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Marijuana Argot As Subculture Threads: *Social Constructions by Users in New York City*

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The British Journal of Criminology, Volume 46, Issue 1, 1 January 2006, Pages 46–77,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azi053>

Published: 10 June 2005

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Abstract

Marijuana-related argot provides socially constructed ways of talking, thinking, expressing, communicating and interacting among marijuana users

and distributors. Such argot also provides the verbal threads by which the marijuana subculture integrates use practices among diverse individuals, groups and regions. An ethnographic study of blunt and marijuana users in New York City identified 180 argot words that are commonly used to maintain the subculture secrecy. Such argot constitutes the subculture threads connecting and linking diverse user groups, networks and markets. These words convey the dynamic expressiveness involved in shared consumption and as a comprehensive communication system among subculture participants. Argot terms are created and spread by subculture participants. Argot also delineates important distinctions within and helps organize how the marijuana subculture structures use practices, networks and markets. Argot maintains boundaries with other drug subcultures. The dynamic use of argot constitutes a communication system widely understood among marijuana subculture participants, yet is largely hidden from mainstream culture.

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Online ISSN 1464-3529

Print ISSN 0007-0955

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