



NORML Rebuts Propaganda

NORML Responds To Latest Marijuana And Lung Cancer Fears -- Widely Reported New Zealand Study Bases Its Findings On Only 14 Cases

Washington, DC, USA: The results of a recent study from New Zealand reporting a nearly six-fold increased risk of lung cancer for individuals who smoke cannabis are based on only 14 cases, and have never been replicated in large-scale population case-control studies, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said today.

The widely reported study, published Friday in the *European Respiratory Journal*, assessed the relative risk of lung cancer associated with marijuana smoking in 79 cases and 324 controls. Of the 79 cases in the study, 70 reported smoking tobacco and 21 smoked cannabis.

<continued on page 3 >

NORML Responds To Media Claim: "Pot As Addictive As Tobacco" -- Widely Reported Study Based Its Findings On Only 12 Subjects, Is Contradicted By The Institute Of Medicine

Baltimore, MD, USA: The results of a recent study from Johns Hopkins University suggesting that quitting cannabis can trigger withdrawal symptoms as severe as those associated with quitting cigarettes are based on subjective reports from only twelve individuals, and are in sharp contrast to findings reported previously by the National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine (IOM).

The widely reported study, published last week in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, evaluated the behavior patterns of twelve participants selected at random to cease their use of marijuana and tobacco for five days.

<continued on page 3 >

2nd Largest US Medical Association Calls for Rescheduling of Cannabis

Sacramento, CA, USA: The American College of Physicians (ACP), the nation's largest organization of doctors of internal medicine and the second largest medical association in the country, called for easing the federal prohibition of marijuana in a position paper released Friday, February 15.

The ACP asked the federal government to review the inclusion of marijuana as a Schedule I drug, a classification it shares with drugs such as heroin and LSD. Schedule I substances are declared to have no medical use and a high potential for abuse by the federal government. Since its inclusion as a Schedule I drug in 1970, the scheduling of cannabis has been constantly challenged.

The conflict between federal

<continued on page 4 >



The Willamette Valley NORML News Report

is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit project to record and broadcast news, announcements and information about cannabis law reform.

The W-V-NORML News Report is produced by the Eugene, OREGON chapter of NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

----- Making contact -----

You can Snail Mail:

The W-V-NORML Newsletter team by writing to -

**P.O. Box 10957
Eugene, OR 97440**

E-mailing:

newsroom@willamettevalleynorml.org

or phoning: **541-517-0957**

Check 'em out on-line! *visit:*

WillametteValleyNORML.org

A Voice for Responsible Marijuana Smokers

Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers. A nonprofit public-interest advocacy group, NORML represents the interests of the tens of millions of Americans who smoke marijuana responsibly. During the 1970s, NORML led the successful efforts to decriminalize minor marijuana offenses in 11 states and significantly lower marijuana penalties in all others.

The oldest and largest marijuana legalization organization in the country, NORML maintains a professional staff in Washington, DC, and a network of volunteer state and local [NORML Chapters](#) across the country. Check 'em out, and find the one nearest you!

The NORML mission is to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohibition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty.

When marijuana is enjoyed responsibly, subjecting users to harsh criminal and civil penalties provides no public benefit and causes terrible injustices. For reasons of public safety, public health, economics and justice, the prohibition laws should be repealed to the extent that they criminalize responsible marijuana use. **NORML, the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws – is located at 1600 K Street, NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20006-2832. Phone (202) 483-5500, Fax: (202) 483-0057 or visit: www.norml.org**

Today Willamette Valley NORML joins the fight to reform state and federal marijuana laws, whether by voter initiative or through the elected legislatures. W-V-NORML will serve as an informational resource to media on marijuana-related stories, providing a perspective to offset the [anti-marijuana propaganda](#) from the government; lobby state and federal legislators in support of reform legislation; publish a regular [newsletter](#); host an informative web site; and serve as the umbrella group for a regional network of citizen-activists committed to ending marijuana prohibition and legalizing marijuana.

Along with their parent organization, W-V-NORML will sponsor public advertising campaigns to better educate the public about marijuana and alternatives to current marijuana policy; provide legal assistance and support to victims of the current laws; and promote relevant research.

