, if you were up in the sky, you could look down and see the plants coming up through the trees, but the guys on the ground never saw it. They're looking around on the ground, going, there's no marijuana down here. That's how sophisticated they get.

And the environmental damage that they're doing in Northern California, it's horrendous. They steal water from the waterways. We've had major droughts on the West Coast and they're stealing the water that is coming down from the snowpack to feed their marijuana grows.

And endangering our salmon runs, because the salmon don't have the stream anymore. Marijuana plants take up a lot of water.

We also have cartels in many states, Chinese cartels, Russian cartels, Hmong cartels that are growing the marijuana, the illegal marijuana, they're not getting the licensure.

So, guess what happens? The legal growers come back crying, going, we can't compete with the prices of these illegal growers. They get the attention of the governor, who then gets the legislature to create a bill, hey, let's cut or reduce the taxation, because the growers can't survive.

And that's what they've done. And they did it so fast. After it was approved in 2016, by February of 2018, they already had bills before the legislature to start cutting

taxation. So, they sell you with, we're going to tax you at this rate. Then, pretty soon, your tax rate continues to drop. and they never look at the cost to society.

## **Social Costs**

So, let's throw out some ideas. What's the cost of a driving death? The cost of life, insurance, to refurbish the cars or damage that's done. It was estimated to be \$US1.2 million back in 2010, by the Department of Transportation. It's easily up to about \$US1.6 million by now.

So, are they adding up the cost of how many, deaths? I already told you that the number of deaths increased by over 20 per cent in Colorado. And who's paying for the poisonings? See what's happened to the Poison Control Centres and their calls. The one in Colorado – the Rocky Mountain Poison Control Centre – was reporting how many times it was getting calls from children, adults, calling into the poison control centre, being out of their mind, or children that are knocked out from marijuana use.

How about cannabis hyperemesis syndrome? Emergency room doctors tell me that they get easily one per shift per doctor, in the states where we have legalised cannabis, people coming in, throwing up, and they can't stop.

**The only effective treatment for cannabis hyperemesis syndrome is to stop using marijuana. Antiemetics don't work with them.**

Interestingly, something that does work is a hot shower. I've hypothesised that it's probably due to the portion of your brain that regulates heat and temperature, and that if you raise that blood level and body level, somehow it's turning off those mechanisms that are causing the hyperemesis.

I've heard of people that have been scalded, that they're willing to be scalded by hot water to try and stop the vomiting. People have died from hyperemesis. Keeping on vomiting is not safe. Not only can you not keep fluids down, but you change the electrolytes in your body – your potassium, magnesium, sodium levels all go out of whack when you're constantly throwing up. And people have died, because you get heart arrhythmia as a result of your potassium or calcium levels being abnormal, or the magnesium that your heart uses.

So, who's paying for all this? Who's paying for the psychoses that are happening? Who's paying for the schizophrenics? Chronic users become schizophrenic. That has been well documented in the scientific literature now.

## Smoking Guns

We've had a lot of mass shootings in the United States. Several of them were marijuana users. Marijuana users that went on to commit mass murders.

Let me give you another tip. Another book you should read is, *Tell Your Children*, by Alex Berenson. He's a *New York Times* writer, and he wrote this book several years ago. And it was because his wife is a psychiatrist and deals with the mental health problems in the jails. And they talked about the fact that most of the people in jail have used marijuana.

And this starts, right off the bat, at the very beginning: "Introduction. Everything you're about to read is true. In the early hours of December 19th, 2014, in Cairns, Australia, a subtropical city of 160,000, Raina Thaiday stabbed eight children to death."

That's how his book starts off. And he goes on to tell you that the courts accepted "not guilty by reason of insanity" as her valid defence for murder. And she did this because she had schizophrenia as a result of her chronic marijuana use.

In California we had the case of Bryn Spejcher. She gives videos about how she stabbed herself, her dog, and her friend one night when she took in high-potency marijuana that her friend had given her. She went psychotic and stabbed her friend to death. She didn't stab herself to death, but when the police arrived, they had to break her arm, that was the only way they could get her to drop the knife. She was stabbing herself.

OK, she survived. But she spent no time in jail – zero – for that murder, because she claimed that the marijuana made her hallucinate and go psychotic.

Let me give you a few other cases. Joshua Jahn in September 2025, fired 29 shots from the rooftop at an ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) busload of migrants, killing one and wounding two others. He was known to have been a chronic cannabis user and worked at a cannabis farm and was described as a "weed-loving drifter with little direction or drive".

In August 2025, Transgender Robert Paul, AKA Robin Westman, 23, was a personal-care cannabis specialist at a medical cannabis program called Green Thumb. He admitted in his manifesto that he had destroyed his body by vaping and other means and blamed his marijuana for “f\*\*\*\*\*g up my head”. He returned to his Catholic junior high school in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and shot dead an eight-year-old and a ten-year-old, and injured 17 others.

