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A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE USE OF CANNABIS

A thesis by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is about the use of cannabis amongst students from a university in the south of England.\* Its aims are to illuminate the nature of cannabis use by adopting a phenomenological perspective, to extend previous 'naturalistic' work on this topic, and thereby to demonstrate the value of asking phenomenological questions.

In the first chapter, the main findings and features of previous naturalistic research on cannabis use are critically reviewed. It is suggested that, when examined from a phenomenological point of view, such research takes for granted and leaves unexplicated several important aspects of the phenomenon of cannabis and that it thereby only partially illuminates its nature. Subsequent chapters focus attention on these neglected issues.

In chapter two, the nature of the social types of cannabis users which are employed by the members themselves is examined. Particular attention is paid to members' grounds for typing users in terms of the two predominant social types in use at the time of this research - the 'head' and the 'freak'. It is suggested that these grounds may be expressed sociologically in terms of four main constructs: centrality, context, community and commitment. In chapter three, the nature of cannabis as a substance from the perspective of the users is analysed, with particular emphasis being placed on members' categories of cannabis and their methods of interpretive work whereby they decide (a) whether a substance is cannabis at all, (b) what type of cannabis it is and (c) the quality of cannabis. Chapter four presents a sequential analysis of the procedural basis of the use of cannabis, with special attention being directed to the use of different methods of consuming the drug and to the social organisation of collective consumption. In chapter five, the focus is on the effects of cannabis. Here particular attention is given to members' conceptions of their experiences of the drug, to their understandings of the production of different kinds of effects, to their interpretive work involved in 'making sense' of these effects, and to their methods for achieving

or avoiding certain kinds of cannabis experiences. The subject matter of chapter six is the morality of cannabis use. The focus here is on how members account for their initial and subsequent use of the drug, their conceptions of its morality, their grounds for defining its proscription as unwarranted, and their methods for sustaining their version of the morality of cannabis use in social interaction. Chapter seven discusses users' cultural solutions to the problem of acquiring cannabis. The main focus is on their methods of quantifying cannabis, their understandings of the cannabis market and their practices and procedures for conducting cannabis transactions. Chapter eight analyses members' conceptions of the risks of being a cannabis user, firstly in the sense of the perceived consequences of discovery and, secondly, in terms of the perceived chances of being apprehended. Members' concealment strategies, taken in the light of their assessments of the risks involved, are then described and their grounds for their selective use analysed. In chapter nine, some formal phenomenological and structural conditions underlying the use of cannabis in this setting are discussed, together with some substantive and theoretical implications of the preceding chapters. Finally, in chapter ten, some suggestions for future research are made.

\* Pseudonyms are used throughout this thesis in order to protect the anonymity of the students and the university.

PREFACE

This study is about the use of cannabis amongst a group of students from the University of Kale between 1969 and 1972. Its aims are to illuminate the nature of cannabis use and to extend in a phenomenological direction earlier naturalistic contributions to this field of inquiry. The thesis that is contained in the following chapters therefore consists of an ethnography with a particular focus on aspects of this phenomenon which have been neglected in previous sociological work. This preface describes some details of the contextual background of the research.

Prior to the 1960s the use of cannabis was not defined as a major social problem in Britain. Its initial proscription in 1928 was more a result of international co-operation than a response to a 'drug problem' in this country. The highest pre-war figure for prosecutions of cannabis offences was 18 in 1938.<sup>1</sup> After the Second World War this figure increased from 86 in 1950 to 185 in 1959. During this period use was largely confined to the West African and West Indian immigrant communities, to the musicians and fans of the world of jazz, and to the small number of adherents of the beat generation. The late 1950s and early 1960s saw further increases in the number of convictions as new groups became converted to the use of cannabis as a favoured form of deviant behaviour. This occurred first amongst the beatniks, peaceniks and others associated with CND and the folk revival of the early 1960s. They were soon followed by some of the mods who, having participated in the 'pill culture' associated with the all-night discotheque scene of the early 1960s, incorporated cannabis, albeit marginally, into their lifestyle. By 1965 the number of convictions had risen to 626.<sup>2</sup>

Whilst convictions had only trebled from 1959 to 1965, they increased twentyfold between 1965 and 1972. This dramatic increase reflected the growing popularity of cannabis amongst middle-class youth, particularly students, as the drug became associated with the development, from 1966-67

onwards, of the hippy movement, 'flower power', and the emergence of the British underground.

The hippies scorned the ethos of productivity that sustained 'straight' society.<sup>3</sup> They followed the bohemian tradition and advocated the creation of an 'alternative' society which would be based on love, peace and such subterranean values as expressivity, spontaneity, autonomy and hedonism.<sup>4</sup> The catalysts for the realisation of this alternative society were drugs and rock music. Through major 'psychedelic' drugs like LSD and mescaline, through minor ones like cannabis, and through the music of such 'progressive' and 'acid' rock bands like the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, the Byrds and Jimi Hendrix, people could be 'turned on' to the hippy way of life. Hippy views, together with the radical idealism of the youthful political dissidents of the period, were disseminated through the underground newspapers such as International Times, Oz, Friends, and Rolling Stone. As symbols of their rejection of straight society, the hippies evolved distinctive styles of dress and speech. An 'alternative' marketplace for hippy paraphenalia - from blue jeans to kaftans, from beads to hash pipes - developed, first in London and subsequently in the provinces. Self-help organizations, like Bit and Release, developed in a similar fashion.

It is beyond the scope of this work to enter into a detailed analysis of the origins and metamorphoses of the hippy movement and the British underground.<sup>5</sup> It is necessary, however, to emphasize that by 1969, when this research began, there had emerged a diffuse counter cultural milieu, one major strand of which was rooted in the bohemianism of the hippies, whilst another stemmed from the radicalism of the more active political dissidents of this era.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, the hippy movement, as a distinct social phenomenon, was becoming fragmented into a variety of cultural elements.<sup>7</sup> For many hippies, it became apparent that their vision of an



alternative society was not going to be realised and that drugs and rock music were inadequate catalysts of social revolution. Nevertheless, some hippies - the heads and the freaks - continued to typify the original commitment to the use of psychedelic drugs. Others, however, became successful entrepreneurs as the alternative marketplace was assimilated into the conventional business world. Further groups ventured abroad to such hippy meccas as Kabul and Katmandu, turned to the country communes or renounced the psychedelic subculture for that of politics, hard drugs or religious ascetism.

Besides becoming increasingly popular, cannabis was also the subject of public controversy from the mid-sixties onwards. Social reaction against the cannabis user, like that against the hippy way of life in general, consisted of moral panic and outrage. The mass media portrayed the cannabis user within the frame of a mythical homogeneous world of drug use where junkies, acid heads, pill poppers, and marihuana smokers lived pathological and degenerate lives. One central stereotypical distinction which was made was that between the weak user (the corrupted) and the evil pusher (the corrupter). Cannabis itself was depicted as a harmful and addictive drug, playing a vital role in the etiology of addiction to heroin and other 'hard' drugs. Other alleged consequences included brain damage, moral apathy and an incapacity to lead a useful and productive life.

These stereotypical images did not go unchallenged. From 1967 onwards there were calls for the legalization of cannabis. Attempts were made to extricate the cannabis user from the fantasy world in which the media had located him; the distinction between corrupter and corrupted was denied; and arguments were put forward against those alleging disastrous consequences of cannabis use. Early in 1967 the Labour Government established a Standing Advisory Committee on the problem of drug dependence.

A special subcommittee of this was appointed to review the available evidence on the pharmacological, clinical, pathological, social and legal aspects of cannabis. Its conclusions were published in what became known as the Wootton Report in 1969. Like subsequent similar reports in other countries (notably the USA and Canada), it recommended some liberalisation of the criminal law pertaining to cannabis. In particular, it favoured a reduction in the penalties for unlawful possession, sale or supply of the drug.

The Wootton Report was greeted with almost unanimous condemnation by Parliament, the popular press and the general public. The Home Secretary of the time, James Callaghan, spoke of calling a halt to the rising tide of permissiveness, and stated that he believed that the Wootton subcommittee had been over-influenced by the lobby in favour of legalizing cannabis. He also let it be known that the law relating to the drug would not be relaxed as long as he was in charge at the Home Office. The drug problem was to be solved by confrontation, not conciliation. The establishment and the activities of the special police drug squads was increased. The consequence of this was an exacerbation of the process of 'deviancy amplification' which, according to Young (1971a), was already taking place in relation to the drug problem. This entailed the translation of certain facets of the fantasy portrait of drugtaking into reality. Thus, where cannabis was initially a 'peripheral' vehicle for the realisation of subterranean goals, as a result of police action it became transformed into a central activity of crucial symbolic importance. Users became more organized and increasingly conscious of themselves as a distinct group with interests which conflicted with those of the control culture. They were obliged to become more secretive. In turn, the necessity for secrecy led to greater social isolation from conventional society, to paranoia and psychotic episodes, and to the development of a conception of cannabis as a symbol of their difference from 'straight' soc-

iety and their defiance of perceived social injustices. The price of cannabis rose and the criminal underworld became increasingly involved in the distribution of the drug. Common problems of social control led to some sense of community being forged between marihuana smokers and heroin addicts, thereby increasing the probability of a 'progression' from 'soft' to 'hard' drugs. With widespread exposure by the mass media, cannabis became increasingly popular as a recreational drug amongst young people.

In 1970, a new Bill, The Misuse of Drugs Bill, was introduced. This recommended a slight reduction in the maximum prison sentence for possession of cannabis, but an increase in the maximum fine for this offence. The outstanding feature of the Bill, however, was its distinction between possession and distribution or 'trafficking'. For trafficking, supply or smuggling the maximum penalty was raised to fourteen years imprisonment and an unlimited fine. This innovation reflected a change in control strategy and the process whereby in the course of media preoccupation with the drug problem, 'drug pushers' had become the scapegoats responsible for the increase in cannabis use. The Bill became law in May 1971 and replaced the Dangerous Drugs Acts of 1965 and 1967. As the optimism of the mid-sixties gave way to disillusionment, controversy to confrontation, the police were provided with a more definite, if illusory, target in their attempts to control the drug problem.<sup>8</sup>

It was against the background of these legal and cultural developments that the students involved in this research attended the University of Kale at Winterbury between 1969 and 1972. Winterbury itself was a small, quiet city with a population of around 33,000, situated in the East Kale countryside. Its religious and historic attractions - Cathedral, city wall, tudor architecture, - and its accessibility to the East Kale coast brought an influx of tourists each summer. For most of the year, however, the city remained undisturbed and tranquil with little in the way of

entertainment beyond two cinemas, a theatre and several pubs. Though near to London (60 miles), Winterbury remained immune to counter-cultural enterprises (with the exception of one or two eating places) until the early seventies when several 'alternative' shops, selling hippy paraphenalia, were opened.

The university was located approximately two miles to the north of the city, yet isolated from it. A private road provided access to the campus which was situated in idyllic surroundings on the top of a hill overlooking the city and the cathedral. One of the six 'new' universities, Kale was founded in 1965 and was organized on the basis of a collegiate system. By 1969 the university had a population of about two thousand students, each of whom was affiliated to one of three colleges. A fourth college was opened the following year. Each college contained a full range of facilities for both study and recreation, including staff rooms, common rooms, dining rooms and study bedrooms. Around three hundred students lived in <sup>each</sup> college, whilst others lived in lodgings, flats or houses in and around the Winterbury area.

Cannabis use was widespread amongst the students, both on and off campus.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, in each academic year, consumption and distribution of the drug tended to centre around several rooms in each college and some of the flats and houses occupied by students in the Winterbury area. Amongst the 'regular' users there was frequent social interaction. Like the 'typical bohemian scene' in Notting Hill, described by Young (1971a), their social world involved 'intense patterns of visiting' and tended to be tightly organized. Contact with the police, in contrast to the situation of the 'middle-class dropouts' of Notting Hill, was an atypical event. The students at Winterbury appeared relatively immune to police action. The police did not, as a matter of routine, patrol the university grounds and neither did they invade the privacy of students' rooms in order to scrutinize their behaviour.

Since it was the aim<sup>4</sup> the research to describe and analyse in detail the cultural meanings of cannabis use rather than survey superficially a large number of different users, it concentrates on a particular group of students - those who were the most immersed in the social world of cannabis use in this period. The initial sample of such students was contacted through 'snowballing' procedures (whereby further contacts are made through earlier ones) in the academic year 1969-70. Additional users were subsequently encountered in the academic years 1970-71 and 1971-2. Participant observation was conducted with over 100 of these students over the three year period of the research. Around 50 of these students were interviewed either formally or informally at some point during the investigation.<sup>10</sup>

The students concerned could be classified as 'heavy' or 'regular' users since they tended to smoke cannabis on a daily or at least several times weekly basis, assuming that supplies were available.<sup>11</sup> However, in this research such classifications on a scale of self-reported frequency of use are of less importance than the categorizations which these members employed to typify themselves as certain kinds of cannabis users. Thus, for the most part, they identified themselves as 'heads' or 'freaks', these being the predominant social types of cannabis user employed during this period. It is with the meanings of the members' own classifications, rather than with their replacement by social scientific alternatives that this study is concerned.

This focus on the 'existential' types of the users themselves reflects the general concern of this thesis with illuminating the nature of the phenomenon of cannabis use as it appears to those who engage in it. Previous research in this field, particularly in Britain, typically has neither been grounded in a naturalistic approach nor, to an even lesser extent, asked phenomenological questions. Instead, whether it has adopted a traditional positivistic approach, assumed a structural or subcultural

position, or been based on interactionist premises, and whether or not it has taken an appreciative or correctional view of the phenomenon, such research has concentrated on questions of etiology.<sup>12</sup> The consequence of this has been that the nature of the phenomenon as it appears to those who participate in it has been insufficiently and inadequately illuminated. Of course, some of this research, notably that conducted by the interactionists, has acquired a deeper appreciation of the phenomenon than others. Yet even here, in its preoccupation with etiology, such contributions have, by neglecting phenomenological questions about the use of cannabis, only partially illuminated its nature.

In contrast to previous research, then, the major concern of this thesis is not to explain the use of cannabis. Instead, it adopts a phenomenological perspective and as such focuses on the social knowledge and interpretive procedures whereby drug users themselves construct the reality of their social worlds. When the notion of causal explanation is discussed it is treated as a members' device for making sense of problematic events and features of their worlds. Such a stance and its substantive focus inevitably limits the scope of the investigation to one range of issues at the expense of others. To a large extent it precludes, not only for practical purposes, but for theoretical reasons also, consideration of questions which may appear crucial from alternative sociological points of view. In particular, it tends to underplay, on the one hand, the more formal features of reality construction in general, and on the other, the larger socio-structural context within which the world depicted in this work is located. Such selectivity is in the nature of the social scientific enterprise. Nevertheless, the ensuing thesis concludes with a consideration of these wider issues in relation to the substantive phenomenon of cannabis use.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the use of cannabis. The users who comprise the source of its data consist of students and ex-students of a university in the South of England. The investigation was carried out between 1969 and 1972. The aim of this work is the provision of an ethnography of the use of cannabis in order to illuminate its nature. In so doing I have endeavoured to build upon the work of previous symbolic interactionist or 'naturalistic' accounts of this phenomenon by adopting a phenomenological perspective. In this chapter, by way of introduction, I shall discuss the sociological context out of which this research emerged, state the kinds of questions upon which subsequent chapters focus, and provide discussion of the methodological procedures involved in conducting the investigation.

As in the study of any substantive phenomenon, the theoretical assumptions made about the nature of man and his relationship to society permit the sociologist to define specific issues as 'problems', pose certain questions and employ particular research methods; all of these elements combine to produce a distinctive kind of understanding of the phenomenon under consideration. In the sociological study of 'deviant' drug use<sup>1</sup> it is possible to discern two major sets of assumptions which have thus generated distinctive kinds of understanding about the phenomenon of drug use in general and the use of cannabis in particular. These two major sets of assumptions may be referred to as the 'structural' approach and the 'symbolic interactionist' approach. Before describing the theoretical orientation of this work, I shall briefly examine the main features and contributions of these approaches.

#### DRUG USE AND THE STRUCTURAL APPROACH

Proponents of the structural approach and its subcultural derivatives<sup>2</sup> assume that deviance is 'objectively given' and ask a number of typical

questions centred on the official statistics on deviant behaviour, which they accept as given.<sup>3</sup> Presupposing determinism, treating man as object rather than subject,<sup>4</sup> assuming that sociological explanations should be modelled on natural scientific ones,<sup>5</sup> the major focus of this approach is with the provision of causal accounts of deviant behaviour. In particular, structuralists account for deviant behaviour in general and drug use especially in terms of 'objectively ascertainable'<sup>6</sup> social conditions such as social class, social disorganization and anomie which prevail upon the individual, exert 'pressure' upon him to engage in deviant behaviour, and thereby produce higher rates of deviant behaviour in those parts of the social structure which are peculiarly subject to such dysfunctional 'strains'<sup>7</sup> and influences.

This approach has generated a large amount of sociological theory and research about drug use. Thus, for example, Robert Merton's (1938) account rests upon the assumption that certain social conditions tend to produce deviant behaviour whilst other social conditions 'function' to prevent the outbreak of such behaviour. In particular, Merton posits two central concepts - cultural goals and socially structured means of achieving them - whose interplay at a societal level can produce pressure to deviate at the individual level. Where these cultural goals and socially structured means or opportunities are in a state of disequilibrium - where society is in a state of 'anomie' - then a 'strain' toward deviant behaviour is produced. Persons exposed to such conditions respond through various 'modes of adaptation'.<sup>8</sup> Drug use constitutes, according to Merton, the 'retreatist' mode of adaptation and occurs when the individual finds the legitimate path to 'success' blocked by virtue of the social conditions prevailing upon him and has, at the same time, 'internalised prohibitions' against the use of illegitimate means of achieving such goals. The drug user accordingly 'retreats' into this form of deviant behaviour as a means of escape, by abandoning both cultural goals of success and the legitimate means of achieving them.

Likewise, Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin (1961) adopt the structural perspective in their etiological account of delinquent behaviour in general and drug use in particular. As in Merton's case, the drug user is viewed as a retreatist in the face of socially structured sources of strain. However, in Cloward and Ohlin's account not only are legitimate opportunities socially structured but so also are illegitimate ones.<sup>9</sup> This extension of Merton's account provides the basis of Cloward and Ohlin's characterization of the drug user as a 'double failure'. This means that whereas, in the case of Merton, the retreatist drug user declined to use illegitimate means to achieve success because of internalised prohibitions against their use, for Cloward and Ohlin the drug user is one who is willing to use both legitimate and illegitimate means but fails to use either. That the drug user is prepared to employ illegitimate avenues to achieve success is inferred by these authors from the 'fact' that the drug users whom they studied had prior arrest records for offences other than those involving drugs. The use of drugs, then, is seen by these authors as a means of retreating from the competitive struggle in both the legitimate and the illegitimate spheres; that is, for Cloward and Ohlin, as for Merton, drug use as a form of retreatism involves the renunciation of both cultural goals of success and the culturally prescribed means of attaining it as a way of adapting to the disfunctioning of the social system.

Finestone's (1957) work represents another example of the structural approach to deviant drug use. In this work he presents a picture<sup>10</sup> of the social type of the 'cat' and offers an account for its emergence. Finestone's account of this social type is that it reflects an adaptation to the lower class urban Negro's disadvantaged position in the social structure. Discrimination and segregation produce inaccessibility of legitimate avenues of attainment, restriction of advancement, limitation of self-fulfillment, and a sense of frustration. The end product is another mode of adaptation whereby this segment of the population turns in

upon itself and constructs new criteria for achievement which are the 'antithesis' of those prized in the broader community.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, the goal of living is the achievement of a life style which disdains work in the 'conventional' sense and instead enshrines the 'hustle' as the accepted mode of achieving 'success'. Likewise, it is the 'kick' which symbolises the 'cat's' disdain for the regulation of conduct in terms of future consequences embodied in 'conventional' culture.

In spite of the many criticisms<sup>12</sup> which have been made of it, the structural approach continues to inspire much worthwhile sociological work on the phenomenon of deviant drug use.<sup>13</sup> Having attempted to describe the main features of this approach, however, further elaboration of the details of its application in particular cases becomes unnecessary in the light of the purpose of this introductory chapter, namely to acquaint the reader with the theoretical perspective employed in this study. An exhaustive analysis of structural contributions is, in any case, beyond the scope of the present work. Accordingly, I shall turn to a brief examination of the other major set of assumptions which has inspired sociological work on deviant drug use, namely the symbolic interactionist approach.

#### DRUG USE AND SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Unlike the proponents of the structural approach, symbolic interactionists<sup>14</sup> assume that deviance is a 'subjectively problematic' rather than an 'objectively given' phenomenon.<sup>15</sup> This means that deviance is seen as a matter of social definition<sup>16</sup>: the meaning of acts is not inherent in those acts; rather, whether an act or person is deviant depends upon a process of social interaction and interpretation.<sup>17</sup> It is assumed that the phenomena of the social sciences are not continuous with those of the natural sciences and that as a result it is incorrect to model social

scientific accounts of deviance on natural scientific explanations. This approach emphasizes that human action is subjectively meaningful action, that man is subject rather than object.<sup>18</sup> The aim of this approach, then, is not the provision of etiological accounts using the official statistics on deviance in the manner of structuralists but rather to 'appreciate'<sup>19</sup> the meaning of deviance to those who practice it and to those who would define it as such. The official statistics on deviance are no longer 'facts' to be explained; instead they are themselves in need of explanation, since they are seen to represent social constructions, not facts.<sup>20</sup> In accounting for deviant behaviour it is assumed that man makes choices rather than being determined by forces beyond his control and comprehension. The emphasis is on the process of becoming deviant, a process over which the human actor himself presides.<sup>21</sup> This is not to deny the importance of 'structural' variables; rather it is to suggest that in interactionist accounts, these 'variables'<sup>22</sup> are transformed into 'situational contingencies' with which the human subject interacts and which he interprets, and in the light of which he forges his own meaningful conduct. The emphasis is on accounting for deviant behaviour in terms of meanings, situational contingencies, and the formation of perspectives and rationalizations.<sup>23</sup>

Alfred Lindesmith's (1947, 1968) work is the first and most obvious example of this approach as applied to drug use. Through informal interviews with persons who defined themselves as addicted to heroin, he was able to isolate the sequence of events which constituted the causal process in which addiction is generated. He shows how behaviour is shaped and directed by the way in which inner experiences are defined; that the crucial element in the etiology of drug addiction is the drug user's understanding of what is happening to him. Thus, he shows that if a person receives 'addictive' drugs without his knowledge, then that person will not develop a craving for the drug. In other words, the



ignorant user will not develop a conception of the uses to which the drug might be put or a connection between his condition and the drug. Rather, Lindesmith suggests, it is the repetition of the experience of using the drug to ameliorate withdrawal distress (when the latter is recognized as such) which appears to lead rapidly to the changed orientation to the drug and to the other behaviour that constitutes addiction.

Probably the most celebrated, and certainly the most relevant, work as far as the present study is concerned, is the interactionist contribution of Howard Becker. Thus, in his study of the process of becoming a marihuana user (1953), Becker starts from a different set of assumptions to those which inform structural accounts and thereby asks a different set of questions about the phenomenon of drug use. Becker assumes that the human actor engages in marihuana use because he is willing to do so, and that he is a subject - he acts in and on the social world on the basis of the meanings to him of objects and events in that world.

Howard Becker's article, 'Becoming a Marihuana User' attempts to understand 'the sequence of changes in attitude and experience which lead to the use of marihuana for pleasure'. Becker's question derives from the assumptions which he makes about social action in general and marihuana use in particular. These assumptions, as Becker points out, are derived from the work of George Herbert Mead.<sup>24</sup> Becker (1963, p.42) states these assumptions in the following way:

Marihuana use is a function of the individual's conception of marihuana and of the uses to which it can be put and this conception develops as the individual's experience with the drug increases.

Becker then outlines the process of becoming a marihuana user as comprising a series of steps or stages in the course of which the individual learns to use marihuana for pleasure. The first step consists of 'learning the

technique' whereby, through a process of social interaction with more experienced users, the novice acquires the knowledge relevant to consuming the drug in the first place. The second stage consists of 'learning to perceive the effects' whereby in the course of social interaction with other marihuana users the novice learns what to expect and look out for as the effects of the drug. The implication is that without this interactionally derived symbolic framework the novice user would be unable to experience the effects of the drug even if, in the view of observers, the drug was 'obviously' having an effect on the user. The third stage in the process of initiation into the use of marihuana for pleasure consists of 'learning to enjoy the effects.' Even if the user learns to perceive the effects, Becker suggests, he may not define them as pleasurable. This, of course, follows from the interactionist assumption that perceptual objects are not inherently meaningful but have to be assigned meaning in an interpretive process. Thus, in this case the sensations produced by the use of marihuana are not automatically or necessarily or inherently pleasurable. For the user to continue to use the drug for pleasure, Becker suggests, he must obviously come to define it as an object that can be used in such a way. As in the case of the other stages of the process of becoming a marihuana user, Becker suggests that the user learns from other users in a process of social interaction to define the effects of the drug as pleasurable.

Becker's second article on marihuana use (1955) continues his exposition of the interactionist perspective on the etiology of this phenomenon. In this work, however, Becker is interested in the sequence of events and experiences whereby persons are able to use marihuana in spite of the existence and influence of social controls. Three major kinds of control are identified: the limitation of supply and access to the drug, the necessity of keeping non-users from discovering that one is a user, and the definition of the act as immoral. It is Becker's

contention that as a person moves from level to level of use so he undergoes a shift in his relationship to these social controls. Such a development makes possible increased usage. The main focus is on the processes whereby the controls become progressively less effective as usage increases over time and on the way in which they prevent such movement by remaining effective.

Thus, in the case of the limitation of supply of the drug, Becker shows how it is necessary for the 'beginner' to overcome this if he is to begin to use marihuana at all, how becoming acquainted with other users makes possible 'occasional use', and how 'regular use' is contingent on the user's relationship with 'dealers' persisting over time. As Becker points out, where such persistence is not maintained, for example because of the arrest of the supplier, then the sustenance of regular use becomes problematic and the user is likely to revert to the level of 'occasional use' which depends only upon chance encounters with other users who have the drug currently in their possession.

Similarly, in the case of the necessity for secrecy, Becker shows how fears of discovery break down as consumption increases, how it is a necessary condition of continued use that they should do so, and how release from the constraints of this type of social control makes possible new levels of use. Social control through fear of discovery breaks down, Becker suggests, when through social interaction with more experienced users the neophyte comes to realise that others need not find out that he has the drug in his possession or that he is under its influence. It is Becker's contention that at each level of use there is a growth in this realization which then makes the new level possible.

In the case of the third form of control, through conceptions of the morality of marihuana use - it is Becker's suggestion that for consumption

to begin and progress the consumer must acquire a series of counter moral assertions whereby he is able to neutralize the moral bind of conventional conceptions of marihuana and rationalize the use of the drug to himself. Unless he can do so, Becker suggests, the development of his marihuana using career will be hampered. As in the case of the other social controls considered by Becker, these 'symbolic supports'<sup>25</sup> for further marihuana use are learned in a process of social interaction from other more experienced marihuana users.

Like Becker's, Matza's work (1969) is also concerned to develop the implications of the symbolic interactionist perspective on the etiology of marihuana use and he similarly traces the steps taken in the process of becoming a user of the drug. Matza's work forms part of his more general polemic against sociological approaches (such as structuralism) which minimised the human capacities of consciousness, intention and subjective meaning in the process of becoming deviant. As such Matza not only summarises and extends Becker's work but continually emphasizes the 'building of meaning and the continuous ordaining of self as the subject proceeds through the open process of becoming a marihuana user'. Like Becker, Matza focuses on the three stages in this process: learning the technique, learning to perceive the effects, and learning to enjoy the effects of the drug. Matza's contribution is his development in symbolic interactionist imagery of the constitution of this process by the human subject. Thus, in the case of the first step, learning the proper technique, Matza emphasizes how this involves active consideration on the part of the user, not only of the experience of learning to use a particular technique but also of himself in relation to it.<sup>26</sup> As far as the second step is concerned, Matza considerably elaborates the nature of the experience of being high, depicting it as essentially a shift in mood whereby the 'normal' configuration of mind, self and society is altered.

Becker's third step, learning to enjoy the effects, is developed by Matza in so far as he suggests that the consequence of the shift in mood, and hence precisely what is enjoyable about the experience of being high, is a 'sensibility to banality' where belief in the mundane world is to some extent suspended and its 'human meaning' revealed.

Besides elaborating Becker's treatment of the process of becoming a marihuana user, Matza is also concerned to develop one aspect of Becker's second essay. Thus, later in his work Matza considers the impact of what he calls 'ban' on the undiscovered user of marihuana and shows how the attempt to deal with its main problem - a feeling of transparency - can compound the process of becoming deviant. Ban and its consequence - feeling transparent - can only be avoided, Matza suggests, by deviousness on the part of the subject. By behaving in such a manner the subject thereby contributes to the building of his own deviant identity.

Becker's and Matza's contributions to the sociology of deviant drug use are largely theoretical and as such they have provided a basis for much substantive work in this field. In addition, interactionists have also provided a large body of ethnographic work on the subject of the drug use in general and cannabis use in particular.<sup>27</sup> Such work has been concerned, in the main, with attempting to illuminate the meaning of drug use, with the processes whereby persons become users of drugs, and with the situational contingencies of drug use.

James Carey's work (1968) is the most prominent and relevant as far as this particular project is concerned. Carey surveys the various patterns of drug use in what he refers to as the 'Colony', examines the social processes whereby persons become involved in different patterns and styles of drug use (very much along the lines set forth by Becker), examines the structure and organisation of supply (from 'street pushing' to 'top level dealing') and attempts to portray the significance of drugs in the social worlds of two social types of drug users, the 'recreational user' and the 'head'.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL SOCIOLOGY, DEVIANCE AND DRUG USE

The sociological study of deviant drug use has been dominated by the two major perspectives already examined, in spite of the development and application of phenomenological perspectives<sup>28</sup> within the wider field of deviance. I shall now turn to this phenomenological contribution to the study of deviance since it is with its implications for the study of drug use that I am concerned in this investigation.

Whilst the symbolic interactionists criticised the structuralists for what they took for granted and ignored, so in their turn the interactionists have been criticised by the phenomenologists for what they took for granted and ignored.<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, the phenomenologists have asked a rather different set of questions from those asked by symbolic interactionists and have thereby provided different kinds of understanding of the phenomenon of deviance. This is not to suggest that there are not perspectives, problems, questions and methodological preferences held in common by symbolic interactionists and sociologists working within the phenomenological tradition. Like the interactionists, phenomenologists assume that social action is fundamentally subjectively meaningful and that as such there is a basic difference between the phenomena studied by the social scientists and those studied by the natural scientist. Schutz (1954) has stated the basic premises of phenomenological sociology in the following way:

There is an essential difference in the structure of the thought objects or mental constructs formed by the social sciences and those formed by the natural sciences. It is up to the natural scientist and to him alone to define, in accordance with the procedural rules of his science, his observational field, and to determine the facts, data, and events within it which are relevant for his problem or scientific purpose at hand. Neither are those facts and events pre-selected, nor is the observational field pre-interpreted. The world of nature, as explored by the natural scientist does not 'mean' anything to molecules, atoms, and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientists - social reality - has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, acting and thinking within it. By a series of common-sense constructs they have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world which they experience as the reality of their daily lives. It is these thought objects of theirs which determine their behaviour

by motivating it. The thought objects constructed by the social scientist, in order to grasp this social reality, have to be founded upon the thought objects constructed by the common-sense thinking of men, living their life within their social world. Thus, the constructs of the social sciences are, so to speak, constructs of the second degree, that is, constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene, whose behaviour the social scientist has to observe and to explain in accordance with the procedural rules of his science.

In so far as these assumptions are accepted then, the aim of phenomenological sociology is to understand the subjectively meaningful nature of the phenomenon under consideration - social reality. In particular, as Phillipson and Roche (1974) suggest, there are two main themes in phenomenological inquiry. These are described as two methodological imperatives or directives. The first is the 'descriptive imperative' and the second the 'constitutive imperative'. The descriptive imperative, is, as Phillipson and Roche (1974, p.128) point out, implicit in the slogan 'back to the phenomenon' and requires that the sociologist should attempt:

.... to record the field of intentional objectivities, or meanings, experienced by a given subject or subjects .... to record the mode, as well as the object, of intentionality, the form of the subject's intentional relation to objects as well as the objects themselves.

The constitutive imperative, is implicit in the slogan, 'show how the phenomenon is built up', and it implies that the sociologist should attempt:

... to reveal how meanings, the intentional modes and objects are constructed by the subject ... it requires an analytical manoeuvre, taking the intentioning and meaning-constituting activity of the subject to pieces, and a constitutive manoeuvre, putting it all back together again ... the description, in so far as it involves an identification of the subject's activities and objects, already carries with it some analytical features. The constitutive move uses the description and the analysis to reconstruct the process by which the specific meanings, and types of meaning arise in the subject's mind and action.

Clearly, these methodological imperatives are shared to some extent by phenomenologically-oriented symbolic interactionists such as Matza (1969).<sup>30</sup> However, sociologists working within the phenomenological-

ethnomethodological tradition extend, refine and to some extent transform the issues implicit in these directives. This transformation involves, as Zimmerman and Pollner (1971) point out, treating as a topic what symbolic interactionists regard as resources in their sociological accounts.<sup>31</sup>

In particular, these phenomenologists are concerned with the relationship between the meanings of the actors studied (in Schutz's terms, the 'first order constructs') and the meanings of the sociologist (the 'second order constructs') and the methodology whereby the sociologist relates the one to the other. On this foundation the interpretive work of the sociologist whereby he assigns and organizes meaning becomes a major focus of sociological investigation.<sup>32</sup>

With regard to the symbolic interactionist approach to deviance, phenomenological sociologists have started to treat as problematic and in need of explication the ways in which the interactionist himself forges a link between the first order constructs and interpretive work of the members and his own second order constructs such as 'deviance', 'rules', 'labels' and 'social reaction'. It is a phenomenological complaint that too frequently the interactionists saw their task as simply identifying the actions of members as exemplifications of their central concepts without explicating the interpretive work involved in such identifications. From a phenomenological perspective, then, symbolic interactionists' formulations of members as doing what the sociologist refers to as 'defining acts as deviant', 'imputing rule-breaking' or 'making a reaction' or even 'defining as pleasurable' themselves become problematic. This is so because the interactionists have not explicated their own interpretive work whereby it is known that members are engaging in activities such as 'defining as deviant', 'imputing rule-breaking', or 'defining as pleasurable'.



Since the phenomenological sociologist treats the concepts used by symbolic interactionists as problematic, the very concept of 'deviance' itself is rendered problematic in the same way. It cannot be accepted, as it is by the symbolic interactionist, that 'everybody knows what is meant by deviance'. The phenomenological approach requires, in the words of Phillipson and Roche (1974, pp.144-45):

The clarification of the concept of social deviance itself. A clarification would require a statement of the interpretive rules according to which sociologists and the members they study designate an act, event, or member, as deviant. How do members and sociologists decide that an event falls within the category which sociologists call social deviance ... The boundaries of the interpretive field are apparently clearly determined by the terms 'deviance' and 'control'. But the use of these sociological terms for defining the subject presume observers' rules, known in common by observers, which state the conditions under which deviance and its control may have occurred. In fact, a shared but tacit assumption among sociologists about what social deviance is allows discourse to proceed unhindered, even though the rules for deciding on the conformity or non-conformity of an event are unknown. When the work of those authors working under the deviance rubric is examined, no clarified, held-in-common observers' or members' rules for deciding the occurrence of deviance are found; observers' definitions and depictions of deviance rest upon meanings which are presumed to be common-sense and known in common by sociologists. The concepts 'social deviance' and 'social control' then become sociological short-hand terms for grouping together what 'everyone knows' to be rule-breaking and rule-enforcement. But what is lacking is an attempt to specify the interpretive procedures used by members and sociologists in deciding what events are to be included and what are to be excluded from the field of investigation; there are no rules specifying how the sociological concepts relate to the members' typifications of the events studied. Until we can describe how sociologists jump from members' typifications to their own constructions, then, we have no means of choosing between alternative descriptions of the same phenomenon. One account is as good as another as they all (members' and sociologists') rest upon unclarified common-sense typifications. This requires the sociologist to inquire into members' and sociologists' rules for imputing deviance to an event.

This perspective has, over the last decade or so begun to generate a large and growing collection of contributions to the sociological study of deviance. Its main emphasis so far has been on the problem of the accomplishment and interpretive foundations of the categorization of persons and acts as deviant. An early example of this kind of approach is the work

of John Kitsuse (1962) who, in a series of interviews, studied the grounds for making imputations of homosexuality. In this work Kitsuse shows that persons relied upon two main classes of evidence in making their imputations (direct and indirect evidence), that the imputation of homosexuality is documented by retrospective interpretations of the deviant's behaviour and that as a result of these imputations persons then engaged in a variety of social reactions to the behaviour or person defined as deviant. Kitsuse categorizes the social reactions of his respondents as either 'explicit disapproval and immediate withdrawal', 'explicit disapproval and subsequent withdrawal', 'implicit disapproval and partial withdrawal' and 'no disapproval and relationship sustained.'

Since the early contribution of Kitsuse, the development of the 'social reaction approach' in a more phenomenological direction has proceeded with studies by Cicourel (1968) on the organizational accomplishment by control personnel of the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency, by Coulter (1973) on ascriptions of insanity, Atkinson (1968, 1971) on coroners' definitions of suicide, Sudnow (1965) on the use by legal personnel of the category 'normal crimes' for the categorization and subsequent treatment of offenders, by Bittner (1967) on the police practice of 'peacekeeping' and by Sacks (1972) on the interpretive procedures followed by policemen on patrol in their decision making with regard to 'suspicious' persons.<sup>33</sup>

Most of this work which has been done from within the phenomenological-ethnomethodological tradition has been focused upon the interpretive capacities and practices involved in making assignations of deviance to acts and persons. It would appear that very little work has been done from this point of view on the interpretive capacities and practices of deviants themselves. This is particularly true of the field of deviant drug use. Almost without exception<sup>34</sup> the implications of the phenomenological critique have not been taken up in the sociological study of drug use. From the perspective of

deviants themselves these implications are that the phenomenon of deviance should be described (involving a focus on the central meaningful objects within the particular deviant world under consideration and on the activity of deviance itself) and that an analysis be provided of its constitution by the members (involving a focus on members' interpretive work and modes of social organization whereby the deviant phenomenon is constructed by the members).

#### THEORETICAL ORIENTATION OF THIS STUDY

In this research it is intended to adopt such a phenomenological perspective, to the use of cannabis amongst students in the South of England. The particular questions to which answers are sought arise when interactionist contributions to the study of cannabis use (especially those of Becker and Matza) are examined from a phenomenological point of view. Such a perspective points up a number of unexplicated issues and provokes a number of interesting questions. In focusing on such issues it is the aim of this research not only to 'more faithfully illuminate the nature of the phenomenon under consideration' but also to extend in a phenomenological direction the interactionist contributions of these authors.

To begin with, then, whilst Becker states that the individual's use of marihuana is a function of his conceptions of the drug and its uses, he does not ask the question, 'What are members' conceptions of marihuana?' or 'What are members' conceptions of the uses to which marihuana may be put?' Instead, by defining the drug as an object that can be used 'for pleasure' and by asking how users come to conceive of it as such, Becker takes for granted these conceptions and leaves unexplicated the nature of this 'pleasure'. Since motives for use are seen as a function of members' conceptions, then clearly members' motives are likewise unexamined and unexplicated.

Even if it is granted that a motive for the use of cannabis is provided by a conception of it as an object that can be used for pleasure, Becker's account leaves unanswered a number of other important questions. Becker does not state, for example, what he means by 'pleasurable', nor does he show what members mean by 'pleasurable', nor how members' conceptions of cannabis are related to his conceptualization of them as 'definitions of marihuana as an object that can be used for pleasure'; that is, Becker does not indicate how he knows that 'pleasure' is the motive of members' use of marihuana, nor does he show how he translates members' first order constructs into his own second order sociological construct 'pleasure'. More than this, Becker glosses over the interpretive issues involved in defining the 'effects' of marihuana as 'pleasurable' or as anything else: he does not consider how members interpret their drug experiences. What Becker does in fact is to assert that the user learns to recognize and define the effects as enjoyable in the course of social interaction whereby he acquires the relevant concepts and capacities for accomplishing such tasks. The nature of the interpretive work whereby such recognition and definition are accomplished remains unexamined and unexplicated.

Besides his elliptical treatment of members' motives, conceptions and interpretive capacities and practices, Becker's account also ignores members' own accounts of the nature of their cannabis experiences. Thus, that the 'effects' of cannabis are problematic is, according to Becker, a member's problem: Becker's respondents report problems in the recognition and achievement of cannabis effects. For his users, the effects are problematic in at least two senses: they need to be 'present' and they need to be recognized; their absence may be explained by failure to meet either or both of these conditions. For Becker, the effects are problematic

in the same two senses: being high is conceptualised as consisting of two elements - the presence and the recognition of cannabis effects. The sociological explanation of non-recognition is that the member lacks a conceptual framework with which to perceive them. But what are members' own accounts of non-recognition? It is clear that Becker's respondents were aware of definitional problems but, it must be asked, was this because they were perceiving the problematic accomplishment of cannabis experiences as sociologists? Or was it simply that on occasion novices and experienced users have difficulty perceiving effects for reasons which make sense to them? Becker conveniently skirts around this problem of the accountability of the effects of cannabis by the imposition of his own theoretical perspective in terms of which the effects of cannabis are problematic by definition. It is clear that Becker is confusing both a members' problem and a sociological problem.<sup>36</sup> Becker presumes to solve them both with the application of his symbolic interactionist framework. Actually, he only raises the problem since his answer is that the member comes to recognise the effects by learning to recognise the effects; it is not shown how members accomplish that recognition nor how they account for the nature of their own cannabis experiences (or the lack of them).

In summary, then, Becker's account raises a number of interesting problems for future research, some of which are taken up in some detail later in this work. First, there is the question of members' motives for the use of cannabis; second, there is the question of members' conceptions of the effects of cannabis; third, there is the question of the interpretive capacities and practices involved in defining the effects of cannabis in particular ways; fourth, there is the question of members' accounts or explanations of the kinds of experiences they have when consuming cannabis. In addition, two further questions are taken for granted or, at the most, receive only 'cursory attention' in Becker's and other interactionist work. First, the nature of cannabis itself is taken for granted - this is the issue

of what cannabis is as a social object and how members constitute it. Secondly, very little information is available about the practices involved in the consumption of cannabis and the social contexts of its use: how and in what contexts is cannabis consumed and what, from members' points of view, is the relationship between different ways of consuming cannabis and the different kinds of effects produced?

Like his first essay, Becker's work on marihuana use and social control also raises several interesting questions. To begin with, in the case of the question of supply, Becker leaves untouched a number of important issues. Thus, for example, there is the question of how members actually accomplish the acquisition of different quantities of cannabis; there is the question of what different amounts of cannabis are typically bought and sold by members; there is the question of how cannabis transactions are conducted; in short, with his preoccupation with etiology, Becker leaves unexamined and unexplicated the whole question of the social organisation of the supply of cannabis - how, in other words, are the acquisition and distribution of cannabis accomplished as social activities?

With respect to the second social control considered by Becker - the problem of secrecy - a number of issues are likewise suggested for further research. These include the kinds of risks perceived by users to be involved in the use and sale of cannabis in different situations and under different conditions, the interpretive work involved in estimating risk, and the kinds of concealment strategies employed by users in their attempt to avoid discovery by non-users in general, and, most importantly, by agents of social control in particular.

Similarly, with regard to the question of morality, Becker's work raises such questions as members' conceptions of the morality of cannabis use, members' methods of interpreting the morality of cannabis use and the interactional work involved in sustaining such moral meanings.

More generally, Becker's work raises the question of the organisation of the world of cannabis use into different types of users. Becker suggests (presumably for analytical purposes) that it is possible to describe cannabis users as belonging to one or another of three social types: beginners, occasional users, and regular users. Such a typology clearly bears a problematic relationship to the social types actually recognised and used by members themselves to typologize each other. The nature of these social types, the conditions under which they are applied by members and the interpretive work involved in their use are clearly matters in need of further investigation.

Similarly, Matza's elaboration of the theoretical implications of Becker's work leaves untouched several important issues which, in terms of the perspective which he himself advocates - naturalism - require explication. Thus, Matza is not concerned to describe members' conceptions of the effects of cannabis and neither is he concerned to indicate members' interpretive work whereby the effects of cannabis are categorized. Matza is also unclear about the nature of his own interpretive work whereby he forges a link between members' first order constructs and his own second order sociological constructs like the 'sensitivity to banality'. Further, in his analysis of the impact of ban Matza leaves unexamined the question of quite how members cope with this problem, how they gauge risks, how they deal with them, the interpretive capacities and practices presupposed in such gauging and coping, and whether the impact of ban and its consequence, the feeling of transparency, depends on various contextual features recognised and taken into account by members. Lastly, like Becker and the other writers working in this field, Matza takes for granted the substance itself, the nature of its constitution and the methods used by members in accomplishing the phenomena of 'cannabis use' and 'acquiring cannabis'.

In summary, then, the application of a phenomenological perspective to previous interactionist accounts of cannabis, and sale suggests the following kinds of questions:

1. The nature of cannabis. What is the phenomenon of cannabis? Are there different types of cannabis? What categories of cannabis do users and sellers use? How do members describe cannabis? How do members distinguish different types of cannabis? How is the phenomenon of cannabis constituted as a social object? What interpretive capacities and practices do members use in constituting cannabis as a phenomenon?
  
2. The consumption of cannabis. How do members accomplish the use of cannabis? What methods do members employ? What interactional competencies does the accomplishment of its use involve? Are there rules for its use recognised and enforced by members? Are different methods used in relation to different types of cannabis? On what grounds do members decide upon the use of different methods of consumption? What are the perceived consequences of using different methods? How is the collective consumption of cannabis socially organised?
  
3. The effects of cannabis. What are the effects of cannabis as far as cannabis users are concerned? What are members' categories and conceptions of cannabis effects? How do members describe the effects to each other? What is the nature of the interpretive work involved in constituting the effects of cannabis in terms of their categories? Are different effects produced with initial use compared to subsequent and continued use? Are different effects seen to be



produced by using different methods of consumption and different types of cannabis? How do users account for different types of effects?

4. The morality of cannabis use. What are members' conceptions of the morality of cannabis use? Do users believe that cannabis use should be illegal or legalised? How do users justify and otherwise account for the use of cannabis? How are conventional moral perspectives against use and sale countered? How do users decide on the morality or immorality of cannabis use? What interactional work is involved in sustaining the morality of cannabis use?
5. The supply of cannabis. How do users acquire cannabis? What organisational and interpretive practices and capacities are involved in such acquisition? In terms of what quantities is cannabis acquired? How do members quantify cannabis? How are cannabis transactions conducted?
6. Avoiding discovery. What are users' conceptions of the risks related to the use and sale of cannabis? How do members gauge these risks? On what do different estimations by users depend from their point of view? What concealment strategies do members employ to avoid discovery? On what grounds do members decide to employ different kinds of concealment strategies?
7. Social types of cannabis users. Are there different types of cannabis users? What social types do users themselves recognise

and use to describe each other? What criteria are employed in the use of social types? What interpretive procedures are followed in their application and use?

#### METHODS USED IN THIS RESEARCH

Having asked the kinds of questions to which answers are sought in this work, it is appropriate that mention be made of the particular methodological procedures employed to find such answers. Accordingly, in this section, I shall be concerned with providing introductory material on the methodological orientation of the research on the one hand, and on its methodological practices and procedures on the other.

In so far as the aim of studying this particular substantive phenomenon from the perspective indicated is the provision of a sociological description which illuminates the nature of the phenomenon, and if such description requires not only study of the accomplishment, organisation and subjective meanings of the phenomenon, but also an analysis of how these subjective meanings are constituted, then clearly the sociologist must employ methods which facilitate realisation of these aims. These objectives imply three major problems in sociological inquiry. The first is the discovery of the first order constructs whereby the phenomenon is described and constituted by members; the second is the translation of these first order constructs into second order, sociological, constructs; the third problem concerns the nature of 'adequate sociological description'.

In order to solve the first of these problems - the discovery of the members' first order constructs of the meanings of cannabis, its uses and its effects, and their methods of actually accomplishing the phenomenon of cannabis use - the methods of participant observation and interviewing were chosen.<sup>37</sup> The method of participant observation was used with a

large number of students (over 100), in a wide variety of situations (when and wherever students chose to use or sell cannabis) and over the whole of the three years' fieldwork. Some of these students were aware of my interest in the sociological aspects of cannabis use, while others were not. With their permission I was able to acquire tape-recordings of social interaction between cannabis users (and sellers) in some situations. Interviews were held with a large number of students (over 50), some of which were tape-recorded with their consent.<sup>38</sup>

I shall not at this point recapitulate at length the justifications and arguments for the use of such methods as this has been accomplished elsewhere,<sup>39</sup> except to say that if handled competently<sup>40</sup> these methods enable the researcher to get close to the subjects of study and appreciate the meanings to them of the phenomena in which he is interested and in the methods of their constitution or accomplishment: it is only through the use of such methods that the researcher can hope to acquire the common-sense knowledge which enables him to 'see the world as a member of the deviant world under consideration.'

The second problem - that of the translation of these first order constructs into second order sociological constructs - derives, of course, from the researcher's aim, not merely to acquire an appreciative view of the members' perspective on the phenomenon under consideration, but also to analyse it and reconstruct it in sociological terms. As Schutz (1954) has put it, the sociologist's 'system of relevances' differs from that of the members of the particular social world being investigated.<sup>41</sup> This second problem, then, was solved 'for all practical purposes' by following the advice postulated by Schutz (1954) for the construction of sociological accounts of subjectively meaningful phenomena. This advice consists of three postulates, the first of which, the postulate of logical consistency, requires that:

the system of typical constructs designed by the scientist has to be established with the highest degree of clarity and distinctness of the conceptual framework implied and must be fully compatible with the principles of formal logic. Fulfillment of this postulate warrants the objective validity of the thought objects constructed by the social scientist, and their strictly logical character is one of the most important features by which scientific thought objects are distinguished from the thought objects constructed by common-sense thinking in daily life which they have to supersede.

This postulate requires that the conceptual framework developed by the sociologist be justifiable on logical grounds and that his methods of constructing his sociological account are logical ones.<sup>42</sup>

The second postulate, 'the postulate of subjective interpretation' states that:

In order to explain human actions the scientist has to ask what model of an individual mind can be constructed and what typical contents must be attributed to it in order to explain the observed facts as the result of the activity of such a mind in an understandable relation. The compliance with this postulate warrants the possibility of referring all kinds of human action or their result to the subjective meaning such action or result of an action had for the actor.

This postulate reaffirms the importance of the subjective meaning of social action in sociological theorizing - that sociological accounts of social action must refer back to the subjectively meaningful nature of social action within the social world being studied.

The third postulate is the 'postulate of adequacy'. It states:

Each term in a scientific model of human action must be constructed in such a way that a human act performed within the life-world by an individual actor in the way indicated by the typical construct would be understandable for the actor himself as well as for his fellow-men in terms of common-sense interpretation of everyday life. Compliance with this postulate warrants the consistency of the constructs of the social scientist with the constructs of common-sense experience of the social reality.

This postulate requires that the sociological constructs of the phenomenon must be consistent with the first order constructs of the phenomenon held by the members; it demands that the sociological constructs be both translatable and recognisable by the common-sense members from whom the sociologist derived his theory.

Schutz's third postulate also implies the third problem mentioned earlier, namely the provision of 'adequate sociological description'. This is the problem of deciding at what point the sociologist has acquired enough data about the phenomenon under consideration to be able to construct an account which adequately illuminates the nature of the phenomenon. In formulating a solution to this problem I adopted the view that the ideal of 'adequate sociological description' is the derivation of the common-sense knowledge<sup>43</sup> which, as a set of instructions, would enable a 'stranger'<sup>44</sup> to pass as a competent member.<sup>45</sup> The model of ethnographic description here, as Frake (1964, p.133) has put it, is as follows:

If a person is in a situation X, performance Y (the result of following a set of instructions derived from a description) will be judged appropriate by native actors.

Not only then, should the members studied be able to recognise themselves in the sociological account but so also should the sociologist or any reader be able to participate as a member with other members on the basis of the account. The practical, methodological implication of this criterion of adequate sociological description is that the sociologist has to develop procedures for 'testing' his understanding of the phenomenon. This was accomplished in two ways in this research: first, by adopting the role of member, that is, by attempting to 'pass' as a member, and second, by submitting my sociological accounts to members for their comment.

#### CONCLUDING NOTE

This research is reported in the following chapters. Each chapter is centred around one of the major sets of questions stated earlier. Within each chapter, on the basis of what has been said about the implications of phenomenology for sociological work, I have attempted within the limitations of time and space to provide commentary on the research procedures whereby sociological sense was made of the phenomena being investigated.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL TYPES OF CANNABIS USERS

Sociological studies which have attempted to formulate and describe typologies of drug users have been of two main kinds. First, there have been a number of studies which have provided descriptions of constructed types<sup>1</sup> of drug users and second, there have been those studies which have provided descriptions of existential types<sup>2</sup> of drug users. In each case the main purpose of the formulation and description of such social types has been to account sociologically for observed differences between persons in terms of their patterns and meanings of drug use.

Sociologists making use of the constructed type to explicate observed differences between persons with regard to their patterns and meanings of drug use have typically proceeded on the basis of 'rating' drug users in terms of a number of pre-defined sociological constructs deemed to be relevant for the purpose of explaining the observed differences. Examples of such 'ratings' include the frequency of drug use, the type of drugs used, the extent of the use of a particular drug, the length of time a person has been using a particular drug and, correlatively, the drug user's rating on standard demographic variables such as sex, age, social class, ethnicity, religious or political views and authoritarianism. Major examples of the use of the constructed type are the works of Howard Becker (1955), Erich Goode (1970) and Bruce Johnson (1973)<sup>3</sup>. In Becker's work, for example, musicians who also used marihuana are typologized into three types of marihuana user in terms of their frequency of marihuana use. This procedure yields the social types of 'the beginner', 'the occasional user' and 'the regular user', each of which is then employed to document the theory that increased usage of marihuana presupposes a particular kind of relationship on the part of the user to a variety of social controls which surround the use of marihuana and which are designed to inhibit it. Goode's work, on the other hand, is concerned with the provision of a 'profile' of the marihuana smoker. This is accomplished by rating marihuana users in terms of their score on such

demographic variables as sex, age, religious views, authoritarianism, political views, sexual permissiveness and religious attendance. The end product of this exercise is a picture in demographic terms of the 'typical marihuana smoker'.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in Johnson's work the main concern is with the 'measurement' of marihuana users in terms of a similar batch of demographic variables. Such a procedure enables Johnson to derive a statistical profile of the marihuana smoker which can then be used to predict the 'kind of person' most likely to become a user of marihuana.<sup>5</sup>

There are some obvious problems with the use of the constructed type as seen in the above mentioned works. To begin with, in Becker's work it is clear that unless they have read his account then marihuana users seem unlikely to type themselves in such terms. At best, even if Becker's types do have a certain common-sense appeal (it is the case with most human enterprises involving the acquisition of capacities and practices that humans learn to pass through an initial stage of being beginners to a later stage of being regular and well-versed practitioners) and even if the absence of clearly formulated existential types provides additional justifications for the provision of constructed types, it is clear that these types have a problematic relationship to the social types actually recognized and used by members themselves to typologize each other. Both Goode's and Johnson's formulations lack even the common-sense appeal of Becker's. In each of these works however, there is to be found the imposition of dimensions of typing which are derived from the perspective of the sociologist, dimensions which clearly reflect the interests of the sociologist himself rather than those of his subjects (or more pertinently 'objects', it would seem) of study. From a phenomenological point of view, the dimensions in terms of which the constructed type is formulated must be relevant to, and subjectively meaningful for, marihuana users themselves and must reflect the ways in which they differentiate between



objects, events and persons in their world: unless the sociologist's constructed types are subjectively meaningful and adequate in this way they will only serve to reflect his own preconceptions and interests, rather than those of the subjects of study, since all he would have done is to substitute his version of types of marihuana users for theirs.

Sociologists of a more 'appreciative'<sup>6</sup> persuasion have attempted to make use of existential types, rather than constructed ones, in their descriptions of different patterns and meanings of drug use. Examples of such work include the studies by Sutter (1966), Blumer, Ahmed, Smith and Sutter (1967), and Davis and Munoz (1968).<sup>7</sup> For example, in his study of the world of the 'righteous dope fiend', Sutter describes the various social types of drug users which are found in that world: 'crystal freaks', 'weed heads', 'pill freaks', 'acid heads', 'garbage junkies', 'winos', 'hustlers' and 'players'. All of these social types of drug users consist of existential types in that they are recognized and used by those who type themselves as 'righteous dope fiends' and by those to whom these various types are referrable. In Blumer's study also, four major existential types of drug users recognized by Oakland youthful drug users themselves are identified and described. The four types are the 'rowdy dude', the 'mellow dude', the 'pothead' and the 'player'. Similarly, in a study of patterns and meanings of drug use in Haight Ashbury, Davis and Munoz identify and describe two further existential types - the 'head' and the 'freak'.