W-V-NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for [medical](#) or [personal](#) purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. W-V-NORML also advocates the legalization of [hemp](#) (non-psychoactive marijuana) for industrial use. **To find out more, like how you can help, call, write or visit our website. You'll be glad you did!**

<continued from LUNG CANCER FEARS, page 1 >
Investigators reported that light-to-moderate lifetime cannabis use "was not associated with a significantly increased risk [of lung cancer]." By contrast, researchers reported that the 14 subjects in the study with the highest exposure to cannabis (more than one joint per day for 10 years) had a 5.7 times higher relative risk of lung cancer compared to controls. Overall, subjects who reported having ever smoked tobacco experienced a nearly seven-fold increase in lung cancer risk. By contrast, subjects who reported having ever used cannabis did not experience a statistically significant increased risk of lung cancer compared to non-using controls.

Previous large-scale population case control studies have also failed to identify a significant cancer risk associated with cannabis consumption. Most recently, a UCLA study of more than 2,200 subjects (1,212 cases and 1,040 controls) reported that marijuana smoking was not positively associated with cancers of the lung or upper aerodigestive tract – even among individuals who reported smoking more than 22,000 joints during their lifetime.

A prior Johns Hopkins University study of 164 oral cancer patients and 526 controls also concluded, "The balance of the evidence ... does not favor the idea that marijuana as commonly used in the community is a causal factor for head, neck or lung cancer in adults [under age 55.]"

Finally, A 1997 Kaiser Permanente retrospective cohort study examining the relationship of marijuana use and cancer incidence in 65,171 men and women in California found that cannabis use was not associated with increased risks of developing tobacco-use related cancers – including lung cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, or melanoma.

"The release of this study does little to contradict the large body of existing science indicating that the moderate use of cannabis presents little-to-no known cancer risk," NORML

Deputy Director Paul Armentano said. "By contrast, a growing body of evidence indicates that compounds in marijuana may, in fact, be protective against certain types of cancer, including lung cancer.

"Moreover, cannabis consumers concerned about the potential health risks posed by smoking may engage in vaporization to significantly reduce their intake of respiratory irritants or gaseous combustion toxins. For select marijuana consumers, such as patients using medicinal cannabis to treat a chronic condition, this method of ingestion is both preferable and advisable." *Additional information on marijuana smoking and cancer risk is available in the online report, "Cannabis Smoke and Cancer: Assessing the Risk," at:*

http://www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=6891

<continued from ADDICTIVE AS TOBACCO, page 1 >
Participants reported their symptoms using a checklist that indicated scores for anger, aggression, anxiety, appetite change, irritability, restlessness, sleep difficulty, and other common withdrawal symptoms. Investigators found that subjects reported experiencing withdrawal symptoms of a similar nature and magnitude regardless of whether they were abstaining from tobacco or cannabis. "These results ... suggest [that] cannabis withdrawal is clinically important," researchers concluded.

By contrast, previous studies published by the Institute of Medicine and others have consistently reported that cannabis lacks the severe physical and psychological dependence liability associated with other common intoxicants, such as alcohol, cocaine, and tobacco. According to the IOM, among those individuals who use tobacco, 32 percent at some point in their lives meet the clinical criteria for a diagnosis of "drug dependence." By comparison, 23 percent of heroin users, 17 percent of cocaine users, and 15 percent of alcohol users meet the criteria for drug dependence.

<continued on next page>

<continued from previous page> Fewer than ten percent of cannabis users ever meet these criteria, the IOM found.

"Millions of Americans have tried marijuana, but most are not regular users ... [and] few marijuana users become dependent on it," the IOM concluded. "[A]though [some] marijuana users [do] develop dependence, ... they appear to be less likely to do so than users of other drugs (including alcohol and nicotine), and marijuana dependence appears to be less severe than dependence on other drugs."

NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano said that symptoms of so-called 'marijuana withdrawal' are typically infrequent, mild, and short-lived. "These are not the sort of symptoms that threaten one's physical health, such as those associated with alcohol, nor are they the sort of symptoms that are severe enough to persuade most individuals to reinstate their behavior, such as those commonly associated with nicotine," he said.

"Furthermore, according to the federal government, most cannabis consumers voluntarily cease their pot use by age thirty. Compare this pattern of use to that of cigarette smokers, who typically begin their habit in adolescence and continue it unabated for the rest of their lives." *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at (202) 483-5500 or Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org.*

<continued from RESCHEDULING, page 1 > law and the twelve states where medical cannabis statutes have been enacted have made many doctors avoid recommending medical cannabis as a treatment. Dr. David Dale, president of the ACP, said that contributed to the ACP's action: "We felt the time had come to speak up about this. ...We'd like to clear up the uncertainty and anxiety of patients and physicians over this drug."