In August of 2025, Ethan Nieneker killed three people in a Target store in Austin, Texas. He had a history of multiple crimes, including marijuana possession, DUI, assault of a family member, and two mental-healthcare reports.

In July of 2025, Dakota Hauver, a cannabis dispensary worker, killed three people in Reno, Nevada, at the Grand Sierra Resort, before being shot by police. In July of 2025, Shane Tamura, a known marijuana user – cannabis was found in his abandoned vehicle – and was hospitalised for mental health disorders within the previous three years. He shot four people dead, including a New York policeman, in downtown Manhattan.

**These are all major national news cases, and they all involve marijuana users. All of them.**

Joel Cauchi stabbed six people to death and injured ten more in the Westfield Centre in Sydney. Remember that case? April 2024. Before being shot by a police officer. The toxicology evidence suggested that Cauchi had been using cannabis in the days leading up to the attack.

We’ve had members of Congress be shot. In 2011, Democrat Gabrielle Giffords was shot in Tucson, Arizona, by a marijuana-impaired person. In 2017, Republican congressman Steve Scalise in Louisiana was shot on a baseball field. Again, the guy that shot him favoured marijuana. It was in his background on his Facebook site, how he really wanted it.

And it’s happening over and over and over again. Why isn’t the media putting this together?

## **Flying High**

We’re constantly running into issues of stabbings, of people attempting to open doors on airplanes. And they come out and say, you know, we think it’s alcohol

making them go crazy on the airplane. Well, I just happen to remember that alcohol has been available on airplanes since the 1950s.

Why is it that we're having problems now with people trying to open doors and going psychotic? It's because of their marijuana use. An edible is easily consumed without anybody seeing it. And, yeah, maybe they then take some alcohol; and they go, yeah, I served them one drink, but he just went completely schizo and it took multiple people to take him down. You hear about this all the time. Why are we not putting this together?

So, you have to understand that with THC, they have to take more and more and more to get the same effect. That starts getting costly, even if they are buying it on the illegal market. Then, maybe they start getting cannabis hyperemesis. Maybe they start hearing voices. Then they switch to something else. Benzodiazepine. Xanax. Opiates like Percocet. Pretty soon fentanyl is added to the Percocet, and they're dead on the street.

Again, we have the stupidity of injection sites in California, and it's horrendous. People just being frozen in place. It's amazing what has been allowed through the tolerance. It needs to stop. The public needs to put the dots together, the crime waves that we see, because people have to steal to get the money to buy the drugs.

## **A House is Not a Home**

We have homes in California. There's a great one, go to CNN, put in Antioch, California. It's about 15 miles away from where I live. Antioch, California. Anderson Cooper did the report. Watch it.

It shows you going into a home and it's loaded with marijuana plants everywhere. The sink, the bathroom, the toilet, the master bedroom – the whole house. You see the rigging of the electrical systems that they did, because they're growing inside the house.

They show the fungus on the walls, because of the humidity and the water that they're having to use. They show the pesticides that they're using, illegal pesticides that are carcinogenic and mutagenic.

So, they make the bust there. And the CNN crew talk to the officer and he says there are three on this block like this. Homes look beautiful from the outside; but the windows are all covered and inside it's loaded with marijuana plants.

So, OK, they got nailed. What happens? A \$US500 fine. They just move on to somewhere else. They sell the house. They refurbish the house and it's immaculate inside now.

But for the person that buys it, surprise, surprise. They have to tear out all the plaster in the place because the THC smells and the stench just gets into the plaster. So the only thing to do is to tear all that plaster out and replace it.

And the officer talks about it and says there are 100 to 200 more in this town, just like this. Just like this. The Chinese cartels have moved in.

We just had a hearing recently at the Department of Homeland Security, a group in the House of Representatives, in which they brought in three major players, from the Drug Enforcement Agency and other areas.

They've come in and they express what they're seeing across the United States; that these cartels have moved in, especially places like Maine, a very small state, a very rural state. And they've infiltrated Maine. They've gone into Oklahoma, which had very, very easy rules for buying land, very cheap for them. And they talk about the fact that you can buy land really cheap in Oklahoma.

They're growing right next to our military bases. Chinese cartels. They're also growing right next to the largest arsenal and weapons-building plant in Oklahoma.

**What are they going to do about it? So far, nothing. So far, nobody is putting the dots together.**

Car crashes, hyperemesis, low birth-weight children, if not spontaneous abortions, cancers. Nobody's putting the dots together. Crime waves, addiction, homelessness.

That's what you're going to get when you legalise cannabis here.