Whilst the description of these existential types of drug users is to be welcomed as part of the development of more naturalistic approaches in the sociology of deviance, there are still, at least from a phenomenological point of view, some problems and unexplicated issues with this approach. Thus, even if it is the case that these studies have

concentrated on the portrayal of existential types and have demonstrated the sensitivity of these sociologists to the problematic relationship between first order and second order constructs, thereby making substantial advancement over the earlier studies using constructed types alone, it is clear that the description of these existential types, as in the case of the constructed types, has been employed to account for observed differences between drug users. Blumer et al's study, for example, sees as one of its main purposes in the portrayal of types of youthful drug users the explanation of the differential likelihood of progression from soft to hard drugs, such as heroin. Similarly, in Davis and Munoz's study, the purpose in the portrayal of the social types of 'head' and 'freak' is to account for the observed differences between the patterns and meanings of drug use found among these different types of drug user.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to typologize cannabis users in terms of constructed types<sup>8</sup> nor to treat types of cannabis users - whether constructed or existential - as resources for sociological explanations of observed differences between cannabis users (such as whether or not they 'progress' to the use of LSD, cocaine or heroin). Both of these options would only serve to deflect attention away from the unexplicated issues mentioned in chapter one with regard to the question of social types of cannabis users. These issues centre around the topic of social typing itself: the social types of cannabis users which they themselves recognize and the processes of social typing whereby members are assigned to one or another social type. The purpose, then, of this chapter is to examine the conceptual maps of the world of cannabis use which are held and used by members to type themselves and others as certain types of cannabis users. The following discussion of these matters is organized around the following questions: (1) what are the social types of cannabis users which were used and recognized, and (2) what are the

grounds employed by users to impute or claim membership or non-membership of a given social type of cannabis user?

### HEADS AND FREAKS

The main social types of cannabis user recognized and used by cannabis users themselves which emerged in this investigation<sup>9</sup> were the 'head' and the 'freak', and a number of derivatives or sub-types of these such as 'political head', 'acid head', 'speedfreak', 'real head', and 'real freak'. This is not to suggest that all cannabis users identify themselves with one of these social types or that such a list of social types exhausts the ways in which cannabis users type themselves and others.<sup>10</sup> (It is clear that some cannabis users were concerned to emphasize that they did not see themselves as belonging to any of these social types. These social types were variously evaluated by cannabis users: some evaluating those who conformed to type positively, others evaluating such persons negatively.) Beyond these major social types of head and freak, rather, there lay a broad spectrum of cannabis users who might be (and on occasion were) typed as 'non-head' cannabis users, as they tended to emphasize their non-conformity to the social types of 'head' and 'freak'. However, whilst such persons did not type themselves in any of these ways, they did not substitute and type themselves as belonging to any particular alternative and collectively recognized social type of cannabis user. Instead, such persons would describe themselves negatively in such terms as 'I'm not a head', 'I don't think of myself as a head', and 'I'm just a normal person who happens to smoke'.

This lack of specific social types to describe the 'non-head' cannabis users clearly raises some problems. Thus, if certain members did not categorize themselves in terms of a particular social type of cannabis user, then it is not possible to map out their grounds for typing themselves

as such. One solution to this problem is to examine social typing only amongst those who did type themselves as heads and/or freaks. A second solution would be to typologize this variety of 'non-head' cannabis users in terms of a constructed type such as 'light user', 'occasional user' or 'recreational user' for the purpose of constructing a sociological map of these 'types' of cannabis users.<sup>11</sup> The first of these solutions, however, neglects the finding of this study that the social types of head and freak seem to have different meanings for different users and that even the variety of cannabis users who might be described as 'non-heads' saw themselves (when questioned), even if negatively, in the frame of reference of these social types. The second solution, furthermore, forgets the purpose of this chapter. As has been suggested earlier, such a procedure would only produce a sociological typology of cannabis users which would most certainly be of problematic relevance to the typologies of users themselves. Rather, since the purpose of this chapter is to treat the ways in which users themselves typed each other as a topic in its own right, the ensuing discussion will examine the ways in which users typed themselves and each other, whether negatively or positively, in terms of the social types of cannabis users of which they were aware. Accordingly, the following section will concern itself with an examination of the interpretive basis upon which users claimed membership or non-membership of these major social types. It is through these claims and disclaimers that the nature of these social types of cannabis is constituted. The main question which will organize the discussion is 'on what grounds did members type themselves or others as heads or freaks or as not being heads or freaks?'

#### THE TYPING OF HEADS AND FREAKS

Previous research (Davis and Munoz, 1968 pp. 160-61) on the meanings of these social types suggests that they represent opposite ends of the spectrum of drug use among 'hippies'. As Davis and Munoz suggest,

The two terms, therefore, have acquired a quality of ideal typicality about them in the hippie subculture and have come at a minimum to designate certain familiar social types. At this level of indigenous typifications they can be seen to reflect ongoing value tensions in the subculture, reflecting a turning inward versus hedonism, Apollonian contentment versus Dionysian excess, a millennial vision of society versus an apocalyptic one.

An initial question which arises then, is what, if any, is the difference between these social types as far as the subjects in this study are concerned. Accordingly, users were asked to comment upon these social types with a view to the grounds upon which they might type a person as a head rather than a freak. Answers to these questions do suggest differences between these social types but these differences seem to pertain to the other connotations which these terms have acquired in addition to drug- or cannabis-specific ones. This 'referential elasticity' of these social types, it should be noted, is also recognized by Davis and Munoz. Accordingly then, these differences must be explicated before elaborating the grounds for the use of these social types in cannabis-specific contexts.

The 'connotative elasticity' of these social types may be illustrated by their use in referring to persons who do not take drugs at all. Consider, for example, the following quotations:

- (1) My mother's a natural head who does not take dope.
- (2) But there are freaks who don't use dope as well, anyone who is a head. I mean I sort of judge it by what people's heads are like, which usually involves dope, in fact almost always does. But I know some people who are sort of naturally tripped.
- (3) I. What does the term 'head' mean to you?  
S. What I would call a head could be described as relating to anything - being really into something, not necessarily relating to drugs, could be a music head or a work head.

identification with these social types. As these extracts indicate, a person may 'appear' to be a freak or even a head, but such an appearance does not, in the opinion of members, necessarily warrant the conclusion that he 'really is' a freak or that he engages in drug use. The implication is that the social type 'head' has a more drug-specific meaning than the social type 'freak'. The latter has much wider connotations of a particular type of lifestyle as evidenced by a person's appearance and, as the following extract suggests, his attitude to 'straight society':

I. What do you mean when you refer to someone as a freak?

S. Well, I'd have to describe it in fairly negative terms as someone who wasn't straight. When I think of a freak I think of someone who possibly takes drugs, you know, as much as anything really. It's sort of a general term describing a certain type of social block, freaks as opposed to being straight or respectable.

#### HEADS AND FREAKS AS TYPES OF CANNABIS USERS

With regard to the typing of persons in terms of these social types in cannabis-specific contexts (i.e. as types of cannabis users) respondents in this study suggest, in contrast to the findings of Davis and Munoz, that there is no distinction between these social types. Instead of emphasizing differentiation between types, users in this research emphasized the synonymy of these social types in relation to the use of cannabis. The following extracts are illustrative of members' views in this regard:

(1) I. Well how does the head differ from the freak then?

S. I think they have become synonymous, you know. People use the word freak now where they would have used the word head a year ago.

(2) I. In relation to dope, what would you see as the difference between heads and freaks?

S. I'm not sure that I would see any difference at all. I think I use the terms pretty much the same ways, you know, dope freaks, heads, potheads, it's all the same thing really.

- (3) I. What would you see as the difference between heads and freaks, in relation to dope?
- S. I don't think I would see a difference between them, you know, the heads are freaks, you know.

Given this synonymy of these social types, attention was then directed toward an analysis of the grounds for typing persons in terms of them. For the purpose of exposition, members' grounds have been grouped around the following second order, sociological, constructs: (1) centrality, (2) context, (3) community, and (4) commitment. It is in terms of the first order constructs, subsumed under these second order constructs, that members drew distinctions between different types of cannabis users. As such, each of these organizing constructs may be regarded in sociological terms as the major dimensions or themes whereby cannabis users typed themselves and others. I shall examine each of these dimensions in turn.

#### CENTRALITY

The 'centrality' of cannabis consumption, as a sociological construct for depicting members' grounds for typing themselves and other cannabis users as heads and freaks, derives from members' first order constructs such as the 'importance', the 'extent', the 'amount' and 'quantity' of cannabis use in the lives of its users. Consider, for example, the following extract:

- I. How important is smoking dope to you, in your overall plan of things?
- S. I see it as a sort of religious activity. Among the heads, it's sort of their religion and it plays an extremely important part in their lives, as important a part as the part played by religion in the lives of the people in the middle ages, and like the great religious gatherings are the sort of pop festivals where everyone goes and smokes dope freely, and the police have a really tough time busting anyone. So it's like a great religious gathering, like a pilgrimage to Canterbury or Lourdes.

I. Is it the same for all the people who use dope?

S. Well, no, not all people who smoke dope are heads. There are lots of people who don't see it in the same way. It's not very important to them, they don't do it very often. Whereas like with most heads they'll smoke, as a rule, most days, you know, it's more natural sort of thing.

As this member suggests, the use of cannabis is seen to play 'an extremely important part' in the lives of those who are heads, importance here being illustrated by the use of a religious analogy ('it's sort of their religion') and by comparing the extent of use in the lives of heads with the extent of cannabis use in the lives of users considered to be people who are not heads.

Similarly, in the next extract the centrality of cannabis for heads and freaks is indicated by the extent of cannabis use and, more particularly, by the extent to which the head's life is seen to 'revolve around' the use of the drug.

I. How important would you say taking dope was to the heads then?

S. It's part of their lives you know. I mean to a certain extent their lives revolve around hash or acid or something. I mean they use it a lot. It's really the quantity. It's really the amount they consume.

The essential difference between the head (or the freak) and the 'non-head' cannabis users, however, is captured in the members' own concept of 'being into' the phenomenon of cannabis and its use. Of the various meanings of this construct the most relevant in the present context is that which points to the extent of a person's involvement with the phenomenon of cannabis and its use - how far the person spends his time, is interested in, and preoccupied by, the phenomenon of cannabis and its consumption. Thus, heads and freaks were described as those types of cannabis users who were 'really into' the use of cannabis. As a way of indicating the importance of this construct for members' distinctions between heads and



freaks and other types of cannabis users, the following quotation evidences a distinction between 'heads' and 'political heads', the latter being seen as less 'into' the use of cannabis than the former. As the user concerned points out, the political head is more 'into' politics than he is 'into' the use of cannabis. In sociological terms, for the political head, cannabis use is not 'central', whereas politics is.

There are are some who don't regard it in the same way. They don't even look what you might call freaky and I sort of regard them, like sort of their main interest is sort of politics. They are really into politics and the revolution whereas the freaks are more into just being freaks and doing their own thing rather than getting all this big political organization together and organizing a revolution.

A similar view of the difference between heads or freaks and the political heads is expressed in the following extract:

I think there are two main groups ... the politically minded ones, they're just not so committed to the use of a substance which is sort of a religious act, actually using it, like gathering round, passing the joint from person to person, and the great ceremonious rolling, sticking the papers together, and you've got your music playing behind, which occurs in all religious ceremonies anyway and like, I don't know, people who try and make their own music, like trying jews harp, making a horrible noise but they really like it, or blow down a flute or a mouth organ, just making noises but enjoying it. The whole thing ...

As both these extracts illustrate, a major criterion for distinguishing the head and the freak from other types of cannabis users refers to the extent to which cannabis consumption constitutes a 'central focus' of life for the person concerned. For political heads the organization of political action provides the central focus in contrast to the centrality of cannabis and its use for the heads. The following extract echoes these grounds for typing persons as heads as opposed to political heads:

S1. I mean CT is an example of the second type of drug user because as a sort of standard he will smoke. He consumed all my dope when I gave it to him the other day but he's not, I wouldn't call him a freak because he's not really into it, he's really into politics and on the union scene, isn't he?

S2. Well, he could be into that and still be a freak, like ST is for example.

S1. Yes, but like I said earlier there are really two sorts of freaks. Like there are people who smoke occasionally but were really into politics. I'd put him with them and (another student). Like politics is really their thing and dope is incidental.

This is not to suggest, however, that there is also a political divide between the heads and freaks and the political heads. As the continuation of the last extract suggests, the difference between the freaks and the political heads in terms of their politics derives from the extent to which the political heads are involved in the organization of political action. Whilst the freaks are often in theoretical agreement with the political heads on political matters, it is the political heads who are into 'action'. It is this distinction between political theory and political action, in addition to the centrality of cannabis and its use, which provides the main grounds for the distinction between the heads and freaks and the political heads as far as the members themselves are concerned:

I. Do you agree with S1?

S2. Well, yes, like politics is really my thing too but er ...

S1. Yes, but I mean like politics may be your thing in your head but they really get into action. They do things, you smoke a lot of dope instead.

S2. Yes, I agree.

Just as in these extracts the centrality of drug use is used as grounds for claiming membership of the social types of head and freak and as grounds for excluding other kinds of cannabis users from membership of such a social category, so also is the centrality of cannabis use employed as grounds for claiming non-membership of these social types. In the following extracts, provided by members who did not consider themselves to belong to the social types of head or freak, it is the same grounds for

typing a person as a head or freak which are employed to argue that these members are neither heads nor freaks.

(1) I. Would you see yourself as a head?

S. No, I wouldn't. I don't smoke that often. It's not that important to me.

(2) I. Would you regard yourself as a head or a freak?

S. No, definitely not. 'Head' to me incorporates a whole pseud subculture which I do not feel the need to identify with. Charge, whilst being pleasurable, is not my life.

(3) I. Would you classify yourself as a head?

S. I wouldn't, no, because smoking is only an occasional activity at present.

(4) I. Would you see yourself as a freak, or a head?

S. Neither. I don't think of myself as being a head, or a freak. I mean I don't smoke that often, it's not that important to me. I'll have the occasional blow when I visit friends but that's all.

(5) I. What about the word 'head'? What does that mean to you? Would you regard yourself as one?

S. I kind of regard a head as a more introverted character because of the use of drugs. It makes me sick, people who all they do is talk about drugs all the time. I don't mind using them but, you know, I don't regard it as a religion or anything, you know, not to sit around every night talking about drugs, you know, it's just a waste of time. It's nice to talk about other things while you are under drugs. I don't want to regard myself as a head. I just want to be regarded as a normal person who just does smoke.

All of these extracts, then, illustrate further the kinds of grounds which are used by heads, freaks and 'non-heads' alike for typing persons as heads or freaks. In particular, with regard to members' claims for non-membership of the social types of heads and freaks, the above extracts indicate the use of the following grounds: (1) lack of importance of cannabis to the person, (2) smoking cannabis is a relatively infrequent occurrence, (3) heads are members of a 'pseud subculture' with which the 'non-head' does not identify, (4) heads are those who are excessively preoccupied with the topic of drug use.

## CONTEXT

The concept of the 'context' or 'contextuality' of cannabis consumption subsumes two dimensions or themes in terms of which members' types of cannabis users were formulated. The first of these is the idea of the situational context and the second is the motivational context.

### (i) Situational Context

The 'situational context' of cannabis consumption, as a sociological construct designed to illuminate members' first order constructs of their grounds for typing persons as heads or freaks or not, refers to the kinds of situations in which different types of cannabis users are seen to use cannabis. The situations in which a person uses cannabis are seen to reflect the part which cannabis plays in the life of the person. In this respect, members drew a distinction between the 'occasionality' of non-head drug use and the pervasiveness, and taken-for-granted place, of cannabis in the lives of heads and freaks. Thus, in the following extract a self-confessed head contrasts the part played by cannabis in his life now that he is a head with the part played by cannabis in his life when he was not a head:

- I. Do you think there are different types of dope users in the university?
- S. There are the heads, what I call the heads, you know, sort of those who are into a sort of head scene and there are the sort of people who are into a more straight sort of scene, like the sort of scene I was in before, where you'd score a quid deal for Saturday night and all sit down in someone's room and smoke it and make it a really high spot of the week. Whereas among the heads, it's just people who have smoked regularly and who don't regard it as such a big thing, just sort of do it as part of their lives, as part of the other things they do.

As this extract suggests, for the head the use of cannabis is a far more integral and taken-for-granted feature of his life than it is for the 'non-head' cannabis smoker. Constituting a taken-for-granted feature, furthermore, the drug is used in a different way among the heads. For

the heads, cannabis is an acceptable and taken-for-granted feature of a wide variety of situations. By way of contrast, for those members who are seen as comprising the 'non-head' stratum of cannabis users, the consumption of cannabis has a much more 'special occasion' quality about it, and the variety of situations seen as acceptable for its use are more limited. The following two quotations reiterate the difference in situational contexts of cannabis consumption for the heads and freaks as compared with the 'non-head' cannabis users:

(1) I. What do you see as distinctive about the use of dope among the freaks?

S. It's just a natural, social thing, where it fits in with dope especially. Smoke anytime anywhere you can if you can get it and you feel like it. Like I tend to turn on if I'm driving or if I'm walking, if I'm working, around the campus, at a concert, in the common-room, you know, whatever ... whereas there are other non-head smokers who don't do it in the same way at all. They tend to smoke in their rooms and not very often at that, usually paranoid about it too, locking doors and things. Generally much more uptight about it.

(2) I. How does the use of dope fit into your life? I mean can you tell me, do you do it often ... when would you say you used it?

S. Like I enjoy my work here. I don't find there's any conflict between the two things. I can smoke and work you see. You see it's just something I do, just part of my life I suppose. I mean I usually smoke in the day whereas other people might only smoke in the evenings. I like a blow after breakfast ...

I. Do you think most heads do? Would you see yourself as a head?

S. I suppose so, yes. Why not? I smoke dope. I think most of the people I know would regard it in the same way.

In contrast to the 'non-head' cannabis user, the head or the freak is viewed by cannabis users themselves as one for whom using cannabis is a taken for granted feature of a wide variety of situations in his daily life. Such contextual pervasiveness stands in marked comparison to the perceived 'occasionality' of cannabis consumption amongst those who are not typed as heads and freaks.

(ii) Motivational Context

The concept of the 'motivational context' of cannabis use as a sociological construct for depicting members' grounds for typing themselves and each other as heads or freaks or not, refers to differences in members' purposes and intentions with respect to the use of cannabis. From members' accounts it becomes apparent that there are different kinds of purpose and intention imputed to those who are typed as heads from the kinds of purposes and intentions or motives which are imputed to those who are regarded as 'non-heads'. Consider, for example, the following extracts:

(1) I. What does the term 'head' mean to you?

S. At first I thought it just meant anyone who took drugs, of any kind in fact, like pothead, speedhead, acid head, that sort of thing, so I took it to mean that. But as I got into it, it came to take on a different meaning, it's more or less the hippie kind of thing, like the hippies are the heads. Like you get skinheads who take speed but I wouldn't call them heads ... Because I think they take drugs for different reasons. I think a head is a person who doesn't use drugs all the time just to get a buzz. They try to change their consciousness also, which I think is what makes a head.

(2) I think a head is someone who is committed to exploring the parameters of his consciousness through the use of drugs.

As these extracts indicate, as far as heads themselves are concerned, a particular kind of motive is imputed to them as a way of distinguishing them from other types of cannabis users to whom a different type of motive is imputed. Thus, in the next extract a different type of motive for cannabis use is imputed to those who are not typed as heads:

...there are also people who aren't heads, who have come here, and after being in contact with heads have started smoking but not in the same way. I mean it's just like social sherry drinking or something, it's just smoking, getting a high, saying, 'that's it for today'. I mean it's not really part of them, they don't think about it in the same way, they do it for a different reason, they don't live their lives around it as much as other people do, as much as with those who are sort of, who are freaks you know.

## COMMUNITY

Another theme in the social typing of heads and freaks is that of 'community'. This theme refers to members' conceptions of the extent to which cannabis users belonged to a 'brotherhood', 'fraternity' or 'community' of heads and freaks. Heads saw themselves as belonging to a community of like-minded drug users, united in their conceptions of cannabis itself, its uses and its position in society. Other cannabis users who were not typed as freaks or heads were viewed as not belonging to such a community of persons and thereby as not sharing the various attributes of those that did belong to it. The marks of community and hence typification as a head or freak in terms of it, manifested themselves in a number of ways. For example, consider the following extract:

But I'm still a head. I still dig heads. Say if I'm driving along and I see a head, I always pick him up as a head and if I've got dope I'll turn him on. So I'm a head as far as that goes in the sense of fraternity. You can't deny it.

In this extract, then, the member describes an example of how this community of heads sustains itself. Through the performance of favours for persons recognised as heads and freaks<sup>13</sup> (the giving of lifts) and through the sharing of cannabis with 'strangers' who appear to be heads, members of this community can share in a common life situation. Through such practices as these the community as a way of distinguishing the head and the freak from the 'non-head' and 'non-freak' is defined. The following quotation reveals further grounds upon which this community of heads and freaks is realised:

- I. But you can't imagine yourself stopping?
- S. No, I don't see anything that's going to stop me at all.
- I. Because there's something else besides the buzz now?
- S. Yes, like a great brotherhood, all the freaks. You sometimes get it, you walk down the street and you see someone with long hair and he sees you and just smiles. You don't know the guy but you are just sort of together.

- I. What do you mean, 'brotherhood'?
- S. It's a very loose brotherhood. Like you see a freak and I immediately assume that he takes drugs. I said earlier that a freak doesn't necessarily take drugs but if I see one I immediately assume that he does and like we are united against the common enemy, the police, who are about to bust us, or not necessarily just the police, the whole state who are trying to repress us, and so you get this political ... er ... motivation too. So it's like a mixture of religious and political brotherhood, rather than any one particular kind.

This extract illustrates the use of several grounds for defining self and others as members of a community of heads and freaks. To begin with, persons who appear to be freaks are assumed to take drugs, thereby binding together such persons with a common interest. A mark of community, then, is a mutual orientation to appearances on the part of those who see themselves as members of it. Further, appearances not only symbolise common interests, they also symbolise common problems for members of the freak community by virtue of the illegal status of cannabis. As the member in this quotation indicates, the police are seen as intent on apprehending drug users and the 'whole state' seen as working for the repression of drug use. Besides a mutual orientation to drug use, then, a mutual orientation towards political and moral problems, arising as a result of the illegality of cannabis, is a typical feature which is used by members to differentiate between heads and non-heads. As the following extract illustrates, it is upon the political and moral significance of drug use, and upon the person's awareness of this 'community' among drug users, that the distinction between heads and non-heads is seen to rest:

- I. What do you think the terms 'head' and 'freak' mean?
- S. Well, a head is someone who ... there are people who smoke but it's essentially within institutional ideas of society and the community. I mean there are people who don't do it regularly, who haven't really thought about politics. They are rather like most straights, they evade problems in politics and that's how it's affected them. A head is someone who is aware of the drug community, one who is, who has really got into the community of people who have



also woken up to the fact that, for instance, I mean to put it incredibly simply, by society's definition smoking marihuana is wrong, it is illegal, it is against the interests of society, full stop. If you get into a head scene, if a person is a head, that sort of definition ceases to have any meaning anymore. Whereas, like I said, there are people who smoke but aren't heads because those definitions still exist, like they're breaking the law, they're being naughty, you know, like you get a kick out of smoking in the bog at school, you're aware, for instance, that in those terms at least it's an anti-social act, you're getting someone uptight. I really think that there is a distinction between the heads and the non-head smokers. Smoke is far more part of their lives and the attitudes that one learns through simply having broken a part of an institutional moral code, you realise, not only that you've broken it, but that the code is wrong, really feeling that the code is wrong, not that you are wrong by breaking it, you know. A head is really a part of a community that is aware of this and it really makes it far easier for one to talk and think without the inhibitions that non-head society and groups and individuals do.

As far as this member is concerned, then, the head is one who has become a member of a community of heads, who is aware of his membership in that community, and who by virtue of that membership has come to hold certain moral and political views, particularly with respect to the illegality, and supposed immorality, of cannabis use. It is this membership and these related moral and political views about cannabis ('the code is wrong', 'you are not wrong by breaking it', 'society's definition (that smoking is wrong) ceases to have any meaning any more') which are used as grounds for differentiating persons who are heads from persons who are not. Thus, as this extract suggests, the 'non-head' is seen as one who is encumbered by 'straight' definitions of cannabis (he sees cannabis use as wrong, gets a kick out of 'being naughty'), is politically ignorant and is unaware of the drug community.<sup>14</sup>

#### COMMITMENT

The concept of commitment<sup>15</sup> is used here to reflect those grounds for typing persons as heads, and thereby distinguishing them from 'non-heads',

which are concerned with the extent to which a person has invested himself, both presently and in the future, in 'straight society'. Commitment to straight society is evidenced by the making of certain investments and a lack of willingness to behave in a manner which might threaten those investments or 'side-bets'. Lack of commitment, on the other hand, is displayed by demonstrating one's lack of investments in, and disaffiliation with, straight society. It is the marks of disaffiliation which are used by members to distinguish those who are heads or freaks from those who are not. Consider, for example, the following extract:

- I. Have you ever thought about what you're going to do when you leave this place?
  
- S. Sort of, not very hard. I've got to get bread from somewhere but I don't intend getting a very straight job. I intend to enjoy myself which a lot of people don't seem to want to do. I want to travel as well which is a very head thing. I mean, I just want to go to the States and I just want to travel around Europe, and that is head, you know, that's what heads do, which is groovy. Like the heads might stay flat on their backs for six months but they suddenly get up and whoosh ... a bit of excitement, I don't know. I think the reason people turn on is because they are fucking bored with the alternatives of the moment. Like I watched telly for the first time for about four weeks and it quite blew my mind, you know. I'm pissed off reading the newspapers and I'm pissed off by most straights, so in all those ways you are a head.

As the first part of this quotation illustrates, a person will be typed as a head on the basis of a certain type of lifestyle. In particular, as the member points out, a head is one who exhibits spontaneity, a desire to travel, a lack of concern about a straight job, and a desire for enjoyment and excitement in his lifestyle. Furthermore, not only is the head concerned to lead a 'non-straight' lifestyle, he is also, as the second part of this quotation indicates, disillusioned with, and denigrating about the straight society he partially rejects.

The following extract echoes this lack of commitment to straight society as grounds for distinguishing heads or freaks from straights. It

also suggests that the typical appearance of freaks (long hair, scruffy clothes) is a symbol of their estrangement from straight society and its values.

- I. How would you describe a freak then?
- S. A freak is a constant reminder maybe to people, to sort of parents, to straights generally, of different values that certain people, young people, have, as opposed to other young people with short hair, maybe you know. Maybe a long hair appearance is just a way of saying that you don't think the same way as someone with short hair. It's not quite towing a conservative-type line, not politically, but you're non-conservative if you've got long hair and you look a freak, not the sort of person who's going to be invited to very straight parties or something. If you're a freak you're just not into that at all.

Amongst those who were concerned to claim non-membership of the social types of heads and freaks, those same symbols of estrangement were regarded as grounds for depicting a person as a freak or a head:

- I. Have you ever thought about your future? Does it worry you?
- S. No, it doesn't bother me because I don't think I will be regarded as a classic freak. I mean even now I won't be regarded as that because my hair isn't long and I don't wear freaky clothes. In fact some people at home say I look like a policeman, so I've never been regarded in those terms and you know, I think that's good. I wouldn't like to be regarded as a freak.
- I. Why not?
- S. Partly because of not being able to get a job, that would bother me, and in any case I don't accept all their standards, I don't see why I should conform to their standards. I accept some of them but not all of them.

### REAL HEADS AND FREAKS

Those cannabis users who typed themselves as heads and freaks distinguished themselves not only from those whom they considered to be essentially straight or 'non-head' cannabis users, but they also were oriented to a further type of cannabis user - the 'real head' or the 'real freak' - which, in a sense, constituted an extreme and more 'authentic' version of the 'mundane' head or freak. Accordingly, this section examines the grounds used by members to type persons as 'real heads' or 'real freaks'.

To begin with, persons are typed as 'real' heads or freaks on the basis of the centrality of drug use in their life. In comparison with heads, real heads were seen as persons who were more extensively involved in the use of drugs; in members' terms, the real head was seen as more 'into' drug use than his counterpart, the ordinary head. Thus, as the following extract suggest, the 'real head' revolves his 'whole life' around the 'head culture':

At one stage I was a real head. I mean whereas now I'm getting a bit more sophisticated about it. You sort of realise I might have to get some money sometime, things like that ... it's not quite as distinct as it was about two years ago, about a year ago anyway, when I was just into acid my whole life revolved around the head culture, whereas now I suppose it does quite a lot but I'm not tripping as much. I've got slightly wider horizons than I used to have.

As this extract indicates, the real head is differentiated from the head in terms of the extent to which his life revolved around the head culture. Further, it would seem that it is also the extensive use of other drugs, particularly 'psychedelic' drugs such as LSD, which are seen as evidence of such extensive involvement in the head culture. The real head, then, would appear to be seen as one who is an extreme version of the head. In comparison with the latter, the real head uses drugs with greater frequency (as this member puts it, now that he is just an ordinary head he is not tripping as much as when he was a real head) than the head, sees drug use as more of a central focus in his life and is less concerned about such problems as the acquisition of a job and money.

Concern about acquiring jobs and money reflects the extent to which the member sees himself as committed to the conventional order. As in the case of heads and freaks, the issue of commitment was used by members to differentiate between the real head and the ordinary head. Thus, heads were seen as more committed to straight society than the real heads and as less immersed in the alternative community of freaks. Consider, for example, the following extract:

- I. Do you think there are different types of drug users at the university?
- S. Well, everyone here is still in society, in straight society. Well, it's really paradoxical, you know, they're being trained to be the elite in society, you know, in a hierarchical structure, which I'm against in theory. But in practice by being here I'm supporting it. And so I wouldn't say there are any real freaks here. As far as I'm concerned you are not a real freak, that is someone who totally acts on how he feels, if you are a head in this place. Here, the head scene, the drug scene, I don't know, it's changed and increased fantastically even whilst I've been here and it's far less a deliberate rejection of straight society's values because a hell of a lot of people do it and that sort of worries me slightly. There are a lot of non-head smokers here I'd say. But there is a really complicated and really fascinating and really healthy head scene here as well. Because the obvious pressures of society aren't on you, for instance, you don't feel so paranoid walking around with a pocketful of dope or something on the campus because the police don't often come up here. We haven't really dropped out until we do and that's a question where the life style, you suddenly realise what you're doing and you realise that you are totally alienated by this place, where you are alien from this place, and then you drop out of it and that's where it gets really heavy in a good way, you know, that is where I really respect the people who have done that.

The real head or freak, then, is typed as such on the grounds that he has disaffiliated himself from straight society not only in theory but also in practice: he is not simply intellectually critical of straight society but he has transformed that critique into action. The real head is the type of head who 'drops out' and 'totally acts on how he feels' rather than being bound to conventional society and inhibited by it. The following extracts illustrate further this display of a lack of commitment to straight society, and an immersion in that society's alternative, as defining features of the real head and freak:

- (1) S. The trouble with the university environment is that it makes you think. I'm worried about what it's doing to my head.

I. How do you mean?

- S. The worst thing is the alienation. Heads don't provide a complete alternative society. You still have to buy straight society's food, live in its buildings, be with straight people. I went to this party and there was this incredible tension there. Thirty or forty year old people there. They were

being really careful what they said and did, and I really had to think about my position with regard to them. I really had to think about what I was saying.

- I. That's bad for your head?
  - S. That's right. Heads outside the university don't have the same problems. They aren't intellectual like those in the university. Real heads, they have rejected straight society as far as possible and are much more committed to opposing straight society and straight society's values. It's not so easy for them to play at being a rebel.
- (2) I. How would you describe a real head then?
- S. You're a real head if you are really into a head scene, really part of a community of freaks who have achieved as much independence from their previous social arrangements in straight society as possible.
- (3) JF, according to MK, is a 'real cool freak' in that 'he doesn't give a fuck about anything'. This is because he is seemingly unconcerned about passing or failing his exams. JF had already spoken to me about his lack of interest in the course and had told me that he was contemplating dropping out of it, just to 'bum around for a while', acquire some money and 'make it to India' in the summer.

(field notes)

As these extracts show, it is the feature of having rejected straight society as fully as possible which distinguishes the real head or freak. Those who are 'really into a head scene', who have 'dropped out' and who are 'more committed to opposing straight society's values' are those who are typed as real heads and freaks.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, members' grounds for typing persons as types of cannabis users have been examined. The analysis has been organised around four main themes or dimensions of typing: centrality, context, community and commitment. The intention of this analysis has not been to provide an extended sociological definition of different types of cannabis users. Rather, the intention has simply been to identify some of the grounds upon

which members themselves define persons displaying typical characteristics as certain types of cannabis users. The four concepts - centrality, context, community and commitment - are intended as ways of typifying the typifications used by members to type themselves and others as non-heads, heads, freaks, political heads and freaks, real heads and real freaks.

The main emphasis has been on cannabis users who defined themselves as heads or freaks. As such, this chapter reflects the 'bias', noted in chapter one, in favour of the perspective of those members for whom cannabis comprised a 'central life interest'. This 'bias' persists throughout the rest of this thesis in that the bulk of the data upon which it is based is derived from such sources.

In so far as the four constructs of centrality, context, community and commitment constitute adequate sociological description of members' grounds for the definition of social types of cannabis users, then it would seem that members are oriented to an implicit continuum of social types of cannabis users, from the non-heads through the heads to the real heads, rather than being oriented to discrete social types of users with definitive boundaries. Thus, in the case of the dimension of centrality, it would seem that cannabis use may be more or less central in the life of the user rather than being simply central or not. Similarly, it would appear that members are not simply committed or not committed to continued participation in straight society; rather, persons are more or less committed - one's commitment is a matter of degree. Overall, it would appear that the 'non-heads' are seen to be those cannabis users who are marginally involved in the use of cannabis and its attendant body of cultural knowledge, attitude and practice, whilst those typed as real heads or freaks are seen as those who are more completely immersed in the world of cannabis use and, at some time, relatively disaffiliated with straight society.

The foregoing analysis of the typical characteristics of these various social types of cannabis users also raises the question of how these constructs are used in specific interactional contexts where typification as a head, freak or whatever is problematic. How, in other words, is members' knowledge of the typical characteristics of non-heads, heads, freaks, real heads, real freaks and political heads organised on particular occasions? How does the member forge a link between the instant case and the typical construct? How does the member decide that this person constitutes a 'typical' or 'normal' freak?<sup>16</sup>

Part of the answer to these questions, as to the other interpretive questions that are posed in this thesis, is that the member employs his common-sense knowledge and that this common-sense knowledge is organised as a collection of interpretive or evidential rules or recipes.<sup>17</sup> Each of the themes of centrality, context, community and commitment are derived from members' first order interpretive rules (for example, a person will be assumed to be a freak if he looks like a freak (if he has long hair, if he wears certain types of clothes), if he is oriented to certain typical meanings of taking drugs (for example, mind expansion), if he is aware of the drug community and if he displays a lack of commitment (does not care about exams, drops out). In their turn, members' interpretive rules may then be reduced to the second order, sociological interpretive rule: if a person displays the typical characteristics or features of a head or a freak then he will be typed as such.

Members' collections of typical constructs, organized as sets of interpretive rules, are then used in scrutinizing instant cases.<sup>18</sup> Clearly, the substantive and generic details of such scrutiny in specific situations await documentation in further contributions to the study of social typing amongst freaks (or heads).<sup>19</sup>



CHAPTER THREE

CATEGORIZING CANNABIS

In the first chapter it was suggested that previous naturalistic studies of the use of cannabis had left unexplicated a number of important issues. In the last chapter, members' conceptions of different types of cannabis users were examined. This chapter treats as problematic the nature of cannabis itself, hitherto taken for granted by previous sociological research in this field.

Any answer to the question, 'what is cannabis?' depends upon what is known about the properties of cannabis and upon the perspective in terms of which a description of 'properties' is formulated. The literature on cannabis is replete with descriptions of the properties of the drug from 'official' or 'scientific' pharmacological viewpoints.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, there are few sociological descriptions of the properties of cannabis from the perspective of its users.<sup>2</sup> This thesis is intended to provide such a description. In particular, this chapter attempts to answer the question, 'what is cannabis?' by examining members' common-sense knowledge of the properties of the drug. The focus, in other words, is on cannabis users' 'folk pharmacology' of cannabis.

For analytical purposes it may be suggested that cannabis users' common-sense knowledge of the drug pertains to at least three dimensions within which it may be known. These dimensions are (1) the substance of cannabis, (2) the uses of cannabis, and (3) the effects of cannabis. This chapter is primarily concerned with the first of these dimensions - the substance of cannabis. The other two dimensions - uses and effects - are considered in subsequent chapters.

It is also useful, as a point of reference, to suggest an ideal type who 'knows nothing' about cannabis, where this 'nothing known' refers to the nature of cannabis as a substance, to the ways in which it may be used and to its effects. Such a person might be referred to as a 'beginner'. From such a point of reference it is clear that it is only in the course of involvement with, behaviour toward, and experience of, cannabis that

the beginner becomes aware of the properties or 'facts of life' about the drug which permit him to distinguish it from other objects, to make certain uses of it, and to derive particular benefits or otherwise from such use. In this work the main focus of attention is on students whose knowledge of the properties of cannabis was extensive rather than on those whose knowledge was minimal.<sup>3</sup>

The particular questions to which answers are provided in this chapter are as follows:- What does cannabis consist of from the point of view of users themselves? What kinds of common-sense knowledge do students possess about cannabis? What categories or typifications do students employ in describing cannabis? How do students recognize cannabis? How are different types and qualities of cannabis recognized? What interpretive capacities and practices are involved in categorizing cannabis? To answer these questions the following analysis focuses firstly on the variety of categories that students use to refer to and in terms of which they typify cannabis, and secondly on the interpretive work undertaken in recognizing cannabis and its different types and qualities. It will be shown that students use a variety of categories of cannabis and that the drug is typified in terms of a number of dimensions. It will also be shown that their methods of interpretive work involve at least two elements: interpretive rules and interpretive strategies. The former consist of 'rules of application', whereby the relevance of a particular category or collection of categories is decided. The latter refer to the means whereby members attempt to clarify apparent ambiguities of objects given for their interpretation and the relationship between these objects and their preconstituted stock of knowledge of cannabis. These interpretive strategies consist, in the main, of the investigative actions taken by members as methods for resolving problems of ambiguity and thereby establishing the basis for categorization via the use of interpretive rules.<sup>4</sup>

## CATEGORIES OF CANNABIS

What then are students' categories of cannabis that are used in their everyday descriptions of the drug? It is to this question that answers must be found before the issue of the interpretive work, whereby various categories are applied, can be raised and considered. This categorization of cannabis presupposes the possession of common-sense knowledge in terms of which such interpretation may be made. The first task for the analyst, then, is to describe the collection of categories which are used by members to refer to cannabis.

Members' talk revealed that cannabis is categorized in terms of a number of dimensions.<sup>5</sup> To begin with, a broad distinction was made between cannabis resin (known as 'hashish', 'hash', 'dope', 'shit', or 'charge') and herbal cannabis (known as 'marihuana', 'grass' or 'bush'). Such a distinction is normally the initial one that members learn to make between different types of cannabis. Examples of the use of this distinction and the categories of cannabis based upon it were ubiquitous in the world of student drug use.

- (1) I've got some really good bush, man. Do you want to come for a smoke?
- (2) S1. What has he got?  
S2. He's got some nice bush. I think he has got a little bit of hash as well, but not enough to sell.
- (3) I prefer hash to grass.
- (4) S1. Do you want to have a smoke of it?  
S2. Okay, What is it?  
S1. That same grass I had before, you know. Remember?  
S2. You still got some of that left? That was really good that stuff.
- (5) S1. Do you want to score?  
S2. What is there?  
S1. There's some nice bush.  
S2. No nice dope around then?  
S1. No, maybe at the weekend though. I'm expecting some Paki.
- (6) It's fourteen for the dope and eleven for the bush.
- (7) S1. Is it grass?  
S2. No, it's this.  
S1. Oh, it's resin. Great! Can you let me have an ounce?

- (8) S1. Got any charge?  
S2. I've got a little.  
S1. Have you got enough to sell me a bit?  
S2. Not really, but you can come and have a blow of it if you like.

Beyond the basic distinction between hashish and marihuana, members came to make further categorizations of cannabis in terms of a number of dimensions, including colour, place of origin, stamps and seals, and composition. It is to the categories of hashish and marihuana in terms of these dimensions to which I shall now turn.

### HASHISH

To begin with, different types of hashish were categorized in terms of a dimension of colour. An initial, and subsequently most pervasive, distinction was concerned with whether or not the hashish was an example of 'black'. In this regard, members differentiated between hashish that was 'black' and other types of the drug.

- (1) S1. P's got some really nice black, if you want some.  
S2. Really? I haven't seen any of that around for a while.  
S1. It's sixteen an ounce.
- (2) S1. What is it? Is it black?  
S2. No, I think it's Lebanese.
- (3) S1. The I. people have got some black if you can find them.  
Nobody else has got any as far as I know.  
S2. What about K? Hasn't he got any?  
S1. He had some. It wasn't black though. I think he's sold out now.

The category 'black' was used to refer to a variety of different types of hashish, some of which, technically speaking, were not black in colour at all. Rather, these other types of hashish could perhaps more accurately be described as 'dark' as opposed to 'light' in colour - usually some shade of brown. Members, however, did not refer, at least in their everyday descriptions, to the various subtle shades of hashish even if they were aware of them, preferring instead to use the category 'black' to cover various kinds of dark-coloured hashish. Students typically learn to distinguish 'black' hashish from other kinds of 'non-black' hashish before they became

aware of different types of 'black' and different types of 'non-black'  
hashish. The distinction between 'black' and 'non-black' is a very broad  
one covering different types of both; the acquisition of further categories  
of hashish carries with it a developing awareness of the subtle distinctions  
in terms of colour and other dimensions between different types.

Besides the distinction between 'black' and 'non-black', members made  
further categorizations of hashish in terms of a place of origin dimension.  
In terms of this dimension, hashish was categorized, firstly in terms of its  
supposed country of origin, as one of the following: Afghani or Afghan,  
Indian, Lebanese, Moroccan, Nepalese or 'Nep', Pakistani or 'Paki', and  
Turkish.

- (1) S1. I think R. would agree that it's pretty good black pak,  
isn't it?  
S2. Yes, it is actually, it's not really that much less than  
the Nep.
- (2) I reckon he had a lot more Nepalese, but he was just  
hanging on to it. There's nothing you can do about that...  
We won't smoke any more Nepalese now, not until lunchtime.  
We're going to go straight back to work in a minute, ten  
minutes, half hour, we'll probably just go in there on our  
way to dinner...
- (3) I was talking with B. who had returned to the area that  
afternoon after going to London to 'score some hash'. He  
tells me about the person from whom he had scored his  
'half-weight of Leb' and described him as a 'pretty reliable  
sort of guy' and 'he said he might be able to get some Nep  
next week - £150 a weight, but it's worth it'.
- (4) S1. What is it?  
S2. It's Paki, it's good Paki though.
- (5) S1. What is there?  
S2. B's got a weight of Paki and K's coming back today and  
he's got Paki.
- (6) S1. You always seem to get Lebanese in the summer, I don't  
know why.  
S2. Probably got something to do with the harvest.
- (7) S1. Did you have any of that Afghani that P. had?  
S2. No.  
S1. Oh, you missed out there.  
S2. Why? Was it good?  
S1. He only had a couple of ounces as far as I know. He kept  
an ounce back for himself I think and sold the rest in quid  
deals, really small deals as well. But it was most excellent  
dope.

(8) I'd heard that there was such a thing as Turkish shit, but I'd never seen any, so I didn't know what it was when I was eventually handed some. 'What's this?' I said to J. He said it was Turkish. It looked a bit like Lebanese, a bit darker, but it was quite fresh. It was okay, not as good as Lebanese, but then it takes really good dope to beat that.

(9) S1. Has B. come back yet?  
S2. Yes, he's got a weight of Moroccan. That's all there was.

Of the seven types of hashish mentioned above, four were subsumed under the category of 'black' hashish: Afghani, Indian, Nepalese and Pakistani were all described as 'black' even though it was recognised that this category was an oversimplified description of the colour of these various types. However, of the four types of 'black', only one type, namely that of Pakistani, was actually used in combination with the category 'black' for descriptive purposes. It was referred to as 'Paki-black'.

Different types of 'black' from the same country of origin were further differentiated in terms of particular regions or districts within the countries. In this way, members used such categories as 'Kabul' (which referred to a specific type of 'black' from Afghanistan) and 'Chitral', 'Kashmiri', 'Bombay steam shit' (types of 'black' from India), and 'Cabal' (a type of 'black' from Pakistan). The following extracts illustrate the use of some of these categories:

- (1) I was talking with M. about the current situation, namely the apparent shortage of supplies amongst the students at that time. In the course of this conversation I asked M. about his buying and selling activities. He said that the 'last really worthwhile dope' that he had acquired had been some 'Bombay steam shit'. I said that I had not heard of that kind of hashish before. He then described it as being 'very dark, very black and sticky'.
- (2) S1. Did you know there's meant to be some Kabul around?  
S2. No. Where?  
S1. Over in (a college)  
S2. Who's got it? Do you know?  
S1. Some friends of A. I think. I am not sure. I was told this, but it might be all a fabrication.  
S2. Mmm, maybe. Be nice though. Haven't seen any decent dope around for a while now.
- (3) S1. What is it?  
S2. Chitral.  
S1. Mmm. Far out.

No further distinctions between types of Pakistani and Nepalese hashish in terms of the place of origin dimension were reported in the course of this research. Instead, both of these kinds of hashish were typed in terms of additional dimensions of categorization. Different types of Pakistani hashish were distinguished according to the kind of stamp or seal with which blocks or slabs of hashish were marked prior to their exportation. For Pakistani hashish the most well-known type of 'stamped hashish' was that referred to as 'Gold Seal' which, as the name suggests, was marked with a gold-coloured seal or stamp. Another type of Pakistani hashish distinguishable by virtue of its seal or stamp, though seemingly less common and less well-known by students, was that referred to as 'Palm Tree'. In this case the hashish was marked with a stamp or seal in the shape of a palm tree. This particular category was often combined with that of 'Cabal' (a stamp referring to a specific region from where the hashish originates) thereby yielding the type of hashish known as 'Palm Tree Cabal'.

- S1. Did you score that dope?  
S2. Yes, it's Paki.  
S1. Is it Gold Seal?  
S2. No, it's Palm Tree.  
S1. Palm Tree Cabal?  
S2. No, it hasn't got a Cabal stamp on it, only a Palm Tree stamp.

In contrast, it was believed, in the case of Nepalese hashish, that stamping did not occur. Instead, members distinguished Nepalese in the form of rolled or pressed balls (referred to as 'temple balls') from other kinds of Nepalese. These latter were referred to by no specific terms but were recognized as having a typical block or slab-like form.

Similarly, it was also recognized as a 'fact of life' about types of cannabis that different types of hashish from Afghanistan were distinguishable in terms of their form or composition. Thus, in this case members made distinction between 'crumbly Afghan' and Afghan which came in blocks or slabs.

Likewise, members distinguished different types of 'non-black' hashish.



In terms of the place of origin dimension, members distinguished the following 'national' types of cannabis : Lebanese, Moroccan and Turkish. Just as for 'black' so also in the case of these types of hashish members made further categorizations in terms of the specific districts within these countries from which particular types of hashish were believed to originate. Thus, members used the category 'Ketama' to describe a particular variety of Moroccan hashish.

- S1. That Moroccan of P's is really quite good dope, don't you think?
- S2. It's supposed to be Ketama. Much better than run of the mill Moroccan. More like Lebanese.
- S1. Well, I suppose there's no reason why the Morroccans can't make good dope.

With Lebanese and Turkish hashish, however, members made no finer distinctions between these types in terms of the place of origin dimension. Instead, for Lebanese, members extended the dimension of colour for categorization purposes and thereby distinguished 'Red Lebanese' or 'Red Leb' from 'Gold Leb'. Turkish hashish, on the other hand, was considered to be somewhat rare and was referred to only in terms of its most general place of origin category. A particular variety of Moroccan hashish was referred to in terms of the compositional dimension, namely 'Pollen', because it had the appearance of the substance that goes by that name in botanical context. On occasion, however, members referred to this same type of hashish as 'Kif' - a category adopted from the categorization devices of the Morroccans themselves.

A further dimension of categorization for both 'black' and 'non-black' which members used to distinguish hashish from the same country was that of the grade of hashish. It was generally recognized that there were different grades of hashish, not just in the sense that some types of hashish were perceived to be of superior quality to other types, but rather in that a system of grading was deliberately operated by producers and exporters. For 'black' hashish, members spoke of 'Grade A' and 'Grade B' as if this was a matter of fact rather than a matter of their own judgement; for Moroccan

hashish members spoke of such grades as 'Zero zero', 'Premiere', 'Primo' and 'Deuxieme'.

- (1) S1. That Morrocan wasn't very good that you sold me last time.  
S2. No, it wasn't was it. It was only deuxieme.
- (2) P. was telling me about a parcel of hashish which he had recently acquired from a friend of his who had gone out to India. He told me that it had come in a large block of small pieces of 'Grade B' 'Paki Black' which had been stuck together. These small pieces, each of which he said weighed just under a half ounce, encased four ounces of the best black Nepalese dope that he had ever seen.

Members did not use categories of different grades to refer to Lebanese or Turkish hashish.

The grade of hashish is one measure of quality that is recognized by members. The dimension of quality was, according to members, the most 'relevant' dimension for the practical pursuit of drug use. For both the experienced and the less experienced user the quality appears to be the main consideration in categorizing cannabis. The following extracts illustrate members' use of categories which indicate the quality of the drug:

- (1) This stuff is very good actually. It's not as good as the Nepalese, but it gets you stoned.
- (2) S1. This Paki is far out.  
S2. That other Paki wasn't too good.
- (3) This stuff is okay. It really knocks you out.
- (4) S1. What have you got?  
S2. I've got some rank Afghan.  
S1. Not very good?  
S2. Not much.
- (5) S1. Is it alright?  
S2. Yes, it's not the best but it's alright. It gets you stoned.
- (6) S1. That's not bad dope, man. Ummm.  
S2. Yes, it's okay.
- (7) S1. Don't think much of this stuff.  
S2. Neither do I.
- (8) S1. What's he got?  
S2. Some Morrocan.  
S1. Is it any good?

- S2. No, it's a load of rubbish. They're always getting ripped off that lot.  
S1. Has anybody else got any?  
S3. (Another student) has got a bit of black, I think.  
S1. Is that any good.  
S3. I don't know. I think so. Do you want to go and see?

- (9) S1. Is there anything around?  
S2. There was some good dope around last night, some Lebanese. I think there's only homegrown grass left now.  
S1. I know. Didn't think much of that.

Among those who are aware of the different types of hashish, there is general agreement about which types are of superior, and which types are of inferior, quality. Types of cannabis are organized conceptually into hierarchies of preferences. It is generally supposed that the 'best' hashish originates in Nepal, followed by that from Afghanistan. Further, it was held that Pakistani, Indian and Lebanese hashish was typically of superior quality to that from Turkey and Morocco, although some members maintained that a specific type of Moroccan hashish which has already been referred to, namely 'Ketama', or alternatively 'Zero zero', was equivalent in quality to hashish produced anywhere else in the world.<sup>7</sup>

Members' appreciation of the qualities of different types of hashish comes to form the basis of preferences for different types of the drug.

The following extracts illustrate members' preferences:

- (1) Lebanese Gold. That's what I call my kind of dope.
- (2) Nepalese is the best, man. It doesn't come around too often and when it does it's expensive.
- (3) Nepalese has always been my favourite dope. When it's good; some Nepalese isn't so good, especially if it's gone hard and it's old. Tends to go off a bit then. But when it's fresh it's a really clean high.
- (4) S1. That's what you really call hashish, that is. (Shows us some Nepalese hash).  
S2. Yes.  
S3. Yes it certainly is. How much is there?  
S1. About a quarter of an ounce. Yes.  
S3. Is this all the shit you've got?  
S1. Ummm. I've got a little grass and some gold leb as well.  
S2. That's quite a little stash.  
S1. I like a little variety so I got some gold leb as well.  
S2. Yes, I've got a taste for gold leb.  
S3. Nepalese and Lebanese, you know, alternate the two.

- S1. Yes, I agree with you. Well, I like to smcke the Nepalese most of the time, but I like some Lebanese here and there, you know, to get a more flowery buzz.  
S2. And for a change, some Kabul is nice.  
S1. I've got some Congolese grass as well - in my library.

### MARIHUANA

Marihuana ('grass' or 'bush') is likewise differentiated in terms of a number of dimensions. As in the case of hashish, members distinguished different types of marihuana in terms of the place of origin dimension. Firstly, marihuana was categorized in terms of its country of origin thereby yielding the following types: Congolese, South African, Nigerian, Abyssinian, Zambian, Kenyan, Morrocan, Indonesian, Thai, Burmese, Vietnamese, Jamaican, Mexican, Panamanian, South American, North American, and English or 'home-grown'.<sup>8</sup>

- (1) S1. What's that supposed to be?  
S2. It's Nigerian.
- (2) I was talking with A. about the troubles he was having with his car, when B. came into the common-room and sat down beside A. His first words, after initial nods and smiles of greetings were, 'Hey, have you had any of that grass that R's got? A. replied that he had tried some and that he thought it was 'alright' and that it was 'pretty good stuff really' but that it was 'not as good as the South African' which another student had sold to him the week before.
- (3) S1. Have you tried any of N's Congolese bush?  
S2. No.  
S1. It's really amazing stuff.

Members also made distinctions between different types of marihuana in terms of colour, composition and specific regions or districts within particular countries; thus members distinguished such types of marihuana as 'Durban Poison', 'Acapulco Gold', 'Panama Red', 'Thai Sticks' and 'Pressed Grass', as the following extracts illustrate.

- (1) S1. B's got some Acapulco Gold. At least he says it's Acapulco Gold.  
S2. What's it look like?  
S1. It's very fine, like dust almost. I don't know, it's very good stuff though.  
S2. I've never seen Acapulco Gold so I wouldn't know.

- (2) C. was telling me about his experience on the previous Saturday. He had 'got so stoned'; that the stuff that he had been smoking was 'really powerful'. He referred to it as being 'Durban Poison'.
- (3) S1. Do you know if there's any dope around?  
S2. No, it's pretty dry at the moment.  
S1. Have you got any?  
S2. I've just a little.  
S1. What's that?  
S2. I've got some Morrocan and some of those Thai Sticks I told you about.
- (4) S1. Where's A?  
S2. He's gone to London to score.  
S1. What's he getting? Do you know? I tried to score the other day, but there was nothing there.  
S2. I think it's that pressed grass again. He brought some down last week. It was okay. Didn't you have any of it?  
S1. No, I didn't.
- (5) S1. Have you heard about this so-called Panama Red that's meant to be around?  
S2. Yes, I had some of it on Sunday.  
S1. Did you?  
S2. Yes, I had a smoke of it over in J's room. It was really far out.

As in the case of hashish, different types of marihuana were graded as to their quality. The grading system for marihuana, however, was different from that for hashish. For marihuana there seemed to be no explicit set of grades such as 'A' or 'B'. Its quality was perceived to be determined by the particular composition of specific batches of the drug. This compositional grading consisted of the recognition that marihuana as a plant was composed of a variety of botanical items such as leaves, stems, flowerheads, stalks and seeds. Further, it is apparently common practice within marihuana exporting countries to separate these various items from each other prior to exportation. It is believed that the different parts of the marihuana plant differ in their quality, such that the flower-heads and top leaves are recognized as being of higher quality than the lower leaves, stems and stalks. In referring to the quality of a particular batch of marihuana, members would refer to its 'stalkiness', would make comments such as 'it has got a lot of sticks in it', 'it's very seedy', indicating their judgement of its relative poor quality, or would offer such commendatory comments as 'it's all heads',

or 'there's a lot of flowers and tops in it' to suggest the high quality of the marihuana in question.

Like hashish, marihuana from different countries was organized in terms of hierarchies of preferences. It was generally agreed amongst those who had experience of different types of marihuana that some were better than others. South African grass, and in particular 'Durban Poison' was often cited as the 'best' type of marihuana. This was followed (though sometimes equalled) by Jamaican, Congolese, and Thai marihuana. At the other end of the scale, members regarded 'English' or 'Home-grown' as the most inferior quality of marihuana. There were, however, recognized exceptions to this system of grading. On occasion it was reported that somebody's home grown was 'far out' or 'really amazing' and 'as good as any foreign bush'. Further, because different parts of the marihuana plant were held to be better or lesser quality, it was often the case that, for example, flowering tops from North America, commonly regarded as a type of marihuana of low repute, would be assessed as superior to stems and stalks from Nigeria, commonly regarded as a type of marihuana of quite high quality.