Officials at the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy panned the ACP's move.

"What this would do is drag us back to 14th century medicine," said Bertha Madras, the ONDCP deputy director for demand reduction.

"With the ACP now supporting rescheduling, the ONDCP can no longer claim that medical cannabis is not supported by science or the practitioners of modern medicine," NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said in response.

With this action, the ACP joins the American Nurses Association, the American Public Health Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and many other medical associations calling for cannabis to be made a legal medicine.

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at: allen@norml.org. Full text of the ACP policy papers is available in PDF format at: http://www.acponline.org/advocacy/where_we_stand/other_issues/medmarijuana.pdf

New Hampshire: House To Vote Next Week On Pot Decriminalization Proposal

Concord, NH, USA: Members of New Hampshire's House of Representatives are scheduled to vote Wednesday next week on a measure seeking to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of cannabis.

If approved by the House, HB 1623 would replace criminal sanctions outlawing the possession of up to one-quarter ounce of marijuana with civil penalties, punishable by a fine only. Under current state law, the possession or of any amount of cannabis is a misdemeanor offense punishable by up to one year in jail and a \$2,000 fine. In January, Vermont Senators approved similar legislation, calling for fine-only sanctions for adults who possess up to one ounce of cannabis. That measure is now pending before the House Judiciary Committee.

<continued on next page>

<continued from previous page> Currently, twelve states have enacted versions of marijuana decriminalization – replacing criminal sanctions with the imposition of fine-only penalties for minor pot violators. *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or NORML Legal Counsel Keith Stroup at (202) 483-5500. Additional information on HB 1623 is available from NORML's "Take Action" Center at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=10823311> or on NORML's blog at: <http://blog.norml.org/2008/02/27/new-hampshire-house-to-decide-on-pot-decrim-plan/>*

Idaho: Pot Measures May Appear Again On City Ballot

Hailey, ID, USA: Hailey voters will likely have an opportunity this May to once again decide on a series of municipal initiatives seeking to liberalize the city's marijuana law enforcement policies.

Hailey's City Clerk's office reported this week that it had certified four marijuana initiatives to appear on a special May 27 ballot. All four initiatives had been previously decided by voters in November, when Hailey residents endorsed language legalizing the use of medical cannabis and hemp, and called on police to make marijuana law enforcement its lowest priority.

In January, Hailey city council members took legal action to nullify all three voter-approved provisions – claiming that they conflicted with federal law.

The sponsor of the initiatives, the Liberty Lobby of Idaho, has said that they would remove the measures from the May ballot if city officials agree "to implement the spirit of the original initiatives."

Hailey's city attorney has previously said that the city is not legally required to accept the outcome of voter initiatives. *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or Keith Stroup, NORML Legal Counsel, at (202) 483-5500.*

Vermont: Senate Backs Pot Decriminalization Proposal

Montpelier, VT, USA: Members of the Vermont Senate voted Thursday in favor of legislation seeking to decriminalize the possession of small amounts of cannabis.

As amended, Senate Bill 238 would replace existing criminal penalties outlawing the possession of up to one ounce of cannabis with civil sanctions, punishable by a fine and no criminal record.

Under current state law, the possession or cultivation of any amount of cannabis is a misdemeanor offense punishable by up to six months in jail.

Currently, twelve states have enacted similar versions of marijuana decriminalization – replacing criminal sanctions with the imposition of fine-only penalties for minor pot violators.

If passed, Vermont would be the first state to enact marijuana decriminalization since Nevada's legislature did so in 2001. *For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, or NORML Legal Counsel Keith Stroup at (202) 483-5500. Keith Stroup's interview with Vermont Public Radio regarding SB 238 is available at: http://www.vpr.net/news_detail/79325/. Additional information on SB 238 is available from NORML's "Take Action" Center at: <http://capwiz.com/norml2/issues/alert/?alertid=10811606&type=ST>*

Obama Campaign Retracts Statement Supporting Decriminalization

Washington, DC, USA: Senator Barack Obama's campaign backed away from statements made last week affirming the Senator's support for decriminalizing marijuana, after being confronted with

<continued on next page>

<continued from previous page> inconsistencies in his past and present campaigns on the issue by the *Washington Times*.

A spokesman for Obama's campaign blamed confusion over the meaning of decriminalization for the inconsistencies, and said that while Obama does not support decriminalization, "we are sending far too many first-time, nonviolent drug users to prison for very long periods of time, and that we should rethink those laws."

