

What is shaping culture? From drug to Drug™ in 365 days

By Brett Rogers

21 Apr 2020

Since the Constitutional court decriminalised the use of cannabis in the home in September 2018, many have had a huge shift in their attitude towards the plant. More people than you think are embracing this new dawn.



Let's light up...

Cypress Hill once sang (quoting Genesis 1:12) on the track 'Legalise it' from the seminal album 'Black Sunday' "I have given you all the seed-bearing plants on earth to use." But the many so-called Christian countries subscribing to the Bible – South Africa included – didn't see it that way.

I remember as a teen (and I know I'm not alone), the stern lectures from my parents about the horrors of the gateway 'drug' that was Cannabis/Marijuana/Ganja/etc. If I saw anyone smoking the weed, I could be certain they would land up in prison for a few years. After that, they would suffer a life-long torment of addiction to class-A drugs and live on the streets.



#EntrepreneurMonth: The sophistication of canna culture - Q&A with KushKush founder Jo Hope

Ruth Cooper 14 Nov 2019



Two decades later and the lessons I was to have learned have been turned on their head: instead of users and sellers going to prison, this plant could land up being the business and health industry injection that South Africa needs so desperately.

There is an important distinction between legalisation and decriminalisation. While we live under the current ruling (decriminalisation), it is still possible for police to arrest if they see fit, with no clear guidelines. And selling cannabis is still an illegal pursuit. Legalisation would provide clear legislation keeping everyone safe.



What have you changed about your own business since the legalisation?

The Seller

Since September 2018 when we heard about this whole legalisation thing. It just made me realise that this could be a real legit business one day. So why not act as if we were legit now already. When the time comes, when we go fully legit. We only have to fill out the legal document's. hahaha The changes made were **new daily menu design, formal delivery times and order quantity specifications.**

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Despite its illegality, activist and weedtrepreneur (yes, it's a word) Tyrone Platt is bringing a professional approach to the fledgling industry, in as much as is possible under the conditions under which he works. He speaks of the incredible business opportunities, as well as the friends and community, he has found in the world of cannabis. The abiding tale that people tell of the cannabis world is of positivity, community, health improvement and economic freedom.

Consumers, too, also still fear prosecution regardless of the decriminalised status of the plant. What really stood out during conversations with several, was that their main focus was not 'getting stoned' but rather their appreciation for the community that cannabis creates.



The Consumer

In spaces where cannabis culture appears **we feel safe,** understood, welcome, free to do as we do and to come together to share with our community, in cannabis communion.

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Quanita Booley, aka That Kin Connie, is an activist and enthusiast who began her crusade just two years ago and has become a force to be reckoned with. Her involvement with The Global Cannabis March held this year in Cape Town showed the sheer numbers of people who are – still to this day – fighting for their right to embrace the plant fully.

“



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The glorious Quanita Booley @that_kin_connie visited us in the garden to chat all things cannabis We also had a sneaky J and gave a little review #watroekdjy?, and worked out how to survive the Zombie apocalypse. #TopTip Use Dinosaurs (yes we know the one camera was blurry and we are sorry) #Cannabis #cannabisculture #cannabiscommunity #durbanpoison #hash #dab #hash #munchies #420life #420 #dagga #cbd #marijuana

A post shared by in_ (@thisisin_) on Oct 4, 2019 at 7:31am PDT

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Last year, the second Cannabis Expo was held in Sandton, and as a child of the 80s, this is certainly something to be amazed by. The director of the Cannabis Expo, Silas Howarth, expressed incredible joy at the diversity and democratisation in the industry. People from all walks of life are getting involved, helping each other and helping themselves. What they all seem to know is the immense capacity for economic growth in South Africa.



The canna revolution - Q&A with Cannabis Expo director Silas Howarth

Ruth Cooper 12 Mar 2020



As we discovered in our research, people from Africa consume almost double the amount of cannabis than those in other countries do. Africa has the land, the capacity and the desire to supply the globe, with the chance of pulling many nations out of the poverty zone and in franchising many with the opportunity for small scale farming.

Annual consumption of marijuana in Africa is 11.4% while the global average is 6%.

NEW FRONTIER DATA REPORT

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People like Jeremy Acton, leader of 'Iqula Lentsango: The Dagga Party of South Africa' has been fighting for decades for legalisation, and firmly believes in the economic and ecological possibilities for the plant.



The Activist

Jeremy Acton, Leader of Iqula Lentsango:
The Dagga Party of South Africa



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“This plant is essential to a sustainable future as the global economy depletes the planet’s non-renewable resources (oil, metals, soil, etc). Legal cannabis production could allow everyone to participate equitably as producers in an economy and not just be consumers. This plant is our future,” he said.

Not everyone will agree that cannabis should be legalised. However, we cannot ignore the existence of the culture, that it is immense and that it is going nowhere but forward.

ABOUT BRETT ROGERS

Brett Rogers, culture lead at Cape Town advertising agency HaveYouHeard and content curator for In_, a channel of content, which showcases cultural forces that are changing the world. It aims to inform, inspire and entertain the viewer and does so with multimedia posts, including podcasts, videos, google trends, mini Q+A's and more. In_ talks to those interested in in-depth cultural exploration and those curious about the world we live in.

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