In addition to the types of hashish and marihuana which have been the focus of attention up to this point there were more 'idiosyncratic' categories in use for descriptive purposes on specific occasions. These categories refer to particular features of batches of cannabis. Examples of such 'idiosyncratic' categorization would be the following:

- (1) S1. Had any good dope lately?  
S2. I scored a little bit of black off C.  
S1. Did he have any of that Afghani left?  
S2. No, I don't think so. What was that?  
S1. You must have seen it, it had that white paint on it.  
S2. No.  
S1. Yes. That's how they brought it in.
- (2) S1. Have you had any of that Afghani that smells like piss?  
S2. Yeah, I thought it was pretty good. It was very moist though, as if it had been soaked in something.  
S1. Good way of increasing the weight of it.  
S2. Yeah, right.

Thus, white paint and the smell of urine contribute specific idiosyncratic

features of particular batches of cannabis.

### CATEGORIZING CANNABIS

Having investigated members' categories used to refer to cannabis the next step in the analysis is to examine the interpretive work whereby members categorize cannabis. How, in other words, do member know that a particular batch of cannabis warrants the application of, or inclusion in, a particular category. This general question may be sub-divided into the following three specific questions: (1) How do members interpret cannabis? ('Is it dope?'); (2) How are different types of cannabis recognized? ('What sort of dope is it?') and (3) How do members assess the quality of cannabis? ('Is it any good?'). In the following analysis each of these questions will be answered in turn.

What then is the interpretive work whereby categorization is accomplished? As has already been suggested, members possess a stock of knowledge of cannabis, different types of cannabis, and different qualities of cannabis. For purposes of categorizing a particular batch of cannabis, this knowledge is organized as a collection of interpretive rules which consist of a category or categories of cannabis, and rules for their application in particular instances. Each category implies its own rule of relevance. Essentially, these rules take the following form: if an object given for interpretation is perceived to display the typical features of an X-type object, then that object may be interpreted as a member of the category of X-type objects. Using this formulation, then, the first problem concerns how members recognize cannabis as cannabis. In describing how this is accomplished it will be shown how the above formulation of members' interpretive practices are arrived at.

For members to use categories of cannabis they must possess common-sense knowledge of the features of the phenomena to which the categories refer. It has been shown that the basic categories for describing cannabis are those referring to the distinction between hashish and marihuana. What then

constituted the differences between hashish and marihuana? What were the typical features of these phenomena used in their categorization? These features were clearly taken for granted by members. Their explication involved the asking of what were from members' points of view, 'strange' or 'silly' questions:

- (1) Sl. What is the difference between hash and grass then? I mean how can you tell?  
S. You really want me to tell you?  
Sl. Just for the sake of argument.  
S. Well, if it's not obvious, grass is leafy, it comes loose usually. It's green. It's the dried plant.  
Sl. How does it differ from hash?  
S. Hash comes in a lump or block usually, though sometimes you get pollen which is usually powdery. Hash is usually brown or black. Sometimes it's green on the inside.  
Sl. How do you mean, 'green on the inside'?  
S. When you cut it or break it, it may be black on the outside but it's green on the inside. That's a good sign that is. Hash is a different part of the plant. They mix the resin with other things sometimes. I wouldn't say that hash is always pure resin, but I think that hash oil probably is. Grass is just the leaves and things.
- (2) Sl. How do you tell the difference between hash and grass?  
S. By looking at it.  
Sl. But I mean what's the difference?  
S. Dope comes in a little block, bush is more like tea leaves.
- (3) Sl. What is hashish?  
S. It's the resin from the top of the plant. They separate the resin from the rest of the dope.  
Sl. How do they do that?  
S. Well, like there's guys and they wear leather aprons and they walk around the fields where it grows with knives like this (demonstrates with hands in a circular movement touching chest as if wiping something onto chest) - scraping it on.  
Sl. Really?  
S. I don't know, but it's a nice story.<sup>10</sup>

In these extracts the members cite some of the typical features of objects categorized as cannabis of either the resinous or the herbal variety. Further, the particular features cited concern typical appearances of objects known and recognized as cannabis. It may be suggested, then, that the member examines the object purported to be cannabis for typical appearances in terms of his common-sense knowledge of such objects. Where the visual features correspond to the typical appearances of cannabis, then the member may conclude that the object before him is indeed an exemplar of the type



'cannabis'. Thus, it may be suggested that in reaching this conclusion the member follows a collection of first order interpretive rules such as, 'if it is leafy, green, has seeds in it, then it is marihuana', or 'if it comes in a block, is a certain colour, then it is a piece of hashish'. These first order interpretive rules, however, as a preliminary step in the analysis, may be reduced to the following second order, sociologically formulated, interpretive rule:

if the appearances of an object purported to be cannabis correspond to the typical appearances of cannabis then the conclusion that the object is cannabis is warranted.

The above formulation of members' interpretive practices, however, provides an incomplete picture of the methods whereby categorization of cannabis is accomplished. Here only one dimension of categorization, namely, that of appearance is taken into account. Appearance alone, however, may not provide sufficient grounds for the categorizing of an object as cannabis. Thus, it is often the case that mere visual inspection does not provide sufficient or unambiguous evidence for ascribing membership of a specific category to a particular object. One reason for this, and a source of members' categorization problems, is that it is possible for certain 'unscrupulous' persons to produce a substance, the appearance of which is similar to the appearance of 'genuine' cannabis, but which 'in fact' is not 'genuine' cannabis at all. Whatever the reason for doubt, however, where the evidence is ambiguous members engage in a variety of interpretive practices and strategies by means of which they may obtain further evidence, or discover additional typical features, which will permit categorization of the object. Thus, on the basis of evidence provided by visual inspection alone, the member is unable to reach a clear decision as to the category in which the object is to be included. As Schutz (1970, p.46-47) has put it:

To come to such a decision, I must obtain additional interpretively relevant material. And in order for me to find such material, I have to create different observational conditions, and then see whether they will furnish new indications.

Changing the observational conditions, furthermore, requires that I act on the object in such a way that its expected reaction might be of interpretive relevance.

Besides appearance, then, other dimensions of categorization are used. One such dimension is that of smell. Cannabis is assumed to possess a typical aroma such that the member may decide that it warrants categorization as cannabis on the basis of its smell (in addition to its appearance). Alternatively, if the object does not possess the characteristic smell then the member may come to doubt that the object is in fact cannabis. There are two main possibilities if the object does not have the 'cannabis' aroma whilst it conforms to the typical features of cannabis in terms of its appearance: (1) it may not be cannabis at all but rather is an artificial concoction, or (2) it may be old cannabis which has 'lost its smell'. A crucial test for whether the object is authentic or inauthentic lies in the creation of 'different observational conditions'. Such an accomplishment rests on the use of known interpretive strategies whereby the new 'interpretively relevant material' may be discovered. In the present case the most 'relevant' interpretive strategy consists of heating the object purported to be cannabis if it has the appearance of hashish. If the object has the appearance of marijuana then a different interpretive strategy has to be used. Heating hashish is believed to produce the typical cannabis aroma, such that if the substance does not 'react' by doing this, then the member can 'reasonably' conclude that his doubts as to the authenticity of the cannabis were well-founded and the object is not cannabis at all. The following extract illustrates the use of this interpretive strategy.

- S1. Is it dope?  
S2. Smell it.  
S1. (Smells the cannabis). Doesn't seem to smell of much.  
(He passes it to another student, S3). (S3 then passes it to S4. It is then passed to S5)  
S4. It's a good deal.  
S2. Yes, it's a good deal. Do you want it (to S1)?  
(S1. looks at it again and smells it again).  
S2. Try it first. Burn it.  
(S1. burns it; it gives off smoke).  
Does it smell?  
(S1. smells it and then breaks a small piece off and tastes it).  
S1. It's dope alright.

In addition, then, to his stock of first order interpretive rules concerning the typical appearances of cannabis, the member possesses a collection of interpretive rules pertaining to the typical aroma of cannabis. Members' first order interpretive rules pertaining to the use of aromas of objects as evidence of their type may be sociologically formulated as follows:

if the aroma of an object purported to be cannabis corresponds to the typical aroma of cannabis then the conclusion that the object is cannabis is warranted.

The most crucial test, however, for categorization of cannabis consists of the consumption of cannabis. This 'interpretive strategy' has become an institutionalized aspect of cannabis transactions.<sup>11</sup> Members are invited to 'try the goods' before they buy, and here, as in the case of the use of the other interpretive strategies the member seeks to discover if the features of the object correspond to those of 'normal' cannabis.<sup>12</sup> In the case of smoking cannabis the member attempts to ascertain whether or not the effects and taste of the object correspond to the known typical effects and tastes of cannabis. The information gained by the use of this interpretive strategy was once more formulated by members as first order interpretive rules, which they found it difficult to articulate but which essentially took such forms as: 'if it tastes like dope, then it is dope' and 'if it has the effects of dope, then it is dope'. These rules may be reduced to the following second order, sociologically formulated, interpretive rules:

if the effects of an object purported to be cannabis correspond to the typical effects of cannabis then the conclusion that the object is cannabis is warranted.

and,

if the taste of an object purported to be cannabis corresponds to the typical taste of cannabis then the conclusion that the

object is cannabis is warranted.

By a combination of observation and experiment and by the application of a variety of interpretive rules and strategies the member typifies the object in question. By examining its 'documentary evidences' in terms of his 'underlying' conception of the drug, the member decides whether or not the object warrants categorization as cannabis.<sup>13</sup> The variety of first order interpretive rules described above may be described in terms of the following second order, sociologically formulated, interpretive rule:

if the features of an object purported to be cannabis correspond to the typical features of cannabis then the conclusion that the object is cannabis is warranted.

How, then, do members recognize different types of cannabis? Distinguishing different types of hashish and marihuana depends on the availability of a corpus of common-sense knowledge of the typical features of the different types, just as the recognition of cannabis as cannabis depended on such a stock of knowledge. A description of members' collections of categories for depicting the different types of cannabis has already been provided in the first part of this analysis. The aim of this section is to show how members apply these categories.

What then are the members' first order interpretive rules and strategies whereby different types of cannabis are recognized? The following quotations indicate some of the typical features which members make use of in recognizing different types of cannabis.

- (1) Sl. Afghani? How would you tell the difference between Afghani and, say, Nepalese?  
S. If it was Kabul I might have some difficulty because in many ways Kabul is very similar to Nepalese.  
Sl. How's that?  
S. They're both dark, almost black, often mouldy. They're both usually quite thick in size usually.  
Sl. What about other kinds of Afghani then?  
S. Brown Afghani is usually quite light coloured, not too light, but it's a definite brown, very different from Kabul and you never get Nepalese that colour. As a rule I would say that Kabul was more brown than Nepalese.

- Sl. Are there any other ways you could tell the difference between Kabul and Nepalese?
- S. Well I think that generally Afghani has a different smell to Nepalese.
- Sl. What sort of smell?
- S. I don't know, sort of more musty, you know. I don't know, you would just know if it was Afghani or whatever when you saw it.
- (2) Sl. Nepalese? How do you recognise Nepalese?
- S. You can get Nepalese various ways. Sometimes it comes in those balls and sometimes you get different kinds of dope inside, in the middle of the ball. I even found some seeds and twigs in it once. Apart from that it's usually black.
- (3) S. You can always tell Nepalese. It's black and dark and has that characteristic Nepalese smell. You can't mistake it.
- (4) Sl. What sort is it?
- S. Morrocan. Quite a trippy sort of buzz. Gets you stoned all right, but it's not heavy like the black.
- (5) Sl. What about Lebanese? How would you tell the difference between Lebanese and Morrocan?
- S. Well, it would depend. Some Morrocan is quite thick like Lebanese. Ketama is quite thick and is much less powdery and dry than most Morrocan. Most Morrocan is very thin and light coloured. Lebanese is thicker and comes in cloth bags with red or blue stamps on it. After the cloth has been taken off you can still see the print of the weave on the dope.
- Sl. Okay, any other difference besides appearance? What about taste?
- S. I don't know. I've sometimes thought that Lebanese has its own special taste. Not as harsh on the throat as black. But I don't know, maybe Morrocan is pretty similar if it's good Morrocan. Bad Morrocan tends to be a bit dry and tastes of cooking spices.
- Sl. What about effects?
- S. Lebanese is better (Laughs).
- (6) Sl. What's it like?
- S2. There's quite a lot of pollen in it. It's quite polleny. It crumbles up very easily. (Description of some Morrocan cannabis).
- (7) Sl. What would you say distinguished Morrocan from other types of dope, say in terms of appearance?
- S. Generally light and sandy in colour, I would say.
- (8) Morrocan always comes in those cellophane wrappers, you know, those thin slabs with cellophane round them.
- (9) Sl. How do you distinguish Afghani from Paki then?
- S. I always thought that Afghani was different from Paki in that Afghani is lighter in colour, it was browner than Paki and had a different smell, more musty, sort of pungent musty. Except Kabul of course. That was darker,

more like Nepalese. Often with those little veins of mould in it. You never get that with Paki.

- (10) S1. This stuff is absolutely good actually, it's not as good as the Nepalese, but it gets you very stoned. I can sell you a quid's worth of Afghan, but I warn you it really ~~knocks~~ you out.
- S2. Well, I don't mind.
- S1. Well, it's been all right but I will admit to you that I want to get rid of it myself.
- S2. Why?
- S1. Because I can't do anything after I've smoked it really, well you have a look at it and see what the quality is. I mean it's good stuff that - it's even got mould on it.
- S2. That isn't Afghan, mate.
- S1. It is.
- S2. It's got yellow on it.
- S1. What?
- S2. Look, it's got yellow on it.
- S1. Oh, the yellow wasn't there before, might have been the result of its contact with the air. Make a break in it. Have a smell.
- (11) S1. I wonder why it is that Lebanese always comes in these linen bags?
- S2. I don't know.
- S1. Hey, this is really nice. It's nice and dark. Smell that.
- S2. Mmmm. Beautiful.

As all these extracts illustrate, members possess common-sense knowledge of the typical features of different types of hashish and marihuana. As in the case of recognition of cannabis as cannabis, members' common-sense knowledge of the typical features of different types is organized as a collection of first order interpretive rules. Each of the above extracts illustrates the use of one or more of these interpretive rules. Each interpretive rule, furthermore, consists of a specification of the typical features which are perceived by members as distinguishing one type of cannabis from another, and the conditions under which one category of cannabis rather than another may be applied. For example extract (10) contains the first order interpretive rule :- 'if a piece of cannabis is yellow-coloured then it is not Afghan cannabis'. Similarly, extract (1) contains a number of interpretive rules for distinguishing Kabul and other types of Afghani from Nepalese, whilst extract (5) contains a similar variety of interpretive rules used in distinguishing Moroccan from Lebanese hashish. Each type of cannabis possesses its own typical features.

Members' first order interpretive rules, in terms of which their knowledge of the typical features of different types of cannabis is organized, may, like those involved in the recognition of cannabis as cannabis, be reduced to a second order, sociologically formulated interpretive rule:

if the features of cannabis correspond to the typical features of a particular type of cannabis then the conclusion that it is that particular type of cannabis is warranted.

Just as members' come to acquire collections of interpretive rules and strategies for recognizing cannabis and different types of cannabis, so also do they acquire such capacities and practices with regard to the assessment of the quality of cannabis.

One major clue which members used in assessing the quality of cannabis was provided by their prior categorization of the cannabis as being of a certain type. As was pointed out earlier, some types of cannabis are renowned for their higher quality. Also members were oriented to what was perceived as a system of grading hashish prior to its exportation. The categorization of cannabis in terms of its type and grade provides the grounds for typical expectations and anticipations as to the quality of particular batches of the drug. The following extract illustrates the use of an interpretive rule for assessing quality which is based on a prior categorization of the cannabis as being of a certain type, in this case 'Paki' that 'had a stamp on it':

- S1. Can I look at the Paki? Because B's got a weight of Paki, and K's coming back today and he's got Paki.  
S2. This Paki is absolutely good actually.  
S1. This other Paki wasn't good actually, or it might be because I have a cold.  
S2. There you are. What do you think of that? It's good Paki all right. There is no doubt that it's good.  
S1. It looks the same.  
S2. As the bad stuff?  
S1. No, not the very bad stuff. It's the same as the stuff that B. has got and that's all right, I think.  
S2. Yes, well this stuff had a stamp on it.

As this extract illustrates, members come to regard certain stamps or seals as indicative of good quality hashish. Furthermore, certain stamps such as 'Gold Seal' were regarded as indicative of particularly high quality cannabis.

Just as the categorization of cannabis as to its type and grade gives rise to certain expectations and anticipations of the quality of cannabis, so also do members employ other typical features as indications of quality. The following extract illustrates the use of a particular feature of Pakistani hashish as indicative of quality:

B. and M. were talking about a recent consignment of hashish that had recently arrived. B. asked M. 'What did you think of it?' to which M. replied, 'It was okay'. B. then said that he knew that it wasn't going to be as good as the last lot of 'Paki' because it had not been so 'green' when he had cut it. M. agreed that it had not been as green as the other and added that whilst this was generally true as a sign of 'good dope' it was not necessarily true that all black that wasn't green wasn't any good.

In addition to the feature of the colour of cannabis, another feature which is used in assessing quality of cannabis concerns its freshness. Cannabis that is fresh is typically preferred to cannabis that is old; it is believed that cannabis will 'go off' with age. Whilst the feature of freshness may be used to impute good or poor quality, the member must first acquire the interpretive capacity for the attribution of its freshness.

The type of cannabis, its grade, its colour and its freshness are all dimensions in terms of which the quality of cannabis is assessed. Each of these dimensions, however, only provides an imprecise estimate of the quality of the cannabis in question. Whether it is 'in fact' good quality cannabis depends upon its effects and these can only be used to assess the drug if the member engages in its consumption. The following extracts illustrate the importance and use of this dimension in the assessment of quality:

- (1) S1. Have you got any dope at the moment?  
S2. Got a bit, yes.  
S1. Got any to sell?  
S2. Got some rank Afghan.



- S1. Yes.  
S2. Well, it's okay. It's the sort of dope that's been buried in Europe for a couple of years.  
S1. It's old.  
S2. Yes.  
S1. It's not so good?  
S2. Well, you know, you smoke it, you sit there, you get a bit stoned, I mean it has an effect. But you sort of look around you know, ummmm (looks around and scratches head as he does so with a seemingly unimpressed look on his face), it's just a bit boring, you know what I mean, just not very strong.  
S1. Is that because it's old, do you think?  
S2. I think so. It's gone dry, you know, I think it was okay once, you know it still fluffs up when you heat it.

- (2) He (a student) expressed his resentment at paying a high price for home-grown grass. He then tells me of a recently arrived quantity of grass which is not home-grown. However, this particular batch of grass is reported to have 'a lot of seeds in it', thus indicating its inferior quality. He says that he had had a smoke of this grass and that he didn't think too much of it. He says he had been in a room with about six other people and that collectively they had smoked about three joints between them. As he pointed out, 'if it had been any good I would have known about it straight away'. He didn't. He then said that 'the number of people in the room was no excuse for there being no high to be got from the grass.'

In deciding quality, then, the 'interpretive strategy' used to acquire 'interpretively relevant information' consists of the consumption of cannabis and the assessment of its effects. Thus, in extract (1) the member states that his 'Afghan' is 'rank' on the grounds that its effects are 'a bit boring' and 'not very strong'. Similarly, in extract (2), it is pointed out that the 'grass' in question was of poor quality because the member had not experienced the kind of effect that he had come to associate with grass that was 'any good'.

As in the case of the other typical features of cannabis, members possess interpretive rules whereby the typical effects of the drug are used in making assessments of the quality of the drug. Such first order interpretive rules may likewise be expressed in terms of a second order, sociological formulation:

If the effects of cannabis correspond to the typical effects of 'high' quality cannabis then the conclusion that the cannabis in question is of 'high' quality is warranted.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to treat as problematic an issue taken for granted by previous naturalistic research on cannabis and sale. Attention has been focused on members' conceptions of cannabis as a substance. Accordingly, members' categories of cannabis and methods of categorizing the drug have been examined. It has been shown that members are aware of a variety of categories of cannabis, that the latter are organized as a repertoire of interpretive rules and that an array of interpretive strategies are utilised in achieving categorizations. In the following chapters, this analysis of the properties of cannabis is extended by focusing on members' conceptions of the uses and effects of the drug.

CHAPTER FOUR

USING CANNABIS

In the last chapter, the focus of attention was on cannabis users' common-sense knowledge of the substance of cannabis. The question upon which this chapter concentrates is how, given this knowledge, do members use cannabis? In order to answer this question, attention will be focused on the procedures undertaken by members in the course of the accomplishment of cannabis use as a 'deviant' activity. Such an activity, it will be shown, rests for its accomplishment on members' common-sense understandings and practical procedures just as the recognition of cannabis as a substance rests on such phenomena. Whereas, however, in the previous chapter, members' interpretive procedures were the main concern, this chapter is more interested in members' application of their common-sense knowledge for the purpose of using cannabis.<sup>1</sup>

In focusing on what might be referred to as the 'minutiae' of deviant acts, it is the intention to stress previous criminologists' apparent lack of interest in, or at least reluctance to investigate, micro-sociological features of deviant enterprises.<sup>2</sup> Such a state of affairs may, in part, be accounted for by recent criminology's preoccupation with the perspective of labellers of deviance on the one hand and with the structural origins of deviance on the other. In the wake of these trends the problematics of the accomplishment of deviant activities have typically been taken for granted or ignored. This neglect, furthermore, appears somewhat surprising in the light of the remarks of one of the leading exponents of the interactionist approach to deviance which has been so influential in recent conceptions and investigations of deviance:

We do not, then, have enough studies of deviant behaviour. We do not have studies of enough kinds of deviant behaviour. Above all, we do not have enough studies in which the person doing the research has achieved close contact with those he studies, so that he can become aware of the<sup>3</sup> complex and manifold character of the deviant activity.

As was indicated in the first chapter of this thesis, such an orientation was shared in the formulation of the research problems for this investigation, namely the provision of ethnographic studies of drug use, particularly in

England.<sup>4</sup> Recent criminology, and in particular labelling theory, has concentrated on the attribution of incompetence (failure to obey social rules) by social labellers. By way of contrast, this work seeks to examine members' competence in the performance of their deviant activities - how do members accomplish deviant acts should they wish to do so?

#### METHODS OF USING CANNABIS

Investigation of members' methods for accomplishing cannabis consumption reveals a variety of practices and procedures.<sup>5</sup> Thus, members accomplished this activity either by smoking, eating or drinking cannabis, and they used a variety of tools and methods for consuming cannabis in these ways. In this section these various methods, members' rationales for their use and the common-sense knowledge upon which such use rested, will be described. The main focus will be on the method of smoking cannabis and on the three principal tools used in such an activity: 'joints' (cannabis cigarettes), pipes, and chillums.

#### SMOKING CANNABIS: JOINTS

Smoking cannabis is the most commonly used method of consuming the drug and the use of joints is the most common method of accomplishing the act of smoking. However, before the member can consume cannabis in such a manner, a number of preparations must be undertaken. To begin with, the joint must be constructed and the cannabis itself prepared for use. How are these tasks accomplished? In the following section, the preparation and the consumption of cannabis by way of joints is described sequentially; that is, as being constituted in a series of interconnected steps or stages.

The method of constructing joints consists of a specification of the typical ingredients used and instructions for their combination. Although, as will be shown, there are different types of joints made and used by cannabis smokers, the most common type consists of a combination of the

following ingredients: cannabis (either hashish or marihuana), cigarette papers, cardboard, and tobacco. Sometimes members constructed other types of joints, using only some of these ingredients. For example, cannabis in the form of marihuana was sometimes used without the addition of tobacco. The rationale for such a practice was that 'pure grass' joints produced different types of effects from those produced by joints constructed with both grass and tobacco. In particular, joints made from grass alone were recognized as producing 'stronger' and 'better' effects in the sense that the smoker became 'higher' after smoking them. The following extracts make this point:

- (1) Grass joints get you much more stoned and they taste better. It's a much cleaner buzz altogether, much more hallucinogenic.
- (2) Obviously I prefer smoking pure grass joints. They make you more stoned. The problem though is that you use your dope up much quicker that way, so I only do it as an exception, if I've got a lot of stuff or if I want to get really smashed.

Besides the type of effect produced, furthermore, members cited other reasons for smoking pure grass joints. These included the following: the smoker may have run out of tobacco - if he wishes to smoke he therefore has little choice but to use grass by itself; grass alone was held to produce a better tasting smoke to one produced by a grass and tobacco joint; grass alone was believed to constitute less of a health risk than joints with tobacco in them. Pure grass joints were, however, the exception rather than the rule. The most common joint consisted of all the ingredients mentioned above. What the next step in the analysis attempts to answer is, given these ingredients, how does the member make use of them?

As was noted in the case of the smoker who used no tobacco in the construction of joints, different proportions of the basic ingredients are used. Just as this is true for the contrast between joints of pure grass and those of a grass-tobacco mixture, so it is also true for members' practices with regard to the other ingredients. Thus, members differed in the number of

cigarette papers which they used to construct a joint. Most members, it would seem, used only three papers. Others, however, made a practice of using five. Exceptionally, use was made of only one or two papers, or even of more than five papers if the smoker wished to construct a particularly large or long joint.

Having decided how many cigarette papers to use, the member then faces the problem of sticking them together. In the case of joints constructed from three cigarette papers (often referred to as 'three skinners'), as the following extract suggests, there are several ways in which the papers may be stuck together. The result is the construction of 'three skinners' of different shapes:

I. Can you describe how you're doing it?

S. You lick the corner of the sticky edge of one cigarette paper. Right? Then you attach the back of another paper to it, lining them up. Turn it over, though you don't have to and some people don't. You can just stick it on the front. But I always turn it over and stick the third paper horizontally across the back of the other two papers. Alternatively, you can lick the whole of the gummed line of the paper and attach it to the ungummed edge of the second paper, going horizontally, and attach the third paper vertically along the edge of the other two papers.

It was also pointed out that the second method of sticking cigarette papers together which is mentioned in the above account is especially useful since it makes possible the extension of the joint by the addition of more papers, thereby producing longer joints. Some members reported constructing joints of seven papers using this method.

After the three-paper variety, the second most popular number of cigarette papers used in the construction of joints is five. The method here is slightly different:

I. Can you describe how you'd make a five-skin joint?

S. First, you stick that on there. You lick that and then stick another paper onto it, so you have got two in a line like that. Then you turn it over and lick the gum of another paper and stick it along the back of one of the papers you have already stuck together, about half way up. Then you do the same with another paper. So you end up with an oblong shape of four papers, like

that. Then turn it over again and stick a fifth paper on the bottom edge to stop them flapping about and the joint falling apart when you roll it. That's it.

Not only do smokers differ in the number of cigarette papers which they use in the construction of joints, they also differ in the methods of arranging the papers. As a result, joints of different shapes and sizes were produced. Thus, smokers were observed making joints that were long and thin, or short and fat, or even 'trumpet-shaped'.

When members were asked why they arranged the cigarette papers in these different ways their accounts were of two main kinds. First, they simply accounted for their particular arrangement of papers in terms of the kind of joint which they wished to construct. The arrangement of the papers in a particular manner was considered instrumental to the construction of different types of joints such that the member would 'obviously' arrange the papers differently according to whether he was attempting to make a three-papered joint, a five-papered one, or a joint that was trumpet-shaped. Second, besides this basic 'instrumental' motivation behind the arrangement of papers, members accounted for the construction of particular types of joints in terms of 'that is how I've always done it'. While they were aware of different ways of arranging papers and the different types of joints which might thereby be constructed, members report maintaining and developing their own routine methods of constructing joints and, in particular, of arranging the papers. On some occasions members varied their practices, but, as a matter of routine, each appeared to develop and maintain their own typical method of accomplishing this task.

Whilst members sometimes varied their method of arranging papers and thereby the size and shape of their joints, on other occasions they had no choice but to 'improvise' in the construction of joints. Such improvisation is called for when, for example, the smoker's supply of cigarette papers comes to an end and a further supply is not immediately available. This apparently occurs most often late at night when neither shop nor bar can



furnish further supplies. It is sometimes possible for the smoker to visit friends to see if they have any papers which they can give him. But where this is not feasible or where supplies are not forthcoming in this or any other event, then the would-be smoker must improvise. Such improvisation usually takes one of a variety of forms; that is, there is a variety of solutions available to the smoker for dealing with this problem. If he has a pipe or chillum he can simply use one of those instead. If he has neither of these tools he can possibly fabricate a substitute for one of them. Such fabrications will be discussed in the following section. For the moment, assuming that the smoker has neither pipe nor chillums nor substitute, then a typical solution is the use of a substitute type of cigarette paper. Thus, some smokers reported using the paper from the inside of cigarette packets after it had been separated from the silver paper. The explanation of the use of this particular type of paper, the separation of which from the silver paper was considered to be a somewhat troublesome task, was that the thickness of it was similar to that of cigarette papers themselves. Such was the type of paper typically made use of when the smoker ran out of cigarette papers and insisted on rolling a joint all the same. Exceptionally, and in what was termed a 'real emergency', it was reported to me that an ordinary envelope had been used for the purpose of making a joint.

After sticking cigarette papers together or finding a substitute for them, there then follows a number of further steps which need to be taken in order to complete the construction of a joint. The first of these is the placing of the tobacco in the joint. There is a variety of procedures whereby this task is accomplished. First, some smokers use 'hand-rolling tobacco', which is purchased loose. Placing such tobacco in the joint involves simply taking the tobacco from that in which it is contained and spreading it along the length of the cigarette papers. Tobacco in the form of ready-rolled cigarettes, however, presents additional problems for the

smoker. Essentially, these problems revolve around the separation of the tobacco from the cigarette in which it is contained. Around such a seemingly slight and insignificant problem there have emerged a number of different solutions. There are four main methods whereby members accomplish the tasks of separation and insertion. The first method may be called the 'tear and empty method'. This involves simply taking the cigarette in hand, breaking it open and emptying the contents into the joint. Other smokers use a second method, which may be referred to as the 'lick, tear and empty method'. This method involves the following procedures:- first, licking one side of the cigarette; second, taking hold of the filter tip and pulling it towards the untipped end of the cigarette in order to tear a thin strip of cigarette paper away from the cigarette; third, emptying the contents into the joint. Such a method is quicker than the first method; it enables the smoker to tear the cigarette open quickly and efficiently. A third method, used less often, is the 'sprinkle method'. This involves holding the untipped end of the cigarette an inch or so from the joint and twisting the cigarette between the fingers in order to make the tobacco fall onto the cigarette papers. A fourth method was referred to as the 'lick and blow method'. This consisted of licking the cigarette and blowing down the untipped end of it. The aim of this procedure was to cause the cigarette paper to become separated from the tobacco, thereby enabling the latter to then be emptied into the joint.

Having extracted the tobacco from the cigarette and placed it onto the cigarette papers, the next step in the construction of the joint is the preparation of the cannabis itself. Members employed different procedures at this stage of the proceedings also. The particular procedures used depended partly upon whether or not cannabis in the form of hashish or marihuana was to be consumed. With cannabis in the form of marihuana, the

member simply has to take out, break off and sprinkle in the amount that he wishes to put into the joint. When putting the grass into the joint, however, the member also proceeds methodically in the sense that he tries to ensure an even distribution of it along the length of the joint. In doing so, furthermore, as the following extract illustrates, the smoker is enjoined to crumble or break the grass into as fine particles as possible:

S1. Do you want to roll it?

S2. Ok.

S1. And while you're rolling it you can use all of this.

S2. All of what? The grass?

S1. Yes, crumble it up as finely as you can. There's enough there for a fair turn on and also use a few pinches of this.

The same practice of crumbling the cannabis is followed in the use of both hashish and marihuana. The rationale in both cases seems to be that of achieving an even distribution of the cannabis throughout the joint and in ensuring that the joint burns evenly and efficiently. The opposite case - the construction of the inconsistently filled joint - does occur occasionally. However, its occurrence, according to members, is most typically envisaged and brought about in those cases where the smoker is being 'greedy', is 'hustling' or simply wishes to consume more of the cannabis himself than he is willing to share with his fellow smokers. Such 'deceit' aside, however, the typical practice of putting cannabis into joints with tobacco requires that the member crumble it and distribute it as evenly as possible.

#### PREPARING HASHISH

With marihuana, no prior preparations of the drug are necessary - the member can simply place it on the cigarette papers. With hashish, however, certain preparations are necessary. Before the hashish can be crumbled into the joint, the smoker must apply a method of making the hashish soft enough to crumble. The methods of producing this outcome involves the application of heat. Heating the hashish typically makes it soft and thereby facilitates crumbling it into the joint. When performing the task of heating the hashish,

the user observes certain procedural rules. These pertain to such matters as how much heat to apply to the hashish in question, and to what method of heating is to be used. If the smoker 'overheats' the hashish, he will burn it and thereby spoil it. 'Underheating', on the other hand, renders the drug insufficiently soft so that the smoker will be unable to crumble it effectively. Smokers typically learn and thereby judge the extent to which a particular piece of hashish requires heat. According to those questioned about this matter in this investigation, a guideline used in judging how much heat to apply to the hashish consists of the apparent 'fact' that the drug, when heated to a sufficient degree, gives off a typical amount of smoke. The smoker learns to recognize such an amount of smoke and thereby that he has heated the hashish long enough. This usually involves only a few seconds. The smoker ceases to heat the hashish at such an appropriate point and then proceeds to crumble it into the joint. If he waits several minutes before doing this, he may well find that the hashish has solidified once again and that to make it soft he will have to reheat it.

How much heat is applied to the hashish and whether heat is applied at all is seen to depend on the type of hashish at hand. Some types of hashish are less resinous in their composition. Instead, they are already soft and powdery. Certain types of Moroccan hashish are recognized as falling into this category. Crumbling such hashish is easily achieved, according to members, without resorting to the application of heat. In addition, if the hashish in question is especially fresh and therefore particularly malleable, the member may well decide to dispense with the practice of heating it altogether.

Assuming that the member decides that it is appropriate to heat the hashish at hand, there are various methods whereby this may be accomplished. Typically, one of four different methods is chosen. The first, and most

common method, consists of the use of a flame, derived from diverse sources, but usually a match or cigarette lighter, and the holding of the hashish against the flame for a few seconds. Such a method may be referred to as the 'hand and flame method'. A second method consists of the use of a pin or similar sharp object on which a piece of hashish may be stuck and, as in the case of the first method, the application of a flame to the hashish. The advantage of this method, according to respondents in this study, is that it enables the flame to be applied to the whole area of the hashish rather than only that part of the piece of hashish which protrudes from the hand in which it is held, as in the case of the 'hand and flame method'. This second method, accordingly, may be referred to as the 'hand, pin and flame method'. A third method for the heating of hashish involves the use of a different kind of tool from that used in the second method. In the case of the third method, smokers make use of silver foil or paper holders in which the piece of hashish can be placed and 'cooked' by the application of heat. Such a method may be called the 'silver foil and flame method'. This method, of course, involves the prior construction of the necessary receptacle for the hashish. Consequently, this method involves slightly more preparation than is the case with methods one and two. In spite of this, however, it is held that this is the most efficient method for heating hashish since it avoids bringing the drug into direct contact with a flame. The risk that the hashish will be spoiled is thereby minimised. A final method, seemingly less common but justified in terms of its convenience, consists of the claspings of a piece of hashish between two matches which are then lit. The hashish is then allowed to heat in the flame for a few seconds. The hashish is then released when the member considers that enough heat has been applied (using the test described earlier). This final method may be referred to as the 'two match method'.

Whatever method is chosen for the heating of the hashish, the next procedure which has to be followed in the construction of joints is that

of the crumbling of the hashish into the joint. It is at this point that the member must decide how much hashish he wishes to put into the joint. Members vary in the amount which they put into their joints - some members putting in pieces around the size of large peas, others putting in amounts around the size of very small ones. There are obviously a number of considerations involved in selecting an appropriate 'dosage'. Thus, the member is more likely to put in a large amount if he wishes the effect of the joint to be strong, if he believes that the hashish at hand is particularly weak and that therefore a larger amount than usual is required, when he has an ample amount of hashish to smoke and when he is feeling particularly 'generous' towards his fellow smokers. Conversely, the member is more likely to place a small amount of hashish (or marihuana) in the joint if he does not want to experience particularly strong effects, if he believes that the cannabis at hand is very strong and that therefore only a small amount is necessary, when he only has a small amount of cannabis left - members spoke of having to 'eke out' their supplies of cannabis when there was currently none for sale - and when he is feeling especially 'ungenerous' towards his fellow smokers. Having decided how much hashish or marihuana to put into the joint, this stage in the process of construction may be completed by crumbling it into the joint. Members reported that there was nothing especially problematic involved in taking this particular step except the occasional difficulty encountered with excessively 'sticky' hashish of brushing into the joint fine particles of hashish which may have become stuck to the fingers in the act of crumbling.

#### ROLLING THE JOINT

Having put cannabis into the joint, the next major step in joint construction is 'rolling the joint'. Before this step can be taken, however, some smokers adopt the additional procedure of placing further tobacco into

the joint either by sprinkling or by one of the other methods outlined earlier. Further, even where the smoker does not place additional tobacco into the joint he is at least likely to mix the hashish with the tobacco already inserted before moving on to the actual rolling of the joint. According to smokers, the reason for this mixing and these further insertions of tobacco into the joint, is that if the hashish is simply allowed to rest on top of the tobacco, a 'one-sided' joint will result; that is, a joint in which the hashish is located on only one side of it will be produced. The result of this is not only an uneven distribution of the hashish but also a joint which burns unevenly. In order to avoid these possible undesirable and 'incompetent' outcomes, then, smokers employ the procedures described above.

Having crumbled the hashish into the joint the next step is the actual rolling of it. Those who were new to the 'art' of rolling joints reported having some difficulty in rolling them competently. Members eventually came to learn how to roll what is conventionally regarded as a 'good' joint. Broadly speaking, however, whether or not the outcome consists of a 'poorly constructed', 'messy' joint, or a 'neat, well-made' joint, there were two main methods involved in the rolling of joints. The first may be called the 'flat surface folding and rolling method' and the second may be referred to as the 'hand rolling method'. The first method, the flat surface folding and rolling method, was by far the most common method amongst smokers in this study and it consisted of choosing a suitable flat surface such as a book, table or record sleeve, following the steps already described for the preparation of the cannabis and its placement with tobacco onto the already arranged papers, and then folding over the edge of the joint nearest the user over the mixture, tucking the ends in as the joint is then rolled up, picking up the joint, licking the sticky edge of the cigarette papers, and sticking it along the length of the joint. Such a method is considered

easier, more convenient and less accident-prone. Rolling joints using the hand-rolling method, on the other hand, is considered more difficult and its accomplishment is regarded as a sign of greater skill and expertise in joint construction.

After the joint has been rolled and the possible sources of producing incompetently constructed joints (such as failing to tuck ends in, licking the wrong side of the cigarette paper, and not distributing the cannabis in an even manner) dealt with, the next step in joint construction consists of making and inserting a 'roach' into the end of the joint which has been left open for such a purpose. Before this is done, one end of the joint is usually twisted closed and the other end left open. There is a simple reason for this: if the smoker leaves both ends of the joint open, when he picks up the joint to insert the roach some of the contents of the joint may well fall out of it. A 'roach' is essentially a piece of cardboard which serves partly as a suitable 'end' to the joint and partly as a means of preventing bits of tobacco from being sucked into the mouth when inhaling.

Some smokers carried around with them, or kept at home, stocks of ready-cut roaches in order to avoid having to tear up pieces of cardboard at the time of joint construction. This practice is partly due to convenience, and partly due to the belief that torn up cigarette packets, whilst not incriminating beyond a doubt, are at least suggestive of criminality. The smoker may decide that one way of 'playing it cool' is not to leave incriminating evidence around. He may thereby conclude that a supply of ready-cut roaches hidden away contributes to the achievement of such an objective.

Besides the differential practice of ready-cut roaches, smokers also differed with respect to the type of roach which they used in constructing their joints. Some smokers preferred long roaches, others short ones, some thick



and tightly rolled, some hollow and loosely rolled. Whatever the type of roach preferred or used in any particular joint, all smokers faced the similar problem of actually inserting the roach into the rolled joint. This task, according to smokers often proved to be the most troublesome task in the collection of procedures involved in joint construction. However, not only was this task troublesome, it was also consequential for the success of the subsequent smoking of the joint. In this regard, the roach had to be inserted in such a way as not to impede the free passage of air and smoke from the lighted end of the joint. Such 'mishaps' often occur and, as will be described shortly, there are various 'rescue operations' which smokers performed to deal with them. Thus, much care is taken with the insertion of the roach into the joint. For this purpose some smokers made use of such objects as matchsticks, pens or pencils or some other thin object which could easily be poked down the end of the joint in order to, first, smooth out a passage in which the roach can be inserted once it has been rolled up, and secondly, to 'spring out' the roach once it has been inserted in order to produce 'a good fit' between the roach and the paper which surrounds it. Performing this task with a matchstick, like the task of rolling joints using the hand rolling method instead of the flat surface folding and rolling method, is regarded as a more difficult and 'fiddly' task than that involving the use of a pen and pencil. Similarly, it is regarded as more skilful - as evidence of a greater 'self-sufficiency' in the art of joint construction.

Having inserted the roach to his satisfaction, the smoker then faces a number of other procedures pertaining to 'finishing off' the joint construction process. Such finishing off procedures, at least for some smokers, consist of smoothing out the joint by rubbing it between the hands, taking hold of the twisted end of the joint and shaking it, and perhaps even giving it a lick or suck before lighting it (on the grounds that it burns slower as a result). Some smokers, before they 'lit up', and after they had inserted

the roach, returned their attention to the other end of the joint which they had previously twisted in order to prevent spillage and either tore off the twisted paper in order to allow the flame immediate contact with the tobacco-cannabis mixture, or 'tucked in' or 'squared-off' the joint.

Following the steps outlined above the construction of joints does not, of course, preclude the possibility that the smoker will produce an 'incompetent joint'. Smokers reported taking a pride in their joint construction. Sometimes they engaged in 'competitions' to see who in the group could roll the 'best' joint, or who could roll a joint in the 'fastest' time. Such competitions consisted of playful occasions on which smokers could demonstrate their skills in joint construction. No great stigma was ascribed to those who fared poorly in these competitions yet those who consistently surpassed other smokers in the quality of their products acquired reputations to that effect. Partly because of this, smokers who were already competent in the construction of joints tended to be the 'main contenders' in such competitions.

Before proceeding to discuss what typically follows the construction of joints, namely the actual smoking of it, mention also has to be made of the various other methods used in smoking cannabis and in consuming the drug in other ways.

#### SMOKING CANNABIS: PIPES

There are two main types of pipe used in the smoking of cannabis: water pipes and non-water pipes. Non-water pipes are akin to the kind of pipe used in the smoking of tobacco. There is a large variety of different kinds of these pipes. Water pipes, on the other hand, are distinguishable in terms of their possession of a water-carrying receptacle through which the smoke from cannabis alone or a mixture of cannabis and tobacco is inhaled. According to members, both kinds of pipe were not difficult to

acquire - both 'head' shops and those specialising in 'eastern' merchandise usually stock a range of hookahs, Morrocan clay pipes, and other types of pipe. As in the case of the joint smoker, furthermore, pipe smokers sometimes made use of 'home-made' substitutes of these items. Accordingly, water pipes were sometimes constructed from flasks, tubes, bungs and bowls, the last item apparently presenting the most difficult problem. In the case of non-water pipes, the necessary hardware<sup>6</sup> included a tube and a bowl. Some smokers reported using a biro tube and silver paper in constructing such pipes.

#### SMOKING CANNABIS: CHILLUMS

One way of describing a chillum is to talk of it as a pipe without a bend whose 'tube' is wider than that of a pipe. Because of this, with a chillum a 'stopper' or 'pea' has to be employed to prevent the smoking mixture from being sucked down the chillum on inhalation. For this reason when purchasing chillums such stoppers are provided. Often they are mislaid, however, and in such an eventuality silver paper pressed into the shape of a small pea is used as a substitute. Similarly, as in the case of both joints and pipes, smokers sometimes fabricate substitutes for the chillum itself. In this regard, smokers made use of such items as hollowed-out carrots and the neck of broken bottles.

The preparation of cannabis for pipes and chillums is essentially the same as it is for joints. As with the latter, hashish is heated and placed in the receptacle while grass is simply broken off and put into it. With chillums a tobacco and hashish or grass mixture, or as in the case of joints, pure grass, is placed in it. The same procedures are followed in the case of pipes, though on occasion hashish alone was used in them. In either case it is considered important to follow the same basic procedures with respect to preparing the cannabis and mixing it with tobacco as in the case of joints.

So far in this analysis the focus has been on the preparation of various means of consuming cannabis. Given that the requisite preparations have been performed, the next step in the process of consuming cannabis consists of the actual methods of consumption. Before examining the procedures involved in putting the means already described into use, mention must be made of members' motives for the use of one method of consuming cannabis rather than another. Members provided a variety of motives for their use of these different methods. Joints, for example, were used on the grounds that they were easy to smoke, that they were less incriminating - for example, the smoker could dispose of them in a fire or flush them down the toilet, - and most commonly, simply because the smoker enjoyed the activity of actually rolling and smoking joints. By way of contrast, pipes are often consumed for different reasons. According to smokers, the main advantage of the water pipe over the non-water pipe, joints, and chillums, is that it filters out many particles of tobacco and its derivatives which would otherwise be inhaled into the lungs. The water pipe also facilitates the achievement of a 'cool smoke' in contrast to other methods. Further, when a water or non-water pipe is employed without tobacco but with hashish or grass alone the grounds for this practice may be firstly that the smoker has run out of his supply of tobacco or secondly that he desires to attain a different kind of effect from that which is typically attainable with cannabis-tobacco mixtures. As noted earlier, according to smokers, the use of hashish or grass alone makes possible the attainment of different kinds of effects which are often described as 'cleaner' than the effects of cannabis mixed with tobacco. Further, the smoking of cannabis 'neat' in a pipe is reckoned to be productive of far stronger effects than those achieved by the smoking of joints, except where joints are composed of grass alone. Smoking cannabis in pipes is also recognized as being a

simpler method of consuming cannabis, involving less preparation and items of hardware. Some smokers favour the use of pipes not because of the different or stronger effects produced but on health grounds. Pipes, they contend, enable the smoker to dispense with tobacco. The same motivation, according to members, informs the use of cannabis in cakes.

It is clear, then, that there are various possible reasons why a smoker might choose to use cannabis in a pipe rather than in a joint or chillum: health, absence of tobacco or cigarette papers, to experience the stronger and different effects of smoking cannabis in pipes, to have a 'cool' smoke, and because of the simplicity involved.

With regard to the use of chillums, smokers account for their use of these items in terms of their ability to produce stronger effects than those typically produced by the smoking of joints.

#### EATING CANNABIS

Whilst smoking cannabis is the most common method of consuming the drug, members occasionally ate it. In this case, members most typically mixed it with food. Thus, occasionally 'hash cakes' were baked, divided amongst participants and eaten. On other occasions hashish or marihuana was put into other kinds of food and in particular other kinds of confectionery and shared amongst members.<sup>7</sup> In addition, then, to the skills involved in the preparation of cannabis which have already been discussed in the case of joint smoking, the consumption of cannabis in food required such culinary expertise as is necessary for the making and baking of cakes or the cooking of other kinds of food.

It was considered necessary to use larger amounts of cannabis in the case of cannabis food than in the case of joints. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, the method of eating cannabis was held to produce different kinds of effects from those produced by smoking the drug. The effects of cannabis when it had been eaten were defined as 'better', 'stronger', 'heavier'

'more trippy' and as 'longer lasting' than the effects produced by smoking cannabis, and in particular by smoking joints of cannabis and tobacco.

Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) Eating dope has a much more lasting and powerful effect.
- (2) ... it seems to have a much stronger effect when it is eaten.
- (3) It's a much trippier buzz when you eat it, much stronger, much heavier altogether.

Additional justifications for using this particular method of using the drug included the belief that such a method was less harmful to health than smoking the drug and that such a method was less wasteful than smoking it.

#### DRINKING CANNABIS

Whereas hashish was usually used when cannabis was to be consumed in food, marihuana was the variety of preference when cannabis was to be drunk. The procedures involved in this method were simply those involved in making 'tea' with cannabis. As in the case of cannabis in food, considerably more of the drug had to be used when drinking it in order to achieve 'recognizable' effects. However, the effects produced by using this method of consumption seemed to be regarded by members as weaker than those produced when cannabis was eaten. It is perhaps because of this assessment of the effects typically produced by this method as well as it requiring 'larger than usual' amounts of the drug to experience its effects, that this method was rarely used.

#### OTHER METHODS

Other methods of using cannabis involved the consumption of different forms of cannabis to those already discussed. Thus, cannabis was occasionally available in the form of 'cannabis tincture' and as such it could be mixed with tobacco and smoked, mixed in food and eaten, and simply drunk by the

spoonful or swig of the bottle. In addition, and even more infrequently, 'THC' capsules<sup>8</sup> were distributed amongst members and 'dropped'. There were no additional procedures involved in the use of these two methods beyond those already described in the case of the other methods.

### CONSUMING CANNABIS

Having prepared the cannabis and having selected a suitable means for doing so, the next step in this analysis and in the use of cannabis consists of actually making use of the items described. For purposes of consuming cannabis the member has not only to learn the requisite skills involved in the preparation of the drug, he also has to learn the skills associated with, and which make possible, its consumption.

In analysing the skills involved in the consumption of cannabis, a distinction must be made between technical and social skills and the kinds of common-sense knowledge underpinning these different kinds of skills. The technical skills are requisite in situations of both individual and collective use of cannabis. Some of these technical skills have already been described in relation to the preparation of cannabis for its consumption. This section is concerned with a further collection of technical skills involved in the consumption of cannabis, given a suitable method of preparation. Essentially, these skills refer to the particular method chosen for the consumption of cannabis. Depending on whether smoking, eating, or drinking cannabis is the chosen method of consumption, the member must first acquire the set of skills involved in the activities of smoking, eating and drinking. Such skills belong to what Alfred Schutz refers to the member's 'habitual knowledge', and in particular, to a specific form of habitual knowledge, namely, 'useful knowledge'. As Schutz and Luckmann (1974, p.107) indicate:

'There is a province of habitual knowledge which concerns skills, but which no longer really belongs to the usual functioning of

the body. We will term this useful knowledge. There are in daily life, or more exactly, in the work zone of the everyday world, certain goals or acts and 'means to the end' that belong to it, and that no longer indicate the slightest problem. They were originally 'problematical' but have been 'definitively' solved. For the goals of acts there is not a single motivation on hand, and for the 'means to the end' there is no known alternative. There are activities that have to a great extent lost the character of acts. I would indeed have to learn them, but continuing realizability of the goals and the exclusiveness of the 'means' that can be used has so often been confirmed, the skills on which they touch are so self-evidently 'obvious' that they have won a high degree of trustworthiness (and objective certainty).'

As Matza and Becker point out, and as is confirmed in this work, the skill that is basic to the smoking of cannabis is that of inhalation. However, when smoking cannabis, the member does not merely inhale as he would in the case of an ordinary cigarette. In order to derive maximum benefit from the drug, members are encouraged to (a) inhale deeply, (b) retain the smoke in the lungs for as long as possible, and (c) breathe out slowly. Having acquired such a skill, like the skills of eating and drinking cannabis, the member 'no longer has to think about them' - their accomplishment is taken for granted in the pursuit of goals to which such skills are essentially instrumental.

Beyond these basic elements of useful knowledge, members possessed increasingly 'specific' knowledge relating to the particular method chosen for the consumption of cannabis.<sup>9</sup> For example, with the use of pipes and chillums in the smoking of cannabis the smoker learns a collection of skills beyond those associated with the act of inhalation in the first place. Thus, in the case of pipes, and, in particular, in the case of the use of water pipes, the smoker learns, often by bitter experience, how to inhale correctly. If the smoker inhales too quickly and vigorously he will receive a mouthful of water for his trouble. Even so, it should be pointed out that inhalation skills, were they correctly employed on every occasion, still might not prevent the smoker from inhaling water; whether or not the smoker gets a mouthful of water depends also on how much water the smoker has placed in the pipe to begin with.



With chillums, on the other hand, besides inhalation, a most crucial skill consists of holding such an object in the correct manner. Essentially, the correct method of holding a chillum for smoking consists of preventing air from being inhaled except by way of the chillum itself. This means that the smoker must hold the chillum in such a way that a seal is created with his hands around the chillum. Many smokers report that they accomplish this quite effectively by simply grasping the chillum between the bases of the forefinger and middle finger and clenching the fist around it. Such a way of grasping the chillum is considered by many smokers to be an 'incorrect' way and such persons do not practice it. Instead, they use both hands to grasp the chillum. Many smokers, however, also reported to me that this method involved additional skills in the sense that it was more difficult to effectively seal out the air by using it. The skill was eventually mastered by most smokers through either a process of direct instruction or through imitation. In the meantime, however, some smokers would become embarrassed when their attempts at competent usage failed. A common solution in the face of such an eventuality was to revert to the one-handed method described above. Additionally, use was sometimes made of wet rags with the chillum, wrapping them around the end of the chillum to reduce its temperature, and cool the smoke.

Similarly, in the case of joints, the smoker learns a repertoire of skills relative to this method of consuming cannabis. As in the case of the other two methods of smoking which have already been discussed, the smoker not only learns how to inhale in the correct manner, he also learns different methods of holding joints. First, smokers hold the joint as they would a conventional cigarette. Second, the joint may be held like a chillum. The rationale for the use of this latter method is that it facilitates the inhalation of larger volumes of smoke than in the case of cigarette-type inhalation, and thereby makes possible the achievement of a higher degree of 'intoxication'.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to these two contrasting ways of holding joints, smokers also learned further techniques of using cannabis. Among smokers, such special techniques were referred to as 'blowbacks' or 'shot guns'. The accomplishment of such phenomena required the assistance of a partner in the act of smoking. In the case of these methods, the inhaler would give the joint to the blower who would place the lighted end of the joint into his mouth, creating a seal with his lips. He would then blow smoke out of the other end of the joint. This smoke would then immediately be inhaled by the inhaler who had meanwhile placed himself in a suitable position for inhaling it. A similar procedure is involved in the case of 'the shot gun'. On occasion some smokers varied the procedure involved, by placing the roach end of the joint in the mouth and blowing smoke out from the lit end. Smokers would also use similar methods with chillums, though, as has been noted earlier, it was considered advisable to use a wet rag to cool them.

Occasionally, perhaps due to incompetence or to accident, 'things happen' when joints are being smoked. A special class of such events may be referred to as 'mishaps'. Associated with these are cultural solutions for dealing with their occurrence. These solutions consist of a set of procedures which may be referred to as 'rescue operations'. Typical mishaps include (a) the joint becoming extinguished, (b) the joint partly or even completely falling apart, (c) the joint burning 'unevenly' - burning down one side of the joint rather than down all sides, and (d) the joint being 'blocked' so that the user is unable to inhale the smoke effectively. The procedure for dealing with joints that have become extinguished is simply to light them again. When the joint partly or completely falls apart, the particular procedures followed in its repair will depend on the extent of its damage: perhaps only a touch of saliva will serve to rectify the fault; alternatively, where the mishap is more serious the joint may require total reconstruction. In the event of mishap (c), the usual procedure is the application of saliva to the side of the joint which is



burning excessively fast, the point of this practice being to slow down the rate at which it is burning. When the joint is, or becomes, blocked, so that the smoker is unable to inhale the smoke from it effectively, then the typical solution is to poke a matchstick or similar sharp object down the unlit end of the joint in order to try and create a passage through which the smoke may be inhaled.

#### INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE CANNABIS CONSUMPTION

In focusing on members' practices followed in the course of cannabis consumption so far in this analysis, most attention has been paid to the preparations and methods of cannabis consumption which pertain to cannabis consumption generally. At this point in the analysis it is important to make a distinction between individual and collective consumption of cannabis. The situation of collective cannabis consumption enjoins on the member an additional set of procedural rules to those pertaining to the situation of individual cannabis consumption. Alone, the member faces the tasks of constructing and smoking his joint, filling and smoking his pipe or chillum, or just baking and eating his cake. Together with other smokers, however, the member faces the task of coordinating his consumption with that of other members. Such coordination is a feature of cannabis consumption which is normatively enjoined on the member in terms of certain rules to which members are oriented in situations of collective as opposed to individual use of the drug: the following section is concerned with the nature of these rules and the social reactions to their infraction.