For more information, please contact Allen St. Pierre, NORML Executive Director, at: allen@norml.org. Full text of the *Washington Times* article can be found at: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080201/NATION/43529865/0/FRONTPAGE>.

NORML Launches New Blog, Front Page Redesign

Washington, DC, USA: NORML's popular website, www.norml.org, unveiled its first redesign in more than eight years this week – adding a pair of staff-driven blogs to the site's front page.

"NORML's front page redesign reflects the organization's commitment to be in more frequent contact with our supporters, as well as our desire to provide activists with the most up-to-date and breaking marijuana law reform news and science," NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said. "NORML's new blog updates – along with NORML's widely popular daily podcast and successful outreach efforts on social networking websites like Myspace and Facebook – gives us greater ability to communicate in a timely and substantive manner with the millions of Americans who desire an end to the government's war on cannabis consumers."

Allen St. Pierre, NORML Deputy Director Paul Armentano, and NORML Outreach Coordinator Ron Fisher will be posting their thoughts periodically on: <http://blog.norml.org/>. Daily commentaries from NORML Daily Audio Stash host Russ Belville will also be available online at: <http://stash.norml.org>.

Nationally Syndicated Talk Show Host To Be New Voice For NORML's Daily Audio Stash -- Over 28,000 Daily Listeners Download Web's Most 'Pot-Friendly' Political Podcast

Washington, DC, USA: The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) has tapped syndicated radio talk show host Russ Belville as the new voice for its highly popular podcast, the NORML *Daily Audio Stash*.

Belville (aka 'Radical Russ') is the current host of the nationally syndicated radio show, "The Russ Belville Show," which airs on XM Satellite Radio's Air America channel 167 and on various terrestrial stations across the country. Belville also serves as the associate director for Oregon NORML.

"We are thrilled to welcome Russ on board as the new voice of NORML's successful audio-programming," NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said. "Five days a week, Russ will share his broadcast expertise and cannabis insight with the tens of thousands of NORML listeners who tune into the *Daily Audio Stash* and visit the program's new interactive blog: <http://stash.norml.org>."

Belville takes over for departing *Audio Stash* host Chris Goldstein, who co-founded the program with NORML's Executive Director in June 2006.

Today, NORML's *Daily Audio Stash* ranks among the top 10 'most subscribed' political podcasts in Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store – typically receiving more downloads than podcasts produced by the White House, the Pentagon, and US Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Available for download Monday through Friday at 4:20pm eastern time at:

<continued on next page>

<continued from previous page> <http://www.norml.org>, the *Daily Audio Stash* provides a forum for politicians, celebrities, physicians, scientists, and citizen activists to participate in uninhibited conversations about marijuana and legal reform.

Recent guests on the *Audio Stash* include US Congressmen and Presidential candidates Ron Paul and Dennis Kucinich, noted poet and political activist John Sinclair, recording artists Fishbone and the Kottonmouth Kings, PBS travel-host and author Rick Steves, comedians Tommy Chong and Rob Cantrell (*Last Comic Standing*), political columnist and commentators Clarence Page and Froma Harrop, and pot cultivation expert and noted author Ed Rosenthal. *For more information or to learn how you can advertise on NORML's top-rated podcast, please contact host Russ Belville at: radicalruss@gmail.com or Audio Stash Executive Producer Allen St. Pierre at (202) 483-5500.*

Cannabinoids Offer "Attractive Target" For Cancer Therapy, Study Says

Stockholm, Sweden: Cannabinoids selectively target cancer cells and inhibit tumor growth, according to a forthcoming review to be published in the journal *Seminars in Cancer Biology*.

Investigators at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm reported, "[C]annabinoids may have ... inhibitory effects on tumor growth, angiogenesis (the formation of new blood vessels), migration and metastasis (the transfer of malignant cells from one site to another). Remarkably, these effects may be selective for the cancer cells, while normal cells and tissues are spared."

Authors concluded, "Such apparent tumor cell selectivity makes the endocannabinoid system an attractive potential target for cancer therapy."

Last month, investigators at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health reported in the journal *Cancer Research* that the administration of cannabinoids halts the spread of a wide range of cancers, including brain cancer, prostate cancer, breast cancer, lung cancer, skin cancer, pancreatic cancer, and lymphoma.