#### RULES OF COLLECTIVE CANNABIS CONSUMPTION

Essentially, coordination of collective cannabis consumption involves following the rules of sharing cannabis. When cannabis is smoked collectively in groups, the individual cannabis smoker becomes subject to certain rules

governing the social use of the drug. When smokers enter situations of collective cannabis consumption these rules come into play. They remain in play for as long as the members continue to use the drug collectively.

It has been suggested that a characteristic normative rule of collective cannabis smoking is that the cannabis is shared. This rule governs cannabis consumption in a number of ways, each of which suggests a further normative rule whereby conformity to the share the cannabis rule may be accomplished. To begin with, collective cannabis consumption reveals the rule that the joint, pipe or chillum is passed from participant to participant in inter-actional sequence. Each participant takes a number of puffs, drags, or tokes and passes the object to be smoked to another participant. This rule may be referred to as the 'pass the joint rule.' Secondly, there is an apparent patterning to the specific manner in which this passing is accomplished. Passing the joint or other object is not an indiscriminate or random business. There is an order to the passing of the joint. Each participant is supposed to take his turn in the smoking of the joint; the participants are required not to 'queue jump'. The joint is not just passed to anyone whom the passer chooses to pass it to. Rather, the passing of the joint is governed by a normative rule which requires that the joint be passed in a particular direction and thereby to a particular participant. Members are oriented to a 'rule of turn taking' in the accomplishment of collective cannabis consumption. Thirdly, there is a further normative rule of collective cannabis consumption which proscribes 'joint hogging'. Such a rule specifies the approximate maximum number of puffs which the member may take 'while he takes his turn', and it may be referred to as the 'quantity rule'. After he has taken his turn on the object to be smoked he is then required to pass it on to the next participant.

Underpinning these normative rules of cannabis sharing lie the collection

of technical procedural rules. Conformity to these rules facilitates conformity to the above mentioned normative procedural rules and thereby to the normative rule of share the cannabis. These technical rules refer to such matters as how the joint is smoked at all, and how the passing of joints is done at all. Conformity to these rules requires the type of skills already described in preparing and consuming cannabis - it involves useful knowledge.<sup>11</sup> Such conformity is rarely problematic. To be sure, the member once had to learn these rules; but now they have become taken for granted as the means of accomplishing conformity to the second type of rule in play in the situation of collective cannabis use, namely the normative rules of such an activity.

That members are aware of the rule of joint sharing is indicated by the fact that they may break off already ensuing conversation with utterances such as:-

- (1) How about some of that, man.
- (2) Are we likely to get any of that, K?
- (3) Were you born with a joint in your mouth?

thereby indicating that they were expecting that the joint should be passed to them - that they would have their turn - and that the joint would not be consumed by only one of the participants. Similarly, that the joint is passed in a particular direction, as a rule of collective cannabis consumption to which members are oriented, is also revealed in the following remarks:

- (1) What way is this going?
- (2) Is this yours?
- (3) Whose is this?
- (4) I think it's going that way, actually.
- (5) Have you had this?

Further, that members are oriented to the quantity rule of cannabis consumption is revealed in such remarks as:

- (1) Have I had this a long time?

(2) How long have I had this?

In other words, then, the current consumer of the cannabis assumes that the 'next in line' is waiting for his turn, just as the person waiting assumes that the current consumer will give it to him.

Given that members are oriented towards a rule which states that the joint, pipe or chillum is to be shared amongst the participants, and to the rule of pass the joint, the turn-taking rule, and the quantity rule, whereby conformity to the share the cannabis rule may be accomplished, what do members do when one of their number breaks this rule? How is deviance in terms of the share the cannabis rule defined? How is the share the cannabis rule invoked by the members?

There is a large variety of ways whereby members react to deviance in terms of the share the cannabis rule. Probably the most common method of invoking the share the cannabis rule consists of an utterance to the effect that the member who currently has the object in his possession should pass it to the person who is 'next in line'. In this regard, members were observed to make such utterances as:

(1) How about some of that joint, then.

(2) Let's have some of that, M.

Such overt reactions as these refer to only one method of invoking the pass the joint rule. Other methods include the suggestion that the member has already had the joint long enough:

(1) How about letting someone else have some of that?

(2) Don't you think you've had that long enough?

Other methods include, 'making bad vibes'; that is, invoking the pass the joint rule in a non-verbal way - for example, glances between the other members present, sighs, coughs, and other such hints. If these do not have the desired effect then the members, and in particular the member whose turn it is, may well decide a more overt reaction to the 'offence' is appropriate.

The decision as to whether or not to make an overt reaction to the person who has kept the joint or other smoking implements for 'too long' rests on a number of issues. To begin with, the member may, in terms of an ethic of 'share and share alike', feel that they should intervene and react to this affront to their morality with an overt deviance imputation. But, in terms of an ethic of 'do your own thing' and 'let others do likewise', the members may feel that they should not interfere and define one of their company as deviant.

For most people most of the time, infraction of the rules of sharing cannabis seems to be a rare event. When such infraction does occur and is regarded as deliberate and intentional on the part of the offender, then definition of the person as deviant may well occur.

There are various accounts which the offender may provide for his infractions. To begin with, it is recognized that one symptom of being 'high' is that of the member forgetting how long the joint has been in his possession. In other words, becoming 'high' - the very activity for which the member has the joint in his possession in the first place - provides the reason for his infraction of the rules whereby getting 'high' is collectively accomplished. Becoming 'high' renders deviance in terms of the share the cannabis rules excusable in the sense that the member can 'deny responsibility' for its occurrence. In this connection, members were often heard to say:

- (1) Did you just give me this?
- (2) How long have I had this?
- (3) Have I had this a long time?

thereby indicating their awareness of the procedural rules of collective cannabis smoking at the same time as indicating their awareness of the possibility that the very act of cannabis consumption may induce the member to forget the rules whereby the activity is collectively accomplished in the first place.

If a member is seen to be 'obviously stoned' and appears to have had the joint in his possession for what is perceived to be an 'excessive' amount of time then the other members may well feel that they should 'say something' to him. Whatever the actual reaction, whatever the form of the utterance, the member may well provide not an account but an apology as another kind of remedial work:<sup>12</sup>

(1) Oh, I'm sorry.

(2) Sorry about that, I completely forgot about it.

Just as there are accounts which may be offered and honoured for keeping the joint too long in one's possession, so there are also accounts available and provided when the member refuses the joint when it is offered to him.<sup>13</sup>

The member who does not wish to smoke at all can simply say,

(1) No thanks; I've got a lot of work to do.

(2) I've got a bit of a headache.

(3) I can't I've got a sore throat.

(4) I think I've had enough.

(5) I'm pretty smashed already.

One question which arises at this point in the analysis is 'how does the member know that deviance in terms of the share the cannabis rule is occurring or has occurred?' To those who take for granted the interpretive procedures involved in such recognition, of course, this poses no problems. For the analyst, however, such a phenomenon must be made problematic.

It is clear that the recognition of deviance in terms of the share the cannabis rule, and indeed any rule, presupposes the acquisition of a collection of interpretive rules whereby such deviance may be recognized. These interpretive rules consist of assumptions about the type of acts which constitute such deviance. In other words, the recognition of deviance requires common-sense knowledge of the procedural rules involved in both the accomplishment of deviance and the accomplishment of conformity. In the light of this knowledge the member knows that deviance is occurring



or not if he sees that the other member is following the rules of committing deviant or conformist acts.

The two most obvious signs of 'joint hogging' are, first, the length of time a person holds the joint in his possession - the length of time that elapses from the moment when he was given the joint. The second sign consists of the number of 'drags' which the member takes on the joint. If the member is recognized as having had 'too many drags' or has had the joint 'too long' then this constitutes evidence that he has had more than his share, and is indeed breaking the share the cannabis rule by way of breaking the 'quantity rule'. Similarly, if the member 'goes out of turn' and thereby deprives another member of 'his turn' then the infraction of the share the cannabis rule may be imputed on the basis of the 'turn taking rule'.

#### ACCOUNTING FOR SHARE THE CANNABIS RULES

Why then is the joint passed from person to person? Why does each participant not have his own 'individual' joint?<sup>14</sup> From members' points of view, it is assumed that when cannabis is being smoked and there are other persons present who also smoke, then the cannabis is going to be shared with them and that after the person has smoked some of it he is going to pass it on to somebody else. Indeed, the very sharing of the joint may be the reason for the members having come to such a 'focused gathering' in the first place.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the expressed intention for the current interaction may be that the members have decided to 'have a smoke' together. It is assumed by members in such a context that each member will pass the joint on after his turn and after a certain number of drags. Each member assumes that the other members assume that the cannabis will be shared in this way. The following extract illustrates this reciprocity of perspectives:

- I. Why is it passed on?
- S. You know that when you are having a joint with someone you are going to give it to him after you have had it for a while.

- I. What do you mean, 'for a while'?
- S. For about three or four drags.
- I. Why pass it on?
- S. That's what having a joint with someone else means. You don't sit there and smoke it all by yourself. That would show you were selfish, not into the spirit of the thing.

But why is this so? How do members account for this practice? To answer these questions, members were asked why only a single joint is smoked, and why it was shared by each of the participants. A variety of accounts were provided for these practices. To begin with, members stated that one reason for them is the 'fact' of the scarcity of cannabis. This made sharing a necessity if all the members who were party to the gathering were to smoke the cannabis. The undesirable alternative was to have just those who happened to have their own supply available smoking cannabis. Because there was rarely enough cannabis for it to be distributed amongst all the participants such that all of them had their own individual joint, and because members preferred to make their supply last rather than break it up and use it all at once, were additional reasons for sharing the cannabis which were suggested by members.

Another account for the sharing of cannabis is that members like to share not just the cannabis itself as a substance, but they also like to share the effects of cannabis:

I couldn't smoke a joint on my own if there were other people in the room who wanted some and didn't have any. Even if they had their own stash I still couldn't consume it all by myself. I'd have to pass it on else my high wouldn't happen. I'd be brought down by feelings of guilt, of meanness. Why shouldn't other people share what I have got. I guess it's this feeling of sharing, nothing belongs to me, everything I have belongs to anyone who needs it. It's a hard principle to live by. Perhaps that's why so many young people drop it, but when it works it gets you higher than any dope smoking alone.

The following extract illustrates how members come to be aware of the share the cannabis rule:

- I. Tell me, why is the joint passed on after three or four drags?
- S. When I first started smoking I wasn't aware of any regular pattern of passing the joint on. I was aware that it was a precious commodity and I passed it on because I

reckoned it was wasted on me. So I gave it to others so as not to waste it but gradually you pick up comments like, 'you've been holding that a long time' or 'were you born with a joint in your mouth?' or 'Where's this joint coming from?' from which you pick up on as meaning 'I want it'. So you watch what other people do, people who you reckon know the ropes and you do what they do. Then new people come along and you can see them getting embarrassed, watching to see what you do and it goes on like that. It's stupid really because you're supposed to be tolerant and yet all the time you're trying to avoid these embarrassing situations which show your lack of experience. Afterwards you wonder why but then you don't need to worry.

### EXCEPTIONS

There are a number of exceptions to the cannabis-sharing procedures described above. Such exceptions occur, for example, when there is an exceptionally large number of persons in the room such that if the participants were each to take three drags the joint would only go part of the way round the room. Under these circumstances, assuming that there is enough cannabis available, the practice is to make more than a single joint and, instead, to have more than one joint 'on the go'. Even so, the turn-taking procedural rules are still operative; often one joint will pass clockwise and the other anti-clockwise, thereby crossing and often meeting at the person in the middle who, it may be said, sometimes smokes both in order not to miss his share of either of them. Similarly, with regard to the quantity rule, members sometimes take only one puff and immediately pass it on. This phenomenon occurs particularly when pure grass or hashish is being smoked. As one member put it:

That's the way you're supposed to smoke grass, man.

The reasoning underpinning this practice is that holding a pipe, chillum or joint containing pure grass or hashish while inhaling deeply is wasteful - far better for the smoke to circulate in someone's lungs than in the air.

### FINISHING OFF

Just as there are procedural rules associated with the preparation, consumption, and sharing of cannabis, so also are there procedural rules

associated with the finishing off of joints, pipes and chillums.

How do smokers finish off joints? One of the features of this process is for the person who has the joint to offer it to the next in line with a comment to the effect that the joint is nearly finished. In this regard, members were heard to make such comments as:

- (1) 'It's a bit roachy'
- (2) 'There's not much there'
- (3) 'You can try it if you like'
- (4) 'Do you want that'
- (5) 'Do you want this'
- (6) 'Rather you than me'
- (7) 'That's nearly dead, I think. Do you want to try it'
- (8) 'That's dead I think'
- (9) 'It's a bit hot'

Such utterances as these, which are produced in the context of joint-concluding activities, serve as announcements that the joint is at its end or at least that its end is imminent. Given such utterances, and the forewarning of the next in line about the state of the joint, it may be declined or accepted. Some smokers reported a liking for the end of the joint whilst others confessed a definite aversion. Those who reported their partiality for the roach said that this part of the joint is 'really the best' since it contains the residues of the cannabis that has already been smoked. Those, on the other hand, who report a dislike for the roach say that it is unhealthy and that it tastes unpleasant. Such persons decline the offer of the end of the joint on both health and taste grounds. Those who willingly accept it, and even report enjoying it, do so on the grounds that it is the best part of the joint in the sense that it is strongly effective. There were, of course, other smokers who did not report a strong preference either way; rather, they simply accepted the joint if it was

offered and put it out when they judged that there was nothing more worth smoking in it. Making such judgements, however, is complicated by the already noted distinction between persons for whom the roach is distasteful and those for whom it has a pleasurable connotation. Such a distinction poses the problem of exactly when the joint is finished. From the point of view of those who do not like to smoke the joint right down to the cardboard, the end of the joint, for all practical purposes, occurs before the joint has been smoked right down to the cardboard roach. From the point of view of those who do like to smoke the joint right down to the cardboard, then the end of the joint does not occur until there is no more tobacco and cannabis left to smoke. Given these different preferences and judgements, members followed the practice of passing joints on until there was literally nothing left but cardboard or until by mutual agreement it was decided to put them out. Passees are typically given the option unless the passer is completely certain that the joint is finished.

Given that the joint has been smoked to an end, members' practices with regard to it do not necessarily stop at such a point. Exactly what is done with the joint at this stage depends on a number of factors. Does the member simply stub it out and leave it in an ashtray? Or does he stub it out underfoot? Does he throw it in the fire? Or does he put it in the waste-paper bin? Does he tear it up into little pieces, put the pieces in a paper bag and dispose of them the next time he passes a public litter bin? Which of these practices is adopted by members seems to depend on two main issues: (a) convenience, and (b) perceived need for secretive procedures. That is, in most cases members would simply choose the method which was considered to be the most convenient. If, however, it was decided that the most convenient method entailed risks which they were not prepared to take, then a more cautious method would be chosen. As such matters are treated more fully

in chapter eight, discussion of these methods and the reasoning underlying them will be left until then.

Finishing off pipes and chillums appears to be a less complicated process. Here, the main signs of completion are (a) when no smoke can be inhaled and (b) when inhalation produces the sound of air being sucked through a hollow tube. At such a point, the pipe or chillum is then placed in an ashtray and emptied of the remaining ash.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, cannabis users' practices and procedures with respect to the accomplishment of cannabis use have been discussed. The account has been structured sequentially in terms of a series of steps or stages which are involved in the activity of using cannabis. It has been shown that members employ a variety of tools and methods for consuming cannabis and that such an accomplishment rests upon a collection of procedural rules, both technical and normative. In the next chapter, this analysis is extended by focusing on the product of this activity, namely the effects of cannabis.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EFFECTS OF CANNABIS

In chapter three some of the typical features of cannabis as a substance were analysed in terms of members' understandings of them, and in chapter four, members' methods of making use of the drug were discussed. In this chapter the analysis of the properties of cannabis is extended by focusing on the effects of the drug. The perspective employed here is that which views members' initial and subsequent use of cannabis as characterized by the acquisition of a corpus of common-sense knowledge about the types of effects which are produced by the use of cannabis. The analysis to be presented attempts to answer two central questions: (1) what are the effects of cannabis? and (2) how are the effects to be accounted for?

There have been various studies which have tried to answer the question, 'what are the effects of cannabis?' The particular type of answer provided, however, depends upon the kind of research undertaken, which in turn depends upon the theoretical perspective and research methodology employed. Thus, from a pharmacological or physiological perspective scientists have 'discovered' the so-called 'objective' effects of cannabis on animals, both human and non-human.<sup>1</sup> Such 'objective' effects are ascertained by the administration of standard physiological and psychological tests on users of cannabis in 'experimental' situations. For example, in a study by Weil, Zinberg and Nelsen (1968) the effects of cannabis were 'discovered' by taking what the experimenters referred to as 'psychological and physiological measures':

The physiological parameters measured were heart rate, respiratory rate, pupil size, blood glucose level, and conjunctival vascular rate. Pupil size was measured with a millimetre rule under constant illumination with eyes focused on an object at constant distance. Conjunctival appearance was rated by an experienced experimenter for dilation of blood vessels on an 0 to 4 scale with ratings of 3 and 4 indicating 'significant' vasodilation. Blood samples were collected for immediate determinations of serum glucose and for the serum to be frozen and stored for possible future biochemical studies. Subjects were asked not to eat and not to imbibe a beverage containing



sugar or caffeine during the four hours preceding a session. They were given supper after the second blood sample was drawn .... The psychological test battery consisted of (i) the Contiguous Performance Test (CPT) - 5 minutes; (ii) the Digit Symbol Substitution Test (DSST) - 90 seconds; (iii) CPT with strobe light distraction - 5 minutes; (iv) self-rating bipolar mood scale - 3 minutes; and (v) pursuit rotor - 10 minutes.<sup>2</sup>

By way of contrast, anthropological, sociological and social psychological approaches to the study of the effects of cannabis have emphasized the need to study drug effects from a subjective viewpoint in natural settings.<sup>3</sup> In particular, as Erich Goode (1972 p.3) has pointed out, the sociological perspective on drug effects stands in 'direct opposition' to the 'chemicalistic fallacy' evident in studies which attempt to establish the 'objective' effects of cannabis. According to Goode, this fallacy is:

the view that drug A causes behaviour X, that the behaviour and effects associated with the use of a given drug are solely a function of the biochemical properties of that drug, of the drug plus human animal, or even of the drug plus human organism with a certain character structure.

Instead of fallacious experimental manipulations of drug users for the purpose of obtaining objective indices of drug effects then, these 'naturalistic' studies have attempted to take their subjects' experiences as their research topic in need of investigation and explication. From this point of view it is held that the effects of drugs are primarily subjective in nature and that understanding of them can only be derived from asking the subject how he feels; the so-called 'objective' study of drug effects serves to obfuscate rather than illuminate the nature of drug experiences. Becker (1967, pp. 164-65) has summarized the findings of those who have investigated drug-induced experiences in their own right:

First, many drugs, including those used to produce changes in subjective experience, have a great variety of effects and the user may single out many of them, one

of them, or none of them as definite experience he is undergoing ... Second, and in consequence, the effects of the same drug may be experienced quite differently by different people or by the same people at different times ... Third, since recreational users take drugs in order to achieve some subjective state not ordinarily available to them, it follows that they will expect and be most likely to experience those effects which produce a deviation from the conventional perceptions and interpretations of internal and external experience ... Fourth, any of a great variety of effects may be singled out by the user as desirable or pleasurable, as the effects for which he has taken the drug ... Fifth, how a person experiences the effects of a drug depends greatly on the way others define those effects for him.

In essence, the sociological perspective on the nature of drug-induced experiences views drug effects as contingent upon, or structured by, the context or culture within which they are taken. Culture, conceived as a corpus of knowledge or understandings,<sup>4</sup> is seen as making possible a 'selectivity' to drug effects such that the drug user only experiences those effects which he selects. To be sure, this is not to suggest that drugs do not 'do things' to those who take them. Rather, it is to suggest that the 'things done' to those who take drugs have less to do with any inherent properties of drugs themselves than with the cultural contexts in which they are taken. In other words, it is members' understandings of the effects of drugs which are crucial in deciding what the effects of a particular drug are. Cultural understandings serve as 'filters' through which a wide variety of 'potential' effects (as reported by members of different drug cultures) are channelled. As MacAndrew and Edgerton (1969, p.165) put it, in the case of alcohol,

... we have contended that the way people comport themselves when they are drunk is determined not by alcohol's toxic assault upon the seat of moral judgement, conscience, or the like, but by what their society makes of and imparts to them concerning the state of drunkenness ... our basic thesis has been that persons learn about drunkenness what their societies impart to them, and comporting themselves in consonance with these understandings they become living confirmation of their societies' teachings.

The conception of drug effects embodied in the sociological perspective described above suggests that the significant effects of drugs have to be accounted for, not in terms of 'pharmacological' properties of drugs, but rather in terms of members' understandings of the properties of drugs and their impact upon users of them. Such a position, furthermore, as Becker (1967) has pointed out, finds its source in Mead's (1934) theory of the self and the relation of objects to the self. As Becker (1967, p.166) indicates:

In that theory, objects (including the self) have meaning for the person only as he imputes that meaning to them in the course of his interaction with them. The meaning is not given in the object but is lodged there as the person acquires a conception of the kind of action that can be taken with, toward, by and for it. Meanings arise in the course of social interaction, deriving their character from the consensus participants develop about the object in question. The findings on the character of drug-induced experience are therefore predictable from Mead's theory.

It was this symbolic interactionist perspective on the nature of drug-induced experiences, and in particular, Becker's (1953) and Matza's (1969) applications of it, which provided the starting point for the present investigation of the effects of cannabis. It is Becker's thesis that persons have to learn to become marijuana users. Such a process of becoming a user involves, according to Becker, three stages, each of which has to be passed through for persons to come to use the drug 'for pleasure'. These three stages are (1) learning the correct technique, (2) learning to perceive the effects and (3) learning to enjoy the effects. According to Becker, experiencing the effects of marijuana - being 'high' - consists of two elements: the presence of 'real symptoms' of intoxication and their recognition and connection with the use of the drug. From the accounts of his respondents, Becker shows that a correct technique is necessary for the production of 'real symptoms' - without such a technique no symptoms will be produced for subsequent recognition and categorization as being 'high'. However, as Becker and

his respondents also point out, even with the presence of 'real symptoms' from an observer's point of view, the cannabis user may not recognize the effects of the drug. Consequently, the user must not only learn a correct technique, he must also learn how to recognize. Amongst Becker's respondents such learning often involved tuition on the part of the user's colleagues. Even if the user learns both to use a correct technique and to recognise effects, he may still not enjoy his experience. As Becker suggests, the effects of cannabis are not inherently pleasurable. For them to become so they must be defined as such. Such a learning process, like that involved in the recognition of effects in the first place, requires the acquisition of a conceptual framework which may be applied and thereby provide for such definitions. The user must learn to evaluate his experience in a favourable manner for his use of marihuana for pleasure to continue.

Matza's (1969) extension of Becker's work is likewise concerned with the etiology of marihuana use from a symbolic interactionist perspective. Matza retraces the three steps identified by Becker as comprising the process of becoming a marihuana user, though in doing so he considerably elaborates them. Thus, in the case of the first step, Matza shows how this is constituted by a 'human subject' who 'actively considers', not only the experience of learning to use a proper technique, but also his 'affinity' with it. As far as the second step is concerned, Matza describes in symbolic interactionist imagery the nature of the experience of being 'high', depicting it as essentially a shift in mood, whereby the 'normal' configuration of mind, self and society is altered. Becker's third step - learning to enjoy the effects - is developed by Matza in so far as he suggests that the consequence of this shift in mood, and hence precisely what is enjoyable about the experience of being 'high', is a 'sensibility to banality' - where belief in the mundane, taken for granted, social world is to some extent suspended and its 'human meaning'

revealed.

As was suggested in chapter one, symbolic interactionist contributions such as those of Becker and Matza raise a number of questions for further research. This chapter is concerned with providing answers to some of them. These are (1) What sorts of experiences do members have on the occasion of their initial use of cannabis? (2) How do members account for the nature of their initial cannabis experiences? (3) What conceptions of cannabis effects do members use to describe their subsequent cannabis experiences? (4) What interpretive work is involved in constituting different types of cannabis experiences? and (5) How are different types of cannabis experiences accounted for? I shall discuss each of these questions in turn.

#### INITIAL CANNABIS EXPERIENCES

Becker's specifications of the first two 'necessary conditions' for becoming a marihuana user derive from his finding that 'the novice does not ordinarily get high the first time he smokes marihuana'.<sup>5</sup> In the light of this finding, users in this study were questioned about their initial experiences with cannabis in order to ascertain whether or not such an observation was appropriate for students in England in the 1970's as well as for musicians in the United States in the 1950's. The present investigation confirms Becker's findings to some extent. More than half of the students questioned about their initial experiences reported that they had not become high on the occasion of their initial use of cannabis. The following quotations are illustrative of users' replies to the question, 'What happened the first time you smoked? Did you get stoned?'

- (1) No, I didn't get stoned. I experienced real disappointment at the lack of effects it had on me.
- (2) I smoked this joint with this other guy who'd bought it off some spade while we were walking round the west end for two and six. We went and smoked on the stairs of

some flats at the bottom of Gerrard Street and then we just sort of walked around. I kept looking at the lights and everything to see if there was anything different but there didn't seem to be anything.

(3) No, I didn't get anything out of it.

(4) No, nothing happened the first time.

Such were the comments of students who had not become high, in the sense that they had experienced 'nothing at all' on the occasion of their initial use of cannabis.

There were, in addition, a number of other reactions to initial cannabis consumption reported by the respondents in this study. A second type of reaction which some users reported was that they had indeed experienced some effects of cannabis on the occasion of their initial use of the drug, but that these effects were not of the type which were later to be recognized as the typical effects associated with 'being high'. The following extracts illustrate this kind of reaction to initial cannabis use: Qu. What happened the first time you smoked? Did you get stoned?

(1) No, I didn't get high except for a slight increase in pulse rate.

(2) I was quite nervous, being turned on at school at 17. There was certainly an effect but I was so unused to the experience that it would be wrong to say I was stoned for the first time.

(3) Not exactly, but dizzy. A bit like first fag.

(4) No, I didn't get stoned, but it was very pleasant for a few minutes.

(5) Not stoned in the sense in which I now understand it. But it had a strong effect, more like alcohol.

A third type of reaction to the initial use of cannabis consists of a non-recognition of the effects at the time of cannabis consumption combined with a retrospective recognition of them after they had worn off.

(1) I guess I got stoned, though I did not recognise it. It was only as an afterthought that I recognised it.

- (2) Yes, though I didn't know it at the time. After an hour or so of smoking, I started laughing for no explicable reason and went on for about a quarter of an hour.

Fourthly, this research confirms the existence of persons who are socially labelled as being high but who do not label themselves as such.<sup>6</sup>

- (1) No, I didn't get stoned, but an observer said I was.
- (2) I didn't know it was having any effect, and even while I was lying helplessly on the floor, laughing hysterically, I insisted that it wasn't. Later I realised it was.

Lastly, and perhaps most consequentially for doubting the universal occurrence of 'not getting high' on occasions of initial cannabis consumption, many users reported that they had indeed 'got stoned' the first time they consumed cannabis. The following are illustrative of their comments:

- (1) Yes, I got stoned like a rocket.
- (2) Yes, I got stoned.
- (3) Of course I got stoned. Why ask such stupid questions?

#### ACCOUNTING FOR THE LACK OF INITIAL EFFECTS

The fact that some users did not experience any effect of the drug when they first smoked it raises the question of how such a state of affairs is to be accounted for.

Becker provides two explanations for users not becoming high on the occasion of their initial use of cannabis. The first of these is that the user must have smoked the drug incorrectly; the second is that the user was unable to recognise the effects of cannabis even if, from an observer's point of view, he was 'really' high. Thus, as Becker (1963, p.49) puts it:

Being high consists of two elements: the presence of symptoms caused by marihuana and the recognition of these symptoms and their connection by the user with his use of the drug. —

An alternative explanation of the non-production of effects on the occasion of initial cannabis use is that provided by Matza (1969). However,

whilst it is clear that Becker's account is reflected in the answers provided by his respondents to his questions about their initial experiences, this is not so in the case of Matza. He is critical of Becker's account of members' failure to experience the effects of cannabis on the occasion of their initial use of the drug. Matza suggests that Becker's account of the non-production of initial cannabis experiences is an exaggeration of the 'human incapacity' to sense oneself. As he (1969, p.125) puts it,

With most initial experiences, even with alcohol we do not typically go about explaining to people what it is they are going to experience the first time they indulge.

Matza does not take the symbolic interactionist view (held by Becker) that the effects of cannabis are problematic by definition. Instead, he adopts the clearly non-symbolic interactionist view that there are certain effects which are inherent to the drug - that irrespective of culture or context, cannabis has certain automatic effects. As such his account betrays a major theoretical inconsistency in his work. This takes the form of his denial of the human capacities of consciousness and intention which, throughout the rest of his book, are continually emphasized as comprising central elements in the process of becoming deviant. As Matza (1969, p.126) suggests,

Momentarily, the subject ceases to preside; momentarily, he is half-asleep ... a first effect of marihuana is a diminished consciousness ... Half-asleep, the subject cannot perceive the effects on himself of the substance he is using.

In other words, then, the reason why the subject does not recognize the effects is not because he does not know how but rather because the substance itself prevents him from engaging in such interpretation.

These 'sociological' accounts of Becker and Matza provided the occasion for addressing the ways in which members themselves understood the production or non-production of initial cannabis experiences. Users who did not become high on the occasion of their initial use of cannabis



were accordingly asked how such a state of affairs could be accounted for. A variety of explanations were offered, some of which resemble those provided by Becker, whilst others indicate additional 'conditions' of becoming high on occasions of initial use, at least from the point of view of users themselves.

As suggested by Becker, one way of accounting for the lack of effects on occasions of initial use is that the novice user does not possess the skills necessary for the production of 'recognizable effects'. Users in this study cited their lack of the requisite skills as a way of accounting for their 'failure' to become high:

- (1) I didn't know how to smoke, you know, inhale and hold the smoke.
- (2) I knew nothing of the technique of getting stoned.
- (3) Probably because I didn't know how to smoke a joint to full effect.
- (4) Inadequate inhalation and over-anticipation.

These extracts confirm the explanation suggested by Becker and his musicians for the lack of effects on the occasion of initial use.

Other users, however, accounted for their failure to experience real effects by citing reasons reflecting the second kind of explanation suggested by Becker, namely, the inability to recognize the effects:

- (1) Marihuana is a drug which gives enjoyment only when its effects are recognized and this comes only with practice.
- (2) I didn't get stoned I suppose because I could not tell the difference between being stoned and not being stoned.
- (3) I just didn't go into it at the time.
- (4) I am not really sure why I didn't get stoned but some evidence suggests that this not getting stoned for some time after beginning to smoke is fairly common. It may be that I expected the effects to be like alcohol.

Besides these two kinds of explanations which both Becker's and this research suggest, there are, however, several other kinds of explanations provided by users in this study which raise the possibility

of extending Becker's account of the process of becoming a marijuana user. Firstly, users in this study suggested that rather than their lack of performative and/or perceptual skills, the explanation for the lack of 'real' effects on the occasion of their initial use is to be found in the nature of the cannabis consumed on such occasions.

(1) It was lousy charge and there was not enough of it anyway.

(2) The dope wasn't any good, that's why.

The implication of this kind of explanation is that even if the novice user does employ the 'correct' technique in consuming cannabis, 'real symptoms' of being high will not be evident unless the cannabis consumed in this 'proper' manner is of sufficient quality to ensure their occurrence.

A second explanation, related to the first, and equally ignored by Becker, which is suggested by the respondents in this study, is that the first time user will not become high if the cannabis is not consumed in sufficient quantity:

(1) It was a mean joint, I guess

(2) There was not enough shit in the joint

(3) I didn't get stoned because I didn't smoke a big enough amount.

This kind of explanation, like the 'quality' explanation, suggests an extension of Becker's conditions for becoming a marijuana user - without sufficient quantity and quality of cannabis no 'correct technique' will be able to produce symptoms of being high.

Thirdly, a further type of explanation given by users in this study for their failure to become high on the occasion of their initial cannabis consumption, draws not upon performative or perceptual skills, nor upon the quality or quantity of cannabis consumed. Instead, this type of explanation cites the user's own physiological and/or psychological condition at the time of initial use. As the following extracts illustrate, this type of explanation may be linked with the second of Becker's accounts,

namely, the inability to recognize the effects:

- (1) Nervous anticipation had something to do with it.
- (2) Nervousness and being unused to the drug would explain it for me I think.
- (3) My body was not used to dope and I was very apprehensive. It was a bit like my first screw.
- (4) I was expecting too much, I was unused to marihuana.
- (5) It was an unfamiliar situation and I was tense, you know.
- (6) Because I really did not know what to expect.

The above mentioned accounts of failure to become high on occasions of initial cannabis consumption suggest that Becker's 'theory' of the production of initial effects is in need of extension. His specification of the conditions necessary for the occurrence of initial cannabis experiences is clearly derived from the accounts of his respondents. It presents two kinds of members' accounts of the non-production of initial effects as necessary conditions for experiencing such effects. If the present research were to follow Becker's lead it would be possible to suggest that further conditions be specified. In the light of the members' accounts presented above, these conditions would have to include the following: (1) the cannabis consumed must be of sufficient quality; (2) the cannabis consumed must be of sufficient quantity; (3) the user must be in a suitable psychological state; (4) the user must be in a suitable physiological state; (5) the user must possess a set of expectations which are congruent with the kind of effects which cannabis 'really' produces. This list of conditions could no doubt be extended even further as more users were asked to account for the non-production of the effects of cannabis on occasions of initial use.

The intention at this point in the analysis, however, is not to present a 'sociological' theory of the necessary conditions for having initial cannabis experiences. Rather, the intention is to show that users themselves have their own theories about such conditions which reflect the theory

presented in Becker's 'sociological' account.<sup>7</sup>

Most users who did not become high on the occasion of initial cannabis use persevered and with subsequent attempts came to perceive the effects of the drug: Qu. When did you get stoned for the first time?

- (1) The second time.
- (2) A week or so after smoking marihuana regularly.
- (3) After a few times.
- (4) About two months after.
- (5) Third time I smoked.
- (6) After a few smokes.
- (7) About my fourth smoke.
- (8) The next few times I smoked.
- (9) The second or third time.
- (10) Third or fourth time. Then more and more stoned.
- (11) About the sixth time after smoking.
- (12) Three or four times afterwards.
- (13) There was no first time as such - instead a gradual increase in awareness of what stonedness was.
- (14) The effects changed slowly. Therefore I cannot give a precise time for when I became stoned the first time.

For users who did become high on the occasion of initial use, as well as for users who became high on subsequent occasions, the effects of cannabis were for some quite surprising, whilst for others they were not surprising at all. This difference seems to be largely attributable to the person's expectations of the effects of cannabis. Thus, those users who 'knew what to expect' reported not being surprised or being less surprised at the effects than those users who did not know what to expect. The following extracts illustrate users' grounds for lack of surprise. Qu. Why do you think you weren't surprised by the effects?

- (1) I was forewarned about the effects.
- (2) I had been associating with people who smoked for some time. I was used to the atmosphere of smoking.
- (3) I was accustomed to recognizing the symptoms in other people.
- (4) I had got to know so many people who did smoke before I smoked and I had seen what reactions it had on them and I had heard them talk about it.
- (5) I had often talked about the effects with regular users.
- (6) I had heard people talk about their experiences and I had read about marihuana. I felt initiated, not surprised.
- (7) People had described the sensations to me beforehand.
- (8) I could relate the state of mind and body it produced to experiences I had had.

These extracts provide support for Becker's argument that the user learns his notions of the effects of cannabis in interaction with other users. Having learned the kind of effects to expect, the user can then check these notions against his experience of the drug. For those, on the other hand, who were surprised by the effects of cannabis when they came to perceive them, the role of expectations of the effects is equally crucial. The following extracts illustrate that 'misleading' expectations were acquired by some users. They found that this information was inappropriate for conceptualizing the cannabis experience. A state of surprise in the user when he discovered what the effects 'really' were like was the result: Qu. Were you surprised at the effects?

- (1) I experienced a great and pleasant surprise because I expected a more 'drunk' effect and little 'intellectual' value.
- (2) I expected the walls to shake and similar Dr. Who-type effects. I was surprised at how relatively sane it was, even not strange. When I recognized stonedness I realized I hadn't known quite what to expect, but that what others had described stonedness by suited what happened.
- (3) I was surprised because of misconceptions handed down by the gentlemen of the straight press.
- (4) The sensations cannot be described easily, so I did not know what to expect.

- (5) I was very surprised because I expected more exciting effects. They were not as strong as they had been reported to be.

Clearly, then, those who reported being surprised by the effects differed from those who were not surprised, in so far as they had not acquired 'accurate' conceptions of the effects of cannabis prior to initial use. However, as both surprised and non-surprised users suggest, with subsequent experience, such conceptions of the effects are acquired. These may then be used in interpreting future cannabis experiences as the user becomes oriented to them as 'the effects of cannabis'.

Acquisition of conceptions of the effects of cannabis does not cease at the point where the user becomes able to perceive them for the first time. As users pointed out, their appreciation of the effects of cannabis developed continuously in that the effects of cannabis changed with subsequent use of the drug. A number of features of members' developing appreciation of the effects of cannabis may be noted at this point. Firstly, members who had not become high on the occasion of initial use or who had experienced only slight effects reported that they experienced progressively stronger effects of cannabis with subsequent use: Qu. Did the kinds of effects that marihuana had on you change with use?

- (1) Yes, they were intensified.
- (2) Yes, its effects grew progressively more marked. I needed less to get stoned. It grew more pleasurable.
- (3) Yes, the effects got stronger.
- (4) I got more and more stoned each time for maybe a year. Then it sort of levelled out.
- (5) Yes, generally the effect became more distinct from being drunk. The effect now is in some ways more interesting but perhaps less pleasant, less of an escape.
- (6) Yes, I became stoned very constantly and needed smaller and smaller amounts to become stoned. As I understood it more I obtained more pleasure from it.

As these extracts suggest, users experienced increasingly strong effects

with subsequent use of cannabis. They clearly support Becker's finding that 'the user develops a greater appreciation of the drug's effects'.

Besides the increased awareness of their strength, a second feature of the users' developing appreciation of the effects of cannabis refers to the 'pleasure' and 'controllability' of these effects.

Qu. Did the kinds of effects that marihuana had on you change with use?

- (1) Yes, the first few times I got very stoned.
- (2) I became able to control it and define it as pleasurable.
- (3) Yes, it was at first like a voyage someone else was leading. It gradually became a more subjectively controlled experience.
- (4) Yes, perhaps in intensity. One gets to know what to do with it.

As these extracts illustrate, a second feature of users' developing appreciation of the effects of cannabis consists of the subsequent definition of the experience as both pleasurable and controllable. Such findings as are reported here fully confirm those of Becker as outlined in what he conceptualises as the 'third stage' of becoming a marihuana user, namely, learning to enjoy the effects of the drug.

#### SUBSEQUENT USE: CONCEPTIONS OF CANNABIS EXPERIENCES

As Becker (1953) suggests, with subsequent experience of the drug the user acquires 'a stable set of categories for experiencing the drug's effects whose presence enables the user to get high with ease'. As he puts it:

Users, as they acquire this set of categories, become connoisseurs. Like experts in fine wines, they can specify where a particular plant was grown and what time of year it was harvested. Although it is usually not possible to know whether these attributions are correct, it is true that they distinguish different batches of marihuana, not only according to strength, but also with respect to the different kinds of symptoms produced.

Little information, however, is provided in Becker's account about these 'stable sets of categories' in terms of which the 'different kinds of

symptoms' are interpreted. Becker's main concern is with initial effects; he is less interested in the kinds of effects which are produced with subsequent use of the drug.

Similarly, Matza's (1969) symbolic interactionist rendition of the cannabis experience provides an analytic summary of it rather than an examination of the variety of symptoms which are recognised by users. Matza conceptualizes the 'mood of marihuana' as the 'mood of dim reflectivity' and its symptoms as an emergent 'sensibility to banality'. As Matza (pp. 136-140) puts it:

Everything to be appreciated - all the objects in the 'symptoms' - are well covered by the term banal ... The fun of marihuana use is the sensibility to banality made possible by the perception of relativity, suspension of belief, and the consequent display of meaning - all directed to whatever happens to be around the mind of the subject. Belief suspended, an aesthetic of the ordinary may appear. The unappreciable may be appreciated. Thus, any object may attract the fancy of the subject; at even keel they all have suspended meaning. The 'symptoms' of being high, therefore, are in principle infinite, the only limitation being the environment of mind. Meaning restored, and glimpsed, the ordinary becomes extraordinary. Music may be heard as wholly musical, possessing tempo, melody, and other elements of its composition; water may be experienced as wholly thirst-quenching; fire as wholly burning, shimmering and glowing; pictures as representations projected in the world by someone who saw things that way; expectations, say, to engage continually in conversation as just that - expectation; long silence as acceptable, inoffensive and meaningful; food as appetizing and tasty; time as wholly a matter of ebb and flow, punctuated not by clock but by the movement or tempo of experience; sex as sensual, or even sexual; jokes - if well composed - as wholly funny; if not, as terribly flat; conversation as an oscillation of relevance and irrelevance; and so on, indefinitely.

That Matza's analytic summary of the cannabis experience indicates his 'appreciation' of it and renders with 'fidelity' its 'nature' is not in doubt here. However, it is to be regretted that further information was not provided about users' own 'stable sets of categories' of the 'different kinds of symptoms' of cannabis experiences. It is to such matters that attention was directed in this research.



In discussing members' descriptions of the effects of cannabis, it is necessary to distinguish those which are produced in 'natural' settings of social interaction amongst cannabis users from those formulated as answers to questions posed by investigators in the setting of an interview, or in the course of the administration of a questionnaire. Most studies have not acknowledged this distinction, simply relying on members' descriptions produced in the latter type of setting.<sup>8</sup> These descriptions of the nature of drug experiences are then held to portray members' conceptions of the effects of cannabis. It must be remembered, however, that such 'data' is a product of investigator-cannabis user interaction in a specific situation just as the descriptions formulated by cannabis users in their own company are situationally specific. It cannot, therefore, be assumed that users' descriptions of their cannabis experiences will be the same in both situations or that the relationship between them will be one of correspondence. The extent to which members' descriptions refer to 'situationally abstract' conceptions of the effects of cannabis is clearly problematic.<sup>9</sup>

This study attempts to take into consideration this problem by providing members' descriptions of their cannabis experiences in each of the types of setting mentioned above. Thus, descriptions were derived first, from participant observation of cannabis users in natural settings; second, from interviews with cannabis users where questions were asked about their cannabis experiences, and third, from members' answers to questions contained in an open-ended questionnaire about the effects of cannabis.

#### DESCRIPTIONS IN NATURAL SETTINGS

With regard to the question of members' conceptions of the effects of cannabis as evidenced in their descriptions in 'natural settings', it is clear that a wide variety of 'indexical expressions'<sup>10</sup> were used. Some of

these expressions were verbal while others were non-verbal. Typical of such verbal expressions were those which referred to the cannabis experience as one where they felt 'high', 'stoned', 'ripped', 'smashed', 'knocked out', and 'zapped'. Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) I like some Lebanese here and there, you know, to get a more flowery buzz.
- (2) ... it suits me fine to go and crash on people's floors, provided I've got plenty of dope to get me off to sleep. I'm still stoned today from last night...
- (3) You remember S? It's the same stuff, as strong as well. You wait till you've had some of this, you'll be absolutely zapped.
- (4) ... I'll tell you what happened. About half the people who have had this have said, 'Oh, I don't think much of that, just felt really knocked out!' The other half have said, 'Oh it's really good'.
- (5) I can sell you a quid's worth of Afghan, but I warn you, it really knocks you out.
- (6) This stuff is very good actually, it's not as good as the Nepalese, but it gets you very stoned.

Besides these rather specific 'subcultural' expressions for describing cannabis experiences, users also employed a variety of other descriptions which contained words and phrases commonly used to describe phenomena in other contexts. Thus, members spoke of feeling 'absolutely marvellous', of having an 'amazing' drug experience, of feeling 'good', and 'really good', often with reference to the estimated quality of the cannabis being consumed. Consider, for example, the following quotations:

- (1) S1. Not bad this combination, is it?  
S2. No, it's all right, isn't it?  
S1. It's not as good as the Nepalese though. But then nothing is.  
S2. No, nothing is. I really think that's absolutely unique. I mean I can see how there's a kind of religious aspect attached to dope, around the very best of dope, you know, people being completely mystified, you know, 'what is this effect?' I feel absolutely marvellous. At other times dope smoking degenerates into a kind of dizzy spell.
- (2) This Paki is absolutely good actually, I feel really good.

- (3) You must try some of D's South African, it's just amazing.
- (4) S1.It's ok this stuff, don't you think?  
S2.Yeah, it's a nice blow. It's good.

Further methods of referring to the user's current cannabis experience consisted of non-verbal descriptions. Such formulations consisted of the utterance of sighs, grunts and other 'appreciative' noises. These non-verbal expressions were similarly assumed by participants to be indications that the user of them was commenting on his cannabis experience and was 'high' or becoming 'high'.

Whatever the expressions employed - whether they were 'subcultural' or not, and whether they were verbal or non-verbal - it was assumed by participants in the scenes of their usage that each knew what the other meant by them. This, of course, presupposed that both speaker and hearer shared a common universe of discourse about the description and interpretation of cannabis experiences. In other words, then, it was taken for granted by the participants that symptoms of being 'high' were essentially similar for each of them : members assumed a 'reciprocity of perspectives on the 'reality' of cannabis experiences'.<sup>11</sup>

It is not possible within the confines of this chapter to do justice to members' understandings of the effects of cannabis. This is partly because of the wide variety of reported cannabis experiences. It is also partly due to the fact that it was generally agreed by members that it was not possible for their drug experiences to be satisfactorily translated into verbal expressions. Members rarely explicated the detail of their experiences to their fellows in natural settings, preferring instead to use the indexical expressions already indicated. Nevertheless, in addition to acquiring descriptions from participant observation, members were asked to describe the 'symptoms' of their experiences, in the course of interviews and the administration of a questionnaire, however unsatisfactory such procedure may be from the point of view of the correspondence of their answers with their

conceptions used in natural settings.

Before turning to the 'underlying symptoms' of cannabis experiences, however, several conclusions may be reached about members' understandings of them from their descriptions in natural settings. Thus, it is possible to detect in these accounts a number of typical features of cannabis experiences to which members were oriented. From the perspective of cannabis users themselves these features constituted 'facts of life' about cannabis and its effects. The first of these consists of the 'transiency' of cannabis effects; the second consists of the 'intensity' of them.

#### THE TRANSCIENCY OF CANNABIS EFFECTS

The effects of cannabis may be described as 'transient', in so far as members understood them to pass through a series of phases or stages, as building up and wearing off over a period of time. Members were aware that the use of cannabis did not produce 'immediate' effects; rather the effects typically 'came on'. Similarly, the effects were not regarded as 'permanent', rather, they 'wore off' after a period of time. The following extracts illustrate members' understandings of the effects as typically passing through a series of phases, that is, as transient:

- (1) I think it's beginning to have an effect.
- (2) S1.It takes a while before you realise you're stoned with this stuff.  
I.Why's that?  
S1.I find that's true with most grass, you know. Seems to take longer for the effects to come on. Just one of those things.
- (3) S1.Is it any good?  
S2.It's a creeper
- (4) This stuff gets you stoned very quickly, you know, but it only lasts for about a quarter of an hour and then it wears off.
- (5) S1.I think it's wearing off now.  
S2.Yeah, me too.

Users were aware that it took a variable amount of time before the effects of the drug became apparent. In some cases, with some types of cannabis, it seems that the effects were recognized very quickly, whilst in the case of other kinds of cannabis the effects took longer to 'come on' and the user had to wait longer before he 'got off'. When users referred to the 'creeping effect' or to cannabis as a 'creeper' they indicated that it took 'longer than usual' for the effects to become apparent and that when they did they took the user somewhat by surprise (hence the expression, 'it creeps up on you'). Having 'got off' on the effects of the drug (after anything from a few seconds to fifteen minutes after smoking, longer - up to an hour - after eating), the initial effects then gave way to the generally intensified central experience of the drug's effects ('being' as opposed to 'getting' stoned). Subsequently, the effects were defined as 'wearing off' and the user 'came down' from the heights of the earlier phases of his cannabis experience.

#### THE INTENSITY OF CANNABIS EFFECTS

Users were not only oriented to the effects of cannabis in terms of their transiency or temporality, they were also oriented to them as varying in intensity. In this regard, users distinguished between being 'mildly stoned', 'stoned', 'very stoned', 'stoned out of my mind', or even 'absolutely stoned'. There were a variety of expressions in use for describing the different levels of the cannabis experience. The following extracts illustrate the use of some of them:

- (1) This is really good dope. But I warn you it really knocks you out. I can't do anything after I've smoked it.
- (2) It's really amazing stuff. I was so smashed yesterday round at P's. I just had to crash out after a while. I couldn't take any more.
- (3) Whereas now everyone's stoned and you know, if you're really smashed and can't do much, you just happen to mention you're stoned, that's cool. Whereas if you're just gently ripped,

you're into the mood of the thing and you don't really think about it, except if you get hassled on a train or something and you're stoned and you lose your ticket, you think, 'fuck it, I'm stoned'.

- (4) We'll have a joint of the Nepalese first, get really smashed and fuck it. I reckon we'll get some more in time. I'm sure we will.
- (5) I'm not sure it's worth it actually. I had some of it and I only got a mild buzz off it. I reckon it'll be better to wait for something else.
- (6) I was extra stoned. It seemed like my body floated off on a journey.
- (7) That Paki is strong isn't it? Much better than that other stuff. I didn't get much off that at all. I think the best thing to do is to smoke a little pre-joint of it.

Beyond their understandings of the effects of cannabis in terms of their transiency and variable intensity, users saw the drug as offering the possibility of a wide range of outcomes, both desirable and undesirable, in terms of specific effects. As will subsequently be shown, it is also the case that users were aware that they could exert some control over the kinds of effects produced by the drug. Before discussing the 'controllability' and 'predictability' of the effects I shall first discuss the specific symptoms, both desirable and undesirable, which users reported.

#### SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS

Before describing members' conceptions of specific symptoms it must be pointed out that users expressed dissatisfaction with their own attempts to describe their drug experiences other than in the general terms already described. Common-sense terms of discourse, and in particular, the attempt to specify particular drug effects could not, according to users, do justice to the complexity and significance of drug experience. From their point of view, drug experiences are only understandable in their own terms. This is one reason why users did not 'in natural settings' refer to their drug experiences in detailed terms, instead preferring to employ highly indexical expressions such as those already described.

One consequence of members' dissatisfaction with their attempts to adequately depict drug experiences in linguistic formulations is the problem of describing their understandings without imposing an arbitrary classification scheme and thereby distorting the reality of the phenomenon under consideration. (Several taxonomies of cannabis symptoms were devised in the attempt to code members' descriptions of symptoms; they were subsequently abandoned on the grounds of their failure to adequately summarize members' understandings.) The scheme presented below is not intended as a definite solution to this problem. The main constructs in terms of which members' accounts of the symptoms are typified for all 'practical purposes' are as follows: perception, mood, physical reactions, and social symptoms. I shall first be concerned with desirable outcomes.

(1) PERCEPTION:

One of the most widely reported symptoms of being high is that which is variously described as 'heightened perception', 'increased awareness', 'expanded awareness', 'increased alertness' and 'enhanced concentration'. Generally speaking, cannabis was seen to improve certain perceptual capacities. The following extracts illustrate members' awareness of cannabis as productive of a general heightening and intensification of perception:

- (1) Dope tends to make me aware of things, more alert. I tend to go into things more when I'm stoned.
- (2) It heightens my perception.
- (3) Induces reflectiveness on things, including myself. Things seem more interesting.
- (4) Sometimes it heightens my concentration. Get more involved in what I'm doing, sometimes lost in it.

In terms of members' first order constructs, cannabis produced an enhanced ability to 'get into' objects of consciousness, and it is this symptom which most aptly expresses the meaning of Matza's construct, 'the sensibility to

banality'.

Beyond this general heightening and intensification of experience, members reported that they 'got into' a wide variety of specific objects of consciousness (as Matza (1969, p.139) says, the symptoms are 'in principle, infinite'). To begin with members treated changes in the perception of their own minds or consciousness as symptomatic of the cannabis experience. Consider, for example, the symptoms reported in the following extracts:

- (1) Dope turns the mind on, it gives, or it can give profound experiences.
- (2) Hash and grass make me more aware of things in my own head.
- (3) Dope helps to explore the parameters of one's own consciousness.
- (4) Marihuana is a drug that is mildly mind expanding.
- (5) Dope can really blow your mind.
- (6) Hash, at least at first, stimulates my thought processes. After a while though I tend to lose that kind of stimulation.
- (7) I become more alert, get rushes of ideas and thoughts and images.
- (8) With hash, I'd got used to much speeded-up associative thought processes.
- (9) Tends to make me introspective.

With regard to such 'introspective' symptoms, members report that their own mind or 'head' becomes the dominant focus of attention and interest.

In the following extract, one user reports that 'being into one's head' is one of the consequences of using cannabis:

H. was saying that before you smoke you are straight. After you smoke you are no longer straight because smoking dope does something to your head. Smoking dope makes you aware of things in a different way. He pointed out that this difference was not just the contrast between being high and not being high, although as he said, these states of mind are sometimes referred to as 'being straight' and 'not straight'. Rather than simply this, there was also a more permanent long-term change from being generally straight to being a head or being into one's head.



This effect, however, as the same member goes on to suggest below, is not an automatic one. According to this member's understanding of these matters, whether the consumption of cannabis was productive of such a permanent 'alteration of consciousness' was contingent on the 'type of person' one happened to be in the first place:

H. then went on to say that some people did not become heads just because they smoked dope. As he put it, 'some people are straight and smoke at the same time', that whether you become a head or not after smoking dope depends on the kind of person you are, whether you are a head and whether other people consider you to be a head'.

In so far as the user's own perceptual processes became his focus of attention and interest and even preoccupation - in so far as the member 'got into his head' - members were oriented to an expansion, however comparatively minimal,<sup>12</sup> of their own consciousness, at least to the extent that they became more aware of the workings of their own minds. Some of the symptoms of this effect of cannabis have already been mentioned, for example, increased awareness, concentration, and heightened perception. In addition, members reported that one of the most pleasurable symptoms of the cannabis experience consisted of the stimulation of mental imagery. In this regard, members reported spending time when high, with eyes closed, immersed in this 'internal' mental imagery, as well as following the train of their own thought processes. Several users reported using what they referred to as the 'picture test' (the greater the stimulation of such mental imagery, the better the quality or the 'higher' the user) in determining the quality of cannabis which they recently acquired, and reported their indulgence in what they referred to as 'mental wandering'.

Besides the user's mind becoming an object of its own attention, a second 'experiential domain'<sup>13</sup> of cannabis experiences consisted not of 'inner space' but of the 'outside world'. Within this domain 'external objects' were the focus of the subject's senses and with regard to the

latter, users were similarly oriented to a general 'heightening' and 'intensification' of experience, particularly the visual and the aural. The following extracts illustrate some of the symptoms of the effects of cannabis within this particular category:

- (1) J. was saying to me that one of the effects of taking dope was that of a 'greater interest and awareness of the small things around' him. He said that he could 'get into' such 'little things like dinging the spoon on the edge of the cup for hours' or 'just sitting watching things' or 'just listening to music'.
- (2) I can really get into things with dope, different to when I'm straight. I can really get into music or my work or just sitting around looking at other people, you know. It seems to give that breathing space where you can really look at things.
- (3) I smoked hash at this big party, the day Sergeant Pepper came out. Someone brought the album along, every one smoked a lot of hash, and I just sat mesmerised by the music, lost in it, for most of the evening.
- (4) With hash I'd got used to a heightened sense of hearing.
- (5) The major effect is an intensification of sense impressions, especially listening or looking at things. Not sure about touch though.
- (6) I can concentrate on things better. I see them in a different light.
- (7) Visual perception greatly clarified. Also hear music better.
- (8) One of the most interesting effects is when your senses get muddled up, synesthesia I think it's called you know, when you can see the notes of music, when you can see the sounds being played in your head.
- (9) Colours often seem brighter. I sometimes see patterns and auras around things, especially with very strong grass, which I find much more hallucinogenic than hash.
- (10) Things seem more pronounced. I see things better, clearer.

(2) MOOD

A second 'experiential domain' of the effects of cannabis within which a variety of symptoms were experienced may be defined as that of 'mood'.

Subsumed under this category are such 'desirable' outcomes as 'feelings of amusement', 'laughter', 'giggling' and 'hysterical laughter'. Feelings of amusement and a general sharpening of the subject's sense of humour are among the most common and first-noticed effects of the drug. It was reported that members would often break into laughter at 'trivial' or 'mundane' objects or events which 'ordinarily' would not have amused them. Similarly, it was also reported that occasionally members would burst into laughter or giggles without apparent reason:

- (1) I just started laughing, I don't know why, and it just went on like that, and everybody started laughing. It was just really nice to have a good laugh.
- (2) After an hour or so of smoking I started laughing for no explicable reason and went on for about a quarter of an hour.

A second category of effects subsumable under the concept of 'mood' consisted of feelings of 'happiness', 'feeling good', 'contentment' and 'euphoria'. The following extracts illustrate some of the symptoms of this type which were reported by members:

- (1) We smoked this stuff, B.'s bush, some Congolese I think, and it was really amazing stuff. I felt really amazing, really euphoric.
- (2) Sometimes makes me elated, other times just contented and happy, sometimes very excited, other times just sort of quietly happy.

Such symptoms as the above were often perceived as transformations or modifications of the mood of the user. Thus, users were not only oriented to cannabis as an intensifier of their perception or mood, they were also oriented to it as a mood-transforming agent. In this regard, users spoke of 'feeling better' after consuming cannabis, of feeling 'peaceful', 'contented', 'pacified' and 'relaxed' where previously they had felt 'depressed', 'uptight', 'worried', 'tense', 'anxious' and 'troubled'. Such mood-modifying properties of cannabis are illustrated in the following extracts:

- (1) It helps to relax me much more effectively than alcohol.
- (2) Tends to make me drowsy, with feelings of amusement. Those are the two main effects. Makes me relax.
- (3) It induces a relaxed state of mind and body. If I'm feeling a bit uptight or something and I have a smoke, that usually helps.
- (4) Dope gives tranquillity.
- (5) It's a pleasant relaxant.

(3) PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Desirable physical symptoms of being high included first of all those related to the perceived 'relaxant' properties of cannabis. Thus, not only was the drug understood to bring about 'mental relaxation', it was also understood to produce 'physical relaxation'. The following extracts indicate that users were oriented to the 'relaxing' or 'tranquillising' properties of cannabis:

- (1) It relaxes me, both in mind and body.
- (2) ... and it makes me physically relaxed, sort of slows you down.
- (3) I just feel I'd like to be stoned about three days a week and that just gives you a nice balance, it keeps you nice and relaxed and it makes you appreciate things when you're straight as well as when you're stoned. It helps you relax. So few people relax nowadays. Society is always rushing around at the moment. It does you good to sit down and put your feet up and get ripped.
- (4) It helps to relax you much more effectively and quickly.

At the other extreme, members reported 'feeling energetic', 'excited' and 'active' as further symptoms of being high, particularly in its early stages. For example, the following extracts show how users were aware of the drug to produce 'adrenalin rushes', 'energy' and a feeling of activity:

- (1) Sometimes I get adrenalin rushes, especially if I'm smoking very good dope, sort of feel your heart pounding away. I used to feel it in my arms, sort of tingling feeling, but I don't tend to feel that anymore. With kinds of bush too, it really can take your breath away.

- (2) In the early part, just after, just as I'm getting stoned, I feel energetic, active, you know, whereas later that sort of 'high' seems to wear off and you tend to relax more.
- (3) If I'm feeling tired and I have a smoke, it can sometimes give me energy.

Besides what might be referred to as the 'depressant' and 'stimulant' properties of cannabis, some members also reported its capacity as an effective analgesic:

Hey, this is getting rid of my headache. I can feel it pressing it down and sort of isolating it.

In addition to these desirable physical effects, users reported others which were not so much 'sought after' or 'desirable' as 'neutral' or 'side-effects' - typical effects of cannabis which were seen as concomitant to the main desirable symptoms for which the drug was used. One such 'side-effect' is illustrated in the following extract:

N. had been talking about what he could do when he left the university. He said that he did not have any idea about the kind of job he would like to do. He didn't particularly want to do anything and said that he thought that this was related to the fact that he smoked dope. As he put it, 'when you are really stoned you don't give a fuck about anything'.

Further examples of such side effects are provided in members' accounts of their experiences of feeling 'demotivated', 'lazy', 'lethargic' and 'crashed out' after having used cannabis. The following extracts reiterate this theme:

- (1) Tends to make me drowsy with occasional bursts of activity.
- (2) You always get tired in the end. If you smoke enough you'll crash out if it's any good and if you smoke enough of it.
- (3) Dope always makes me yawn. That's one of the first signs of getting stoned.

As the next quote shows, this kind of effect is particularly noticeable when cannabis is combined with alcohol:

I find it really devastating with alcohol.

In addition to the tranquillising, stimulating, pain-killing, and soporific properties of the drug, a variety of other symptoms not easily subsumed under these categories were identified by users. They included

'feelings of heaviness in the body', 'feelings of lightness', 'warm feelings in my stomach', 'tingling sensations', 'dizziness', 'reddening of the eyes', 'dryness of the mouth', 'thirst', 'hunger', 'craving for sweets' and 'loss of balance'. Some users even attested to the 'laxative' properties of the drug, on the grounds that 'it must relax the muscles or something'.

#### (4) SOCIAL SYMPTOMS

Users also reported a number of desirable effects or symptoms in terms of their interpersonal or social relations. Particularly desirable experiences were those of 'increased sociability', 'togetherness' and 'friendliness'. Consider, for example, the following quotations:

- (1) At times it has brought about feelings of great togetherness with other people, you know, feeling very close, you know, having a good time and really getting down to it.
- (2) I think smoking dope brings people together, not just in the way it brings you up against straight attitudes and everything, but just the smoking thing by itself. It's a very cohesive thing, sort of breaks down the barricades.
- (3) Increased sociability, sometimes to the point of giggling, is the main one.
- (4) I have sometimes experienced what I think was telepathic communication.
- (5) It's a general social relaxant.

As these quotations suggest, members were oriented to the certain desirable social effects of the drug and observation of the use of the drug would seem to confirm these statements. The use of cannabis often seemed the occasion of such sociability, with members engaging in 'friendly' face to face social interaction, laughing and joking. At other times, however, the use of cannabis occasioned withdrawal from such pursuits.<sup>14</sup>

#### UNDESIRABLE OUTCOMES

As was suggested earlier, users were not only oriented to the possibility of a wide variety of desirable outcomes of the use of cannabis,

they were also oriented to a range of undesirable effects of the drug. As in the case of the desirable effects, these undesirable ones may also be conceptualised as occurring within the 'experiential domains' of perception, mood, physical reactions and social symptoms.

(1) PERCEPTION

In the case of the undesirable effects of cannabis on subjects' perceptual processes, an appreciation of them may be gained through understanding that the reverse side of the coin to the 'sensitivity to banality' is not simply, as Matza suggests, the perception that life is a drag.<sup>15</sup> Rather it is 'getting hung up on things' and possibly even 'being unable to get out of things'. Expanded perception in the form of a sensitivity to banality is not necessarily a pleasurable experience; indeed, it may well be defined by the user as an uncomfortable and unpleasant one. In this connection, members reported that they had occasionally experienced such effects as 'thoughts getting out of control', 'getting too far into things', 'being unable to get out of thought spirals', 'feelings of going mad' and 'feeling paranoid'. Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) I just couldn't control the effects. I kept having these crazy thoughts about whether I was going mad, or whether I really was mad. I couldn't seem to settle down at all.
- (2) It was very unpleasant. I could hear this whining noise in my ears and it wouldn't go away. I couldn't stop listening to it. It really freaked me out.
- (3) After initial exchanges of greetings such as 'How are you?' 'I'm fine thanks', 'How are you?' M. volunteered the information that all he really wanted to do in life was to keep stoned all the time - 'I mean it's nice isn't it?' he said. I nodded approvingly. M. then said, 'But I've been overdoing it a bit lately'. I asked him what he meant by this and he replied that he had 'been going a bit mad lately, been having trouble with my head'. I asked him if this was when he smoked a lot and he affirmed that this was so - 'Yes, that's right', he said. 'I've been trying to convince myself that I was perfectly sane but all the other people at college have been telling me that I was going mad',

he said. I asked what he meant by 'going mad' and he replied, 'I have great difficulty in holding myself together these days, it's really freaking me out, I may even given up smoking for a while'. I expressed some surprise at this last remark to which M. rejoined, 'Oh yes, I mean I can't drive the car when I'm stoned like that, I have a lot of trouble keeping it together, I just don't know what's going on'. Apparently the other day he had 'really freaked out' - he had got 'so stoned' that 'I did not know whether I was coming or going'. Because he had kept on becoming so stoned he had started to refuse the joint. 'I just couldn't take it' he said.

Furthermore, rather than perception of objects becoming clarified or their distortion being defined as pleasurable, users sometimes found the 'hallucinogenic' properties of the drug uncomfortable:

Distortion of perception, particularly sense of time, I found pretty unpleasant. Also a loss of feeling of what was reality, and at times an unpleasant feeling of being awake and dreaming at the same time.

In addition to 'freaking out' in the short term, members also reported certain more 'long-term' adverse effects on perception, particularly with regard to 'memory':

- (1) J. was saying to me this afternoon that he thought that his memory had definitely got worse since he had smoked dope. He said he thought that this was because of the dope and not just because he was now several years older.
- (2) I had asked B. if he thought dope had affected his memory. His reply was that he thought dope impaired one's memory in two ways. First, it impaired memory in the sense that it was especially difficult to remember things in the short term - he cited the example of himself when he had been smoking and could not remember what he had been saying to his friend several moments before - this, he said often happened. Secondly, there was also a long term deterioration of memory - his memory was perceived by him to be not as sharp or quick as it was before he had been using dope on a regular basis, which in his case he reckoned was about four or five years.

(2) MOOD

As in the case of perception, certain symptoms subsumed under the category of 'mood' were also defined as unpleasant and undesirable. In particular, cannabis was understood by members as being a drug which could



'feed the mood it finds'. Thus, the use of cannabis could exacerbate and intensify as well as alleviate such moods as depression, anxiety, 'uptightness', fear and discontent. The following quotes illustrate members' awareness of this property of the drug:

- (1) Marihuana has a well-known tendency to exaggerate and heighten feelings already present.
- (2) I had already been in a bad mood. I was very depressed and anxious. The drug just made it worse. I thought more about what I was anxious about and got more depressed and anxious than before.
- (3) I was really down and when I smoked I just seemed to get more into it, I was really preoccupied with myself and depressed and smoking just made it worse I think.

(3) PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Physical effects of the drug may be unpleasant also. The following extracts illustrate some of those which were reported:

- (1) Once the effect was total paralysis. I found it horrific.
- (2) Sl. We ate some of this charge and after about two hours S. started shaking. He was laying on the bed and trembling and couldn't stop.  
I. What happened?  
Sl. We walked him around for a bit, gave him some water, got him to take some deep breaths. He just crashed out in the end.
- (3) I freaked out after eating an oxo sized cube of Lebanese Red. It had strange physical effects. First heartbeat, paralysis of the right side, which was temporary. Hallucinations. I couldn't communicate because things were happening so fast. It was not nice. It took effect a day after I had eaten it. I was therefore not aware of what was going on and I really thought as soon as the physical effects started that I was dying. This set up a fear which caused the rest of the time to be bad.
- (4) Yeah, Saturday I was smoking joint after joint of this other stuff, and I didn't get anything off it. It just gave me a headache, it's a drag.

(4) SOCIAL SYMPTOMS

As with the other symptoms, furthermore, users also reported that on occasion a symptom of being high in this 'experiential region' consisted

not so much of an enhanced interpersonality but an impaired one: users spoke of feeling tense and nervous in their social interaction after smoking cannabis and of one of the major symptoms of being high as a 'withdrawal' from social interaction as opposed to an immersion or engagement in it, as each of the cannabis users became more and more engrossed in his own 'internal symptoms':

- (1) Sometimes it creates barriers between me and other people. I want to communicate and can't.
- (2) C. was saying to me that he thought cannabis was a very anti-social drug, since after using it people tended to withdraw. On the other hand, he said it was its absence which brought people together, since whenever there was a shortage of it people were always running around and asking each other if they had some.

#### CANNABIS AND WORK

The overwhelming impression of the various symptoms of cannabis described in the two preceding sections is one of contradiction. The drug is perceived as capable of producing a variety of different kinds of effects, both desirable and undesirable. Such a finding, of course, should not be surprising in the light of the sociological perspective which holds that there are no inherent effects of cannabis. Rather, it supports the view that the particular effects experienced by the user depend upon the symbolic framework within which he relates to the drug. In order to further document such 'contradictions' in the kinds of effects produced by the drug the following extracts pertaining to the influence of cannabis upon the subject's ability to concentrate on his work tasks may be presented.

I was talking with W. over a cup of coffee and he brings up the subject of smoking and working. He tells me of another student who is a friend of his who, he says, cannot manage to do any work without dope; that dope enables him to 'get into his work' much better than if he is without it. I ask W. how he feels about this relationship between dope and work and he informs me that smoking prevents one from engaging in systematic work or problem solving but that it may be useful in stimulating unexpected avenues of thought and insight. But he says he is not very sure about this. He adds that he thinks it depends

on the kind of attitude one has to it, if you can afford to be relaxed about it then dope can be useful, but if you are under pressure then the dope may well impede progress he feels.

Other users were subsequently asked, 'Can you work and smoke at the same time?' These are some of their replies:

- (1) Yes, it's great. The work trip becomes much more meaningful. I might be an exception though.
- (2) Some kinds of work are OK - notes for essays: sometimes I am distrustful of stoned conclusions. Not if I have to finish something or do it in a hurry.
- (3) Yes, better (art)
- (4) I don't know. A few times I have been reading whilst smoking and found that I couldn't remember what I had read afterwards - though I could remember certain points of significance whilst smoking but not afterwards.
- (5) Yes, very often it helps concentration. I can work without a break for perhaps twice as long as I can straight and I also enjoy the work better.
- (6) Usually not, though sometimes I can concentrate better.
- (7) Yes, always to advantage. I think so anyway, but sometimes I get distracted and my attention goes elsewhere.
- (8) Tends to make it more difficult.
- (9) Not at all. I tried typing once and found myself repeating phrases about three times, making up phrases, and skipping paragraphs. However hard I tried to concentrate I could not help myself repeating the above mistakes, so after two large pages I gave up.
- (10) Not very effectively.
- (11) Difficult to concentrate.

Thus as with the other kinds of symptoms of being high already discussed these were also subject to contradictory reports. Whereas for example some users reported that their ability to concentrate was improved, others reported that it was impaired.

#### INTERPRETING THE EFFECTS

As was pointed out in chapter one, the question of the interpretation of

the effects of cannabis has been neglected by interactionist contributions to this field. Becker, for example, states that the user learns to recognize and define the effects as 'pleasurable' on the basis of a 'stable set of categories' but he does not indicate how such definitions are accomplished, nor what is meant by 'pleasurable' in the case of cannabis. Similarly, Matza - even though he attempts to capture the 'pleasure', or as he puts it, the 'fun' of cannabis use in the 'mood of dim reflectivity' and its consequence, the 'sensitivity to banality', does not address the question of how the subject interprets or categorizes the effects of cannabis. However, having discussed some of the underlying 'pleasant' and 'unpleasant' symptoms of the cannabis experience in this chapter, it is now possible to turn to the question of how the user decides that he is 'high'.

Given what has already been said about the symptoms of being 'high' the answer to the question of the interpretive work, at least on a substantive level, is relatively straightforward. Members possess, for purposes of recognition and definition, a corpus of common-sense knowledge of typical symptoms of being 'high'. In Becker's terms, such a corpus of common-sense knowledge consists of a 'set of categories' or, in Garfinkel's, an 'underlying pattern'. How then is this corpus of knowledge organized for the purpose of interpreting the effects? How is it actually used in the user's interpretive work whereby the member is able to conclude that he is 'high'?

As far as the organisation of this corpus of knowledge is concerned, it may be suggested, first of all, that it is the appearances of objects in the light of the subject's altered state of consciousness which indicate that the subject's consciousness is in fact altered. As has already been pointed out, these 'objects' are located in a variety of 'experiential domains' and pertain to those to which the subject becomes 'sensible' or attentive. It is the typical appearances of these objects which confirm

for the member whether or not he is having an experience of the type which he has come to know as 'being high'. Following this line of reasoning, it may be argued that the subject follows an interpretive rule of the following kind in interpreting his current state of consciousness as 'being high':

If the appearance of an object of the subject's consciousness corresponds to the appearances of objects of consciousness which are known to be symptomatic of being 'high', then the conclusion that the subject is 'high' is warranted.

The concept of 'interpretive rule' is used here, as in the previous chapter, to describe the way in which the members' common-sense knowledge is organised. Interpretive rules specify the typical features or symptoms of being high. They do not, however, indicate the way this knowledge is actually used in making sense of objects of consciousness.

In order to make use of his common-sense knowledge, organized as a set of interpretive rules, it is clear that the member must make use of what Garfinkel (1967) has referred to as the 'documentary method of interpretation'. This consists of

... treating the actual appearance as 'the document of', as 'pointing to', as 'standing on behalf of', a presupposed underlying pattern. Not only is the underlying pattern derived from the individual documentary evidences, but the individual documentary evidences, in their turn, are interpreted on the basis of 'what is known' about the underlying pattern. Each is used to elaborate the other'.

Thus, in making use of the kind of interpretive rule specified above, the member examines the particular appearances of objects of his consciousness. If the observed particulars correspond to those presupposed in the underlying pattern (being high) then he is able to conclude that he is high. The appearances (documentary evidences) are used to document the underlying pattern (being high) while at the same time his common-sense knowledge of being high (the underlying pattern) is used to interpret the particulars.

Just as the member uses his common-sense knowledge of the typical symptoms of being high in deciding whether he is high at all, so also

he uses it in defining his experiences as either pleasant or unpleasant, as desirable or undesirable. As has already been shown, members possess common-sense knowledge of typical undesirable cannabis experiences as well as desirable ones. This knowledge is likewise organized as a collection of interpretive rules which depict the 'underlying pattern' ('pleasurable cannabis experience') in terms of documentary evidences ('symptoms of pleasurable cannabis experiences'). The method of interpretation whereby the member applies this knowledge is essentially the same as in the case of interpreting the effects as those of being high in the first place. This section can be concluded by noting that in the case of either pleasant or unpleasant cannabis experiences the treatment by the member of symptoms as indicative of either of these kinds of experiences often acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy in that simply by defining the symptoms as indicative of (as the document of) an unpleasant or pleasant experience, the member is likely to have an experience in accord with his definition. Indeed, such interpretations in the case of subsequent unpleasant cannabis experiences such as 'getting hung up', 'fear', 'nausea', 'paranoia' may well exacerbate the kinds of experiences which the member attempts to avoid. As has been noted by other writers and by members themselves, such matters are those over which the member can exert some control : there is a recognition among members themselves of the power of definition and the consequences of emotional reaction. It is with these matters in the more general context of the determining or conditioning factors of cannabis experiences which the next section of this chapter is concerned.

#### CONDITIONS OF CANNABIS EXPERIENCES

Members not only distinguished a wide variety of effects of cannabis, they also asserted that the type of effect produced by the use of the

drug was contingent upon certain conditioning or determining factors. The following section is concerned with describing members' understandings of the production of their drug experiences in terms of such factors.

#### METHOD OF USE

To begin with, it is part of members' common-sense knowledge of cannabis that the method whereby cannabis is ingested conditions the type of effects which the member may experience. As was shown in the previous chapter, there is a variety of methods or techniques for using cannabis. These different methods are understood by members to be productive of different types of cannabis experience. For example,

- (1) Eating dope has a much more lasting and powerful effect.
- (2) I tend to save the use of my chillum for when I want to get really smashed.
- (3) It's a much cleaner high if you smoke dope straight, say in a pipe, rather than in joints. All that tobacco clogs up the experience I think.
- (4) I freaked out after eating very strong charge in a cake. The effects were very strong and uncontrollable. I panicked.
- (5) I have only every been too high after eating dope. It seems to have a much stronger effect when it is eaten.

#### QUANTITY USED

Secondly, members asserted that the effects of cannabis are contingent on the amount of cannabis consumed:

- I. Have you ever been in a situation when smoking where you felt you were 'too high' and wanted to 'come down'?
- S. Several times.
- I. Why do you think this happened?
- S. OD. I think you can have too much of anything.

The common-sense knowledge that the amount of cannabis consumed conditions the character of the cannabis experience, and in particular, makes possible the occurrence of undesirable cannabis experiences is expressed in the

notion of the 'OD' or 'overdose'. In this regard members were heard to speak of 'ODing' when reporting their cannabis experiences to one another.

#### TYPE OF CANNABIS

Thirdly, the effects of cannabis were seen to be contingent on the type, and especially the quality, of cannabis consumed. The following comments illustrate that members were oriented to different types of cannabis as productive of different types of effects:

- (1) This Paki is so much better than that other Paki.
- (2) I mean I can see how there's a kind of religious aspect attached to dope, around the very best of dope, you know, people being completely mystified - you know, 'what is this effect?'. I feel absolutely marvellous. At other times with dope that's not so good, dope smoking degenerates into a kind of dizzy spell.
- (3) A friend of mine had a useful concept which I tended to forget. He used the term 'demotivation'. I've never heard it used before, ever. In about 1962 he said that the effect of dope is one of demotivation, but, sometimes, he said that dope in general causes you to go into a state where you, ummm, you know, the things that you did were descending to an arbitrary level, you know, this kind of anxiety state you tend to get in when you are trying to get things done, you know you've got to get it together, you're sort of hustling, you don't listen to anybody, become intolerant of whatever is going on, and just do whatever you've got to do. Whereas when you are stoned you can't do this in the same way, you just tend to think 'Oh, what a fucking drag' and just forget it, and it's not so much demotivation, although you can call it demotivation, the effect is, does, tends to put you in a state where you don't feel able to adopt that particular disguise at that particular time, you don't feel like being in that state, hustling around, you think, 'Well, why should I do that? I feel quite good as I am', whereas normally you wouldn't feel that. You see where it comes is that without the dope you wouldn't be able to feel happy unless you did the work but with the dope you are able to feel happy without doing the work, so that is where it takes the motive away. You know, the motive you had for doing it is gone, you know in order to feel happy and accommodated you wanted to do the work before, but now you're stoned you don't need to. But with the very best dope I find it doesn't work like that. I've found that with the best dope it tends to release energies



and so I don't look upon the work anymore as a drag. Whereas before it was a drag that I had to do it. And when I was just sort of vaguely stoned I just don't bother to do it. But with the best I actually enjoy doing it. I look at it and start reading, and whoosh you just go straight through it like that. And that kind of scene is really good but you don't achieve it very often.

- (4) Grass makes me much higher than hash, much more euphoric.

#### MEMBER'S PHYSICAL CONDITION

The effects of cannabis were also understood to be related to the physical condition of the user. The following comments illustrate members' understandings of the effects as contingent on such a factor:

- (1) I didn't think much of that other Paki, but it might be because I've got a cold.
- (2) I felt really tired, smoking just made me crash out.
- (3) If you're feeling really fit, really energetic, I find that using dope can be so much better, you really feel it then. Like I had a game of football and when I came back I had a blow of some dope I had and it was really amazing, you know, just sort of closed my eyes and floated off, just so relaxing.
- (4) I just felt too knocked out, I was smoking when I was tired.

#### MEMBER'S PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITION

In addition, the member's psychological condition was cited as the cause of undesirable cannabis experiences in particular:

- (1) I. Why do you think people have such (unpleasant) experiences?  
S. It probably varies from person to person. But I think nervous instability might cause this.
- (2) I. Why do you think you had such an (unpleasant) experience?  
S. I guess I was emotionally unsettled at the time.
- (3) I. Can you account for why you had such an (unpleasant) experience?  
S. I already had bad moods and that made me tense.

In particular, with regard to the occurrence of undesirable effects members reported that the occurrence of such effects was contingent on their ability to control the effects:

- (1) I forgot I could control and direct the effects temporarily

- (2) I couldn't control the situation. I had never been so out of control.
- (3) If I had gone with it instead of fighting it. But the experience turned me off smoking.

#### SENSITIZATION AND TOLERANCE

The effects of cannabis were also seen to be contingent upon the amount of time which had elapsed between the present use of the drug and previous use. In the following extract, for example, the member states that he thinks the effects are 'quite good' but that the reason for this may be that a considerable amount of time has elapsed since he previously used cannabis.

I. was talking of the contrast in his way of life now that he had left the university. In the course of this conversation, he remarks, 'the shit I've just been smoking is quite good'. He then adds, 'but that might be because I haven't had a smoke for ages.'

Furthermore, not only is it believed that users become 'sensitized' to the effects of the drug after time lapses, it is also believed that with frequent and continuous use of the same batch of cannabis a tolerance to the drug can be built up:

- (1) I think you tend to get used to a particular piece of dope. I stopped getting anything off that Paki after a couple of weeks of smoking it. I had to lay off it for a few days to get anything off it.
- (2) I don't think I get as stoned as I used to, you know you look back and you remember times when you were flat on your back for a whole term or something. I mean I just don't get so stoned now but I smoke as much if not more. I reckon you just get used to it. If I don't smoke for a while though it sometimes improves.

#### COMBINATION WITH OTHER DRUGS

Another 'conditioning factor' reported by members consisted of the use of other drugs. It was believed that by mixing the use of cannabis with the use of other drugs a different kind of 'high' was thereby

produced, a 'high' which retained features of the particular 'highs' of each of the drugs but which produced an overall effect which was unique in itself. In the following extracts, it is reported that the presence of opium can alter the effect of cannabis and that, when combined with the use of dexedrine the effects of cannabis can be adversely effected:

- (1) It's got a lot of opium in it and that's why it really knocks you out, you know, it lasts a long time, once you get stoned on it, it lasts you about three or four hours and when you wake up the next day you find that it hasn't really worn off, all your joints ache in a characteristic opiated fashion, you know.
- (2) I was smoking that Nepalese on Saturday with some of these Dex. I don't think I'll be doing that again. Felt sort of immobilised, like a zombie.

#### SOCIAL SITUATION

The last of the conditions which was recognised by members as having an influence on the nature of their cannabis experiences was that of the situation or context in which the drug was used or in which the member found himself after having consumed it. As the following extracts suggest, where the user finds himself in a situation which he defines as 'uncomfortable', then an 'uncomfortable' cannabis experience may be the result:

- (1) I had been smoking before I went round to R's. I was pretty stoned and I thought it would be nice to carry on round there, give R. a turn on, you know. But when I got there, oh, he had these really straight uptight people there. I couldn't seem to relate to them at all. I started feeling really paranoid. I had to leave.
- (2) ... like the other night I went downstairs after I had been smoking and there were these other students there, people I didn't know, and they were talking you know, and I just couldn't get into a conversation with them. They seemed very straight. It was their characters. It might have been a bit different if I hadn't been stoned. But I don't think so.
- (3) I was just so smashed I couldn't communicate very well, you know, and they were expecting you to engage in this polite conversation. It was awful.
- (4) There was a feeling of tenseness in the place. Being high just made it worse.

By way of contrast, other kinds of situations are viewed as being more compatible with the use of cannabis. In such situations the effects are experienced as pleasant rather than unpleasant; both situation and the effects mutually enhance one another. The following quotations illustrate how some situations are regarded as more appropriate for experiencing the effects of cannabis than others:

- (1) We used to go up to London to concerts and things and we'd be stoned and it would be really nice, just listening to music or something.
- (2) Sometimes it's pleasant to have a smoke before going to the cinema. I always seem to enjoy the film more if I have a few smokes before I go.
- (3) There's nothing like a good blow on a nice sunny afternoon, sitting down by the lake. I really enjoy that. I like to be outside when I smoke. It seems to have a better effect.

Given these understandings of the production of the effects of cannabis, members also came to acquire a corpus of knowledge in terms of which they could organize their drug experiences and put the drug to particular uses in specific situations. Such knowledge pertained to such matters as (1) How to achieve certain kinds of cannabis experiences, and (2) How to avoid certain kinds of cannabis experiences.

#### ACHIEVING DESIRABLE CANNABIS EXPERIENCES

Achieving particularly 'strong' effects of cannabis was accomplished by consuming cannabis in those ways which the member had come to view as productive of such effects. Thus, 'strong' effects were achieved by making use of particularly high quality cannabis, by using large amounts of such cannabis and by consuming it 'neat' in a pipe, in a chillum or in a cake. Conversely, if the member wishes only to achieve 'mild' effects, then the 'appropriate' procedure is for him to consume less cannabis of lesser quality, and to avoid consuming in pipes, chillums or cakes. The most appropriate method for achieving such mild effects is by way of mixing

cannabis with a large amount of tobacco in a joint and sharing that joint with a large company of people.

Members were also aware that they could achieve desirable cannabis experiences by taking into consideration the other conditions mentioned in the previous section. Thus, desirable outcomes were seen to be more likely if the member decided to use the drug in an 'appropriate' situation, if he was in a 'good mood', and if he was in a healthy psychological and physiological state.

- (1) The best situations for smoking dope are those where you can relax, where nobody is going to hassle you and you can just get into things and do your own thing.
- (2) If I'm happy, it makes me feel better, if I'm down, it often makes me feel worse.

#### AVOIDING UNDESIRABLE EFFECTS

Members were also aware of different methods of avoiding the occurrence of undesirable cannabis experiences. One method was to control the amount of the drug consumed.

Qu. How can you avoid such (unpleasant) experiences?

- (1) By moderating the amount smoked.
- (2) Control intake.
- (3) I had been talking with T. about a recent experience of his which he had described as very unpleasant. I had asked him why he thought it had occurred and he had told me that it was because he had had more than he usually has.
- (4) Don't smoke so much.
- (5) By not taking too much.

As has also been shown, members understood that the effects of cannabis were also situationally determined. Given this understanding, members found that one method of avoiding the occurrence of effects which were unpleasant was that the member simply had to avoid unpleasant situations:

- I. How do you think one can avoid such experiences?
- S. By finding out by experience what is potentially a bad situation and not repeating it.

In addition, the recipe for the avoidance of undesirable experiences was also seen to reside in the member's 'attitude' towards the effects, his familiarity with the effects, and in the knowledge - the self-assurance - that the effects will pass:

- (1) I think you can avoid it largely by accepting that certain feelings, for example, loss of sense of reality, need not be worrying. This is in part a question of getting used to the drug feeling. Also by recognizing that the feeling will pass, which one doubts when one first experiences them.
- (2) I. How do you think that one can avoid such experiences?  
S. It just comes with practice.
- (3) I. How do you think that one can avoid such experiences?  
S. Only by fully relating and understanding and wanting to be stoned.
- (4) I. How can you avoid such experiences?  
S. By self-control, but you've either got it or you ain't, I suppose.

Lastly, as the following quotes suggest, the member learns that the effects of cannabis are conditioned by the subject's mood:

- (1) I. How can you avoid such experiences?  
S. By smoking only when you are feeling right and by relaxing fully.
- (2) I. How can you avoid such experiences?  
S. By not worrying about it, by not getting uptight or freaking out. Just staying calm.

#### CONCLUDING NOTE

In this chapter, members' conceptions of the effects of cannabis have been analysed. Particular attention has been focused on certain aspects of this phenomenon which have hitherto been neglected by previous interactionist contributions to this field. In this regard, the major concern in this chapter has been with members' conceptions of the underlying symptoms of cannabis experiences, with members' methods of interpretive work whereby their experiences are categorized and with their understandings of a variety

of conditions or contingencies of different types of cannabis experiences. Lastly, it has been suggested that, given their knowledge of the effects of cannabis, members' are able to select appropriate occasions for consuming the drug.

CHAPTER SIX

THE MORALITY OF CANNABIS USE



In the last chapter, attention was focused on members' conceptions of the effects of cannabis. In so doing, an attempt was made to enlarge upon symbolic interactionist work on the 'definitions of the situation' which are involved in making sense of the effects of cannabis. The analysis is extended in this chapter by examining members' conceptions of the 'morality' of cannabis use. As in the previous chapter, the starting point of the analysis consists of symbolic interactionist work on this topic.

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, the warrant for directing attention to members' conceptions of the morality of cannabis use is that not only do members acquire conceptions of cannabis, its uses and effects, they also acquire 'favourable definitions' which 'permit' them to engage in the use of cannabis in spite of adverse moral conceptions of the practice. Adverse moral conceptions comprise 'unfavourable definitions' of the use and effects of cannabis which, according to Becker (1963, p.61), 'function' as a major form of social control whereby the use of cannabis is inhibited. They are embodied in the stereotype of the 'dope fiend' who is conventionally pictured as a person who violates 'two basic moral imperatives': (1) one must be responsible for one's own welfare and (2) one must be able to control one's behaviour rationally. Using cannabis, in this stereotypical view, leads to the violation of these imperatives through, for example, the destruction of will power, the release of inhibitions and restraints, and the breakdown of moral barricades.<sup>1</sup>

As Becker (ibid, pp.72-78) suggests, for use to begin and persist the member must learn favourable definitions of the use of cannabis whereby he can overcome these adverse moral conceptions. This is achieved 'by accepting an alternative view' of cannabis use to that contained within the stereotype. Such a view serves to 'neutralize' the user's sensitivity to the stereotype, making possible initial, subsequent and increased usage.

Becker states that the 'beginner' has at one time accepted the conventional picture and that initially he comes to acquire an 'emancipated view of the moral standards implicit in the usual characterization of the drug user ... in the course of his participation in an unconventional segment of society ...' (ibid p.73). Subsequently, the member learns a series of 'rationalizations and justifications with which he may answer objections to occasional use if he decides to engage in it' (ibid, p.74). Several such rationalizations and justifications are suggested by Becker: (1) conventional persons indulge in much more harmful practices; a comparatively minor vice like marihuana smoking cannot really be wrong when such activities as the use of alcohol are so commonly accepted; (2) instead of being harmful, the drug's effects are in fact beneficial; (3) if use is scheduled, the user can reassure himself that the drug can be controlled; this then becomes a symbol of its harmlessness. 'Regular' use is likewise sustained through the use of such rationalizations as the drug's harmlessness, and beneficial effects, its controllability, and the normality of its use.

The work of Becker and others on the morality of cannabis use<sup>2</sup> reflects a traditional symbolic interactionist interest in the ways in which persons 'account' both to themselves and others for their acts in the face of adverse moral conceptions of them.<sup>3</sup> Such contributions, both to the study of cannabis use specifically and of deviant behaviour more generally, have, in the main, been oriented to members' accounts of their acts as resources in the sociological explanation of them.<sup>4</sup> Rationalizations, neutralizations, justifications and vocabularies of motive comprise central elements in the process of symbolic interaction leading to the commission of deviant behaviour. This is so because it is claimed that such 'accounts' - such a process of self-accounting - consist not simply of excuses or justifications formulated after the event for the benefit of 'external' audiences, they also comprise an important means whereby the member is able to engage in deviant behaviour in the first place.<sup>5</sup>

As suggested in chapter one, this perspective raises such questions as the following: (1) What are members' conceptions of the morality of the use of cannabis? (2) What kinds of accounts do members provide for the use of cannabis?

If, on the other hand, a phenomenological perspective is adopted on these matters - and members' accounts are thereby treated not as resources in sociological explanations of deviant behaviour but as topics in their own right - then attention is directed not only to the nature and content of members' accounts of their deviant behaviour and to their conceptions of the morality of cannabis use, but also to a rather different set of questions. As Douglas (1970, pp.11-12), summarizing the phenomenological perspective on morality, suggests:

We must, then, shift the focus of our analyses of moral experience. Rather than attempting to analyze moral experience in the abstract, or independently of its social context, we must always focus on the everyday uses of morality, both through linguistic statements and by other forms of communication, found in social interaction. When we shift our focus in this way we become concerned with somewhat different questions .... with the conditions under which the members of society consider any concrete thing to be moral or immoral.

In addition, then, to the overlapping interest in members' conceptions of the morality of the use of cannabis, the adoption of a phenomenological perspective on these 'moral matters', as suggested in chapter one, directs attention to such questions as the following: (1) On what grounds is the morality or immorality of cannabis use decided? (2) How is the morality of cannabis use sustained in social interaction?<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the ensuing discussion addresses itself to four main issues. The first and second represents an overlapping interest to both symbolic interactionists and phenomenologists; the third and fourth represent topics of more exclusive phenomenological interest. These issues are:

- (A) Members' accounts of their use of cannabis.
- (B) Members' conceptions of the morality of the use of cannabis.
- (C) Members' methods of deciding the morality of the use of cannabis.
- (D) Members' methods of sustaining the morality of cannabis use in 'natural settings'.

#### A. ACCOUNTING FOR THE USE OF CANNABIS

In order to acquire information about how members accounted for cannabis use, members were asked motivational questions about their initial and subsequent use of the drug.<sup>7</sup> In the light of previous symbolic interactionist work on this topic it was anticipated that questions about initiation and continuation of cannabis use would provide rationalizations and justifications - accounts - which would include reference to members' moral conceptions.<sup>8</sup> However, the most striking feature of the accounts produced through the use of this technique was that, in the absence of direction from myself towards these moral issues, members' accounts did not address such phenomena. Instead, their accounts made use of motivational constructs which contained little reference to their conceptions of morality. In order to elicit the latter, a set of questions pertaining to the illegality of cannabis use were asked. Before examining these replies, however, a brief excursus on the nature of their replies to motivational questions is provided.

Members made use of four main types of motivational construct in their replies to motivational questions about their initial and subsequent use. These ranged from the voluntaristic to the involuntaristic or deterministic,<sup>9</sup> and may be conceptualised as 'purposes', 'reasons', 'triggers' and

'predisposers'.<sup>10</sup> Purposes may be seen as goals, objectives, plans or projects. For a motive to be a purpose it must have a future reference in the subjective experience of the member at the time of the act. Purposes can always be preceded by 'in order to ...' In this way they correspond to Schutz's notion of the 'in order to motive'.<sup>11</sup> They assert the voluntaristic nature of the act in question.<sup>12</sup> Purposes can be distinguished from a second type of motivational construct which may be referred to as reasons. A motive which is a reason exists in the present tense in the subjective experience of the act or at the time of the act and can be preceded by 'because' but not by 'in order to'. Like purposes, reasons imply the conscious and voluntaristic nature of acts. The third type of motive may be referred to as the trigger. These are features of the situation or context of the act which are instrumental in arousing those 'internal' states which have been referred to as purposes and reasons. The trigger 'sets off' the act. Externally, the trigger consists of events and/or persons which stimulate or facilitate the act in question in a particular situation. Internally, the trigger refers to such 'internal events' as 'sudden impulse' or 'I suddenly got the idea that I wanted to ...'<sup>13</sup> The fourth type of motive - predisposers - is 'involutaristic' and refers to biographical factors and forces which are seen to determine persons to act in particular ways. In this way they correspond to Schutz's notion of the 'genuine because motive'.<sup>14</sup>

(i) Initial use

Members made use of a variety of purposes in accounting for their initial use. These included 'finding out what the effects were', 'trying the buzz', and 'seeing what sort of change it would bring about'. The main acknowledged purpose was to experience the effects of cannabis. The following extracts are illustrative of such purposive accounts:

- (1) I. Before you took any dope, what did the idea of it mean to you?  
S. It didn't mean anything else, it just meant that I wanted to try the buzz.
- (2) I. When you first took it, did you take it just to get high or what?  
S. I just wanted to see what it was like.
- (3) I. Did you ever think about using dope before you actually did?  
S. Yes, I, you know, I wondered about it, but then there wasn't so much talk about cannabis, it was more about pills and that. I thought, 'just what is it like?' you know, 'Is it going to make any difference? Is it going to make me change my mind'. Because I thought it would be more of a mental change than a physical change which I expected pills were. I just wanted to see what kind of change it would have, what the effects were.
- (4) The change, I hadn't thought about that so much, but I wanted to see what it was like.
- (5) I. What did you think about drugs before you took any?  
S. Well, I really wanted to try drugs, you know, I had this set in my mind that as soon as I came on things, like acid and dope, rather than h. and I thought this would be a really good thing.

As these extracts indicate, members' purposes imply the voluntaristic nature of initial use. They suggest that the member freely chose to engage in it.

Like purposes, reasons also indicate the conscious and deliberate choice of the individual in initial cannabis use. In this way, members made use of four main kinds of reason for their initial cannabis use: curiosity, expectation of beneficial effects, the appeal of the activity, and the harmlessness of the drug. Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) I. You wanted to try hash before you did?  
S. It was just basic curiosity. Not sort of any intellectual reasoning behind it.
- (2) S. I never read the newspapers very thoroughly. I had just skimmed through and all I got was that these things would make me feel really good. I didn't think too much about after effects like the possibility of a comedown or anything.

- (3) S. I was fifteen or sixteen when I first had a smoke and at that time everyone was raiding chemists and getting blues or whatever they call them pills. Well, I've never touched them, I've never had any speed or anything or a pill in my life at all, you know, and I was more worried about that because I didn't want to stay up all night, jiggling myself to fuck, because it really bored me. I thought, you know, it's nice just to sit around smoking and talking. It appealed to me more. It seemed more what I wanted to do.
- (4) S. I wanted to see what it was like because I'd heard of people who had smoked and it didn't seem to do any harm to me and yet there was a lot of fuss because it was illegal and so on, you know. That I guess was it. I hadn't thought about charge so much. This friend of mine said, you know, that it was really good and really relaxing.

As suggested earlier a category of accounts which stands midway between purposes and reasons and predisposers is that of triggers. This type of motivational construct was used to make reference to such phenomena as other people, events and situations which were instrumental in 'triggering off' member's initial cannabis use. Thus, members accounted for their initial cannabis use in this way by referring to their presence at parties where their initial drug use 'just happened', to their friends making some available to them and to the rest of the group in which they were participants, and to the fact of their membership of a particular group of persons. The following extracts are illustrative of members' accounts which made use of the idea of the 'trigger':

- (1) I. When you first started taking dope did you make a conscious effort to go out and find it or did it just sort of happen?  
S. When I first started it just happened. I was at a party and someone was smoking and just offered you the joint, that was all. That's how it was when I first started.
- (2) S. Looking back on it now I honestly could not say why I began to smoke. A guy I knew scored and we all smoked. It was as simple as that.
- (3) I. How did you get into it?  
S. I got into it here at college.  
I. Did you look around for it?  
S. Well, no, I just had some friends who just sort of started rolling joints, basically, and it did change my circle of friends to some extent. Like I met some

people who sort of smoked so I had a smoke with them and which led to sort of more smoke, smoking, sort of built up like that which made me sort of, since I was quite paranoid at that time about dope, about getting caught, about getting busted, sort of made me lose contact with other people, with people who didn't smoke, with people who didn't trip.

- (4) I. Well, how did you come to get into drugs then?  
S. Well, a friend of mine at school had a friend from outside the school and got some for us.
- (5) I first smoked hash around Easter 1967. Sitting drinking with a group of friends I'd met through a peace action group, in a flat. One of us began rolling cigarettes, crumbling some sweet smelling stuff into them and passing them around. We all smoked.

A fourth category of account referred to conditions and circumstances which were deterministic in the member's initial drug use. In contrast to the individualistically oriented accounts of sexual offenders, the predisposing factors identified by cannabis users in this research consisted mainly of cultural or social factors; members saw their participation in a particular community or culture as predisposing them to engage in activity which was widespread in that culture. Consider, for example, the following accounts of such cultural predisposition:

- (1) I. How did you get into it?  
S. I initially got into it through the music, not through dope, through sort of groups and things and it was just part of it. Sort of the music and the dope sort of followed as part of it. Sort of one led to the other really.
- (2) I first smoked marihuana when I was in the first year sixth. Myself and several friends had become interested in the flower power movement in 1967 and began to listen to John Peel's show as if it was a religious service. It was that sort of situation.
- (3) When I first smoked hash it was like just one more aspect of a community of friends that already existed.

(ii) Subsequent use

As far as members' accounts of their subsequent use is concerned, members report a much wider range of purposes than in the case of their initial use.<sup>15</sup> Members' accounts included reference to such purposes as the following: to achieve pleasure, to experience the effects of the drug,



to get high, to relieve tension, to get smashed, to make it part of one's lifestyle, to conform to the expectations of others, to increase enjoyment of other activities, to turn a friend on, to do a friend a favour, to assess a new batch of cannabis, to reciprocate past favours, to relax and to expand one's consciousness. The following extracts are illustrative of the use of purposes in accounting for subsequent use of cannabis:

- (1) I. Why do you smoke?  
S. Pleasure, I guess. I smoke to get stoned.
- (2) I mean even when I revised for my A levels and I got good A level results, well I was smoking every week then. Well, when I was revising, just to relieve the tension, say twice during the week and at the weekends after I'd finished revising I'd have a couple of joints.
- (3) We'll have a joint of the Nepalese first, get really smashed and fuck it. I reckon we'll get some more in time. I'm sure we will.
- (4) I smoke pretty openly now, I have small amounts on me, like when I'm going up to London on a train or driving or something, I always smoke, just to make it part of my life.
- (5) S1. Shall we try some of that; see what it's like. It doesn't look too bad actually.  
S2. If you want to, yes.

Similarly, members also made use of a range of reasons for their subsequent use, both in general and on particular occasions. Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) I. Why do you take drugs?  
S. Because I like the high basically, because I like getting stoned or tripping out.
- (2) I. Why do you smoke dope?  
S. Because I like doing it, I think it's good for you. I think it does people good to sit down and get stoned. It slows you down and makes you appreciate things.
- (3) I. Why do you smoke?  
S. It varies. I might just feel like a smoke, like getting stoned, you know.

- (4) I. How come you decided to have a smoke at that time (before breakfast)? Do you usually?  
S. I just felt like it, that's all. I felt like having a stoned day.

As has already been suggested, triggers constitute an intermediate category of motives which stands midway between the voluntarism of purposes and reasons and the determinism of predisposition. As far as their subsequent use of cannabis was concerned, members made use of such triggers as attendance at parties, dances and concerts where cannabis was available, visiting and being visited by persons who made the drug available to the member, simply being 'offered the joint', and particular occasions when or situations where the use of the drug was a routine feature of these occasions and situations. The following quotations indicate the use of such triggers in accounting for subsequent use:

- (1) .... a friend of mine might come round, say R. If he came round I'd roll a joint and we'd have a smoke.  
I. Why?  
S. I don't know. He is one of the people that I smoke with. We usually have a blow if either of us has got any dope.
- (2) I. How come you were smoking last night?  
I thought you didn't have any.  
S. D. brought some over that he'd scored that afternoon, said did we want to have a blow. It was really nice. A nice surprise.
- (3) I. How did you manage that? (smoking at a concert)  
S. I was just sitting there and this guy down the row lights up. It just got passed down the line.

Members' use of predisposers as a motivational construct with which to account for subsequent use referred to such 'involuntaristic' factors as participation in the 'drug community', membership of the 'counter culture', habit and the kind of way of life which the member leads.<sup>16</sup> The following extracts contain reference to these types of accounts:

- (1) I. Why do you smoke dope?  
S. Habit I guess.
- (2) I. Why do you take dope?  
S. I find it very difficult now to define exactly why I continue to take drugs. It is just something that I do, a habit I suppose although that word has a perjorative meaning these days thanks to the mass media.
- (2) I. Why do you smoke?  
S. I just smoke because it's part of my life. It's just something that I'm into at this point in time. All my friends smoke. It's just like being part of a community of people with the same sort of outlook and it's part of that.

#### B. CONCEPTIONS OF THE MORALITY OF CANNABIS USE

Limited insight into members' conceptions of the morality of the use of cannabis was gained through their replies to motivational questions.<sup>17</sup> Instead, appreciation of these conceptions was derived from members' answers to a rather different set of questions, namely those which focused on members' views on the illegality of cannabis<sup>18</sup> and from their everyday moral utterances. Thus, members were asked if they agreed with the illegality of the drug, if they thought that cannabis should be legalised and to comment on the grounds upon which they reached their conclusions. The following section reports members' conceptions of the morality of cannabis use as revealed through such questions. Members' everyday moral utterances are examined in the last section of this chapter.

Members were aware that the use of cannabis was illegal and that sanctions could be imposed by the courts if they were discovered in possession of the drug by agents of social control.<sup>19</sup> They took precautions against such an eventuality.<sup>20</sup> However, whilst it was acknowledged that cannabis use was 'deviant' in the sense that it was illegal, the authoritative claim that it was also immoral was not accepted. Members recognised 'ban' as a 'fact of life' but they regarded such a state of affairs as unwarranted, even immoral, in the light of their common-sense knowledge of the 'facts of life about dope'. They saw the attempt to

suppress the use of the drug as misguided and unjustified. Throughout, members evidenced little concern to excuse or justify or otherwise neutralise their behaviour in a vocabulary which assuaged the norms from which they deviated.<sup>21</sup> Instead, members challenged the very legitimacy of these norms. The following extracts illustrate members' refusal to accept the condemnation of cannabis as an immoral phenomenon:

- (1) .... I mean, to put it incredibly simply, by society's definition smoking is wrong, it is illegal, it is against the law, full stop. If you get into a head scene, if a person is a head, that sort of definition ceases to have any meaning anymore ... one learns through simply having broken a part of an institutional moral code, you realise not only that you've broken it, but that the code is wrong, not that you are wrong by breaking it, you know.
- (2) I. Do you think it should be illegal?  
S. I don't see anything wrong in it. If I did I wouldn't do it, would I? If other people want to think it's wrong, it's their business.
- (3) I. Do you think dope should be legalised?  
S. Yes, I do.  
I. Why? On what grounds?  
S. The more appropriate question, you know, is why is it illegal. I've yet to hear a good and sufficient reason.

In terms of cannabis users' own view of the morality of cannabis use, such a practice was not immoral, even if it was illegal. Rather, its very proscription was seen as immoral.<sup>22</sup> These conclusions were based on members' own experience of the drug - in their knowledge of the 'facts of life about dope' which were taken for granted and drawn upon in the course of their cannabis use - and on 'evidence' provided by others, including 'authoritative' reports such as that of the Wootton Committee.<sup>23</sup> The following section examines the use of this range of symbolic support in claiming that cannabis was unjustly proscribed.

### C. INTERPRETING THE MORALITY OF THE USE OF CANNABIS

Members were aware of several conventional contentions which were used to sustain proscription of the use of cannabis. These included the contention that cannabis was harmful or potentially harmful, that it

produced dependence, and that it led to the use of other, and in particular addictive, drugs such as heroin. Members countered the adverse moral conceptions embodied in these contentions by drawing on their knowledge of the properties of cannabis and the consequences deriving from its use and by providing a collection of justifications for their conclusion that the law against cannabis was wrong. The following section provides a description of these justifications.

(i) Cannabis as harmless

To begin with, the conclusion that the use of cannabis was unjustly proscribed by law was based upon what may be seen as a 'denial of injury'<sup>24</sup> whose intention or function is not to assuage the norm being broken but to challenge it and demonstrate its inapplicability to the case of cannabis. Thus, according to members, cannabis was a harmless drug - one which was harmful in neither a psychological nor a physiological sense. The following extracts illustrate the use of this 'technique' in claiming that the drug is unjustly subject to 'ban'.

- (1) Charge to me is simply a pleasurable and harmless drug. I can't see any harm in using it at all.
- (2) Marihuana is not harmful to health. It doesn't damage your health, either physically or psychologically, at least not for adults who are aware. It is, for instance, far less harmful than alcohol.
- (3) I. Are you in favour of legalising it?  
S. Definitely.  
I. Why? On what grounds?  
S. It's not harmful.
- (4) It shouldn't be illegal because it hasn't been proved harmful.
- (5) Anyway there is a lack of scientific support for its prohibition. The weight of socio-statistical evidence suggests the inadequacy of the present legal position.

(ii) Cannabis as non-addictive

The conception of cannabis as harmless was supported by the claim that it was also non-addictive.<sup>25</sup> Members reported that they did not encounter

physical or psychological problems when they stopped using the drug for any particular length of time. They did not 'need' to take it. If they did take the drug, it was emphasized that such consumption was freely entered into with no feeling of compulsion. The following extracts make use of this kind of justification in reaching the conclusion that cannabis should not be proscribed by law.

- (1) I never have any trouble if I stop smoking for a while. It doesn't seem to have any sort of addictive properties about it.
- (2) I. Do you think it's addictive at all?  
S. Not at all. I don't have any bad physical effects or anything if I don't have any for a while. I think I miss it but not in a physical way, not at all.  
I. In a psychological way?  
S. Well, I think you get used to things, to anything that you like doing but that doesn't mean that you are addicted to it.

(iii) The use of cannabis as a victimless crime

Closely linked to the first two justifications is a third which may be seen as a 'denial of the victim'<sup>26</sup> where, like the first two justifications, the purpose of its provision is one of rejection of, rather than accommodation within, the law being broken. Thus members claimed that it was immoral to punish acts which were without victims or where the only 'victim' is the actor himself.<sup>27</sup> Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) It shouldn't be illegal because it hasn't been proved harmful and no person has the right to stop another from doing something which is not harmful to himself or others.
- (2) The effects are no more harmful than those of alcohol. The present law results in the unjust punishment of those who have not harmed themselves, other people or society. Even if it is argued that there may be harmful consequences of which we are not fully aware, this must be completely established before a law which does harm to individuals can be justified. The law should not punish actions which are self-regarding in the J. S. Mill sense.

(iv) Cannabis and other drugs

Members not only drew on their own experience of the drug in itself to reach the conclusion that it was not harmful; they also cited 'authoritative' reports like that of the Wootton Committee to support their claims and they made comparisons between the effects of cannabis and those of other drugs, notably legal ones like alcohol and tobacco.<sup>28</sup> In this way, the banning of cannabis on the grounds that it might be harmful was countered with a non-accommodative version of the 'condemnation of the condemners'.<sup>29</sup> Thus:

- (1) It is absurd to punish people for the use of hash when it is obvious that it is less harmful than alcohol and tobacco.
- (2) It is not addictive, not like alcohol can be. It's not habit forming in the way that tobacco is. You don't have any trouble giving it up if you have to for any reason or if you run out of it.
- (3) Alcohol is such a messy stupid slippery slidey drug. It makes you physically helpless and repulsive. Charge is none of those things.
- (4) It is less harmful to health than legal drugs like alcohol. As a drug it is not physically incapacitating as much as alcohol. Unlike alcohol it's a pleasant socialiser and thought stimulant. There is no proof that it is harmful to individuals physically or leads to addiction to hard drugs.
- (5) The Wootton Report and my personal experience have proved to me that it is harmless, though it should be respected. Other drugs are not. Like people tend to think that charge and heroin are both illegal and if charge is a harmless buzz, then heroin must be the same. And in any case, both alcohol and tobacco are more dangerous and yet are legal.
- (6) It doesn't make you become an addict, or renders you physically helpless in any way and is not in any way repulsive or revolting like alcohol.

To members, it is 'obvious' that cannabis is less harmful than alcohol and tobacco. Such a conclusion is grounded in their own experience of each of the three drugs mentioned and is buttressed by reports on the

experiences of others. In particular, the 'obviousness' of this conclusion is based on such knowledge of the relative merits of cannabis as compared with alcohol as the following: cannabis does not cause hangovers, it is non-addictive, it is not physically harmful, it is not psychologically harmful, and it is not socially harmful in the sense that it does not cause people to become violent or induce them to engage in such 'anti-social' behaviour as dangerous or 'drunken' driving.

It was also pointed out that legal drugs such as alcohol and tobacco had been proved to be harmful but that they remained legal whilst cannabis, which had not been proved to be harmful, remained illegal.<sup>30</sup> This, according to members, revealed the hypocrisy and bias of those who would seek to maintain its legal proscription. Furthermore, some members went on from this point to argue that it was because of the influence of the alcohol lobby that cannabis remained illegal, since, it was argued, the manufacturers stood to lose money were cannabis made legal and people came to appreciate the relative benefits of the effects of cannabis compared with those of alcohol.

(v) Beneficial effects

The use of cannabis and the advocacy of its legalisation were justified not only in terms of denials of harmfulness, but also in terms of assertions of a variety of beneficial effects and consequences of the use of the drug. In the following quotation, cannabis use is justified in view of the member's belief that the drug is 'good for you really in lots of ways':

I think it's good for you really in lots of ways if you use it. Like some people can smoke all day and it can just do them good all the time. I don't know, I just feel I'd like to be stoned about three days a week and that just gives you a nice balance, it keeps you nice and relaxed and it makes you appreciate things when you're straight as well as when you're stoned. It helps you relax. So few people relax nowadays. Society is always rushing around at the moment. It does you good to sit down and put your feet up and get ripped.



Other users echoed these opinions:

- (1) I. Do you think that it should be legalised?  
I think it would be a good idea if it was legalised.  
It turns on the mind, gives profound experiences.  
It helps to relax you much more effectively and quickly.
- (2) The effects usually induce a relaxed state of mind and body. I reckon like if everyone smoked pot there would be no more wars.

(vi) Adverse consequences of prohibition

The definition of cannabis as a dangerous drug and the illegality of its use was also countered with a further version of the condemnation of the condemners through arguing that proscription was unjustified on the grounds that it produced certain adverse consequences. The particular consequences so produced would not, it was claimed, prevail if cannabis were legalised.

The first of these adverse consequences, deriving from the fact of ban, is that 'criminals' could profit by selling cannabis. Its legality, as the following extracts suggest, would remove the market for cannabis from the clutch of such profiteers:

- (1) If it were made legal it would take the market out of the hands of the underworld.
- (2) Keeping it illegal otherwise attracts the criminal element. There wouldn't be so much money in it for them if it were legalised.