In November, researchers at the California Pacific Medical Center Research Institute reported that the administration of the non-psychoactive cannabinoid cannabidiol limits the activity of the breast cancer metastasis gene Id-1, stating, "[Cannabidiol] offers hope of a non-toxic therapy that could [treat aggressive forms of cancer] without any of the painful side effects [of chemotherapy.]"

*For more information, please contact Paul Armentano, NORML Deputy Director, at: paul@norml.org. Full text of the study, "The endocannabinoid system in cancer - potential therapeutic target?", will appear in *Seminars in Cancer Biology*. Additional information on the use of cannabinoids as potential anti-cancer agents is available in the online report "Cannabinoids as Cancer Hope" at: http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=6814.*

NORML Remembers Outspoken Conservative Marijuana Law Reform Advocate William F. Buckley

Washington, DC, USA: Conservative author and political pundit William F. Buckley died on Wednesday, February 27, from complications from diabetes and emphysema. He was 82 years old.

Though most well known for his politically conservative writings as founder of the magazine *National Review*, Buckley also spoke out routinely against the criminal prohibition of cannabis. Buckley is believed to have penned more than 40 syndicated columns criticizing America's 'war on drugs,' and enjoyed a nearly five-decade long friendship with former NORML Executive Director (and current MarijuanaNews.com editor) Richard Cowan.

NORML expresses its sincere condolences to the friends and family of William Buckley.

*Narcotics police are an enormous, corrupt international bureaucracy ... and now fund a coterie of researchers who provide them with 'scientific support' ... fanatics who distort the legitimate research of others. ... The anti-marijuana campaign is a cancerous tissue of lies, undermining law enforcement, aggravating the drug problem, depriving the sick of needed help, and suckering well-intentioned conservatives and countless frightened parents. -- William F. Buckley, Commentary in *The National Review*, April 29, 1983, p. 495*



News From *your* local affiliate of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

Drug Law Reform Community Mourns Passing of John Morgan, M.D.

New York, NY, USA: Longtime marijuana law reform advocate Dr. John Morgan passed away Friday, February 15, in New York City at the age of 67. Dr. Morgan served on NORML's Board of Directors from 1995 to 2004, and on NORML's Advisory Board thereafter until his death. Morgan died after suddenly falling into a coma in the hours following an unexpected diagnosis of leukemia. Friends and family, some of whom had spoken to an apparently healthy Morgan just days prior, were stunned and saddened.

Dr. John P. Morgan was a physician and professor of pharmacology at the City University of New York Medical School. He graduated from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine in 1965. Following training in internal medicine (at Syracuse) and clinical pharmacology (at Johns Hopkins University and the University of Rochester), he began a career in academic pharmacology and medicine at the University of Rochester. He began his work at City College in 1977, where his teaching included the topics of pharmacology, clinical pharmacology, and drug policy.

Although perhaps best known to the drug law reform movement as coauthor (along with the late sociologist Lynn Zimmer) of *Marijuana Myths, Marijuana Facts* (The Lindesmith Center, New York, 1997), Morgan had been an active force in drug law reform for decades. Dr. Morgan published approximately 100 articles, book chapters, and books on the clinical pharmacology of psychoactive drugs. More

*** NOTE! The Willamette Valley
NORML Public meeting *
Happens every 4th Sat. of the
month and will be at
Herbs Toasted Subs,
1210 Willamette St, Eugene *
call: 541.517-0957 -or- visit:
<http://WillametteValleyNORML.org>**

recently, his research and writing involved issues such as urine testing in the American workplace, medical marijuana, the socio-pharmacology of crack-cocaine, alcohol prevalence during national prohibition, and physician prescribing practices.

In a statement announcing his death, NORML Executive Director Allen St. Pierre said, "John was a wonderful man, scholar, brilliant educator, author, researcher, lecturer and good friend to anyone who extended their hand to him. Every single man and woman in this country and around the world who cares about replacing prohibition-oriented policies with science/public health-based policies owes a man like John Morgan immense thanks and praise."

*The family asks that in lieu of flowers,
donations in his name be made to support
Stem Cell or Multiple Sclerosis research at Mt.
Sinai Hospital. Call the hospital's Development
Office at (212) 659-8500 or use their online
gift form at
http://www.mountsinai.org/msh/ways_to_give_ms.jsp*

*** THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY (W-V) NORML NEWS REPORT > * P.O. Box 10957, EUGENE,
OREGON, 97440 * PH: (541) 517-0957 * EMAIL: newsroom@willamettevalleynorml.org *
OR VISIT: www.WillametteValleyNORML.org**