From the perspective of users themselves, then, the definition of cannabis as a dangerous drug and the banning of its use contributed to the involvement of profiteering criminals in the distribution of the drug. The theory held by members is that legalisation would constitute one way of preventing this involvement since it would remove a potential source of profit for such persons.

A second adverse consequence of illegality is that it led to confusion amongst some people about the dangers of other drugs. It was argued that

by linking together cannabis with other much more harmful drugs, such as heroin, current legal policy was in fact contributing to the progression of persons from soft to hard drugs. The following extract makes this point:

The fact that it is illegal can make you aspire to a hard drug scene, especially amongst teenagers. This is probably the best reason for legalising it as the attractiveness of the heroin and coke scene would vanish.

Legalising cannabis, then, would remove the drug from a homogeneous 'drug subculture'.<sup>31</sup> Were cannabis legal, then the necessity of participation with persons who might make progression to other drugs a possibility would be obviated. There would no longer be any need to interact with persons who used or were able to make available other, more dangerous, drugs.

(vii) Arguments against legalisation

The foregoing analysis of members' grounds for regarding cannabis as unjustly defined as deviant is not intended to give the reader the impression that all members wished to see cannabis legalised. Thus, even whilst members saw the law against cannabis as immoral, many of them at the same time did not want to see cannabis given an official stamp of approval. Three main arguments were put forward against legalisation; the first was economic, the second political, and the third, 'socio-political'.

There are two variants of the economic argument against legalisation. The first takes the view that legalisation would make selling the drug to fellow cannabis users no longer a profitable enterprise:

If it were made legal it wouldn't be profitable any more. Some people would have to get jobs, for instance.

The second economic argument is that legalisation would make the drug more expensive. This was concluded on the basis of the belief that the government would tax the drug at a high rate:

Legality might make it more expensive. It could be a real bummer, with high tax, you know. But it would be nice if they legalised it in Canada.

The political argument against legalisation is basically that the drug would no longer function as a political symbol for those opposed to the present political system. Through legalisation, potential revolutionaries could be assimilated into conventional political structures:

- I. Do you think cannabis should be legalised?
- S. No.
- I. Why not?
- S. Pot smoking could then become a political lever. Often you find that it's middle class students with vague anti-establishment views who are the main group smoking marihuana. In the future, this could be catered for by a political party along with other types of demands this group is making and it would therefore become reformist in nature. In other words, smoking dope which is regarded as one of the emblems of a revolutionary, socialist, and dropout etc. group, is not necessarily so. I wouldn't legalise because the structures of society must be changed. Liberal ideology must be exposed for the minority interest it exists for. To legalise it, to represent this group, would merely strengthen the capitalist system.

A third argument against legalisation is that it would transform the nature of the activity; its very illegality being an integral and taken for granted feature of being a cannabis user. Legalisation would remove this contextual feature of cannabis use and deprive its users of an important 'symbol of rejection'. The following extract expresses this point of view:

- I. Do you think it should be legalised?
- S. I can't think of a worse thing happening. I would not have anything else to live for if I didn't have my struggle with the police and all their heavy mind games. ... It's all part of it. If they legalised shit then something else would take its place as a symbol of rejection maybe. It's part of my life. I couldn't think of anything worse than going into a government shop and buying it. I'd have to give it up.

D. CONSTRUCTING THE MORALITY OF CANNABIS USE IN SOCIAL INTERACTION

The findings reported in this chapter fully support those of previous symbolic interactionist work to the extent that students in this study held a number of conceptions of the morality of cannabis use which permitted them to counter adverse conventional moral conceptions of their activities. So far in this chapter, the attempt has been made to extend this work by focusing on the interpretive bases of members' conclusions that the drug is not immoral and should not be the object of authoritative proscription. However, it is not simply the case that members 'held' certain moral notions about cannabis and its uses, that these played a prominent etiological role in the commission of cannabis offences and that the morality of cannabis use was decided on the basis of members' beliefs about the 'facts of life about dope' as they saw them. Rather, it is also the case that the phenomenon known as the 'morality' of cannabis use is something that is constructed and sustained in the course of members' interactional work. In the interest of extending this analysis still further in a phenomenological direction, additional information would be required on members' actual use of their moral conceptions in the course of 'natural' social interaction. This is so because it is only in the course of such interactional work that the emergent reality of the morality of cannabis use is realised. What is required is further information about members' 'morality work' whereby the view of cannabis as immoral is countered.<sup>32</sup> Time and resources did not permit much of this kind of information to be gathered in the course of this research. However, that which was acquired is described below, more in the spirit of suggestions for future research on the morality of 'deviant' phenomena than as an exhaustive analysis of members' methods of sustaining the morality of cannabis use.

The principal occasion when members were observed making moral utterances about cannabis, its uses and its effects, was that involving a response to mass media statements - on radio, television and in the newspapers - about the 'dangers' of cannabis. On such occasions, members were observed using three main methods of sustaining their version of the morality of cannabis through their moral utterances.<sup>33</sup> The first of these methods involved scoffing at the view being presented through the media. Members were heard to 'scoff' when they ridiculed, mocked, poked fun and laughed at expressions of the condemnation of cannabis. Thus, on one occasion, a member was observed to respond with the utterance 'what a stupid thing to say' to a statement about how most heroin users had started out on cannabis and that it could be inferred that cannabis was a contributory cause of heroin addiction. A second method consisted of the display of scepticism. Members were heard to engage in this activity when they expressed their disbelief about 'factual' reports and findings about the dangers of cannabis use with such utterances as 'I don't believe it' or 'what a load of rubbish'. Another prominent method of displaying scepticism was to refuse to accept contrary findings about the risks of using cannabis. Thus, reports of the damage caused by cannabis in experiments on both animals and humans were discounted. The results of animal experimentation were discounted as inapplicable to humans while in the case of one particular study on humans which was given considerable publicity because of its claim that cannabis caused brain damage, members argued that the cause of the brain damage could not be attributed to cannabis as the persons involved in the experiments had a history of the use of other drugs, notably amphetamines, which were recognised as harmful by members. A third method of sustaining cannabis users' version of the morality of cannabis use involved the use of sarcasm. In this way,

members were heard to make such statements as 'Oh yes, we all know it drives you mad', 'You know that's bad for you, don't you', or simply 'of course, of course' in response to condemnations of cannabis.

#### CONCLUDING NOTE

In this chapter, several issues which are raised by symbolic interactionist work on the morality of cannabis use have been examined. Particular attention has been paid to the ways in which members account for their cannabis use. The distinguishing feature of their accounts - a feature which stands in contrast to much earlier interactionist work - is their lack of concern with moral problems. Four main types of motivational construct were identified - purposes, reasons, triggers and predisposers - which, it was shown, illuminated members' methods of accounting for their cannabis use. As far as members' methods of handling the moral problems surrounding their cannabis use as a result of social reaction are concerned, it was shown that members did not view cannabis use as an immoral activity and that they made use of a variety of interpretive criteria in drawing such a conclusion. In the last section of the chapter, it was suggested that in the interest of extending sociological work on members' conceptions of the morality of 'deviant' behaviour in a more phenomenological direction systematic analysis of members' everyday moral utterances would constitute a promising development.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ACQUIRING CANNABIS

Each of the phenomena examined in chapters three, four and five - the categorization and consumption of cannabis, and the interpretation of its effects - presupposes the availability of supplies of the drug. The restriction of supply, according to Becker (1963, p.61), comprises a major form of social control whereby cannabis use is inhibited. This chapter discusses how students acquire cannabis and thereby overcome this form of social control. The main emphasis is on purchasing the drug.

As suggested in chapter one, particular attention is focused here on several questions hitherto left largely unexplicated in symbolic interactionist work on the supply of cannabis.<sup>1</sup> These questions are (1) How is cannabis quantified? (2) How are supplies and suppliers of cannabis contacted? and (3) How are cannabis transactions conducted? In answering these questions, acquisition is viewed as a 'problem' which requires 'solutions' on the part of those who want to obtain a supply of the drug. Members' methods of devising solutions to this problem constitute an essential aspect of 'cannabis culture' as an ongoing accomplishment grounded in members' knowledge and action.<sup>2</sup> Thus, participation with cannabis users and sellers provides the knowledge that it is possible to obtain cannabis in a variety of quantities and, in particular, in terms of a number of typical weights and measures. In addition, participants learn that typical weights and measures are usually obtainable from some sources or 'contacts' rather than others, and that there is a corpus of knowledge pertaining to the location of supplies of the drug and to the conduct of cannabis transactions. Having acquired such knowledge, members are then able to use it purposefully in acquiring or 'scoring' the drug.

Given that the student has decided to acquire some cannabis, what is then done in order to solve this 'problem' depends, in the first instance, on how much he wants to acquire. Before discussing the accomplishment of acquisition, then, preliminary attention will be focused on the quantities in terms of which cannabis is typically acquired and distributed.



A. THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

(i) Methods of quantification

Members made use of three main methods in describing different amounts of cannabis and in quantifying the drug. Each method involves a different vocabulary of quantification, is used with respect to different amounts of cannabis, and typically pertains to different types of cannabis transactions.

The first method of quantifying cannabis consists of the 'bits and pieces' method. In terms of this method, cannabis is described and quantified in such categories as 'enough for a joint', 'a little bit', 'enough for a couple of blows', and 'a small piece'. The following extracts illustrate the use of this method of quantifying cannabis:

- (1) S1. Have you got any charge?  
S2. I've got a little bit, yes.  
S1. Can I score some off you?  
S2. I've only enough for a couple of smokes.  
But I should be getting some more on Friday.  
I think B. might have enough to let you have a little, enough for a couple of joints, anyway.
- (2) S1. Do you think you could let me have enough of that for a smoke? I'm right out of dope at the moment. I'll pay you back at the weekend. I'm expecting D. to bring me back an ounce.  
S2. That's okay.
- (3) S1. Did you manage to get anything?  
S2. There was nothing there to score. D. just laid this little bit on me. Really nice of him, don't you think?  
It's quite good dope too, I think, the remainder of the Paki we were smoking the other week.  
S1. Are you going to roll it or shall I?

As suggested by these extracts, the distinguishing feature of this method of quantification is that it involves specification of neither the weight of the cannabis concerned nor its monetary value at current market prices. This method is typically employed in those kinds of cannabis transactions where cannabis is exchanged freely between one user and another and as such it typically pertains to quantities of cannabis whose weight is about a gram

and whose monetary value is small (typically less than £1). Such transactions are most common amongst friends where one person has 'run out' whilst another still has some in his possession or when one person has recently acquired a new supply of cannabis and wishes to introduce another to the new batch of the drug and thereby 'lays a bit on him'.

The second method of quantifying cannabis may be referred to as the 'money's worth' method. The distinguishing feature of this method is that it enables the user of it to describe and distinguish between different quantities of the drug in terms of how much money they command at current market prices. This method provides the user with such 'quantification categories' as 'ten-bob deals', 'quid deals', 'pound draws' and 'a couple of quids worth'. The following extracts illustrate its use in describing quantities of cannabis:

- (1) S1. Can I score any dope, T?  
S2. How much did you want?  
S1. Just ten bob's worth if that's okay.  
S2. Mmmm. Alright.
- (2) S1. I'm going to see P. later on. Do you want me to get you anything? It was meant to be arriving today.  
S2. Yes, that would be nice. About three quid's worth.  
S1. Okay.
- (3) J. came over and said that if any of the present company wanted to score any dope there was a person over in (a college) who was selling quid deals of Afghan. He had just bought one of them. This person had apparently only had an ounce of the stuff and had divided it up into twenty quid deals. It was, however, excellent dope according to J. His advice was to 'get over there quick' before it was all sold.

The use of the 'money's worth' method is most common in the case of the exchange of quantities of cannabis which 'weigh' less than a quarter of an ounce but where the amount is greater than that found in the case of cannabis transactions involving the first method of quantifying cannabis. Occasionally, users freely part with such quantities as 'quid deals'. Usually, however, such quantities are exchanged for money amongst those who

typically buy such amounts or amongst those who usually buy larger amounts but have to recourse to purchasing such small amounts because of a current shortage of cannabis.

The third method of quantifying cannabis consists of the 'weight' method. As this term suggests, its distinguishing feature is that it describes different quantities of cannabis in terms of how much they 'weigh'. This method yields such quantification categories as 'quarter ounces', 'half ounces', 'ounces', 'weights' and 'kilos'. The following extracts illustrate the use of this method:

- (1) S1. How much could you let me have?  
S2. I could let you have a half, perhaps three-quarters. I only scored two ounces and I sold a half ounce to E. last night. It depends if I get more tomorrow.
- (2) S1. How much is a weight of the black?  
S2. £150.  
S1. What about the Moroccan?  
S2. £135. It's good though.  
S1. How much of the black did you get?  
S2. One and a half, and we got a half of the Moroccan.
- (3) S1. Can you get me an ounce of it?  
S2. If you want. When do you want it?  
S1. When can you get it by?  
S2. If you come over later this evening, I should have it by then. Or I could see you tomorrow.  
S1. I'll ring you later on, about ten, and we can work something out, okay?  
S2. Okay.

As these usages suggest, the 'weight' method is most common in the case of quantities 'weighing' more than a quarter of an ounce. Unlike the first method, but like the second method, quantifying cannabis in terms of its weight is more typical when the drug is being bought and sold rather than being given away.

Participation, then, with other users and sellers provides the knowledge that cannabis is typically acquired and distributed in a number of typical weights and measures. For analytical purposes, these typical weights and measures have been described as three ideal typical methods of quantifying cannabis: the 'bits and pieces' method, the 'money's worth' method, and the

'weight' method. However, whilst it may be said that these sociological typifications constitute adequate depictions of members' typifications of quantities of cannabis, it must also be pointed out that there are exceptions to be found in members' uses of these different methods. On occasion, amounts of cannabis larger than 'enough for a couple of blows' will pass from one user to another without the exchange of money, sometimes as a gift or favour. Similarly, the 'money's worth' method is sometimes used to categorize amounts of cannabis which apparently 'weigh' more than a quarter of an ounce. The following extracts report the use of these methods in such 'exceptional' circumstances:

- (1) In the course of discussing with J. his recent acquisition of ten ounces of cannabis, J. told me that for the purpose of 'getting rid of it', as far as selling it was concerned, he had converted it into 'thirteen ten quid deals'.
- (2) I was talking with J. when P. arrived. P's first remark to J. was to ask him if he had any 'shit'. J's reply was that he could only sell him 'four quids' worth of black'.
- (3) In a talk with C. it was reported to me that a friend of his to whom he had gone to score had had 'eighty quids' worth of best black ripped off'. 'He didn't know who pinched it or what'. I asked C. how much that was and he told me 'about a half weight'.

Clearly, then, as these extracts illustrate, the above mentioned 'quantification methods' do not represent hard and fast rules for describing different quantities of cannabis; instead, they represent three 'ideal typical' methods of quantifying cannabis which tend to correspond to the typical methods used by members under typical circumstances. Generally speaking, the conditions under which these methods are used may be expressed as follows: the smaller the amount being exchanged, the less likely it is that the category used to describe the quantity of cannabis in question refers to money or weight, whilst the larger the amount being exchanged, the more likely it is that the category used to describe the cannabis in question will refer to its weight.

(ii) Variation in weights and measures

Besides acquiring the knowledge that cannabis is typically acquired in typical quantities, members also learn that what passes for a given weight or measure of cannabis is a matter of variation. There is no necessary correspondence between the use of a quantification category and the actual weight of the cannabis to which the category refers. Such variation in correspondence is occasionally the subject of some dispute between parties to cannabis transactions. The following extract illustrates members' knowledge and evaluation of such variations:

- S1. What's he given you? Give R. the Pakistani first.  
S2. Well, where have you got the Nepalese from?  
S3. Well, he did offer to give us the money back or Pakistani and we got about a quid deal of Nepalese.  
S1. Yeah, I mean what he did was reasonably expedient since I told him we didn't want it you see, so what he did was to use our money to score himself and came back and sold it. He came up to me and said 'You can have one and a half ounces or your money back or any part of it', so I told him a half ounce. I mean he's selling really incredibly bad deals. I've never seen anything like it. You see that bit you've got there, hand up that smallest piece, yeah, he's selling a bit like that for, you know, two quid, it's not a third of the rest though is it? I mean, a bit like that, he's obviously making sixteen or seventeen of those.  
S3. Yeah, it's a nice little hustling scene he's got going.  
S1. I don't think we'll be scoring any of those though. Just buy a half ounce between us if we have to.  
S3. Mind you, I'm not sure that was a particularly good deal.  
S1. Yeah, right. Perhaps a bit under. It's a pity A. isn't still here.

By way of contrast, the seller's practice, as reported in the following interchange, is subject to approval rather than disapproval:

- S1. Where did you get that from?  
S2. From P.  
S1. Looks a good deal.  
S2. Sixteenth of an ounce. He weighed it out in front of me.

Similarly, that which passes for an 'ounce' differs. A distinction is made by members between 'weighed' ounces and ounces which are not the result of weighing on a pair of scales. According to members, the importance of the distinction derives from the belief that it cannot be assumed that what is given the title of an ounce warrants it in terms of its weight. The member

consequently learns to recognise that phenomenon as 'short weight' or a 'bad deal' as opposed to 'good weight' or a 'good deal'. The following extracts illustrate members' awareness and use of this distinction:

- (1) S1. That looks like a good deal you've got there.  
S2. Right, it's a weighed ounce alright.
- (2) S1. How much did you score then?  
S2. A half ounce....or just under half an ounce.  
S1. Let's see....mmm....you never get a good deal from K, do you?

Members thus learn to recognise 'short weight' as opposed to 'good weight' when they see it. The question of the interpretive work involved in accomplishing such typifications is therefore raised. Before discussing it, however, attention is focused on how members accounted for variations in weight and measures.

(iii) Accounting for variation in weight and measures

Not only do buyers acquire organised knowledge of quantities of cannabis and their variation, they also acquire certain understandings of the production of that variation and, in particular, of the conditions surrounding the acquisition of 'good weight' and 'good deals' as opposed to 'bad weight' or 'bad deals'. The following section is concerned with depicting such understandings.

According to members, variation in weights and measures is explicable in terms of a number of contingencies or factors associated with the conduct of cannabis transactions. The first of these contingencies consists of the quantity of cannabis involved in the transaction. It is believed by members that the larger the quantity of cannabis purchased the more likely it is to be a weighed amount. The weighing out of small quantities (below quarter of an ounce) appears to be the exception rather than the rule:

- S. It's not normally the case that you get somebody giving you weighed out quid deals and things. You generally have to accept what's given you when you buy amounts like that.

- I. What proportion of an ounce do you think you would normally get then?
- S. I'd say anything between a sixteenth to less than a twentieth of an ounce, assuming the price is around fourteen quid.

But it is not simply the case that the purchaser always receives a 'weighed' amount if he buys more than a quarter of an ounce. It is more likely, but by no means guaranteed. Whether or not the purchaser receives a 'weighed' amount is also seen by members to depend on a number of other 'factors'.

The second factor upon which variability was seen to depend consists of the purchaser's relationship to the seller. It is believed that the closer that relationship the more likely is the purchaser to receive a fair deal from the seller. Consider the following extracts:

- I. How come you always get a better deal from K. than from A. then?
- S. I don't know A. very well but K. is a good friend of mine, he often lays dope on me if I've run out. I'm sure A. gives good deals to his friends. But he's a bit of a hustler, you know.

A third factor, suggested by users and sellers alike, consists of the generosity of the seller of cannabis. Thus, it is not always the case that the purchaser receives a better deal from a friend than from a stranger. Some sellers are renowned for their 'fairness' in conducting cannabis transactions, weighing out the cannabis in front of the buyer and doing so even if the amount required is as small as a quid deal. From such sellers the buyer will receive for his 'quid' a piece of cannabis whose weight constitutes the same fraction of an ounce as the 'quid' constitutes a fraction of the current price per ounce. According to members, it is part of their commonsense knowledge that from other sellers the buyer cannot expect to receive such 'fair' amounts. For example, the current price for an ounce of cannabis in 1972 was £16 per ounce. From some sellers the buyer received for his £1 a sixteenth of an ounce, sometimes weighed in his presence. From other sellers, however, the buyer received only a twentieth of an ounce, which was judged by the

seller as adequate and as an amount that he could 'get away with'. In such cases, the cannabis is not weighed in front of the seller and is presented to the buyer on a 'take it or leave it' basis.

A fourth contingency of the kind of 'deal' received in the course of cannabis transactions consists of the strategy adopted by the buyer. Whilst to some extent it is the case that buyers generally accept what they are given, it is also the case that where a buyer insists on having his purchase weighed then he is more likely to receive a weighed quantity of cannabis or a 'good deal'.

Amongst some buyers and sellers such insistence is apparently unnecessary: the weighing of cannabis at the time of the transaction is an institutionalized practice. Where it is not, then the buyer may have to insist on such a practice to ensure receipt of 'good weight'.

Lastly, and related to the two conditions just mentioned, is the factor of the situation in which the transaction takes place. Transactions differ in the degree of publicity to which they are exposed at the time of their occurrence. In a crowded street, public house or other public place, open to the intervention and intrusion of agents of social control and other persons from whom the buyer and seller would prefer to keep their business a secret, it is considered inexpedient for them to engage in the rather visible procedures of weighing out and cutting up pieces of cannabis. In such cases, by virtue of the risk of discovery, it is clear, then, that the weight of a given quantity of cannabis is subject to variation. It is also clear that the members must learn through experience if a given quantity warrants inclusion within a particular measurement category. The concern in the next section is with the interpretive problem raised earlier; how do members recognise quantities of cannabis as warranting membership of different categories of weight and measurement?



(iv) The methodology of measurement

Recognition that a given amount of cannabis warrants membership of a particular category of weight or measurement presupposes a set of categories in terms of which such membership may be decided and a set of procedures whereby such conclusions may be reached. Earlier, members' collections of categories of weight and measurement were described. In this section the question of how members forge a link between a given quantity of cannabis and those categories is examined. In providing an answer to this question the various methods whereby members decide the applicability of these categories are described.

(a) Using scales

The use of scales was considered to be the most accurate and reliable means of establishing whether or not a given amount of cannabis 'really' weighs the amount it is purported to weigh. Members were observed making use of a variety of such weighing devices. These included finger scales, kitchen scales, spring scales, stationery scales and chemical balances. Finger scales were the most convenient to carry around since the user could simply fold them up and put them in his pocket. However, like kitchen scales and spring scales, they were not generally regarded as especially accurate. Although less convenient, stationery scales and in particular chemical balances were regarded as the most reliable means of establishing accurate weight. For smaller quantities of cannabis, coins were accepted as accurate balances when using chemical scales, since it was held that a two pence piece weighed a quarter of an ounce, a one pence piece weighed an eighth of an ounce and a half pence piece weighed a sixteenth of an ounce.

In making use of scales to establish the weight of pieces of cannabis, the member follows the interpretive rule which states that:

If, on a pair of scales, a piece of cannabis conforms to a specific

weight, then the conclusion that the piece of cannabis weighs that amount is warranted.

From the point of view of members, the use of this interpretive rule constitutes the only reliable method for establishing the weight of pieces of cannabis. Its use, however, depends upon the availability of a set of scales in the first place. It is often the case that members do not have scales available to assist them in deciding the weight of a given quantity of cannabis. If members do not have at their disposal a set of scales, then other methods for establishing weight must be used.

(b) Rules of thumb

Without the use of scales the member has to rely on the correspondence between the amount at hand and previously experienced amounts of cannabis. The following extract illustrates a member's use of his preconstituted idea of what an ounce should look like:

- S1. What do you think of that?
- S2. It's a bit under actually. If you imagine double that for an ounce, it's a bit under.

In this quote the member follows the interpretive procedure of invoking in his imagination the size of an ounce of the cannabis in question ('if you imagine double that ...'). He then compares the piece of cannabis in his hand with such a typical construct. The member imagines the piece of cannabis in his hand as doubled in size and compares this with what he 'knows' to be the typical size of an ounce of cannabis. Because of the apparent lack of correspondence between the imagined doubled piece of cannabis and the imagined typical ounce of cannabis, the member then concludes that the cannabis in question is 'underweight' ('...it's a bit under').

The correspondence between cannabis at hand and typical weights and measures of the drug is established in terms of several dimensions. These include the consistency, thickness, length and breadth of the cannabis in question. The following quotations illustrate the use of

some of these 'interpretationally relevant moments':<sup>3</sup>

- (1) S1. That doesn't look like a half to me.  
S2. It's thick though, you know, I put a lot in that joint, I didn't actually break off a lot to put in though, you know, when you crumble it it's very compressed. This will be a bit under a quarter and this will be a bit over, so that's why I thought it was okay actually.
- (2) S. ...we went to B. to try and score a quarter and we eventually got in touch with this bloke and he brings out this slab. It looked like a quarter, it was the right sort of size, you know, it was the right sort of shape, looking at it that way but it was really thin when you had a good look at it, you know, so it wasn't a quarter at all and when we got it back and weighed it it was just over three ounces.

By visual inspections, then, members are able to come to conclusions about the 'approximate' weight of pieces of cannabis given for their interpretation. As the above extracts illustrate, in accomplishing such interpretation members rely on a collection of first order interpretive rules, which are centered around various dimensions in terms of which cannabis may be measured. Examples of these first order interpretive 'rules of thumb' for measuring quantities of cannabis are as follows:

If a piece of cannabis has the thickness, length and breadth of an ounce of cannabis then it is an ounce of cannabis.

If a piece of cannabis has the appearance of an underweight quarter then it is an underweight quarter.

These first order interpretive rules may in their turn be reduced to the following second order, sociologically formulated, interpretive rule:

If a piece of cannabis exhibits the typical features of a typical weight or measure of cannabis then the conclusion that the piece of cannabis constitutes such a weight or measure is warranted.

## B. WEIGHTS, MEASURES AND CONTACTS

### (i) Types of contacts

Whatever the quantity of cannabis which the member wishes to acquire,

its acquisition assumes the existence of persons from whom the drug may be acquired. In other words, acquisition presupposes sources. In order to engage in cannabis transactions, then, the member must not only gain knowledge of weights and measures, he must also become acquainted with such sources.<sup>4</sup> In the parlance of members themselves, 'scoring' requires 'contacts'. Given contacts, of course, scoring will then be contingent on availability.

Participation with cannabis users and sellers provides the knowledge that it is possible to acquire the drug from different types of contacts, each associated with certain weights and measures of cannabis. Three main kinds of contact may be distinguished, each pertaining to a different 'level' at which cannabis transactions occur.<sup>5</sup> First, there are those contacts from whom the user can acquire small amounts - quid deals, two quids' worth and quarter ounces of cannabis. These contacts are themselves likely to be scoring ounces or similar amounts. Second, there are those contacts who score 'weight' - quarter pounds, half pounds and pounds - and from whom the user may acquire such quantities as half ounces and ounces. The third type of contact consists of those from whom one can acquire weight. Such contacts, in their turn, will be scoring from those who are able to make available a number of weights.

The types of contact mentioned above distinguish between persons who are known for their ability to make different amounts of cannabis available to the scorer. In addition to this 'quantity' dimension, contacts were further differentiated in terms of whether they were able to make cannabis directly available to the scorer or whether they only had access to people who could. In other words, a distinction was made between direct and indirect contacts, the former supplying direct, the latter being in a position to arrange and sometimes carry out 'deals' for those wanting to score.

A third dimension in terms of which contacts were differentiated

from one another referred to the regularity of cannabis transactions between buyer and seller. On this basis, members were oriented to a distinction between their 'regular' contacts, those which were 'occasional', those about whom the member had knowledge but from whom cannabis had not been purchased and those who were 'strangers'.

(ii) Locating supplies

Assuming that the member is acquainted with contacts from or through whom he believes he can score, the particular procedures followed by him in locating a supply of cannabis will depend upon the particular quantity which he seeks to score.

(a) Small amounts

According to members, locating small amounts of cannabis (amounts in the region of a quid deal) is a relatively uncomplicated and not particularly difficult enterprise, assuming that there is some cannabis generally available. The number of persons from whom it is possible to score such amounts is estimated by members as a substantial proportion of all those who consume cannabis within and around the university setting. The grounds for this estimation are that most people would be able to spare such a small amount. Indeed, many students make a practice of purchasing cannabis in ounces and dividing this amount up into a number of quid deals and other small amounts and then making these available to others. Given such knowledge, the member can then visit these 'distributors' or he may, on the other hand, simply ask an acquaintance or more probably a friend who has a supply of cannabis whether he can 'spare a quid deal'. The following extracts report the use of such methods of obtaining quid deals:

- (1) I. How would you go about scoring then?  
S. What? How much?  
I. Say just a bit, say a quid deal.

- S. I'd ask someone I knew if they could spare me a bit, lay some on me, someone who has enough to give me a bit or who could sell me some.
- (2) I. How would you go about getting hold of a quid deal?  
S. That's no hassle. I'd just go over to P. (a college) and look for someone I knew. There's usually somebody around who can spare a quid's worth.

(b) Ounces

Locating ounces or similar quantities is, apparently, a more difficult enterprise than locating smaller amounts of cannabis, as there are fewer persons selling at this level. Such persons are typically those who are in the business of acquiring larger amounts of cannabis (quarter weights, half weights and weights) and are more often referred to and more often refer to themselves as 'dealers' than students selling smaller amounts.

The following extracts report members' methods of locating ounces:

- (1) I. Well, how would you go about scoring ounces?  
S. That might be more difficult. Depends if anyone had any for sale.  
I. Who would you go to?  
S. I'd see B., J. or D. basically. They're the only people I know who are into selling ounces at the moment, or I might ask C. if he knew anyone who had any.
- (2) I. Suppose then that you want to score some cannabis, say, half an ounce, how would you go about doing it?  
S. First of all, I'd have to think - 'who do I know who is likely to have any?' - I may think that J. might be getting some in. And then again, D. might have some.  
I. How would you go about getting it?  
S. I would phone J. up as he has a phone, but he doesn't like you mentioning it directly. D. isn't on the phone, so I would probably pay him a call and see if he had anything.

Having located such a contact or a person who knows one, the student could ascertain if there was any cannabis available. If none was available, and this was often the case, since dealers tended to sell their consignments fairly quickly, the member could 'put in an order' to reserve a supply of cannabis the next time it 'came in'. Alternatively, the member could ask the dealer if he knew anyone else who had any to sell.

(c) Weights

Cannabis transactions involving quantities above a quarter of a pound of the drug were rarely made locally. Locating a supply of weight typically necessitated getting in touch with 'dealers', usually in London, though occasionally elsewhere. If the dealer had a telephone, then the student would simply call him to see if any was available. It often was not, or it was 'on its way'. In such an event the usual procedure was to call back later to see if a supply had arrived. When it had, a transaction could then be arranged. If the dealer did not have a telephone, then a visit to him would be necessary. Similarly, when the student arrived there and none was available or, according to the dealer, it was on its way, or he was waiting for it to 'come in', then the student would have to 'wait around' for the supply to become available. Sometimes students would get directed to other dealers or their contacts whom they did not know but who were reputed to know where there was some cannabis. Often, of course, such a development resulted in another session of 'waiting around'. The following extract reports the experiences of two student dealers who attempted to locate a supply of cannabis in London and had to wait around in order to locate it:

S. Like we decided to score a few days before we calculated that we'd run out of shit. J. went away for a few days and I arranged the deal for the day J. was to get back. Our contact said it would be okay for that day. When J. came back we phoned him and told him we wanted a pound. B. (the contact) said he could do it but as things never happen before the evening and he'd have to suss things out in the afternoon we'd better ring back at five. We did this and were told that he would have it together by eight or nine and that he would ring us at the flat of a mutual friend at that time. We waited there until about eleven or twelve when B. rang us to say he had failed to connect because his contact hadn't rung him. B's always like that, he's too dependent on someone else's organisation. We rang him the next day at two as he'd told us to and he said ring back again in an hour or so as he was only waiting for the news to come through. This carried on for two or three days, with us ringing B. every few hours until quite late in the evening. By the weekend nothing had come through so we decided to try someone else on the offchance. But it was the same with that guy too until Tuesday when it all happened and B. managed to get hold of a few pounds of fresh black shit. We had to

drive across London to B's place to pick up. We smoked a little, weighed it out, paid our money and split, telling B. we were grateful and what a hassle we knew it was for him. It had taken us a week to get hold of a pound. It had been a real drag at times but we'd done it.

Sometimes, of course, there are fewer complications for those who wish to acquire weight. A friend may be telephoned (contacts are usually friends as well - people with whom the student can sit and smoke - or friends of friends, rarely the proverbial 'peddler') and he may say that the student can come and 'pick up' straight away. If only a short travelling distance is involved and cash is ready at hand, then the deal may be concluded in a matter of hours.

(iii) Availability

Even if students know and locate contacts for supplies of cannabis, it is clear that they cannot score if it is not available. The state of the cannabis market at any particular time or place provides a limitation on the intentions of members with regard to the acquisition, distribution and consumption of cannabis. Availability constitutes a necessary condition of such activities.

It is a 'fact of life' about cannabis and its acquisition which is recognised and taken into account by members that the drug is available on some occasions but unavailable on others. In other words, the supply of cannabis is seen to fluctuate. Such a feature of the market for cannabis provides an effective limitation on the intentions of those who would acquire the drug. The following extract illustrates how even if a student is intent on acquiring cannabis he cannot do so if others, in their turn, are unable to acquire it and thereby make it available to him:

- (1) S1. Have you got any shit?  
S2. I've got about a quarter of an ounce man, that's all I've got left of some grass I bought some time ago. In fact, I went up to London this weekend, in fact, and I stayed for a few days but there was nothing there.  
S1. That's too bad.  
S2. But I may be going up again tomorrow, just to see if there is anything there.



- S1. So you can't let me have any then?  
S2. Sorry man, that's how it is. Why don't you stay for a blow though?

- (2) I was sitting with P. when C. arrived. The first thing he asks P. when he has sat down and there is a lull in the conversation between P. and I, is, 'You haven't got any dope have you?' P. replied that he hadn't. C. then said that he had been all over looking for some and that nobody seemed to have any.

In the terminology of members themselves, times when cannabis is completely and persistently unavailable are known as 'droughts'. At such times, when the market is 'dry', unless the member has foresightedly established a 'stash' (a store or reserve amount of cannabis), acquisition, consumption and distribution become impossible. There are, of course, other times when the opposite situation prevails, times which might be referred to as times of 'superfluity' in the absence of a first order construct to describe such a state of affairs. It is at such times that members are able to exercise their 'free choice' in matters of acquisition, distribution and consumption of cannabis.

Such free choice, however, is never completely unbounded. Even when cannabis is available, it is rarely the case that all types of cannabis are available at the same time. More typical of the market for cannabis is the situation where some types are available whilst others are not. The following extracts illustrate members' awareness of this 'social fact' about the cannabis market:

- (1) S1. What's happening? Anything available?  
S2. There was some Lebanese around last night, but I think that's all gone now. There's some home grown, if you want some of that.  
S1. How much?  
S2. Ten an ounce.  
S1. No black?  
S2. No, nothing.
- (2) S1. Have you heard of any good dope around?  
S2. There's a bit of black.  
S1. What is it? Is it any good?  
S2. Just run of the mill Paki. It's okay.  
S1. No Nepalese or Afghani then?  
S2. Haven't seen any of that around for ages.

Furthermore, according to members, some types of cannabis are more frequently available than other types. It was generally acknowledged that it was easier to acquire Moroccan and Pakistani hashish than Nepalese or Afghani hashish. Similarly, some types of marihuana, such as 'South African' and 'Thai sticks' were more rarely available than other kinds, such as Congolese and home grown. The rarest types of marihuana, at least in England, were those of 'Acapulco Gold', 'Panama Red' and other types of Latin American marihuana. The following quotations attest to this differential availability of cannabis depending on its type:

- (1) I. What types of hashish would you say were the most difficult to get hold of?  
S. Nepalese seems to be the rarest these days, followed by Afghani. They're obviously the best and I reckon someone is creaming that off the top. It's much easier to get hold of Moroccan these days, which is obviously not as good but it's okay.  
I. What about grass?  
S. It's generally more difficult to get hold of things like Acapulco Gold, the best sorts of American, Mexican or South American grass. The only time I've had any Acapulco Gold or Panama Red was when I was in the States last summer. I mean you hear about them being available over here, but I've never seen them.
- (2) I. Could you get hold of Nepalese very easily?  
S. No, not really, you just have to wait until there is some available, which is not very often. That's generally the case with the best types of dope, you know.

Besides this acknowledged differential availability of different types of cannabis, and in particular the greater difficulty of acquiring those kinds of cannabis renowned for their high quality, members also reported that some kinds of cannabis were more likely to be available at some times of the year rather than at others. The early summer months, for example, were said to be the 'traditional' time for Lebanese hashish, whilst at such times it was typically correspondingly more difficult to acquire the various kinds of black hashish. For the latter, the winter months were thought to constitute the time of year when they were most likely to be available. The following extract reports members' use of such 'seasonal variation' to account for the differential availability of different types of cannabis:

I was discussing with D. what he thought were the reasons for the lack of supplies of some kinds of cannabis at some times of the year. He said that he thought that the summer months were the usual time when Lebanese was available. As he put it, 'you always seem to get a nice bit of Leb in the early summer'. By way of contrast, he said the winter months were supposed to be the time for black and it was his experience that this was so. In addition, as he pointed out, home grown grass is more common at the end of the English summer than at other times of the year. Beyond these kinds of seasonal variations, however, he was unable to report any other regular differences in availability between different types of cannabis.

(iv) Accounting for variation in availability

Just as members were aware that cannabis was subject to variations in availability, so also were they aware of a variety of accounts for such variation. These accounts were then used to explain to themselves and others why they were unable to acquire cannabis on particular occasions. What then were these accounts? How did members understand the fact of variation in the supply of cannabis?

The activities of agents of social control is the most commonly cited explanation of members' failure to acquire cannabis and of the fluctuating nature of the supply of cannabis.<sup>6</sup> It was recognised that through such policies and practices as the interception of illicit cargoes and the arrest of exporters, importers and other distributors, social control agents operate to create a situation of scarcity in the market for cannabis. The following extracts illustrate the use of this kind of account for variation in the availability of the drug:

- (1) D. had been in Amsterdam for four weeks during the summer. He was telling me about it, describing it as a 'smoker's paradise', with 'no busts' and 'people smoking in public bars'. He drew attention to the contrast between this situation and that prevailing in England at the present time where, as he put it, people were facing a 'drought'. He said that he vaguely anticipated this and had brought four ounces of marihuana and some LSD down with him. But, he said, nobody else seemed to have done likewise. He said that he had seen a small quantity of red Leb around the evening before but that the only thing around now was home grown grass. He said that he had taken to getting drunk as an alternative. He said that he thought the current shortage was due to police action getting 'heavier and more effective', with a 'lot more people getting busted

recently', that the smaller amount of cannabis in circulation was due to 'more harrassment' by the police of people whom they knew to be dealers.

- (2) I asked C. why he thought it was very difficult to acquire any cannabis at the present time (he had previously been complaining that he hadn't had a smoke for about two weeks). He said that it was because a lot more people were getting 'knocked out' by the police. He said that two of his friends from whom he usually acquired his cannabis had recently been busted and that he had heard of other arrests of other sellers of it.

Besides sellers of the drug being apprehended and thereby sources of supply 'drying up', members cited a number of other kinds of accounts for variation in the availability of supplies of cannabis. One of these alternative explanations was the occurrence of dock strikes. Members reported that whenever there was a major dock strike, the supply of cannabis became seriously disrupted, only to resume its 'normal' state when the strike was over. The following extracts illustrate the use of this 'theory of supply' to account for the unavailability of the drug:

- (1) S1. What's it like in London?  
S2. Dry. How about you?  
S1. Same here, has been for about three weeks now.  
S2. It'll be alright when the dockers go back to work.  
S1. Do you reckon that's why it is?  
S2. Oh yes, it's always the same when this happens, everything goes dry for a few weeks and all you can get is home grown. You just have to wait until it's over.
- (2) S1. Is there anything there?  
S2. There's a bit of grass, not very good. But that's about all.  
S1. Why do you think it's so bad at the moment?  
S2. Could be because of the dock strike, you know.  
S3. I'm sure it is. It was like this the last time we had one.

The successful conclusion of dock strikes, given a resumption of supplies, was then used to account for that resumption:

- S1. Have you got much of it? Is there any chance of scoring?  
S2. There's loads around now, now that the dock strike is over.

A third type of 'theory of supply', which is used by members to account for the variation in the availability of cannabis at different times of the year, draws upon the behaviour of cannabis users themselves rather than on the activities of agents of social control or the behaviour of dock workers.

This theory is used to explain the relative difficulty of obtaining cannabis around the times of Christmas and New Year. It asserts that users, in an attempt to overcome what they anticipate to be the 'traditional' shortage at such times of the year, purchase both earlier and more than usual. The self-fulfilling result of such belief and practice is, as a consequence, the very shortage anticipated in the first place. In the following extracts this kind of account is used to explain the unavailability of cannabis at these times of the year:

- (1) S1. Is there anything going at all, do you know?  
S2. Mmm, you've left it a bit late.  
S1. What? Christmas?  
S2. Mmm. Well, there might be something, somebody might have some left to sell, but I doubt it.
- (2) I. Have you ever had any difficulty getting hold of it?  
S. Not really, except sometimes around Christmas or New Year. It seems to be the tradition that people get their stocks in early, so the longer you leave it, the more difficult it is to get any.

A final account employed to explain the difficulty in obtaining cannabis at certain times refers to the behaviour of the sellers of the drug rather than to that of its users or the police or dockers. This theory is used to account for the relative unavailability of cannabis during the summer months compared to other times of the year. One explanation of this is that 'the dealers are on holiday'. The following account uses this mode of reasoning to explain why cannabis was unavailable:

- S. The reason why it's not around, I think, is that everyone's gone away. P's gone, R's gone away, S's not here. There's just nobody about. It was the same last year. When everyone goes on holiday, you just can't get anything, except the odd bit that somebody has had lying around for a while.

The 'validity' of these theories is not investigated here. Future research may accurately demonstrate a relationship between particular ways of accounting for unavailability and the 'real cause' for unavailability on a particular occasion. Whether it does or not, however, these accounts constitute ways in which members themselves make sense of their own inability to acquire the drug.

(v) Finance

Even if cannabis is available when the buyer contacts a supplier of it, he may well be unable to acquire it unless he has sufficient money to purchase it (or unless he can get credit). Before discussing the conduct of cannabis transactions, then, attention will be briefly focused on members' methods of 'raising the money'.

The most common method consists simply of using one's own money, thereby limiting the amount of cannabis purchased to that which the buyer can personally afford.

A second method involves combining one's money with that of others, thereby forming a 'syndicate' for the purpose of purchasing the drug. In this way, larger amounts of cannabis could be bought at a lower unit cost. Some members take this course and buy more than they require for personal use, sell the surplus at a profit and thereby provide 'free smokes' for themselves.

A third method is to 'sell the cannabis in advance'; that is, to obtain money from other persons on the promise of providing cannabis for it at a later date. This method enables the member to acquire cannabis and to make a profit on the transaction by acting as a go-between.

C. CANNABIS TRANSACTIONS

Assuming that cannabis is available when the member has located a source of the drug, how is it then acquired? It is at the point where the member has located a source, and the drug is currently available, that the member may acquire the drug. Given the fulfillment of such 'conditions' of successful acquisition, then a cannabis transaction may take place. This section is concerned with examining the nature of such phenomena.

Cannabis transactions may be of various kinds. An initial distinction may be made between those which involve a direct interaction between the seller of the drug and its buyer, and those which involve only an indirect social interaction between buyer and seller. In the latter type of

transaction the exchange of money for cannabis is usually mediated by a go-between, whilst in the former type of transaction money and cannabis are exchanged directly. A second distinction may be made between the amount of cannabis and money exchanged in transactions. Some transactions involve the exchange of large amounts of cannabis, whilst others involve the exchange of small amounts of cannabis for small amounts of money.

(i) Indirect transactions

There are several kinds of indirect cannabis transactions, where the buyer does not meet the seller, only the intermediary. Firstly, the buyer asks a contact to acquire cannabis for him and the contact then goes to the seller and purchases it to take back to the buyer. This kind of arrangement occurs when the buyer does not know or does not wish to be directly involved with a seller but is prepared to be involved in transactions with the intermediary. It may also arise when the seller himself does not wish to conduct transactions with 'strangers' and is prepared to sell cannabis only to known associates. Thus, in this kind of transaction, the buyer is relatively uninvolved; his part is restricted to requesting his contact to acquire cannabis for him and to providing the money facilitating such a 'deal'.

A second kind of cannabis transaction involves both the buyer and the contact visiting the seller but only the contact conducts the transaction, the buyer remaining outside. In this kind of cannabis transaction the buyer is prepared to play a more active role but is excluded from direct contact with the seller. One reason for this is provided when the seller stipulates to his associates that he does not wish for 'strangers' calling on him, preferring to restrict his customers to those he knows well and can trust. When such a stipulation is made, then the procedure often adopted for purchasing cannabis from such persons is for the buyer to wait outside or in some other pre-arranged meeting place and for the contact to conduct the transaction with the seller for him. The following quotations report

cannabis transactions where this kind of procedure was employed:

(1) S. ... I had decided to try to score some dope ... D. said he could get some but that J. didn't like people he didn't know going round to his place, he is very careful. He said that J. had sworn them all to secrecy a long time ago. So when we went round there I had to wait outside round the corner in the car while D. went off to get the dope. I waited about a half hour and then D. came back with it.

I. Did you give him the money beforehand?

S. No, D. said that he had an arrangement with J. I just gave it to D. after he had got it.

(2) C. said that when he wanted to score dope from A. at first he always had to score through B. He used to give B. the money and B. would go and score the dope. Now that he knew A. he went to score it himself. I asked C. why he thought A. used to do this, C. replied that A. was very cool about it, that he didn't want people to get to know about him, preferring to keep those with whom he dealt down to a minimum.

A third type of indirect cannabis transaction occurs when a group of students pool their resources to purchase cannabis, usually in large amounts. However, it is considered unnecessary and inexpedient from both buyers' and sellers' points of view to have more than just a few of the members of the group conducting the actual transaction. It is typically the case that two or three of the buyers will conduct the transaction on behalf of the other members. Whilst most of the 'syndicate' remain uninvolved, a few will either purchase the cannabis directly from the seller, or indirectly by using a contact in the manner described in the case of the second type of indirect transaction. The following extracts report the use of this method of acquiring cannabis:

(1) I. How many of you were involved in it?

S. Just me and P.

I. Can you tell me how you went about it? How did you get the money?

S. We got the money from K., N. and F. P. got 75 from K and N, and I got 75 from F. and also forty from M. We then put the rest in between us to make it up to two weights.

I. How did you get it? Did you just go straight round and pick it up?

S. We'd arranged it with A. the last time. He said he'd give us a ring when it happened. We went up and he had it there.



- (2) It was reported to me that the N. crowd had recently invested five hundred in a deal with some of B's friends in London. There were apparently about six of them involved in it and probably more than that as some of the main contributors had also got their money by selling their cannabis in advance. They had got people to give them the money before they had bought the stuff. Then they had all given their money to B. and D. who had gone off to London to score it.

According to members, there are two main disadvantages involved in the use of indirect cannabis transactions in acquiring cannabis. The first of these is that the buyer does not have an opportunity to examine the cannabis being purchased. He is unable to see what type of cannabis it is, he cannot try it to assess its quality and he is prevented from ensuring that he is receiving 'good weight'. He must trust his contact to take care of these matters for him. The second disadvantage is that the buyer usually has to give his money to his contact who will then go and purchase the amount required. The danger in this kind of procedure is that the buyer may be 'ripped off' - that is, the contact may abscond with the money. This is particularly so when the buyer does not know the contact very well. Students reported knowing people who had lost several hundred pounds in their transactions with contacts whom they did not know and even with people whom they did know. In one particular case, the person concerned had been given money by his friends for a supply of cannabis and he had then gone to India with it.

(ii) Direct Transactions

The complications of the indirect transaction are to some extent overcome if the buyer conducts his transactions directly with the seller. Whereas in the indirect situation the buyer and seller remain anonymous to each other, the direct transaction is characterised by face-to-face social interaction between buyer and seller.

There are several advantages to conducting cannabis transactions directly as far as buyers are concerned. The first of these is that the

buyer is able to control what is done with his money by retaining possession of it until it is exchanged for cannabis. The second advantage is that the buyer has the opportunity to inspect, sample and sometimes weigh the cannabis which is for sale before the purchase, whereas in the case of the indirect transaction the buyer can only do this after the purchase has been completed. In the course of inspecting, sampling and weighing, the member is able to make use of his knowledge of types and qualities of cannabis and the construction of typical weights and measures of the drug in order to ensure acquisition of 'good deals' as opposed to 'bad deals'.

(a) Inspecting

It is a usual feature of direct cannabis transactions that the buyer is given the opportunity to examine the cannabis for sale before making a decision as to whether or not to purchase any. With such an opportunity, the buyer is able to draw upon his previously accumulated stock of knowledge about categories of cannabis in order to decide whether what is for sale is cannabis at all and, if so, what type of cannabis it is.<sup>7</sup> That inspection is a typical feature of direct transactions and that both buyers and sellers are mutually oriented to the provision of such opportunity is illustrated in the following interchanges between buyers and sellers:

- (1) S1. Can I see it? What is it?  
S2. It's Afghani (he shows it to S1, then hands a piece of it to him).  
S1. Mmm, looks okay (he smells it, turns it over in his hand, examines it closely visually, sniffing it again).
- (2) S1. Here, have a look at that, that's what you call nice bush that (he hands it over in a polythene bag to S2).  
S2. Yeah, see what you mean. It smells really strong.  
S1. It's quite fresh.

According to members, the experienced buyer would always insist on inspecting the goods if the seller did not offer them for examination. Only by doing so is the buyer able to maximise the likelihood of obtaining a 'good deal' and minimise the risk of being 'burned' - that is, being sold as

cannabis a substance which, although looking like cannabis, is not 'in fact' cannabis at all.

(b) Sampling

Another prominent feature of the direct cannabis transaction, in contrast to the indirect version, is for the buyer to sample the seller's cannabis by consuming some of it. Both buyer and seller are mutually oriented to such a feature of their transactions:

- (1) S1. Is this the dope?  
S2. Yeah, roll a joint and see what you think of it.
- (2) S1. What sort of dope is it?  
S2. It's Paki. It's okay.  
S1. Can I make a joint?  
S2. Sure.

Sampling makes possible the categorization of cannabis, not only in terms of its authenticity, but also in terms of its quality. As a feature of cannabis transactions, sampling therefore facilitates further the acquisition of 'good deals' in the course of scoring the drug. As such, it is considered to be in the interests of buyers to sample the cannabis for sale before purchase and to conduct transactions in situations where sampling is expedient.<sup>8</sup>

(c) Deciding how much to buy

Using his knowledge of the drug and its effects the buyer can then come to a decision as to whether the cannabis is worth buying. If the cannabis is considered to be of acceptable quality, the buyer may purchase the amount he originally intended to buy.<sup>9</sup> If, however, the cannabis at hand is of exceptional quality, the buyer may conclude that purchasing more than he originally intended is warranted. However, it is also often the case that buyers purchase cannabis of low quality on the grounds that 'anything is better than nothing'. Whether a member decides to purchase a particular batch of the drug will depend not only on the quality of the drug but also on such matters as how long he is prepared to wait until 'good' quality

(d) Weighing

The next typical phase of the direct cannabis transaction consists of the weighing out of the desired amount. It is at this point that the member makes use of his knowledge of the various methods of constructing weights and measures of cannabis. As indicated earlier, scales are considered the most accurate and reliable means of establishing whether or not a given amount of cannabis 'really does' weigh the amount that the seller suggests. Consequently, it is in the buyer's interest to ensure that scales are used when the cannabis is 'cut up' or 'split', if this is carried out during the transaction, or to bring along a set of scales in order to check the weight of previously 'weighed out' pieces of cannabis. Without the use of scales, members have to rely on other methods of quantifying pieces of cannabis. As with the use of scales, members make use of their knowledge of typical weights and measures in order to ascertain whether the cannabis in question is 'good' or 'fair' weight. The aim is to establish the degree of correspondence between the cannabis at hand and the member's preconstituted stock of knowledge of typical weights and measures of cannabis. The usual procedure is for the seller to hand the cannabis to the buyer for his inspection and to ask him if he believes it to be acceptable.

In some cases whether a given amount is defined as a certain weight of cannabis is a matter of negotiation between buyer and seller:

- S1. That there, I measure it as a quarter of an ounce, or just over a quarter of an ounce in fact. You want a half don't you? C. come here, you can be a fair arbiter.
- S2. Well, I bought a quarter of an ounce yesterday so I've got a pretty good idea.
- S1. That's a half ounce. If you do get a pair of scales and find it's drastically underweight, don't hesitate to tell me, but I don't think it is.

Besides the negotiative element in this interchange, a further strategy which may be employed by buyers in order to ensure the purchase of 'good' weight is illustrated here: the buyer informs the seller that he possesses the knowledge of what constitutes a quarter ounce.

cannabis is available, and on whether he currently has any cannabis in his possession. If the member does not wish to wait the arrival of such cannabis, then a preferred solution adopted by many members is to purchase a small amount of inferior quality cannabis to 'tide them over' or 'keep them going' until more desirable varieties of the drug 'come in'.

The buyer is not always free to purchase whatever amount he chooses. He is constrained by the amount which the seller is willing and able to supply him. If the seller does not have available the quantity requested, then that quantity obviously cannot be supplied. Furthermore, it is sometimes the case that sellers deliberately restrict the quantities they sell.<sup>10</sup> Once word, for example, has spread that seller X has Y amount of cannabis for sale it is possible for a situation to arise where the seller is asked to sell amounts ranging from 'ten bob deals' to several ounces to many persons. In such situations the seller may become inconveniently inundated with requests for sales of small amounts. In such circumstances, sellers sometimes restrict sales to a half or quarter ounce and above and only sell the occasional quid deal to friends as a favour. Sellers justify such practices on the grounds that it is too inconvenient to be cutting up the cannabis in such small amounts all the time and that the larger the number of customers a seller has coming round to his place the greater the risk of his activities becoming known to those with an interest in his apprehension.

Occasionally restriction of sales to particular amounts occurs in the opposite direction, with sellers refusing to sell more than a specified quantity to individual buyers. In the case reported in the following extract, the seller refuses to sell more than 'three quids' worth' on the grounds that he wishes to sell it to as many people as possible:

D. asked if he could have some of it. He had to be content with asking for £3 worth, as the seller with the cannabis did not want to sell it all to one or two people - that was why he had cut it up into small amounts - he wanted to distribute it as widely as possible since there was so little around.

The last quotation not only suggests that members are mutually oriented to the 'authority' of scales in establishing the weight of given amounts of cannabis, it also suggests that members work within a margin of error in their cannabis transactions. In spite of the likelihood of such errors certain direct cannabis transactions do not involve the weighing of the cannabis. In such transactions it seems, members are prepared to tolerate what is given to them by the seller without question, neither sampling nor checking the weight of the cannabis received at the time of purchase. As was indicated earlier, members are aware of the conditions under which the production of 'inaccurate' weights and measures are most likely produced: in cannabis transactions involving small amounts, in transactions with certain types of sellers, according to the strategy adopted by the buyer and according to the situation in which the transaction takes place. Consequently, on the basis of such knowledge the member is able to organise his cannabis transactions in such a way as to maximise the likelihood of a 'good deal'. By being oriented to the conditionality of transactional outcomes the member is able to act in such a way as to ensure a successful conclusion to his cannabis transactions.

(e) Paying

The final phase of the direct cannabis transaction is typically the payment of the seller by the buyer for the cannabis received. This may be done in a number of ways: the buyer may pay cash, give the seller a cheque or he may buy the cannabis on credit, undertaking to pay the seller at a later date. It is generally the case that there is a current price of cannabis and that different types of the drug command different prices. Usually the best quality cannabis commands the highest price. In 1972 prices ranged from as low as ten pounds per ounce for 'home grown' marihuana to sixteen pounds per ounce for grade 'A' Nepalese and Afghani hashish. As a consequence, buyer and seller usually do not 'haggle' or bargain over the price of pieces of cannabis, thereby sustaining the current market price

for the drug. Buyers accept that it is essentially a sellers' market for cannabis since there is normally a sufficient number of people demanding cannabis to satisfy the sellers' ability to supply it. It is usually up to the buyer to 'take it or leave' when he has been informed by the seller of how much the present consignment costs. It is usual for members to ask 'How much is it?' rather than to say 'I'll give you four quid for that bit'.

#### CONCLUDING NOTE

This chapter has attempted to illuminate members' methods of devising solutions to the problem of acquiring cannabis. The main focus has been on buying the drug.<sup>11</sup> The analysis presented here has concentrated on certain taken-for-granted aspects of the reality of the 'problem of supply', as experienced by those who wish to acquire cannabis. In particular, attention has been focused on three main issues: the quantification of cannabis, the contacting of supplies and suppliers of cannabis, and the conduct of cannabis transactions. The account has been constructed sequentially in order to illuminate the series of steps which are involved in acquiring cannabis and thereby overcoming that form of social control involving the restriction of supplies of the drug.

CHAPTER EIGHT

AVOIDING DISCOVERY



In the last two chapters, attention has been focused on certain issues connected with two of the major forms of social control confronting cannabis users. In this chapter, a third form of social control, that of the threat of discovery, is the central topic of analysis. The main focus is on how members avoid discovery by the police. As in previous chapters, the starting point of the discussion consists of symbolic interactionist contributions to the study of this topic in relation to the use of cannabis.

The importance of the threat of discovery or, as Matza puts it, 'ban', has been pointed out by several writers working within the symbolic interactionist framework.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Becker (1963, p.66) suggests:

Marihuana use is limited to the extent that individuals actually find it inexpedient or believe that they will find it so. This inexpediency, real or presumed, arises from the fact or belief that if nonusers discover that one uses the drug, sanctions of some important kind will be applied.

Similarly, Davis and Munoz (1968, p.57) note:

Thus, the omnipresent threats of police harrassment, of arrests, and incarceration, as well as of a more diffuse social ostracism are 'facts of life' which the hippie who uses drugs only occasionally must contend with fully as much as the regular user.

Finally, Matza (1969, p.155) observes:

To become deviant is to embark on a course that justifies, invites or warrants intervention and correction. By definition then, to deviate is to run the risk of apprehension.

As far as interactionist contributions to sociological understanding of the impact of ban on the cannabis user are concerned, the most prominent are the works of Becker (1955) and Matza (1969). Thus, in his discussion of 'secrecy' and marihuana use, Becker shows how fears of discovery break down as consumption increases, how it is a necessary condition of continued use that they should do so, and how release from the constraints of this type of social control makes possible new levels of use. Social control through fear of discovery breaks down, Becker suggests, when, through social

interaction with more experienced users, the user comes to realise that others need not find out that he has the drug in this possession or that he is under its influence. It is Becker's contention that at each level of use there is a growth in this realisation which makes the new level of use possible. Thus, 'occasional' use is sustained by confining it to those occasions on which meetings between the worlds of user and nonuser do not seem likely and by safeguarding against intrusion by nonusers at the time of committing cannabis offences. 'Regular' use, on the other hand, 'does not take into account such possibilities and plan periods of getting high around them'.<sup>2</sup> Rather, according to Becker (1963, p.68),

It is a mode of use which depends on another kind of attitude toward the possibility of nonusers finding out, the attitude that marihuana use can be carried on under the noses of nonusers or, alternatively, on the living of a pattern of social participation which reduced contacts with nonusers almost to zero point.

Matza's concern is different from Becker's. He examines the impact of what he refers to as 'ban' on the secret cannabis user and shows how the attempt to deal with one of its problems - the problem of transparency - can compound the process of becoming deviant.<sup>3</sup> The problem of transparency can only be solved, Matza suggests, by deviousness on the part of the subject. By behaving in such a devious manner the subject thereby contributes to the building of his own deviant identity. Box (1971, pp.220-221) summarizes how this occurs in the following way:

The subject has to appear to be conventional, if only to state officials (but normally to many significant others as well), in order to avoid sanctions. To do this, the subject has to be devious - he plays at being ordinary. The irony is, having exerted so much effort to appear ordinary, the subject performs a disservice to himself by glimpsing the possibility that he is, after all, only playing at it. A glimpse is all it needs to jolt the subject into contemplating that if he is not the person he is playing at being, then who is he? This doubt is sufficient to prepare him to be slightly more compliant with the State's altercating when - and if - he is apprehended for committing an offence.

There has been little attempt to examine or extend the work of these authors. One exception, however, deserves mention at this point. Thus, in an effort to extend Becker's contribution, Schaps and Sanders (1970) examined the degree to which different types<sup>4</sup> of cannabis users behaved secretively. In this way 'moderate' users were more secretive than either 'light' or 'heavy' users. Schaps and Sanders explain these differences by pointing to the interactive effects of two variables: (1) the user's knowledge of drug laws and enforcement methods and (2) the feasibility and convenience of protective measures. They suggest that 'light users often were ignorant of the drug laws and enforcement methods and, as a result, did not feel a need to conceal incriminating activities'. In the case of the moderate user, on the other hand, 'familiarity with the drug scene and increasing regularity of use brought realization of the serious consequences of a legal confrontation' and, because of a typical commitment to his role in 'straight' society, the moderate user 'therefore chose very carefully those to whom he revealed his secret and often used very elaborate means to hide the supplies, accoutrements, and actual fact of his drug use'. By way of contrast, 'faced with an ever-widening circle of people who could inform on him and the increasing inconvenience or difficulty of staying clean, the heavy user came to believe it impossible to protect himself ... (and) ... often gave up trying ...'

Notwithstanding the value of studies like those of Schaps and Sanders, the concern in this chapter is rather different. As suggested in chapter one, several questions are raised by symbolic interactionist contributions to the study of secrecy and cannabis use. In this chapter, two main issues provide the central topics of discussion. These are (1) the nature of the perceived risks of using cannabis, and (2) the kinds of concealment practices employed by cannabis users to avoid discovery and apprehension.

## 1. THE RISKS OF CANNABIS OFFENCES

The phenomenon of risk suggests a concern with consequences and chances: it may refer to the consequences of an action or to the chances of that consequence occurring. In this chapter both of these aspects of the phenomenon are taken into consideration.

### (i) Risk as consequence

Earlier sociological work has identified several risks - in the sense of consequences - of committing cannabis offences. Box (1971, p.151), for example, states that the 'most important risks are giving off information and being apprehended'. Similarly, Becker (1955) mentions the following risks: being discovered in possession of the drug, being unable to hide its effects, repudiation by people whose respect and acceptance he requires both practically and emotionally, and arrest. A preliminary research task, then, consisted of investigating the perceived or feared consequences of using cannabis which members themselves recognised.

Members' accounts of the kinds of risks taken by themselves in the performance of cannabis offences suggest that they were oriented to a variety of possible untoward consequences of their actions. An initial, and most 'obvious' kind of risk consisted of apprehension by the police or, in the words of members, 'being busted'. The following extracts indicate an orientation to this possible consequence:

- (1) I. What do you see as the main risk in using dope?  
S. Being busted I guess. I mean obviously there are other hassles that would go along with it but, you know, it's all down to the fact of being busted.
- (2) Being busted is my main worry. I really wouldn't like that to happen.
- (3) I. What do you think are the main risks of using dope?  
S. Getting busted by the police; getting busted that's the main risk.

Apprehension was regarded by members as consequential in a number of ways, each of which constitutes an additional risk of using cannabis. Thus, apprehension could result in the imposition of a fine by the courts. The following extracts illustrate members' awareness of the possibility of financial deprivation as a possible consequence of discovery by agents of social control:

- (1) I. Any other risks?  
S. The most likely is fines, getting fined, you know, anything from twenty to a couple of hundred quid. I read in the paper of this guy being fined two hundred quid for it.
- (2) I. What do you think would happen if you were busted?  
S. Probably all that would happen if I got busted would be I'd get fined but that would prove a hassle at the moment. I just don't know where I'd get it from. Borrow it I suppose but all my friends are as poor as I am.

A second kind of risk envisaged by members as a possible consequence of their discovery by agents of social control consisted of imprisonment. Even if members believed that for most cannabis offences the likelihood of such a consequence was fairly small,<sup>5</sup> the fear of it was reported several times during the course of conversations about the risks of using cannabis and other cannabis offences, such as supplying and growing the drug. For example, in the following extract from notes taken of a conversation with a student who had been selling cannabis quite regularly it is reported that it is the specific eventuality of subsequent incarceration which constitutes the main feared consequence of apprehension:

He said that he didn't like the idea of getting busted and being put in prison. I asked him what it was about being busted that worried him most and he replied that it was the thought of being put in prison: 'It's just a horrible place to be in', he said. I asked him if anyone would be upset if he was busted. He replied that his family might be but he had not seen them for such a long time because he had left home now so it was not so much that which worried him as the specific form the punishment would take, and in particular, imprisonment, that he feared most.

The following quotation also suggests a fear of imprisonment as a possible consequence of apprehension:

Going to prison that's a real bummer. I mean it's not as if you've committed any great crime. I just don't like thinking about it.

In addition, members were oriented to the possibility of other consequences of apprehension. These included such 'hassles' as being sent down from the university, difficulty in acquiring jobs and, in the case of foreign students, being deported. The following quotations depict some of these feared consequences:

- (1) I'm more worried about the hassles afterwards that would go with it. You know, the fact that I'd been busted and I'd got a record, you know. Being in possession of dope wouldn't really worry me, it would be all the hassles and things.
- (2) Right now I don't care about being busted but it might be a hassle for getting a job later on if anybody found out. People have all kinds of hang-ups about things like that.
- (3) I don't think they'd chuck you out if you got busted. I don't think so but I wouldn't like to chance it.
- (4) I. What do you think would happen to you if you got busted?  
S. It depends on whether I got caught with quite a lot. I might even get deported.

Besides fearing the social reaction of official agents of social control, members were also oriented to the possible untoward consequences of discovery by a variety of 'non-official' significant others as well. These included parents, girlfriends, and other persons 'whose respect and acceptance he requires both practically and emotionally' such as teachers and colleagues. The following extracts are illustrative of such persons from whom members preferred to keep their cannabis offences secret:

- (1) I. What worries you about it?  
S. It's more my parents, you know all my family and all that. We live on a council estate, they're working class but they've got middle class ideals.
- (2) I. What about getting busted?  
S. That never occurred to me at all. It's only in the last two years that it's worried me. Rather than getting busted what I was worried about was my parents finding out.

- (3) I. What do you think about getting busted now?  
S. Well it would be a real drag. I'd have to go through all the explaining to my parents how and why I'd taken drugs.
- (4) I. Are there any people from whom you keep your smoking hash a secret?  
S. I worry about my girlfriend finding out.  
I. What worries you about it?  
S. I worry about her knowing I've had a smoke that day. You see if the effects are still lasting when I meet her, she'll know, she'll sense it.  
I. What would happen if she did sense it?  
S. We'd have a row. There'd be a scene about me taking drugs, how they're really bad for you. I mean, she's only frightened about some harm coming to me.  
I. Do you agree with her?  
S. To an extent, some drugs I'm sure are harmful but not charge.  
I. So what happens if you're still high and you go home?  
S. When I go home I sit there feeling pleasantly high, everything a bit hazy and distant and her father starts talking to me about my studies and all that. I just don't know what to say to him. And then his son comes in all bright and breezy. I feel pretty out of place. It gets a little uncomfortable sometimes. Like I get worried they are going to find out and I know they object. Sometimes they ask me what's the matter. I just say I'm feeling tired or something.
- (5) I'm always careful not to smoke if I'm going to a seminar. When you're stoned out of your mind in a seminar and someone's droning on in the corner about something you've no idea what they're talking about, it's just too much. Besides which if you get asked a question and you can't answer it and they suss you're smashed, then there could be hassles there.

(ii) The certainty of discovery

In the last section, some of the different kinds of risk, in the sense of 'feared consequences', which were seen as possible results of discovery and apprehension were examined. This section concentrates on members' knowledge of the chances or 'certainty'<sup>6</sup> of discovery and, in particular, their apprehension by agents of social control. It will be shown that members were aware that in the performance of their deviant acts, the

likelihood of discovery varies and that this variation is a state of affairs over which the member had some control by attending to a variety of 'factors' or contingencies of discovery. The following section examines the factors which, according to members, made apprehension more or less likely.

(a) Situational factors

To begin with, members were oriented to a relationship between the situational context of cannabis offences and the likelihood of their discovery by agents of social control. Certain situations were regarded as 'safer' than others. The campus, for example, was considered to be a safer situation for the commission of cannabis offences than other, more 'public' situations, though even the campus could become 'unsafe' on some occasions. Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) S. If I do any dealing in there (the local pub) I always feel really paranoid. I prefer to let N. go in and for me to be lookout outside.  
I. A bit risky?  
S. Yeah, right.
- (2) I. What about up here? Do you think there's much chance of getting busted up here?  
S. Up here is not so bad, not much chance of it, except perhaps at concerts or something like that. You hear rumours that some of them are up here. In fact, I've seen Inspector D. around here before now.  
I. Where was that?  
S. It was at a concert over in (a college).
- (3) ... because the obvious pressures of society aren't on you, for instance, you don't feel so paranoid walking around with a pocketful of dope or something on the campus because the police don't often come up here.
- (4) I was talking with H. about the advisability of selling cannabis in a local public house. He said that it was 'very uncool' to enter the place with drugs of any kind in one's possession since it was known as a place where the police occasionally went. He said that he had also heard that one of the barstaff was an informer. He commented that it had been very uncool for two persons whom he knew to have tried to sell cannabis in the form of quid deals at the place several days before.

(field notes)



As each of these extracts suggest, it is part of members' common-sense knowledge that certain situations are more dangerous and risky than others with respect to the commission of cannabis offences. It is part of that knowledge, for example, that the police are apt to visit certain locations in the course of their routine practices of law enforcement. It is assumed, further, that the police do this because they, in their turn, assume that such locations are visited by the kinds of people whom they expect to find in possession of drugs. By imputing this knowledge to the police members are then able to conclude that it is inadvisable to have drugs in one's possession in such locations. Conversely, other locations are recognised as less risky. As extracts (2) and (3) indicate, it is believed that the campus is a safer place than the local pub and, as a consequence, members have no need to 'feel paranoid' about possessing drugs there except on such exceptional occasions as concerts when the police have been known to visit the campus. The following extract re-emphasises this point regarding the relative safety of the university campus with respect to the possibility of apprehension by the police:

I had visited a student's room on the campus. The door was open when I arrived but there was nobody in. I walked in intending to wait for its occupant. As I looked around the room I could see that there had been no precautions taken in spite of recent rumours about drug busts in the area. I could see both cannabis and LSD on the table, and on the floor odd little pieces of cannabis. I concluded that the occupant couldn't be very far away. He came back fifteen minutes later. I asked about the lack of precautions. He said that he thought he didn't have much to worry about because there had been so many people using his room, that it was likely that he could easily deny responsibility and knowledge of what had been going on in the room. As he said, 'that's the thing about living in college really, there are so many let out clauses'. He said that he thought the police had to go through the college authorities first before they could raid the campus, that the police were not free to just walk in and bust people and that a friend of his had been warned by the college authorities about police inquiries about him and that he had therefore had enough time to 'clean up'.

(field notes)

The relative safety, then, of the college campus is assumed to derive not only from the fact of infrequent police supervision; it is also believed by members to derive from a particular relationship between the police and the college authorities.<sup>7</sup> Such beliefs enabled members to neutralise the danger of possible apprehension; they provided a sense of relative security in committing cannabis offences on campus as opposed to other, more public locations, where they were seen as less safe and in some cases definitely dangerous.<sup>8</sup>

(b) Personal factors

In addition to the situational factors already discussed, members believed that the chances of discovery and apprehension were related to several 'personal factors'. These included behaviour and appearance.

It was reported by members that engaging in certain types of behaviour, presenting certain kinds of appearances and thereby becoming a certain type of drug user increased the chances of discovery and apprehension.

Consider, for example, the following quotations:

- (1) I. Why do you think about getting busted down here but not at home?  
S. Because down here I know people who have been busted. When I was at home the only people who were getting busted were the guys who were breaking into chemists and things, real hoodlums. They weren't after people like me who only scored a quid deal sort of once every couple of weeks.
- (2) I. What do you think are your chances of getting busted?  
S. Well I don't think it's very likely down here, you know, I don't think they are very interested in middle class university students who just smoke. I think they are mainly interested in busting dealers, people who sell a lot.
- (3) I. Has the possibility (of being busted) increased since you started getting in weights?  
S. It's increased since I've done that, yes, because my name is obviously known amongst people. Like 'M. is getting some dope in this week or next week', everyone sort of try to spread the word so people know so they'll come and buy it off you. So you could easily pick up a name that way. But if you are just a sort of casual smoker who buys it and doesn't bother doing any dealing

then they are not likely to pick up your name so easily. So I've got more paranoid in the last few months.

- (4) C. and I were walking across the campus and as we walked he tells me that he has invested £120 in a deal with some other students to buy several weights of hashish. Apparently C. had given his money to one of these students at the beginning of the previous week so that this person had had C's money for about a week. C. tells me that this student had gone to London to score the hashish but had not yet returned. He had, further, gone to score in a car painted in bright psychedelic colours. C. thought that this was 'very uncool' as it would attract the attention of the police.

(field notes)

These extracts illustrate several personal factors which were considered important contingencies of discovery and apprehension. By attending to them, members could thereby minimise the risk of such eventualities. By ignoring them, however, the chances of apprehension were increased. Thus, as extract (1) suggests, the police were not concerned with arresting 'people like me who only scored a quid deal sort of once every couple of weeks'; rather, they were interested in 'real hoodlums' and 'guys who were breaking into chemists'. Extracts (2) and (3) make the point that the risk of apprehension is increased with involvement in selling or 'dealing' cannabis. Extract (4) suggests the importance of appearance as a factor influencing the chances of discovery.

(iii) The severity of sanctions

Members not only believed that the likelihood or 'certainty' of discovery by agents of social control was related to certain situational and personal factors, they also believed that the 'severity' of the sanction imposed in the event of apprehension was also contingent upon several factors over which, likewise, they could exert some measure of control.<sup>9</sup>

First, members were aware of a relationship between the type of cannabis offence and the severity of punishment. Consider, for example, the following extracts:

- (1) I. Do you ever think about being busted?  
S. No, not at all. Well I sort of adopt the attitude that if you are going to get busted you are going to get busted. I mean there is very little you can do about it. You take precautions but after that it's sort of luck really.  
I. What do you think would happen to you if you did get busted?  
S. It depends on whether I got caught with quite a lot. I might even get deported.  
I. Would that matter?  
S. Yes, it would. At the moment it would, but I try not to, I mean that it's a precaution I take, but after that point I don't sort of worry about it, I mean I worry about it to the extent that ... I don't want to get busted but ... so I take precautions but after that ...
- (2) I. What about getting busted?  
S. Ah, that's a hassle. I'm pretty careful, I don't deal which is something I've never done so if I got busted I'd just get done for a little.
- (3) I. Why have you never dealt?  
S. Because of getting busted, I guess. They'd be much heavier on you if they caught you dealing.

As these extracts suggest, it is judged by members that the severity of sanctions imposed upon those who are apprehended is related to the 'seriousness' of the offence. That is, it is apparent that members believe that agents of social control and, in particular, magistrates, operate on the basis of a particular sentencing policy. By imputing this sentencing policy to agencies of social control the member can gauge the likely consequences of apprehension in the case of particular offences. Where the offence is defined as relatively trivial then, it is believed, the sanction will be correspondingly light, but where the offence is seen as serious then the corresponding sanction will be heavy. By using this 'theory of punishment' members, as each of the above extracts suggest, are able to reach decisions about the likely consequences of being apprehended

for their deviant acts. By attending to such a theory, and by modifying their cannabis offences in the light of it, members can act to minimise the severity of sanctions in the event of apprehension.

Members reported that in addition to the seriousness of offence, courtroom appearance was also an important factor which had some bearing on the severity of sanctions imposed by magistrates. In the following account it is reported how this factor was taken into account as an element in the member's strategy when attending court for a cannabis offence:

- I. What do you think about getting busted?
- S. Well, it's set up a real conflict in me, not so much the fact of getting busted, which is fairly simple, but the fact that a lot of people who were straight took it upon themselves to sort of make it a lot easier for me when I could have been fairly nastily hassled or that was the impression I got. So that set up this conflict within me because I felt that I owed them something, but at the same time because as individuals they themselves had taken trouble, and yet at the same time, I'm dead against everything they stand for. And I think that that fucked me up a bit. Basically it hasn't changed anything, like, you know, I thought a hell of a lot at the actual bust about whether I was going to compromise in any way at all. And then I thought, well I didn't see why not as long as it didn't compromise my head, but I mean that was a bit of a contradiction in terms in itself. For instance, getting my hair cut. Now I was told that my sentence would be in proportion to the length of my hair, more or less and I was in a cell for a while and I really didn't dig it and just in the interests of self-protection, I thought it was common sense to get it cut. I don't care about getting it cut, I mean I don't care about it all that much except what it means sort of in my head, sort of symbolically.

This extract, then, provides an example of the use by a member of the factors which are assumed to influence the kinds of sanctions imposed by magistrates.<sup>10</sup> By attending to the factor of appearance ('I was told that my sentence would be in proportion to the length of my hair') it is hoped that the severity of sanctions will be minimised.

## 2. CONCEALING CANNABIS OFFENCES

The first part of this chapter has been concerned with the phenomenon of risk; the second part is concerned with the phenomenon of secrecy or concealment. The basic question to which an answer is sought is as follows: how do members conceal their cannabis offences in view of the risks of committing them?

The sociological significance of secrecy was first suggested by Simmel (1950). According to Simmel, secrecy refers to the purposive hiding and masking of realities. He saw this activity as one of man's greatest achievements - as he puts it (ibid, p.330) - 'the secret offers, so to speak, the possibility of a second world alongside the manifest world'. 'The purpose of secrecy', Simmel suggests, 'is above all, protection'. This may refer to the protection of the self or of others. Whoever or whatever is protected, whatever phenomenon is its object, secrecy involves and makes sense of the behaviour of persons who engage in concealing knowledge of events, acts, and persons in a context of a real or imagined attempt by others to reveal the knowledge concealed in the secret.

As far as the commission of cannabis offences is concerned, the phenomenon of secrecy or concealment has received little attention from sociologists.<sup>11</sup> Thus, whilst he notes its importance, Matza (1969) directs the main beam of his gaze away from members' methods of concealing their deviant acts. Instead, he concentrates on the subjective experience of 'transparency' and on showing how attempts to cope with it can contribute to the building of deviant identity.

Becker, on the other hand, does provide some insight into members' methods of coping with the possibility of discovery. He suggests two principal concealment practices: the isolation of cannabis use from persons regarded as threatening and the control of the effects of the drug when in

the company of nonusers, 'so that they can be fooled and the secret successfully kept even though one continues participation with them'. Schaps and Sanders (1970) provide a little more information. Their findings may be summarised in their own words as follows:

The secretive user protected himself by the avoidance of dangerous (obvious) drug-use situations. He was careful to use drugs only in a 'safe' place, i.e. where there were no well-known 'heads', where 'head' cues such as psychedelic music and lighting were not obvious, and where the possibility of his discovery by those against drugs and likely to inform on him was reduced to a minimum. He also spent considerable time, energy, and creativity in hiding the incriminating evidence of drug use. However, the hiding place was usually a compromise between safety and accessibility.

The user who was concerned with secrecy believed it necessary to control his relationships. He was selective about those who knew of his illegal activity. He suspected extremes; he was afraid to trust the 'straight' person who might use the information against him and was wary of the 'head', or heavy user, whom he saw as extremely liable to arrest and coercion by the enforcers. He was also careful to control knowledge of his activity while interacting with relatively new and inexperienced members of the drug community. The secretive user defined as a threat the novice who did not yet understand the necessity for secrecy. In addition, the novice was often suspect because he tended to become known as a user through status-oriented flaunting of his illegal activity.

In their work, Schaps and Sanders are primarily concerned with the secretive behaviour of the 'moderate user' whom they equate with the 'secretive user'. They suggest that the 'heavy user' or 'head' is unconcerned with secrecy. By way of contrast, the research reported below is primarily concerned with the secretive behaviour of those who used cannabis extensively and typed themselves as heads or freaks. As will become apparent in the course of the discussion, the 'heavy users' or 'heads' in this research did engage in secretive behaviour.

The problem of the secret cannabis user is the problem of the discreditable.<sup>12</sup> To solve it, he engages in what Goffman (1968, p.58) refers to as 'passing' - 'the management of undisclosed discrediting information about the self'.<sup>13</sup> A variety of methods of, or recipes for, passing were observed and/or reported in the course of this research. They are

described below.

(i) The presentation of straight appearances

It has already been suggested that members believed that the display of certain appearances could be taken as a sign of possible involvement in cannabis offences. In particular, it was believed by members that the police operated on the basis of certain stereotypical images of deviant drug users in the course of their law enforcement activities. Accordingly, in the light of this knowledge, members sometimes endeavoured to counteract the possibility of having deviance imputed to them on the basis of their conformity to such stereotypical appearances. They did this through the presentation of 'straight' (i.e. conventional) appearances. Particular methods included cutting their hair and wearing clothes that were not, in their view, associated with the stereotypical image of the deviant drug user. The following cases report the use of this kind of concealment strategy:

- (1) In the course of my conversation with J. about the activities of the local police with regard to persons of mutual acquaintance - they had recently been busted - J. mentioned that as he had been selling some cannabis he thought it would be 'cooler' if he cut his hair so as to appear less suspicious.
- (2) Today I had a talk with N. about how a person could be 'really sure' of not being stopped by the police when he had cannabis in his possession. He said that he thought the best way was to look really straight: to wear a business suit, to have straight clothes and to drive a straight looking car, preferably a Ford Cortina, an Escort or an 1100. He said that the only really successful dealer he knew operated like that.

Similarly, it has already been stated that transporting cannabis in brightly painted cars was judged by members as 'uncool' and as increasing the chances of being suspected, stopped and searched. In the light of this assessment, members stated that when they were acquiring or possessing cannabis they attempted to avoid attracting attention to themselves in this way.



(ii) The segregation of social worlds

A second method of restricting the information given off about their deviance is for members to perform their cannabis offences in private, away from the gaze of persons who might disapprove or otherwise pose a threat were they to become aware of them. The following extract reports one generalised strategy for maintaining the privacy of cannabis use:

... since I was quite paranoid at the time about dope, about getting busted, about getting caught, it sort of made me lose contact with other people, with people who didn't smoke, with people who didn't trip.

In this extract, then, it is suggested that privacy is sustained by the segregation of the social world of cannabis users from the social world of nonusers.<sup>14</sup>

(iii) The privatization of cannabis use

The segregation of social worlds is accomplished by making use of a further set of procedures. These constitute the 'privatization of cannabis use'. Particular procedures of establishing and sustaining the privacy of cannabis offences included selecting places where 'outsiders' (i.e. nonusers) are unlikely to intrude, locking doors, pulling curtains, checking the identity of callers (asking 'who is it?' or looking out of the window before opening the door) and, in the event of a visit from the police, refusing entry whilst incriminating evidence is disposed of.

In 'public places' where nonusers could also be present, for example in students' common rooms or at some public intersection on the campus, further procedures for sustaining the privacy of cannabis use are used. In the public setting, the sharing of joints becomes concealed, smoking is shielded, and the scene is scanned for possible threatening persons being present. Joints are passed from person to person in a 'discreet' manner and when taking their turn members would sometimes adopt a particular method of holding the joint in order to prevent it being observed by

passers-by: instead of holding the joint prominently between the fore-finger and the middle finger, members would hold it between the thumb and the index finger with the end of the joint that was alight enclosed within the clasped palm of the hand. All of these procedures shroud the act in ambiguity. As a consequence, a decision as to whether or not a person is committing a cannabis offence or merely smoking a cigarette is not easily made.

(iv) Avoiding dangerous situations

It was suggested earlier in this chapter that members were aware that committing cannabis offences in some situations is more likely to result in discovery than committing them in other situations. In the light of this knowledge, members made use of a general concealment strategy of avoiding dangerous situations when committing their cannabis offences. The following extract contains reference to the use of this strategy:

I asked N. why he was dealing in Canterbury. He replied that it was because, first of all, he didn't want to deal in his home town because he lives there and so he thought it would be 'cooler' and safer to sell it elsewhere even though he could have sold it there because he knew a lot of people who would buy it there. He said that the activities of the police seemed more threatening there. As he put it, his home town had a 'more zealous drug squad'.

(field notes)

(v) The use of allusion

This method was most common when members were arranging cannabis transactions over the telephone. It involves alluding to cannabis and the quantities of it which were to be bought and sold, instead of speaking about them directly. The use of this method is reported in the following extract:

D. was telling me about a person they had met who was not from the university, who could sell them weights if they wanted any. D. remarked that this person was very 'cool' because he would not give D. or his friends his address and had told them exactly what to say over the telephone and not to mention cannabis explicitly.

(field notes)

Some members had developed routinised vocabularies for alluding to cannabis and its various quantities. In one particular case, the members spoke of 'oranges', 'boxes of oranges' and 'crates of oranges' instead of 'dope', 'ounces' and 'weights'. In another case, members spoke of 'furnished rooms' for ounces and 'unfurnished rooms' for 'weight'.

(vi) Transactional restriction

It was noted earlier that the risk of being apprehended is perceived to increase when the member becomes renowned for his ability to make cannabis available to others. It is one of the problems of becoming renowned as a source of supply that an inexpedient number of customers may call and ask to purchase cannabis, often in inconvenient small quantities. In such a situation it is a common strategy on the part of sellers to attempt to restrict their clientele to purchases of certain amounts of cannabis. One method of doing this is to refuse to sell cannabis in less than a specified quantity, say a half ounce. In the following extract it is reported that one of the problems of the seller is the 'excessive' number of persons who come to know of him and require his services:

I don't know this for sure, but I'm pretty sure he's the originator of it but he has had other stuff before. I don't think he wants anyone to know that he has got stuff so I shouldn't approach him on the lines that you already do know, just sort of casually ask him. When I saw him last he was very uptight because, in fact he said he was going to give up selling quid deals, just make it all half ounces and ounces. You see the

thing is everyone goes over and scores separately, you know, 'Have you got a ten bob deal?' and you get people knocking on your door all the time.

Other methods of transactional restriction not mentioned in this extract but noted earlier in the chapter on acquiring cannabis, include instructing customers not to reveal their source and not to bring strangers round to the seller's house.

(viii) Acting normally

Becker suggests that one of the fears which possesses the user of cannabis is that of others becoming aware that he is under the influence of the drug. The basis of this fear is the belief that one of the effects of cannabis is the impairment of 'normal' social interaction. The user is beset with fears that when confronted face-to-face with persons to whom he cannot afford to disclose the fact of his drug use, he will give himself away by his inability to follow the normal routine and rules of social interaction. Thus, the user may feel unsteady on his feet and suspect that others will notice that he is swaying about - something that does not normally occur without 'good reason' (as at a concert or when otherwise listening to music); he may take 'too long' in answering questions; his verbal responses may not follow the 'normal pattern'; his fears may make him tremble, providing further fuel for the fear of being discovered. In all these ways the user may feel that he is giving himself away - that he is, in Matza's terms 'transparent'.

How then does the user manage these fears? Becker's answer is that the user becomes aware that others need not know that he is high - that he can get away with it and that he is in fact opaque as long as he behaves that way. This, of course, as Becker suggests, is a matter of experience. However, to say this is only to beg the question of how the user is able to appear normal when he is in fact being deviant.

Two main strategies of appearing normal when under the influence of cannabis were identified in the course of this research. The first is based on the assumption that nonusers will be unable to discern whether the user is high. The user, in other words, assumes the perspective of nonusers does not reciprocate his own.<sup>15</sup> He behaves normally simply by acting as though he is normal. The key to a successful normal performance is spontaneity; the user takes for granted the acceptability and normality of his behaviour and acts accordingly. To dwell upon the normality of the impression being given off, to treat the performance as problematic, serves only to hinder it.

Occasionally, the user will find himself under the influence to such an extent that to behave spontaneously puts at risk the normality and acceptability of his behaviour. This type of situation reveals a second strategy: interactional restriction. Depending on the extent to which he is under the influence, the user can either simply hold himself in check and control himself at the moments when he feels he will give himself away or, if his condition is more serious - if he is so high that a normal performance has become impossible - then the most appropriate strategy is withdrawal from social interaction or, where this is not possible, staying in the background - being present at the setting of interaction but not actively participating in it.

(ix) Stashing

In view of the possibility of being raided by agents of social control, members occasionally adopted the concealment practice known as 'stashing'. This involved 'keeping the place clean' by storing the bulk of the member's cannabis in some hiding place away from his place of residence (though, occasionally, in view of the possible inconvenience of this concealment practice, members would sometimes devise hiding places inside their homes).

The aim of stashing was to ensure that if the police did raid the house then the quantity in possession on the premises would be minimised and easily disposed of. Members' methods of disposing of cannabis in such eventualities are discussed in the next section.

(x) Disposing of the evidence

There are many methods of disposing of incriminating evidence in anticipation of or in the event of a visit from agents of social control or other threatening persons. Some of these methods are, according to members, preferable to others. This section examines these methods and members' grounds for choosing amongst them.

One such method was employed during the consumption of cannabis. Consider, for example, the following extract:

We could sit by the window and blow it out the window.  
It would be very cool.

This extract illustrates once again how the possibility of discovery enters into the members' selection of situations for the commission of cannabis offences. In this case it is the 'escape route' provided by sitting next to the window which provides the protection required. Such a procedure, in the event of intrusion by persons from whom the members wish to withhold information indicating they were committing a deviant act, enables the efficient disposal of incriminating evidence. It also enables the members to prevent the room being filled with cannabis smoke, the smell of which might lead persons to conclude that cannabis offences were being committed.

Occasionally, members have been obliged, when faced with the arrival of the police at the door, to dispose of large quantities of cannabis. It was reported in one case that three ounces had been disposed of; in other cases, the disposal of ounces, half ounces and smaller amounts was reported.

Depending on the amount involved, there are several methods available to members for disposing of incriminating evidence: flushing the cannabis down the toilet, eating it, throwing it in the fire, throwing it out of the window, and finally, hiding it. Each method has its characteristic problems. It is considered quite feasible that one can eat small amounts of cannabis. In fact, one case was reported where a member had eaten a half ounce of good quality cannabis. However, it is considered impracticable and inconvenient to try to consume three ounces by oneself. If there is a large amount to dispose of and a large number of persons present one possible solution is to break up the cannabis and for each person to eat some. The problem, according to members, with this method is that there is rarely time to break up the cannabis and share it out in this way in the event of a police raid. If the cannabis is already broken up into small pieces then such a procedure becomes a convenient method of disposing of incriminating evidence. Throwing the evidence out of the window involves running the risk of it being found by the police. Several students related accounts to me of policemen waiting outside windows ready to catch the ejected evidence. These same members reported cases where persons had been subsequently apprehended and sanctioned as a result of following such procedures. To some extent though, in spite of its attendant risks, this method of disposing of the evidence is considered advantageous because where it results in the cannabis not being found by the police it allows the possibility of retrieval later. By way of contrast the method of flushing the cannabis down the toilet precludes such a possibility. Whilst the latter is a 'safer' method in that it involves less chance of recovery or discovery by the police, it is considered a rather drastic and wasteful method because it prevents later retrieval. The safest method, of course, is putting the cannabis on the fire. The disadvantage with this method, however, is that, even more than in the case of flushing the evidence down the toilet, the

possibility of retrieval is precluded. From the point of view of later retrieval the most appropriate method is that of hiding cannabis on the premises. The risk of using this method, however, is that it might be found by the police.

To cope with the possibility of being discovered in the event of a police raid, members also followed a number of anticipatory procedures. One such procedure, as already described, consisted of retaining only small amounts of cannabis on the premises, thereby facilitating quick and not too costly disposal. Other procedures included the destruction of other kinds of suggestive and incriminating evidence. Thus, members were observed 'keeping the place clean' by throwing roaches on a fire, burning roaches in ashtrays and making use of neatly cut pieces of cardboard instead of torn-up cigarette packets for the construction of roaches. The aim of these practices was to leave as little trace as possible of the commission of cannabis offences. These were by no means widespread practices, however. Some members would habitually take these kinds of precautions whilst others seemed content to accumulate waste bins full of roaches, torn-up cigarette packets and other kinds of suggestive and incriminating evidence of cannabis offences. Their grounds for 'not bothering' were that (1) the police were unlikely to visit them and (2) it was inconvenient and excessively 'paranoid' to be concerned with such petty precautions. Such an attitude, contrary to the findings of Schaps and Sanders (1970), appears to be the exception rather than the rule amongst the 'heads' in this research.

#### CONCLUDING NOTE

In this chapter the focus of attention has been on the issue of secrecy or concealment. In the first section, members' knowledge of kinds of risks involved in the commission of cannabis offences was examined. Particular attention was paid to the perceived consequences of their offences,



the perceived certainty of their apprehension and the perceived severity of subsequent sanctions. In the second part of this chapter, attention has been directed towards the concealment practices and procedures which are employed by cannabis users to avoid discovery.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have sought to explore, from a phenomenological perspective, the use of cannabis amongst a group of students from a university in the South of England between 1969 and 1972. The aim of this work has been to illuminate the nature of cannabis use through the provision of an ethnography. As an underlying concern, an attempt has been made to extend in a phenomenological direction earlier naturalistic contributions to the sociology of cannabis use.

Previous research on 'deviant' drug use in general and on the use of cannabis in particular has not for the most part, and especially in Britain, been grounded in a naturalistic approach. In fact, there is a distinct lack of naturalistic ethnography in British studies of drug use. Instead, British research in this field has been concerned overwhelmingly with questions of etiology and has tended to display a correctional orientation to the subject. As a result such research has been inclined to pay only cursory attention to the nature of the phenomenon of drug use as it appears to those who actually engage in it. Much of this work has adopted an empirical stance towards 'the drug problem' and has sought to establish the prevalence and correlates of different patterns of use, and the characteristics of users. Samples of such specific populations as schoolchildren, students in higher education, juvenile offenders, patients at VD clinics, and the inhabitants of English towns have been surveyed with a view to isolating the causal factors involved in the use of drugs.<sup>1</sup>

One notable exception to this empirical and correctional orthodoxy is the work of Young (e.g. 1971a, 1971 & 1973). Even here, however, despite its naturalistic leanings - evident in Young's concern with appreciating the social meanings of drugtaking and with their interactional origins - the commitment to etiology overrides that to naturalistic ethnography. Thus, in Young's (1971) programmatic statement of the requirements necessary for sociological understanding of the origins, content and stability of subcultures of drug use, there is no apparent concern with the provision of ethnography. Ultimately, the subjects' perspective on their drug use is explained away

through a synthesis of structural and interactional 'factors'.

Much American research on drug use has likewise been cast in an empirical, correctional and etiological mould.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to the British situation, however, there is also, perhaps because ethnographic fieldwork on deviant phenomena in general has a stronger foundation and a more traditional acceptance, an extensive corpus of naturalistic studies of drug use.<sup>3</sup> Most of this work is based on symbolic interactionist premises, its 'archtype' (according to Matza (1969, p.110) being the work of Becker (1953) on the social process of becoming a marihuana user. Even here, however, etiology, albeit in a humanistic guise, remains the central theme of the work, just as it is in Matza's (1969) extension of Becker's seminal statement. As a result, what may appear as central aspects of the phenomenon as far as the members themselves are concerned, become transformed into the peripheral, or ignored altogether, in these accounts of drug use.

This thesis was in part conceived in the ethnographic tradition in order to redress the empirical-correctional bias in British research on 'deviant' drug use. It was also partly conceived with the aim of extending in a phenomenological direction these earlier naturalistic contributions to the sociology of cannabis use. Unlike these earlier works, however, this thesis was not designed and has not attempted to explain why people take drugs. If the question of etiology has been raised at all it has been with regard to how drug users themselves account for problematic events and features of their social worlds. Accounts have not been treated as resources in the production of sociological causal explanations. Instead, they have been treated as part of the corpus of knowledge used by the members themselves to construct the reality of their own worlds. I have argued that the contributions of naturalistic-interactionists like Becker and Matza, whilst making theoretical and substantive progress on non-naturalistic studies of drug use, are in this and other respects not naturalistic enough. I have suggested that this is because they have neither consistently applied nor sufficiently followed

through the phenomenal implications of the naturalistic imperative to 'faithfully reproduce the world as it is sensed by its occupants'.<sup>4</sup> Thus, on the one hand, their work embodies such theoretical inconsistencies as the imposition of concepts, categories and classifications, and the use of accounts to explain observed features of the use of cannabis, which appear to have problematic and undemonstrated connections with the reality of the phenomenon as it appears to cannabis users themselves.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, these interactionist contributions have left unasked a number of important questions, questions which emerge through an appreciation of the reality of the phenomenon from the perspective of the members. These questions, I have argued, require answers if the reality or nature of cannabis use is to be more adequately illuminated from a sociological point of view.

It has been my thesis that in order to rectify this state of affairs and thereby more adequately and faithfully illuminate the nature of the phenomenon as it appears to those who engage in it, it is necessary to overcome these inconsistencies and omissions. Each of the preceding chapters has addressed a set of unexplicated issues arising out of earlier naturalistic work and has been guided by a phenomenological stance toward their explication. In general, I have stressed the necessity of investigating those meanings which cannabis users themselves, in the natural attitude, take for granted about the use of cannabis and its related problems of social control. I have sought to do this through their description and constitutive analysis. More particularly, I have concentrated on the practical knowledge whereby members are typified in terms of their social types of cannabis users, substances are categorised as cannabis, cannabis is consumed and acquired, its effects interpreted, its morality constructed and discovery by agents of social control avoided. I have argued that these aspects of the phenomenon had hitherto received only cursory attention in naturalistic work, with the result that the nature of the phenomenon had only been partially illuminated. However, it is through the use of such cultural resources as social types of

cannabis users, categories of cannabis, methods of consuming and acquiring the drug, interpretations of its effects, conceptions of its morality, and methods of avoiding discovery by agents of social control, that worlds of cannabis use are ongoingly produced and sustained. It is from their appreciation, description and constitutive analysis, that sociological understanding of the nature of cannabis use can be furthered.

The particular group upon which this research has focused consists primarily of students who typified themselves as heads or synonymously as freaks, these being the main existential social types of cannabis users in use during this period. In chapter two the meanings of these social types were described and analysed. From the perspective of the users themselves, these social types referred to persons who saw themselves as members of a wider social world of psychedelic drug use. As such, heads were oriented not only to the 'pleasurable' properties of drugs like LSD, mescaline, and cannabis; they also shared a mutual interest in the 'psychedelic' or 'mind expanding' potential of these drugs. More particularly with respect to cannabis, membership of this world or community of freaks signified the sharing of a corpus of knowledge about cannabis, its effects and its methods of use. It implied that the drug was a central and taken for granted feature of their everyday lives. Being a freak meant also that one shared with other freaks common problems, attitudes and practices in relation to the police, the State and 'straight society'. Amongst these users there was a distinct consciousness of 'them' and 'us'. They spoke of feeling repressed and estranged and of a sense of injustice at what they saw as the persecution of cannabis users. They expressed the view that freaks were 'uncommitted' to, and 'disaffiliated' from, straight society. As such, they reported a lack of interest in the acquisition of 'straight' jobs and the lifestyles that accompany them. Cannabis use was not the only symbol of this divide between the freaks and the straights; a distinctive casualness and looseness of apparel gave further expression to the freaks' separation from the 'uptight' world of straight society.

Whilst these users saw themselves as heads and identified with the wider community of heads, they were also aware that their involvement in this world was not as complete as that of others whom they typified as 'real heads' or 'real freaks'. The latter were seen as users whose lack of commitment to straight society was more thoroughgoing, whose membership of the community of freaks was more fully fledged, and whose use of cannabis and other more potent psychedelic drugs was more central and taken for granted than that of the heads in the university setting. The users in this research were, after all, still students and, as such, their disaffiliation from, and their opposition to, straight society could be seen as less authentic, more artificial and more academic than that of freaks who did not inhabit protected middle-class enclaves like the university setting and who did not occupy the relatively privileged social position of a university student. It was in this respect that users spoke of 'being alienated' by the university setting and of holding in esteem those freaks who had 'really' dropped out.

Subsequent chapters described and analysed the practical knowledge and interpretive work of these self-typified freaks as it pertained to the categorizing of cannabis, the consumption and acquisition of the drug, the interpretation of its effects and the problems of social control impinging on its use in the context of the university setting during this period. These users possessed extensive knowledge of cannabis as a substance. They differentiated between varieties and qualities of both hashish and marijuana and made use of a corpus of practical and interpretive procedures in order to accomplish such differentiations. A repertoire of skills, recipes and other elements of knowledge was drawn upon in connection with the consumption of the drug. This included methods of preparing cannabis, procedures and rationales for different means of consuming it, and a variety of practices, conventions and rules for sharing the drug with other users. Members also shared a stock of knowledge about the effects of cannabis. This consisted not only of a collection of conceptions or categories for recognising and

describing its effects, but also a set of understandings about the production and contingencies of different kinds of cannabis experiences. As with the social typing of cannabis users, the categorization of cannabis, and the consumption of the drug, the interpretation of its effects was likewise grounded in the interpretive work of the members.

In chapters six, seven and eight the ways in which these users handled problems of social control were examined. Three main problems were investigated: morality, supply and secrecy. In chapter six it was shown that when asked to account for their initial and subsequent use of cannabis these freaks made use of four kinds of motivational construct: purposes, reasons, triggers, and predisposers. In the absence of moral commentary on cannabis consumption in their use of such constructs members' conceptions of the morality of the activity were subsequently revealed through interviews about the current legal status of cannabis. Such a procedure indicated that users held a more or less coherent set of beliefs which justified use of the drug and claimed that the legal proscription of it was based on untenable premises. In chapter seven the problem of supply was the focus of attention. It was shown that members employed a corpus of knowledge in accomplishing the acquisition of cannabis. This corpus pertained to the social construction of quantities of the drug, the social organization of its availability and the conduct of cannabis transactions. Finally, in chapter eight, attention was focused on the problem of secrecy or, more precisely, on the knowledge and methodology underlying the avoidance of discovery by agents of social control. It was thus indicated that these members shared a collection of understandings about the risks of cannabis offences in relation to a number of situational and personal contingencies, and with regard to the seriousness of the offence committed. In the light of their understandings of the risks involved, members made use of a series of concealment strategies and tactics. These were described, along with the reasoning underlying their use.

In describing and analysing the substantive phenomenon of cannabis use



from the perspective of this group of self-named heads or freaks I have sought to demonstrate that members of deviant worlds possess understandings, models, methods, practices, categories, accounts, interpretations, - in short, elaborate cultural knowledge which they employ in constituting the reality of deviant phenomena. In so doing, they ongoingly reproduce and sustain 'deviant subcultures' as 'socially sanctioned grounds of inference and action that people use in their everyday affairs and which they assume that others use in the same way'.<sup>6</sup> It is my view that if sociologists of deviance are to further their understanding of these subcultures, then it is imperative that greater attention be paid to the social knowledge they embody and to the manner in which they are constituted by the interactional and interpretive work of their members.

Thus, in this research it has been emphasized that the members socially structured their world by using the typology of cannabis users consisting of 'straight users', 'heads', and 'real heads'. I have argued that it is necessary for the sociologist of deviance to appreciate and portray these typologies held by members themselves rather than impose arbitrary sociological classifications if his account of the phenomenon is to reflect the reality it purports to describe. Similarly, members possessed their own 'folk pharmacology' of cannabis. This consisted of their categorizations of the substance itself, their methods of using it, and their understandings of its effects. In terms of this folk pharmacology, members were able to distinguish different types and qualities of cannabis, make use of a variety of methods of consuming the drug, interpret its effects and thereby 'get high with ease' (cf. Becker, 1953), and, finally, structure or channel their cannabis experiences in preferred directions by attending to the variable conditions of their production. It was suggested that, relative to the users' perspective embodied in this pharmacology, the sociological and natural scientific models of drug effects are only two models among several that may be drawn upon by the members in making sense of drug effects. It would seem

that whilst from a sociological perspective the meanings of cannabis (for example, its qualities and its effects) do not emanate solely from the drug itself, from the perspective of its users, this is precisely what they are assumed to do. It is thus from an appreciation, description and constitutive analysis of such folk pharmacologies, including their models of drug effects, as opposed to the imposition of 'official' or 'scientific' pharmacologies, that sociological understanding of the nature of drug use is to be furthered. Through a similar programme of substantive phenomenological work on the knowledge and 'methodology' used by members in coping with such contingencies of social control as morality, supply and secrecy, the nature of deviant subcultures as comprising 'solutions' to 'problems' may be more adequately illuminated.

The freaks' knowledge of these various aspects of the phenomenon of cannabis use is treated by them as 'obvious' and it is taken for granted. It comprises for them the 'facts of life' about cannabis, its uses and the attendant problems arising out of its illegality. Seen from the members' perspective these facts are intersubjective; they are part of an objective reality 'out there' which, it is assumed, appears the same, at least for all practical purposes, to the members of the world of freaks. These facts are not questioned, they constitute the tacit grounds for the organisation of the freaks' practical affairs. Being a freak means living within the suspices of this factual knowledge and using it as a taken for granted resource in the social construction of the reality of cannabis use. This thesis has attempted to depict these taken for granted cultural resources.

#### TOWARDS A FORMAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL SOCIOLOGY

In describing and analysing the practical knowledge and interpretive work of this group of cannabis users I have advocated a more thoroughgoing phenomenological or substantive phenomenological approach to deviance. I have thereby placed a special emphasis on the substantive features of the particular reality of

cannabis use amongst a specific group rather than on the essential properties of reality construction in general.<sup>7</sup> Formal phenomenological sociology, on the other hand, directs the sociologist's attention to the 'basic' and 'invariant' features of social interaction and interpretation which are conceptualised as underlying their 'surface' manifestations in substantive contexts. As Cicourel (1973, p.45) points out in the case of deviance:

When deviance is said to arise, it is deviance vis-a-vis the idealized surface rules as conceived by members and/or sociologists. But surface rules or norms presuppose interpretive procedures and can be consulted only after the fact (as written rules or social customs) for revealing the detection and labelling of deviance.

Similarly, as Phillipson and Roche (1974, p.135) suggest, from the perspective of formal phenomenology,

substantive documentation and research in any field, including that of deviance, is almost premature until the rules which societal members (including sociologists) follow in constructing their realities and meanings have been revealed and clarified.

Formal phenomenological sociology, following Schutz (1962, 1964, 1967, 1967a, 1970), enjoins the production of a 'constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude'. This would provide an understanding of the common-sense world of everyday life through an investigation into how social realities are experienced and constructed by interacting subjects. It is amongst the ethnomethodologists such as Garfinkel (1967) and Cicourel (1964, 1968, 1970, 1973) that the study of these basic features of reality construction has been most fully developed. In such work there is an evident 'scant regard for substantive areas (or issues) except as scenarios of invariant procedures' (Attewell, 1974, p.208). This is because, as Coulter (1973, p.160) puts it,

ethnomethodology announces no less than a paradigm shift; a complete reformulation of what is to count as data, researchable problems and findings; it is incommensurate with a substantive topic orientation to social research.

Drawing on the work of Schutz, ethnomethodological studies by Garfinkel, Cicourel and others have elaborated what has been referred to as a 'model of the reality constructor' whose properties are conceptualised as constitutive

of social interaction: they both create interaction and the possibility of interaction. Time and space precludes the unraveling of the historical development of this model. For present purposes, the succinct summary of its main features as contained in Mehan and Wood (1975) will suffice. As they suggest, the model of the reality constructor is composed of (1) social knowledge and (2) interpretive procedures that operate on that social knowledge. Social knowledge provides a practical, rather than a scientific or theoretic, interest in the world, it is socially distributed, tacit, and it takes the world for granted.<sup>8</sup> Interpretive procedures, which comprise 'a mechanism that activates the situationally relevant aspects of this constantly changing stock of knowledge' include 'searching for a normal form', 'doing a reciprocity of perspectives', and 'employing the et cetera principle'.<sup>9</sup>

In so far as the construction of the particular reality described in this thesis rests on the interactional and interpretive work of its participants, then it may be seen as both presupposing and displaying the formal features of such a model of the reality constructor. Thus, for example, the facticity of the members' knowledge can be shown to be grounded in the interpretive procedure, 'doing a reciprocity of perspectives'. As Schutz (1967, p.12) points out,

...the general thesis of reciprocal perspectives leads to the apprehension of objects and their aspects actually known by me and potentially known by you as everyone's knowledge. Such knowledge is conceived to be objective and anonymous, i.e. detached from and independent of my and my fellow-man's definition of the situation, our unique biographical circumstances and the actual and potential purposes at hand involved therein.

Similarly, the categorization of cannabis and the interpretation of its effects may be seen as substantive exemplifications of the use of the interpretive procedure, 'searching for a normal form'. Thus, as Cicourel (1973, p.86) indicates,

...this common-sense principle provides each member with instructions for unwittingly (and sometimes deliberately) evaluating and striving for a reciprocally assumed normal form judgement of his utterances and perceptions. The member's unwitting acquisition and use of these principles provide a common and standardized system of implicit

signals and coding rules. Without such principles everyday interaction would be impossible for nothing could pass as 'known' or 'obvious', and all dialogue would become an infinite regress of doubts.

Likewise, in the case of using cannabis, for example, it may be suggested that the knowledge that a person is breaking or invoking the rule proscribing 'joint hogging' or 'bogarting' presupposes a knowledge of the context of such occurrences. Deviant acts and utterances conveying social reactions to them are indexical expressions and, as such, their meaning rests on the use of the 'et cetera principle' whereby the member 'fills in' the contextual background to the event and thus establishes its meaning in terms of his social knowledge.

Cicourel (1973, p.87) describes this interpretive procedure as follows:

The participants to a conversation must 'fill in' meanings throughout the exchange and after the exchange when attempting to recall or reconstruct what happened because of the inadequacies of oral and non-oral communication, and the routine practice of leaving many intentions unstated (Garfinkel, 1964). Vague or ambiguous or truncated expressions are located by members, given meaning contextually and across contexts, by their retrospective-prospective sense of occurrence. Present utterances or descriptive accounts that contain ambiguous or promissory overtones can be examined prospectively by the speaker-hearer for their possible meaning in some future sense under the assumption of filling in meanings now and imagining the kinds of intentions that can be expected later. Or, past remarks can now be seen as clarifying present utterances.

Examples may also be drawn from the preceding chapters in order to demonstrate that the social knowledge depicted in them possesses the formal features of social knowledge outlined above. Thus, it is clear that the knowledge used by the members to categorize cannabis, to quantify the drug and to make sense of their cannabis experiences takes the world for granted, is tacit, socially distributed and provides the knower with a practical interest in the world. This knowledge takes the world for granted in that the members 'expect the world beyond to be accurately pictured by their way of looking at it' (Mehan and Wood, 1975, p.100). As Garfinkel (1967, p. 272) suggests:

The person coping with everyday affairs seeks an interpretation of these affairs while holding a line of 'official neutrality' towards the interpretive rule that one may doubt the objects of the world as they appear. The actor's assumption consists in

the expectation that a relationship of undoubted correspondence exists between the particular appearances of an object and the intended-object-that-appears-in-this-particular-fashion.

Such a feature of social knowledge makes it possible for objects such as cannabis or a given quantity of the drug to be accepted for what they appear to be on the surface. The second feature, the tacitness of social knowledge, provides that the meaning of events, objects and experiences (eg. being high) 'means both for the witness and the other more than the witness can say', (Garfinkel, 1967, p.56). The third feature, the social distribution of knowledge, has been described by Garfinkel (1967, p.276), following Schutz (1967, p.14), in the following way:

There corresponds, thereby, to the common intersubjective world of communication, unpublicized knowledge which in the eyes of the actor is distributed among persons as grounds of their actions, i.e., of their motives or, in the radical sense of the term, their 'interests', as constituent features of the social relationships of interaction. He assumes that there are matters that one person knows that he assumes others do not know. The ignorance of one party consists in what another knows that is motivationally relevant to the first. Thereby matters that are known in common are informed in their sense by the personal reservations, the matters that are selectively withheld. Thus the events of everyday situations are informed by this integral background of 'meanings held in reserve', of matters known about self and others that are none of somebody else's business; in a word, the private life.

This feature provides that 'biographical differences' in the meanings of cannabis, its uses, its effects and its associated problems of social control may be treated as irrelevant for the purposes of coordinating and communicating about cannabis-related activities and events. The final feature of social knowledge mentioned above, its provision of a practical interest in the world, has been summarized by Garfinkel (1967, p. 273) as follows:

Events, their relationships, their causal texture are not for (the person) matters of theoretic interest, He does not sanction the notion that in dealing with them it is correct to address them with the interpretive rule that he knows nothing, or that he can assume that he knows nothing 'just to see where it leads.' In everyday situations what he knows is an integral feature of his social competence.

Thus, in their everyday affairs, as has already been suggested, freaks are not oriented to their knowledge in the 'theoretic stance'; instead, that knowledge

provides the basis for the organisation of their practical activities.

These examples could be magnified and other instances exemplifying aspects of the formal model of the reality constructor could be drawn from the preceding chapters. Such a procedure, it may be argued, would serve to 'deepen' the analysis presented in them. However, to proceed in this direction now and, more especially, to have done so earlier - that is, to have used this research as an occasion for the study of these invariant properties of reality construction - would entail a change of emphasis from phenomenism to essentialism.<sup>10</sup> As such, it would preclude a thoroughgoing commitment to remaining faithful to the ways in which the members themselves apprehend their social worlds. This is because, as Rock (1973) suggests, there is a theoretical disjunction between these modes of understanding deviant worlds. Thus, as Coulter (1973) points out in connection with Cicourel's work on these invariant properties;

Cicourel's own inventory of 'interpretive rules' looks hardly like rules members might formulate for conceptualising concrete actions or utterances; in fact they are simply Schutz's postulates for orderly intersubjectivity.

It may thus with some justification be argued that an exclusive concentration on these 'deep structures' of reality construction leads to an obfuscation rather than an illumination of the nature of substantive phenomena like deviance or, more particularly, the use of cannabis. Given the substantive focus of this research, it has therefore been necessary to treat these essential or basic properties as background features of the work.<sup>11</sup>

#### SOME CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Whilst this thesis has advocated a more thoroughgoing phenomenal approach to the meanings of cannabis use than has hitherto been employed by sociologists of deviance working within the field of cannabis use, this is not to deny that sociological understanding of the phenomenon may be extended further by examining it from a position at greater distance from the perspective of the users themselves. Matza, (1969, p.39), for example, takes

such a view:

To view phenomena internally is to stress the way they seem or appear to the subjects experiencing them. That appearance is relevant and consequential. But the stress on appearance in no way precludes the observation that subjects may be so situated as to glimpse the phenomenon in a special, peculiar or distorted fashion. Their relations may be so structured as to obscure aspects of the world surrounding them. From a phenomenal standpoint, the appearance is a reality, but so too is distortion or refraction...the subject's perspective must be comprehended and illuminated, not enshrined. The angle of vision and consequent refraction must be considered as well as the substance of what is seen.

This view suggests two main issues. The first is that of the relationship between social phenomena and their social contexts. The second concerns the question of false consciousness. I shall return to this second issue later in this chapter. The following section concentrates on the implications of social context for an adequate understanding of the nature of cannabis use.

Since social phenomena are not constituted in a social vacuum, it can be contended that a consideration of their social contexts can illuminate their nature. In connection with the use of cannabis such a consideration is also warranted by the apparent historical and cultural diversity of meaning and practice that has been documented by naturalistic research on this phenomenon. From the work of Auld (1973, 1977), Becker (1953, 1955, 1967), Berke and Hernton (1974), Boughey (1967), Carey (1968), Goode (1970), Mikuriya (1970), Rock (1977), Rubin (1975), Schaps and Sanders (1970), Sutter (1969), and Young (1971a, 1971, 1973) at least two things are clear about the relationship between social context and cannabis use. The first of these is that there are cross-cultural similarities and differences in the meanings of cannabis use, both between and within particular societies. Secondly, it is apparent that these meanings are subject to transformations with the passage of time. Such changes occur as new groups of users create new meanings and as older groups elaborate on old ones. By taking into account such heterogeneity and flux the perspectives of the members of particular worlds of drug use assume a relativity which remains unnoticed as long as they are viewed internally. As Rock (1977, p.14)



indicates:

Over time, and among sections of the using community, there has been an evolving set of structurally available vantage points from which the issue may be viewed. Drugs cannot signify the same things when they are taken by jazz musicians, or by black youth, or by university students, or by the middle aged and conventional.

From this perspective it is clear that the statements of the members about the use of cannabis upon which this work is based do not possess an 'ultimate facticity', but a 'local facticity'; they constitute 'what is asserted as factual by participants in a particular drug-using community'.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, however, whilst it is imperative to recognise that the meanings of cannabis use portrayed in this thesis are tied to a particular group in a specific locality, it is also important not to allow this insight to obscure possible cultural interconnections between this and other groups of users. The sociologist is thus invited to explore the manner in which worlds of cannabis use reflect both local and wider contextual conditions. As a general principle, such intellectual distancing is essential to the sociological enterprise. In Matza's (1969, p.67) words:

Vision, in contrast to mere sight, is the capacity to see things unconventionally and more profoundly than others, partly by possessing a wider visual span. Seeing phenomena in relation to others, or within some wider context, is the very meaning of sociological vision...Putting the individual in a group context, the group in communal, historical, or societal contexts are prime projects of sociologists, and such placement requires the naive or trained capacity to see things that way.

In shifting attention away from description and constitutive analysis to sociological explanation, it is possible to discern a variety of contextual influences on the phenomenon of cannabis use.<sup>13</sup> In the following section I shall examine the ramifications of three of these. The first refers to the wider social structure within which the head or freak subculture with which the users in this research identified was located. The second consists of these users' position in society as students and, in particular, their largely middle-class backgrounds.<sup>14</sup> The third influence pertains to the impact of social reaction to the use of drugs in the local setting of this research.

(I) SOCIAL STRUCTURE

It has already been emphasized that the students in this research derived their self-images as types of cannabis users from the wider subculture of heads or freaks. This subculture, signifying a particular orientation to the use of cannabis and to the problems arising out of its illegality, was ongoingly expressed in, and provided a basis for, social interaction between diverse groups of users who identified with it. The alternative press of this period mediated, disseminated and caricatured its cultural resources. Much of the 'progressive' and 'acid' rock music of the time epitomised its 'focal concerns'. To the guardians of public morality and legality the subculture was cause for outrage and confrontation.

The freak subculture was itself embedded in a wider contextual configuration. To begin with, it comprised a fragment of the larger counter cultural milieu of the late nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies.<sup>15</sup> More particularly, its roots are traceable to the hippy subculture of the mid-sixties and beyond to earlier expressions of the bohemian tradition. This continuity is apparent in much of what was distinctive about the freaks' values, attitudes, beliefs and lifestyle. Thus, like the hippies, the freaks combined an emphasis on the subterranean values of expressivity, spontaneity, hedonism, and autonomy with a disdain for materialism and the 'ethos of productivity' (cf. Young, (1973b, p.187). Cultural interconnections are also evident in the hippies' and the freaks' mutual interest in mysticism, love and peace, the alteration of individual consciousness as the route to social change, communal living and the use of psychedelic drugs as a means towards the attainment of such ideals. More specifically, it was from the hippies that the freaks' psychedelic framework for the interpretation of drug experiences was derived. Similarly, the normative structure of collective cannabis use portrayed in chapter four can be traced to the hippy ethic of property

sharing (cf. Auld, 1977, p.271). There is also an apparent continuity in styles of dress and speech, and tastes in music between the freaks, the heads and hippies.

In their turn, the freak subculture, its hippy predecessor and the counter cultures in general are traceable to structural forces and changes in the wider society. Such a link becomes especially clear when they are examined within the framework of what Young (1974) refers to as the 'central convergence in deviancy theory'. This involves a synthesis of anomie theory and its subcultural derivatives with certain insights emanating from the labelling or interactionist approach to deviance. This model, as elaborated in the explanation of a variety of deviant subcultures,<sup>16</sup> assumes that what people do depends on the problems with which they have to contend (cf. Cohen, 1955). Cultures are thus defined as 'social devices evolved to solve problems faced by men living in particular parts of the social structure' (Young, 1973b, p.183). New culture or subcultures arise as collective solutions to problems of anomie. These problems, involving disparities between socially structured aspirations and institutionalised means of achieving them, are, in their turn, products of 'contradictions' in the wider socio-economic structure of society. Such contradictions would include, for example, the inculcation of aspirations for material success and the relative absence of opportunity to attain it amongst certain sections of the society's population (cf. Merton, 1937). Initially, the problems are handled through a process of 'dissociation' and the conjoint creation of a subcultural solution involving deviant behaviour.<sup>17</sup> The subsequent development of these solutions is partly contingent upon the impact of social reaction to them by agencies of social control.<sup>18</sup>

In terms of this approach, it has been suggested by Brake (1973) and Young (1971, 1973a) that drug subcultures amongst students in higher

education constitute a means of realising such subterranean goals as hedonism, expressivity and spontaneity. These subcultures originate in a state of disenchantment or disillusionment with the content and prospects of their courses. As Brake (1973, p.40) observes:

Middle-class boys also dissociate from the educational system, but in their case it comes at the level of further education, not secondary. A boring curriculum preparing the student for a dreary and not very well paid job led to the dropout culture of the hippies. A demand for spontaneous hedonism led to the use of hallucinogenic drugs. In particular the use of psychedelic drugs meant the development of acid rock, communal life, pop art and the individual, mystical revolution.

More specifically, Young (1973a) suggests that amongst students from backgrounds similar to those of the participants in this research drugtaking is a bohemian subcultural solution to problems comprising a lack of instrumental involvement in their education, and a disparity between their expressive aspirations and the ability of their courses to meet them. These problems, taken together, provide the 'socially induced frustrations' (cf. Young, 1973a, p.I) which motivate students to evolve subcultural solutions involving the use of drugs.

It is not enough, however, simply to point to certain 'problems' as providing the impetus for the construction of deviant subcultures. These problems must themselves be explained in terms of larger structural forces in society. As Young (1971, p.84) argues:

It is necessary to go beyond the immediate origins of drug use and try to explain why the immediate origins themselves occur in terms of wider processes occurring within society...it is not sufficient to say that the bohemian student faces at college a state of anomie because of his aspirations for an interesting and meaningful course are not met, and that this gives rise to a culture of bohemianism within which drug use becomes a means of obtaining the desired goals of the new subculture. We must also explain why it is that the course is unable to meet the demands of the students and what determines the specific terms in which the student's demands are couched. This brings us to the consideration of the educational system, and the relationship of the latter to the economy, in short for us to view the anomie and drug use of bohemian students in the context of the total society.

Following this line of analysis, the problems which give rise to such middle-class counter-cultural phenomena as student drugtaking and the hippy movement are explicable in terms of several major structural and cultural changes occurring in the wider society during the postwar period. These changes included the move towards advanced capitalism with its shift in the organisation of the mode of production; a more complex division of labour; a concomitant expansion of education promoting the new social and technical skills required for the growth of an increasingly bureaucratized society; and a replacement of the more 'protestant ethic' of the 'petit-bourgeois', traditional middle-class with the new 'ideology of affluence' of the 'progressive' modern middle-class. In this bureaucratized, affluent, 'neo-Keynesian world of contemporary consumer capitalism' man no longer realised his true identity in his work.<sup>19</sup> Instead, he endeavoured to do this in his leisure and in the expression of subterranean values. This was in part because work, bureaucratized and enmeshed in a system of formalized rules, largely precluded the realisation of such expressive aspirations. It was also partly because modern capitalism both facilitated and required such a reorientation. As Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts (1975, p.64) indicate:

...the shift in the way the mode of production was organised required and provoked a qualitative expansion in the forces of 'mental production', a revolution in the spheres of modern consciousness. The harnessing of Capital's productive power needed, not only new social and technical skills, new political structures, but a more repetitive cycle of consumption, and forms of consciousness more attuned to the rhythms of consumption, and to the new productive and distributive capacities of the system... Advanced capitalism now required not thrift but consumption; not postponed gratifications but immediate satisfaction of needs; not goods that last but things that are expendable: the swinging rather than the sober life-style.

Several researchers have traced the emergence of the middle-class counter-cultures in general and the hippy movement, the freak subculture and student drugtaking in particular, to this configuration of social changes. Thus, as

Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, and Roberts (1975, p.65) suggest:

The counter-cultures were born within this qualitative break inside the dominant culture: in the caesura between the old and the new variants of the dominant ethic...When the codes of traditional culture are broken, and new social impulses are set free, they are impossible fully to contain. Open the door to 'permissiveness' and a more profound sexual liberation may follow. Raise the slogan of 'freedom', and some people will give it an unexpectedly revolutionary accent and content. Invest in the technical means for expanding consciousness, and consciousness may expand beyond predictable limits...In fact, as soon as the counter-cultures began to take the new slogans at face value, the slogans were transformed into their opposite.

Others, more specifically, have linked the conditions underpinning the hippy and student drugtaking subcultures with these postwar structural and cultural changes. The low level of instrumental aspirations amongst hippies and student drugtakers has thus been attributed to postwar affluence in a number of sociological accounts of these phenomena.<sup>20</sup> For example, McGlothlin (1975, p.536), in his discussion of the hippy movement, argues:

When an adolescent grows up in a structured society which demands he assumes adult responsibilities at a relatively early age, the alternative of turning on and dropping out is not available. An affluent society which allows prolonged periods of economic dependence and leisure greatly increases the possible choices as to lifestyles. Anything which leaves the individual without an established place in the social structure increases the likelihood for radical departures from existing norms.

Similarly, Young (1973b) quotes Flacks (1970) in his explanation of student drugtakers' lack of instrumental involvement in their courses:

For some at least, growing up with economic security in families of secure status can mean a weakening of the normal incentives of the system and can render one relatively immune to the established means of social control, especially if one's parents rather explicitly express scepticism about the moral worth of material success. Postwar affluence in our society, then, has had the effect of liberating a considerable number of young people from anxieties about social mobility and security, and enabled them to take seriously the quest for other values and experiences.

Whilst postwar affluence and security contributed to a lowering of instrumental aspirations, it also served to raise their expressive counterpart.<sup>21</sup> Such an occurrence reflected, firstly, the widespread emphasis on

consumption and the expression of subterranean values during leisure time. Secondly, as Young (1973a) contends, in the case of students, it reflected their parents' adherence to a humanistic tradition. This increased as the professional middle-class grew with the expansion of the welfare state.<sup>22</sup> The expressive demands contained in this tradition were then exacerbated by these students' long exposure to the competitive and democratic ideals of the educational system (itself subject to large-scale expansion during the postwar period). Thus, as Brake (1973, p.40) asserts:

Middle-class education encourages greater articulation of criticism of the world and also develops individual autonomy in the sense that one is encouraged to believe one can get up on the received world and change it.

Subsequently, however, these expressive ideals and aspirations became accentuated and transformed through participation in bohemian subcultures:

...this notion of a continuing humanistic tradition should not blind us to the creative role of these students in terms of their raising and transforming their parents' expressive aspirations. It is not merely, as Frank Parkin has suggested, that society inculcates young middle-class people with ideals they find lacking in the real world. What has happened is that bohemianism has taken parts of a humanistic culture, accentuating and adding to it, to a point where it is qualitatively different.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, the failure of the educational system and the wider world of work to satisfy these expressive aspirations can be traced to the requirements of an increasingly bureaucratized society and the reorganisation of the mode of production. These developments led to an increasing demand for specialised social and technical skills, an expansion of education in order to provide them and concomitantly, a heightened emphasis on the acquisition of formal qualifications. Thus, just as the bureaucratization of occupational roles available to the middle-class young served to close off expressive ambitions at work, so also has the necessity of attaining a good degree in order to have a competitive position in the market for jobs precluded to a large extent the realisation of such aspirations at college.

(2) SOCIAL CLASS

In the course of the preceding discussion it was suggested that social class is relevant to a sociological account of the origins of student drug subcultures. This section elaborates the discussion by examining the influence of students' middle-class backgrounds on the provision of opportunity for, and on the direction or content of, sub-cultural solutions involving the use of cannabis.

Middle-class culture cannot only provide students with a motivation to engage in the use of cannabis, it can also facilitate the translation of that motivation into action. As Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts (1975, p.60) suggest, 'the youth of each class reproduces the position of the 'parent' classes to which they belong'. Thus, 'middle-class culture affords the space and opportunity for sections of it to 'drop out' of circulation' (cf. Clarke et al, 1975, p.60). One way in which this is accomplished is by providing its youth with a university education. As Brake (1973, p.48) comments:

the middle-class have always had in the university, a space, both temporal and geographical, where they can ask questions about the world and themselves, and where they can experiment with ideas and identities.

The very fact of being from a middle-class background increases a person's chances of becoming a university student. Of course, being a student does not guarantee or require the use of cannabis, but in comparison with the position of their working-class contemporaries, it does provide the opportunity to engage in initial, occasional and extensive experimentation with identities and activities, including those currently proscribed by the criminal law. Thus as Brake (1973, p.40) suggests:

Working-class subcultures are a temporary filling-in of the time before marriage; they are temporary, part-time subcultures, but in the middle-class subcultures can become a way of life in terms of full-time commitment. This is greatly aided by the use of the period spent at college or university. Working-class adolescents seldom leave home, except to get married and so they never explore alternative subcultures. The middle-class go away to college,



and develop both social and geographical journeys. It is they who go to Nepal, to San Francisco and the hip capitals of the world. The middle-class culture of the freak is then developed from the bohemian student culture...

In comparison to his working-class counterpart, not at college but in regular employment, the middle-class student is relatively free to organise his life as he pleases. Whereas 'working class youth is persistently and consistently structured by the dominating alternative rhythm of Saturday Night and Monday Morning'<sup>24</sup> the middle-class student is to a large extent free from the restrictions of job or school timetable. University life allows him to arrange his routine to suit his own convenience. If he so chooses he can sleep all day and work or play all night (though he may eventually be called to account for his absence from classes). Such freedom is particularly suited to such activities as the use of drugs, where the effects may last for several hours, or even days.

This freedom to organise one's life as one chooses is augmented by the students' relative lack of adult supervision in comparison with that of their peers living in the parental home.<sup>25</sup> The potential for deviant behaviour provided by such an absence of social control has been recognised by several scholars.<sup>26</sup> For example, Young (1973a, p.1) states:

Authentic oppositional subcultures can arise, but only amongst adults who are partially isolated from the rest of society. But certain groups of young people are precisely in this position of being isolated from adults and society in general, namely students (who are, of course, largely of middle-class origin). Students, unlike their working-class contemporaries, often live away from home and have, as universities grow, little contact with anyone except their peers...this is not to suggest that all students will, because of their isolated position, form contra-cultures. Rather, that the insulation from the rest of society provides a potentiality for contraculturation which will be realised by sections of the student population who are subject to certain tensions.

Thus, although college authorities may formally assume a role in loco parentis, the degree of moral supervision tends to be minimal:

questions of conformity and deviance, morality and immorality, are typically treated by them as matters for the student's own discretion. Generally, only when breaches of legal, or the university's own, codes become flagrant, serious, or injurious to others do the university authorities adopt a more paternalistic, intrusive and controlling posture toward the wayward student.

The potential for deviant behaviour which results from the lack of adult supervision is further compounded, as the above quotation suggests, by the presence of socially supportive peers.<sup>27</sup> At university the student enters a world where he is surrounded by, and therefore able to meet, large numbers of other young people. Amongst those at the University of Kale, the use of cannabis was widely accepted, so it was relatively simple to find friends with whom such an activity could be shared. Further, such socially supportive others provided not only companionship in the use of cannabis, they also afforded access to supplies of the drug. As was suggested in chapter seven, the widespread availability of at least small amounts of cannabis meant that its acquisition was typically an uncomplicated and reliable routine for the students in this locality.

Access to socially supportive others and to supplies of cannabis is particularly facilitated when the participants in worlds of drug use are located in communal settings where close and sustained association between members is possible. The collegiate structure of the University of Kale provided such a setting; others were produced when groups of students decided to live together in a house or flat. At the time of this research the total number of undergraduates at the university was around two thousand. Each of the four colleges was allocated a quarter of these students, three hundred 'living in', the remainder occupying flats or houses in and around Winterbury. One consequence of these collegiate arrangements was a reduction in the anonymity of university life.

Within the framework of such a system, it was possible to become acquainted, at least by sight, with the majority of the members of one's own college. The close proximity of the four colleges to each other, and the inter-collegiate teaching arrangements, encouraged acquaintance and association with the members of other colleges as well. The collegiate system of the university itself thus facilitated student drugtaking, providing access to other users, as well as places on the campus where collective gatherings for consuming cannabis could occur.

Middle-class culture also influences the content of students' subcultural solutions to problems of anomie. It has been suggested by several researchers that, in general, deviant subcultures reflect the subterranean norms and values of their 'parent' class culture.<sup>28</sup> Whilst both working-class and middle-class deviant subcultures accentuate such general subterranean values as expressivity, hedonism, autonomy and spontaneity, the specific direction of this accentuation is typically consistent and continuous with their class background. As Young (1971, p.92) remarks:

The solution initially devised by an individual or group will be a product of their culture of origin. That is, cultures are transmitted from one generation to the next and then transformed in order to meet the exigencies of the new social situation which their members find themselves in. The old culture is a moral springboard for the emergence of the new.

On the one hand, then, working-class youth, facing a disparity between aspirations and opportunities, tends to express itself in delinquent solutions because these are consistent with the culture of their social class of origin. Brake (1973, p.41) describes this continuity in the following way:

Working-class delinquents become involved in theft because on the one hand there is pressure through mass-media advertising to gain consumer goods (a process that is necessary for the continuation of capitalism) and on the other hand there is a value system which has an ambiguous and complicated attitude to theft. It is always possible, for example, to buy things in a working-class community which 'fell off a lorry'. Violence

grows in a culture which respects the machismo values of the hard man, and where fist fights continue into early middle age; where it is essential to be able 'to look after yourself'. The value system develops out of the violence done to the working class in the slums and ghettos. In a dreary life you go where the action is, fighting, gambling, football or nicking.

On the other hand, middle-class youth, encountering similar problems of anomie, tend to evolve bohemian solutions because these are consistent with the culture of their class of origin. In contrast to working-class culture, that of the middle-class embodies an emphasis on the control of physical aggression. The result is that middle-class deviant subcultures have evolved in non-violent directions. More particularly, Young (1971, p.92) depicts the continuity between the subcultures of drug use amongst middle-class students and their class background as follows:

A contrasting example would be that of a group of middle-class students who because of their disillusionment with the rewards of further education drop out and create a bohemian subculture. The values of this emergent culture will be related to the values of their middle-class background. It will be understandable in terms of their culture of origin, changed in order to meet the problem they collectively face. That is, it will be like the culture of the working-class delinquent in that it extols expressivity, hedonism, and spontaneity but will have a middle rather than a lower-working-class orientation. Thus it will value expressivity through non-violent aesthetic pursuits and hedonism through a cool (ie controlled) mode of enjoyment rather than a frenzied pursuit of pleasure ... Drug use in this group will involve the smoking of marihuana ... which has the culturally defined properties of enhancing aesthetic appreciation and bodily enjoyment in a restrained and non-violent manner.

Besides these general cultural influences on the content of middle-class drug subcultures, it is also possible to discern certain consequences flowing from the material basis of student life. The provision of the student drug user with material security in the form of a grant, in addition to any parental contribution to his income whilst at college, establishes a set of conditions which facilitate the adoption of a certain 'role-style' of participation in the world of cannabis use. Rock (1973<sub>a</sub>, pp.93-94) suggests several features of this style associated with the 'wealthy drug user':

In part, the assumption of a particular role-style is shaped by the deviant's practical power. The deviant, and all others who share the same deviant status, clearly lack effective collective power because they are unable to resist the attribution of deviancy itself. Yet any deviant has some control over the features of his social world. All rule-breakers experience problems posed by issues of organisation, collaboration, competition, isolation, social control, stigmatisation and the like. The way in which these issues may be managed is an expression of the deviant's command over men and resources. The wealthy drug user or homosexual has fewer problems of exposure than his poorer fellows. He is relatively capable of safely arranging his world so that its risks are reduced. He need not 'hustle' in order to sustain his deviancy; he does not always have to venture out into public areas in the search for sexual partners or drugs; and he can consume deviant goods and services behind shielding walls and doors. He has the greatest opportunity to remain covert if he so chooses; he does not have to affect an entrepreneurial role-style; and self-advertisement as a politicised or expressive deviant is not, as it may sometimes be, a necessary consequence of high visibility.

There are obvious similarities between the situation of the middle-class students in this research and that of the 'wealthy drug user' mentioned by Rock. Thus, in comparison with their non-student counterparts, the users in this research did not have to work or 'hustle' in order to acquire the necessary financial resources for buying cannabis: they did not have to 'affect an entrepreneurial role-style' in order to sustain their cannabis consumption. Like the wealthy drug user, however, the students' 'command' over 'resources' occasioned by the method of paying their grants in three large instalments, one per term, permits quite large 'economy' purchases of the drug and thereby provides the option of adopting the role of 'dealer' in the world of cannabis use. This is in direct contrast to those who must occupy such a position in order to pay for their own 'habits'. For students and others who have a secure material base for their drug use, 'dealing' can be entered into simply for its 'intrinsic' attractions: the chance of making a profit, either in the form of money or 'free' cannabis; the respect of fellow drug users; ability to exert an influence on the local drug community; and the sense of excitement derived from participating in the larger and slightly sinister world of drug distribution.

Both wealthy drug users and students are also afforded similar opportunities for 'covert' deviancy by virtue of their position in society. This freedom to deviate derives in part from the ability of such users to avoid or otherwise handle the impact of social reaction to their drugtaking. It is therefore to the question of the relationship between student drug use and social reaction in the local setting of this research that this discussion of contextual influences now turns.

### (3) SOCIAL REACTION

The cannabis user, at least in theory, is a member of a social group with which the police are likely to be in conflict. In practice, however, worlds of drug use can be seen to differ in the degree to which confrontations between their members and the police actually occur. Young (1971a, p.32) suggests that there are 'two intervening variables' which determine whether such conflicts take place. These are the visibility and the vulnerability of the group in question. Thus, certain groups are both highly visible and vulnerable to the police, whilst others are able to avoid being noticed, becoming subject to surveillance and being apprehended. It is within this second category of users that the students in this research may be located. This, it will be suggested, has important consequences for the nature of their cannabis use.

Young (1971a, p.32), describing the situation in Notting Hill between 1967 and 1969, indicates that the 'hippie marihuana smoker' there was both highly visible and vulnerable to the police. He writes:

The drug-taker, because of his long hair and - to the police - bizarre dress, is an exceedingly visible target for police action. The white middle-class dropout creates for himself the stigmata out of which prejudice can be built, he voluntarily places himself in the position in which the Negro unwittingly finds himself. Moreover, he moves to areas such as Notting Hill where he is particularly vulnerable to apprehension and arrest, unlike the middle-class neighbourhoods he comes from where he was to some extent protected by 'good' family and low police vigilance.

Between 1969 and 1972, the university setting at Winterbury differed from Notting Hill in that its student drug users were neither particularly visible

to outsiders nor vulnerable to apprehension by the police. Against the background of the rest of the students at the university, the appearance of the cannabis users did not seem especially 'bizarre', outrageous or unconventional. Long hairstyles were not the sole prerogative of student drugtakers. Elements of the hippy style of dress were displayed by both users and non-users. Consequently, unlike the 'hippie marihuana smokers' in Notting Hill, the student drug users at Winterbury, both on and off campus, did not present an 'exceedingly visible target for police action'. In another context, the students' style of dress and long hair may well have created 'the stigmata out of which prejudice can be built' but within the university setting, 'bizarre' appearances were an acceptable facet of student life.

A similar contrast can be drawn between Notting Hill and the context of the university at Winterbury in terms of the degree to which drug users were vulnerable to police action. Where marihuana smokers were highly vulnerable to police surveillance and apprehension in Notting Hill, both on the university campus and around the Winterbury area, as long as the students confined their drug use to themselves and did not involve the local residents, they were largely immune from such social reaction.<sup>29</sup> Box (1971, p.152) has observed how such a state of affairs can facilitate the use of 'soft drugs':

...not only amongst university students who have 'dropped out', but also amongst those with attachments to conventional others and commitments to the future, there is widespread consumption of soft drugs. This is perceived to be a pragmatic form of deviant behaviour because it can be performed in private places where the likelihood of apprehension is minimal. The police cannot be peeping through key-holes or seeing through walls; neither are they seen patrolling English university grounds. A student's locked room, in a middle-class enclave relatively immune from police surveillance, provides an ideal setting for the commission of such offences as soft-drug consumption.

This lack of visibility and vulnerability helps to explain the students' reports of feeling protected from police harrassment both on the university campus and in private places in the surrounding area. Since confrontations and arrests rarely took place, students felt free to possess and use cannabis in these locations with a degree of casualness that would have been imprudent

in other contexts where encounters with agents of social control were more likely to occur. This is not to suggest that these students blatantly drew attention to themselves by engaging in 'uncool' behaviour. Neither is this meant to imply that the East Kale Drugs Squad was totally inactive in the Winterbury area during this period. The Squad appeared, however, to restrict the sphere of its operations to the most notorious meeting places of the local users.<sup>30</sup> Consequently, the students still stressed the advisability of 'keeping cool' and taking precautions, even though the possibility of apprehension, for the most part, was perceived as fairly remote.

Whilst the relative absence of social reaction can be seen to increase the students' freedom to deviate in the university setting it also suggests the necessity of an alternative to Young's (1971a) account of the centrality of cannabis use in the lives of 'hippie marihuana smokers'. Thus, in his account, Young indicates that what was a 'peripheral activity' in Notting Hill in 1967 became 'a central activity of great symbolic importance' in 1969. He attributes this transformation to police action against the marihuana smoker. However, it would seem that cannabis use amongst the students at Winterbury between 1969 and 1972 signified in several respects a similar centrality and symbolic importance, and yet there was little direct social reaction on the part of the police which could account for this. This is not to suggest that the patterns and meanings of drugtaking in both contexts were identical. Certain features of the Notting Hill drug scene in 1969 were not characteristic of the university setting (for example, widespread paranoia, distrust and psychotic episodes; interaction and identification with heroin addicts), but others most certainly were (for example, the extensive use of cannabis; its significance as a symbol of the users' difference from 'straights' and their defiance of perceived social injustices; a common critical ideology; and a consciousness of themselves as a group of freaks with definite interests against the wider society). How can these similarities be explained if there was little direct social reaction in the university setting?



The centrality and symbolic importance of cannabis use amongst the students in this research can be explained in terms of the concepts of social identity and indirect, rather than direct, social reaction. Thus, it has already been shown that these students identified themselves with the wider community of freaks for whom cannabis use was a central and symbolically important activity. The social types of the head and the freak, as was indicated in chapter two, implied a common attitude to the use of cannabis and a mutual orientation to the problems of social control that surrounded it. Users did not have to experience a direct social reaction in order to realise that freaks faced a threat of apprehension by the police. It was sufficient to know that people with whom they identified were being arrested. The 'persecution' of drug users was widely known in this period of confrontation. Both the 'straight' and the underground media publicised the drug trials of rock musicians and other, less 'aristocratic', members of the underground. Police 'busts' of freaks at pop festivals, 'on the street', in their homes and elsewhere were likewise given extensive press coverage. Thus, even though the student drug users themselves were largely immune to direct conflict with the police, they experienced, by virtue of their identification with the larger subculture of freaks, a more generalised and indirect confrontation. It was through this identification and indirect social reaction, combined with the opportunities for drugtaking at university, that cannabis use became both central and symbolically important in the lives of these students during this period.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The preceding contextual considerations suggest a method for generating a particular variety of sociological understanding of the use of cannabis. Aspects of this phenomenon which remain obscured when an inside view is taken, are revealed when an outside perspective is adopted. By placing the phenomenon within a wider socio-structural configuration the sociologist is able to

acquire insights which are otherwise inaccessible.

Despite the plausibility of this mode of sociological analysis, there are major obstacles to its fusion with the phenomenological work contained in the rest of this thesis. This is because these varieties of sociological practice are grounded in different paradigms. They differ in the kinds of assumptions which they make about the nature of the phenomenon to be explored, the type of question to be asked and the particular methodologies considered appropriate for finding answers to the problems so derived. As long as 'naturalism' attempts to synthesize these contrasting approaches then the argument that it comprises a coalition of inconsistent theoretical perspectives can be sustained. It is necessary to disentangle these divergent orientations in order to facilitate the coherent development of naturalistic sociology.

The first of these obstacles pertains to different conceptions of the place of causal explanation in sociological work. Structural sociology aims for the production of such explanations and assumes their superiority over the accounts of the members themselves. Phenomenological sociology neither takes such an aim nor makes such a judgement. Not all phenomenological sociologists would a priori reject structural explanations, but as phenomenologists their major interest would be in the use of such structural accounts by members (including sociologists) as ways of making phenomena accountable. Turner (1974, p.7) describes this view in the following way:

'Theories' and 'methods' (in the usual sociological sense) are here regarded as socially organised and accomplished products and practices in their own right, and so regarded they are endlessly fascinating as topics. Theory and method here lose their privileged position as part of the apparatus which belongs to the analyst, not themselves subject to inquiry, and take their place as phenomena whose status vis-a-vis other doings and accomplishments is not immediately obvious.

From this perspective, then, explanations or accounts are treated as topics worthy of investigation in their own right since they comprise methods for constructing social realities. Thus, as Zimmerman and Pollner (1971, p.289) observe:

The ethnomethodologist is not concerned with providing causal

explanations of observably regular, patterned, repetitive actions by some kind of analysis of the actor's point of view. He is concerned with how members of society go about the task of seeing, describing, and explaining order in the world in which they live.

The main problem, then, from a phenomenological-ethnomethodological perspective, is not to provide a causal explanation of drug use or drug subcultures, but to examine how drug users themselves explain problematic events and features of their worlds. Whatever the plausibility of structural or other kinds of social scientific causal explanations, their relevance and correspondence to the accounts of the members is open to question. It has thus been one of the central themes of this thesis that the members possess their own collection of theories and understandings about cannabis and its use. These members may make use of elements of social scientific explanations, as in their vocabularies of motive described in chapter six or their understandings of the production of different kinds of cannabis experience depicted in chapter five. However, these accounts comprise only part of the members' larger corpus of knowledge employed in formulating motives, making sense of the effects of cannabis or constructing the reality of other features of their worlds. The relevance of sociological perspectives to participation in these worlds is always problematic.

A second and closely related obstacle to the fusion of structural and phenomenological perspectives is the notion of false consciousness which is implicit in structural accounts. This is the view that the subjects may be mistaken in their definitions of reality. From his more 'objective' stance the sociologist can perceive things as they 'really' are. He can point to distortions, inaccuracies and falsehoods in the members' merely subjective assessments of the world. By ironicizing the members' experiences the sociologist can thereby deny their versions of reality.<sup>31</sup>

These denials give rise to the argument that in so far as phenomenological sociologists are concerned to describe and analyse without question the members' 'subjective' realities, then such sociologists risk the perpetuation of illusion,

delusion and other misinterpretations. However, such an argument is itself based on a misunderstanding of the nature of their work. From a phenomenological perspective there can be no false consciousness as such, only differences in consciousness. Rock (1973, p.26) makes this point:

The objection of false consciousness cannot be legitimate at the phenomenal level. No consciousness can be false although it may be different from other consciousnesses.

Thus, the primary task for the phenomenological sociologist is to investigate members' interpretations of reality and not their truth or falsity as measured by some 'definitive version of the world' (cf. Pollner, 1975, p.27). Whatever the apparent absurdity of men's beliefs from an outsider's perspective, as Thomas argued, 'if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences'. Of course, this is not to deny that the members can perceive themselves or others to be mistaken in their subjective assessments of their situation. From a phenomenological point of view, however, what is interesting is not the absolute or 'objective' truth or falsity of these definitions but the methods whereby mistakes are realised and the assumptions which underlie such discoveries.<sup>32</sup>

A third obstacle refers to the different ways in which structural sociologists and phenomenologists use concepts like 'social structure', 'social context', 'social class' and 'social reaction'. As Rock (1973, p.19) argues:

...the (deviancy) perspective's version of phenomenism cannot be coherently united with an analysis which emphasizes ideas of structure. It cannot be married to such macro-sociological concepts as social class or social institution. It cannot even be reconciled with formalist conceptions which give prominence to a social order that is relatively independent of people's understandings or intentions.

The structural sociologist assumes an objective social structure existing independently of the actors' interpretive and interactional work. He attributes properties of exteriority and constraint to this reified construction and seeks to examine its influence on the occupants of particular positions within it. In contrast, the phenomenologist takes

the view that 'social structure is an essential <sup>part</sup> of the reality of everyday life' (Berger and Luckmann 1967, p.48). He therefore examines the conceptions or maps of social structure which are held by the members themselves.<sup>33</sup> These social structures are not sociological inventions, they are constructed by the social structuring activities of the members.<sup>34</sup> Yet they come to possess a facticity similar to that of the sociologists' own reified models. Thus, as Rock (1973, p.25f) indicates:

Reification and abstraction are integral to everyday life. Deviants and others use first-order constructs to typify the world in terms of structure, force and process...A system of shared perspectives on social structure possesses many of the properties displayed by the sociologist's own models...The reified and anonymous character of its parts seems to transform it into a system with its own rules. Like Durkheim's conscience collective, it is an order which is apparently sui generis. There is thus a societal reality which is transcendent and suprapersonal. But it is not the reality of the structural analysis which has been rejected by the deviancy sociologists. On the contrary, what distinguishes it is its clear utility at the level of Verstehen. That is, it represents a kind of transcription of motives; an articulation of ideas about social constraint and social freedom; a mapping out of alternative courses of action; and a source of identity.

The maps of social structure which are constructed by the members are used to formulate the social terrain in which they negotiate their everyday lives. These maps contain the members' own conceptions of social class, social context, social reaction and the like. They provide the basis for 'stratifying practices', the contextual information used in making sense of objects and events, and the knowledge employed in handling problems of social control. In short, as Berger and Luckmann (1967, p.48) suggests, 'social structure is the sum total of...typifications and of the recurrent patterns of interaction established by means of them'. It is, through an appreciation and analysis of such maps and their methods of social construction that a phenomenology of social structure can be built.<sup>35</sup> The imposition of reified sociological conceptions of social structure, social class, social context and social reaction, on the other hand, is a serious restriction on such a development.

Whilst it is clear that there are major obstacles to the fusion of the phenomenal strand of naturalism with its structural or essentialist counterpart, it is also apparent that there are grounds for arguing that phenomenological sociology is too limited in its scope, contribution and analytic power. One variant of this critique of phenomenology points to the dangers of 'mindless relativism' in the phenomenological project, where all accounts or maps of social structure are equally valid, where separate realities abound and where choice between them is arbitrary. Such a position is, in a sense, a reasonable one, but it does tend to inhibit sociological analysis. An exclusive emphasis on the members' first-order constructs makes sociological abstraction redundant. An over-enthusiastic concern for phenomenological faithfulness can restrict the researcher's ability to devise analytical categories. The formulation of second-order constructs is, after all, essential to sociological work, including that of phenomenological sociology.

While phenomenological sociologists would agree on the necessity of formulating second-order constructs in their descriptions and constitutive analyses, they appear to differ in the degree to which they place intellectual distance between themselves and their subjects of study. One useful programme of work which moves beyond the depiction of particular 'life-worlds' and yet retains the phenomenological postulates of subjective interpretation and adequacy as methodological principles has been suggested by Rock (1973). This involves both an appreciation and a transcendence of the deviant's world view. As Rock (1973, p.27) observes, the sociologist of deviancy has access to maps of social structure which are held by the members of social worlds which interconnect with that of the deviants. These maps can help to illuminate particular features of the world they adjoin. An appreciation, for example, of the interpretive schemes of the members of the police drugs squad in the locality of this research could illuminate further the kinds of problems of social control confronted by

the students. The sociologist can thus perceive from his 'transcendent' position how the groups' 'interlocking perspectives complement or conflict with one another;' how, in effect, the one serves to shape the other.<sup>36</sup> He can thus discern an order of events which remains unnoticed by the participants. Phenomenological faithfulness is assured in so far as the sociologist grounds his portrayal of the perspectives of each group in their respective interpretive frameworks.

There is, however, a second programme available to those with fewer qualms about phenomenological infidelity, false consciousness and the 'superiority' of sociological accounts. This programme, chosen by those whose 'task is not merely to...act as carriers of 'alternative phenomenological realities', but 'to create a society in which the facts of human diversity, whether personal, organic or social, are not subject to the power to criminalise',<sup>37</sup> eschews ethnography and reasserts the relevance of structural sociology.<sup>38</sup> It claims that the phenomenological approach fails to provide sufficient ammunition for critical theorizing and social transformation. Quinney (1975, p.188), for example, takes such a view:

Phenomenological thought by itself, however, is incomplete for obtaining our objectives...it lacks the critical edge that would allow us to fully transcend the present, in life as in mind. Phenomenology does make us question the assumptions by which we live. This is its major achievement. But what is needed is a philosophy that would allow us to actively transcend the existing order, one that would allow us to be committed. We thus turn to the development of a critical philosophy.

The construction of a more thoroughgoing structural and 'critical criminology' has led to a refocusing of criminological problems. Attention has been diverted away from phenomenological description and constitutive analysis towards the production of politically committed, radical and Marxist criminological work. A sharpened concentration on questions of inequality, wealth, power and conflict, and their relation to crime and the construction and enforcement of criminal law has emerged.<sup>39</sup>

Critical criminology's attack on phenomenological work may be justified in its own terms; its political aims may be laudable; but in the end the radical structuralism of the 'new' criminology remains theoretically inconsistent with a phenomenological approach. The choice between paradigms rests on the sociologist's purposes. In the final analysis, however, whatever one's purposes, and whatever sociological framework is chosen, the production of sociological accounts is grounded in the interactional and interpretive work of the sociologist and the subjects of his research.



CHAPTER TEN

EPILOGUE

In this thesis an attempt has been made to illuminate the nature of cannabis use by adopting a phenomenological perspective. I have suggested that, when viewed from a phenomenological point of view, earlier naturalistic work on cannabis use has taken for granted, ignored, or at best, paid only cursory attention to certain important aspects of the phenomenon with the result that it has only partially illuminated its nature. By concentrating on these neglected issues, this work has sought not only to further sociological understanding of cannabis use by the provision of an ethnography of the phenomenon; it has also sought to extend previous naturalistic contributions and thereby demonstrate the usefulness of asking phenomenological questions.

In order to fill in some of the gaps in sociological understanding of the nature of cannabis use, attention has been focused on the following issues: (i) social types of cannabis users and members' grounds for typing persons in terms of them; (ii) members' knowledge of types of cannabis and their methods of categorizing the drug in terms of such knowledge; (iii) the social organization of cannabis consumption; (iv) the nature, interpretation and accountability of the effects of cannabis; (v) members' accounts of their cannabis use and their conceptions of the morality of the practice; (vi) members' knowledge of the cannabis market, quantifying practices and methods of acquiring the drug; (vii) members' methods of avoiding discovery. Throughout, the major focus has been on members' practices, knowledge and interpretive procedures whereby cannabis culture is ongoingly produced and sustained.

The research began with a series of questions about the use of cannabis which were derived from previous naturalistic contributions and phenomenological criticisms of them; the research ends with a further set of issues which arise in the light of the analysis and the particular social context in which the research was conducted.

1. Social types. What social types of cannabis users do current

members employ to type each other? Do cannabis users still make use of the social types 'head' and 'freak'? (Informal observation would suggest that these social types are no longer in use to the same extent, but it is unclear exactly what social types (if any) have replaced them). What social types do other kinds of drug users in other settings employ in typing each other? What kinds of criteria are used in typing persons as particular types of drug users? What interpretive procedures are followed in social typing? How are social types used in the course of social interaction?

2. Cannabis. What categories of cannabis do current users in the UK use to describe cannabis? What categories of cannabis are used in other cannabis cultures? How useful is it to conceptualise members' common-sense knowledge of cannabis as consisting of a collection of interpretive rules? What other kinds of interpretive procedures are involved in the categorization of cannabis? What categories and categorization devices do users of other drugs employ?

3. Consumption. How do current users in the UK and other cultures accomplish cannabis consumption? What methods do they use? On what grounds do they decide to use a particular method? What methods are used in the consumption of other drugs? What are the rules which are used by members to structure the use of cannabis and other drugs? How useful is it to distinguish between individual and collective use in the case of other drugs? How useful is it to distinguish between technical and normative procedural rules for accomplishing and organizing drug use (and other activities)? How are the rules used in the course of social drug use? How are infractions in terms of such rules interpreted? How are social reactions against 'offenders' formulated? In what forms are deviance-imputations made? On what grounds do members refrain from making their deviance imputations public?

4. Drug effects. How do current users describe the effects of cannabis? What categories of effects do they use in their descriptions in natural settings? How do other drug users describe the effects of other drugs? How do members understand the production of different kinds of drug experiences? What are the 'facts of life' about other drugs that are taken for granted by their users? What interpretive procedures are involved in making sense of drug effects? In what ways do members use their knowledge of drug effects to achieve particular types of drug experiences?

5. Morality and motivation. How do users of cannabis and other drugs account for their drug use, both in general and on particular occasions? What are drug users' conceptions of the morality of their actions? On what grounds do other drug users decide the morality or immorality of their drug use? How is the morality of the use of cannabis and other drugs constructed? How useful are the concepts of 'scoffing', 'scepticism' and sarcasm' as devices for depicting members' methods for sustaining versions of the morality of drug use? How is the 'immorality' of drug use constructed?

6. Acquisition. In terms of what typical quantities is cannabis currently acquired in the UK and in other cannabis cultures? In terms of what typical quantities are other drugs acquired? What kinds of cannabis are currently available? (Informal observation would seem to suggest different categories of cannabis predominate and that alternative forms of the drug (eg, 'hash oil') have become more common). How are changes in the kinds of cannabis available to be accounted for? What other kinds of interpretive procedures are followed in quantifying cannabis and other drugs? What are current members' methods of acquiring cannabis and other drugs?

7. Distribution. How is cannabis distributed? How are other drugs distributed? On what grounds do users decide to distribute cannabis

and other drugs? How do distributors quantify cannabis and other drugs? How is the distribution of cannabis and other drugs organized?

8. Avoiding discovery. What are the currently perceived risks (both in the sense of consequence and in the sense of chance) of using, acquiring and distributing cannabis? What are the perceived risks of engaging in other kinds of drug offences? How do drug users estimate these risks? What other kinds of concealment strategies do members use to keep their drug offences secret? How do members decide on the use of particular concealment strategies? What is the impact of direct social reaction on the drug offender?

Answers to these questions could contribute further to sociological understanding of the nature of cannabis use and other forms of drugtaking. Whether subsequent sociological researchers will want to address these kinds of issues remains to be seen. At first sight, survey of the current sociological scene would suggest that they will not, at least in the UK, where interest in naturalistic research on deviance, like the social context out of which this work emerged, has passed into the realms of history, only to have been replaced by more structuralist endeavours. In the USA, however, the outlook for phenomenological research appears to be more promising, both with respect to ethnographies of substantive topics such as drug use and ethnomethodological investigations of more transsituational practices.

Finally, and in conclusion, in reply to those who would object to the kind of research undertaken here on the grounds that it does not contain a blueprint for 'getting rid of the phenomenon' of cannabis use, I would suggest that they take to its logical conclusion the interactionist view that deviance is that which is labelled as such. The 'real cause' of cannabis use as a social problem, crime or form of deviant behaviour is the activity of law makers and law enforcers: without a law against cannabis, cannabis users would not break the law.

Preface

1. This figure is drawn from Schofield (1971, p.68).
2. This and the preceding postwar figures for cannabis offences are drawn from Plant (1975, p.45).
3. For extended discussion of the 'ethos of productivity' and the hippies, see Young (1971, ch.6, and 1973b).
4. Cf. Young (1971, 1971a, 1973a, 1973b) on the hippy subculture and subterranean values. For earlier discussion of such values, see Matza (1961) and Matza and Sykes (1961).
5. For such an analysis, see Young (1973b).
6. Cf. Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts (1975, p.61).
7. Cf. Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts (op. cit., p.61f) and Young (1973b).
8. It has been observed by Young (1971a, p.44f) that the distinction between buyer and seller in the world of cannabis use is difficult to sustain because there are frequent interchanges between participants in the occupancy of these social roles. Such an observation was confirmed in the course of this research.
9. Estimates of the prevalence of cannabis use in the UK student population during this period vary from 2% to 50%. Reports published prior to 1970 indicated that between 2% and 10% of students had used the drug at some time and that from 1% to 4% could be classified as 'regular' users (although this was ill defined) (cf. Linken 1964, 1968; Bestic, 1968, and Binnie and Murdoch, 1969). After 1970 estimates range from 3% to 50% (ever used) (cf. Young and Crutchley, 1972; Kosviner and Hawks, 1972; Kosviner, Hawks and Webb, 1973; Somekh, 1973; and Duddle, 1973).

It has also been suggested that the rates of student cannabis use are highest among the more urban, popular and 'prestigious' colleges at those oriented to those disciplines in which users are over-represented

(Kosviner, Hawks and Webb, 1972). Faculties which appear to reflect the highest rates of use are social sciences, arts and medicine, with physical sciences, engineering and business studies reflecting lower rates (Young and Crutchley, 1972; Somekh, 1973).

10. Since the correlation of patterns of drugtaking with students' characteristics was not the purpose of this work little systematic demographic data was gathered. However, as far as the initial sample of 70 users was concerned, 70% were male, 30% female, the majority had attended grammar schools (71%), rather than public school (23%), comprehensive (3%), or technical (3%); most came from non-commercial middle class backgrounds; and most were studying social sciences or humanities with relatively few studying natural sciences.
11. A number of attempts have been made to classify British cannabis users in terms of their frequency of use. For example, Kosviner and Hawks (1977) classify users as 'casual' users (uses three or less times per month), 'regular' users (uses one to three times per week), and 'heavy' users (uses four or more times per week). Crutchley and Young (1971) similarly make a distinction between 'occasional' and 'frequent' users, though they do not define these terms.

Although a systematic sample of all cannabis users was not taken in this research, preliminary data would suggest that it is perfectly possible to adopt such a procedure in this research and that users could be similarly classified into a number of categories in relation to their frequency of use. Data from an open-ended questionnaire given to students during the initial period of this suggest that students could be classified as either 'daily' users, several times weekly users, weekly users, several times monthly, monthly, <sup>or</sup> several times yearly. <sup>users</sup> This initial sample of users contained out of 70 users, 37 daily users, 24 several times weekly users, 3 weekly users, 5 several times monthly users, and 1 several times yearly user.

These users might thus be classified as 'heavy' users (those who use daily, assuming that supplies were available), 'regular' users (those who use several times weekly), 'occasional' users (those who use weekly or several times monthly), and 'infrequent' users (those who use less than several times monthly).

12. British research on cannabis use is predominantly empirical and positivistic in orientation. See, for example, the work of Anumonyne and McClure (1970), Backhouse and James (1969), Bean (1971), Bestic (1966, 1973), Binnie and Murdoch (1969), Blumberg (1973), Chapple (1966), Duddle (1973), Einstein, Hughes and Hindmarch (1975), Hindmarch (1972), Kosviner and Hawks (1972, 1977), Kosviner, Hawks and Webb (1973), Plant (1975), Plant and Reeves (1973), Somekh (1973) and Stimson and Ogborne (1970). The major exception to this empirical and positivistic orthodoxy is the work of Young (1971, 1971a, 1973b). Even here, however, the main concern is with etiology rather than ethnography.



Chapter One: Introduction

1. 'Deviant' drug use is defined in this work as drug use which is subject to proscription by law. As far as this research is concerned, this means any drug which is proscribed by the Dangerous Drugs Act, 1967, and the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971. This is not to suggest that persons may not disagree with such proscriptions nor that for them the use of a particular drug is not 'deviant' in the sense of immoral. The 'morality' of cannabis use is discussed in chapter six.
2. Prominent exponents of such work include Robert Merton (1938, 1957 and 1964), Albert Cohen (1955), Walter Miller (1958) and Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin (1961).
3. On the view of deviance as objectively given, and the typical questions which are asked by sociologists who adopt such a view, see Earl Rubington and Martin S. Weinberg (1968).
4. See David Matza (1969) on the paradigmatic distinction between man as subject and man as object.
5. The view that social scientific accounts should parallel natural scientific ones presupposes that the phenomena studied by the social sciences are 'continuous' with the phenomena studied by the natural sciences. For discussion of these issues, see Maurice Natanson (1963), especially pp. 271-285.
6. That is, ascertainable from the point of view of the 'omniscient' sociologist. On sociological omniscience, see Jack Douglas (1971a), esp. Ch.2.
7. See Travis Hirschi (1969) and Steven Box (1971) for critical discussion of 'strain theory'.
8. According to Merton, these modes of adaptation are conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion. In which mode the individual adapts depends, according to Merton, on whether the individual subjected to structurally induced strain accepts or rejects the conventional

cultural goals of 'success' and/or the institutionalized means of attaining it. The range of possibilities which Merton allows are represented diagrammatically as follows:

<u>Modes of Adaptation</u>	<u>Cultural Goals</u>	<u>Institutionalized Means</u>
1 Conformity	+	+
2 Innovation	+	-
3 Ritualism	-	+
4 Retreatism	-	-
5 Rebellion	<u>±</u>	<u>±</u>

Here, + means acceptance, - means rejection, and ± means rejection of one set and the substitution of another set, of goals and means.

9. This reflects the incorporation by these authors of elements of what has variously been described as 'cultural diversity theory', 'cultural transmission theory' and 'differential association theory' - a perspective which has its roots in the work of the early Chicagoan exponents of the 'social disorganization approach' and in the symbolic interactionally infused work of Edwin Sutherland. See especially, Sutherland and Cressey (1960), Sutherland (1937) and Sutherland (1949). For an assessment of Sutherland's affinity with 'naturalism', see Matza (1969), esp. pp. 101-109.
10. Finestone is concerned not only to provide a structural account of drug use; he is also concerned to present in some detail a description of the lifestyle of the 'cat'. In this sense Finestone's work represents something of a bridge between structural accounts in which the phenomenon itself receives only cursory attention and later ethnographic depictions of styles of deviant drug use in the USA ( see note 27).
11. Cf. Albert Cohen's (1955) thesis that the delinquent code consists of a deliberate inversion of middle class standards. Where, however, Cohen suggests that delinquent subcultures are products of adolescent status problems, reaction formation and a direct opposition to

conventional culture, Finestone sees the culture of the cat as more of an 'indirect' response. As he puts it:

Among the various interrelated facets of the life of the cat two themes are central, those of the 'hustle' and the 'kick'. It is to be noted that they are in direct antithesis to two of the central values of the dominant culture, the 'hustle' versus the paramount importance of the occupation for the male in our society, and the 'kick' versus the importance of regulating conduct in terms of its future consequences. Thus, there appears to be a relationship of conflict between the central themes of the social type of the cat and those of the dominant social order. As a form of expressive behaviour, however, the social type of the cat represents an indirect rather than a direct attack against central conventional values.

12. See for examples of these criticisms, Lindesmith and Strauss (1968, esp. p.397), Hirschi (1969, Ch.1), Box (1971, Ch.4), Phillipson (1971, Ch.5) and Douglas (1971a, Ch.2).
13. I have in mind here the work of Bruce Johnson (1973), Cindy Fazey (1973) and Jock Young (1971, 1973). It should be noted, however, that Young's work on drug use is inspired not only by the structural approach but also by symbolic interactionism ( see, for example, Young, 1971, Chs. 2, 3, 5, 8 and 9).
14. This is not to suggest that symbolic interactionism is not presented in a number of different varieties and guises by its exponents. For discussion of such variety see B. Meltzer, J. Petras and L. Reynolds (1975). See also the distinction between behavioural interactionism and phenomenological interactionism made by Douglas (1971b, Ch. 1).
15. See Rubington and Weinberg (eds) (1968, pp.1-12) on this distinction.
16. Major early exponents of the labelling approach include Howard Becker (1963, esp. Chs. 1 and 2), John Kitsuse (1962) and Kai Erikson (1962).
17. Cf. Herbert Blumer (1969, Ch. 1) on the three basic premises of symbolic interactionism and the methodological orientation based upon them.
18. On the paradigmatic distinction between man as subject and man as object, see Matza (1969).

19. Cf. Matza (1969, Ch. 2).
20. On the problematic status of official statistics of crime and deviance see Cicourel and Kitsuse (1963) and Douglas (1967). For summary and discussion of sociological literature documenting the social construction of official statistics, see Box (1971) and Bottomley (1973)
21. This is the view that is emphasized especially by Matza (1969), though it must be noted that in Matza's account of the process of becoming deviant there are moments when the human subject, somewhat inconsistently with Matza's prior argument, ceases to preside over what is happening to him. See Matza (*ibid*, esp. pp. 125-126).
22. See Blumer (1956) for criticism of 'variable analysis'.
23. See for example, the work of Sutherland (1949), Cressey (1953), Sykes and Matza (1957) and Matza (1964).
24. Strangely enough, Becker acknowledges his debt to Mead only once in his early work on marihuana use, and then only in a footnote (Becker, 1963, p. 42). In his later work on drug use, however, Becker is more explicit about the Meadian roots of his approach (see Becker, 1967).
25. See Steven Box (1971, pp. 155-157) on the concept of symbolic support for deviant behaviour.
26. As Matza (1969, p. 120) puts it, '..it is only in the affiliative circumstance that the subject, and thus the sociologist, can discover the human meaning of affinity'.
27. Prominent examples of such work include Blumer, Ahmed, Smith and Sutter (1967), Sutter (1966, 1969 and 1972), Davis and Munoz (1968), Carey and Mandel (1968), Carey (1968), Feldman (1973), Goode (1970), Priest and McGrath (1970), Orcutt (1972), Schwartz, Turner and Peluso (1973), and Schaps and Sanders (1970).
28. As in the case of symbolic interactionism, there is a variety of phenomenological perspectives in sociology, in particular the phenomenological work of Alfred Schutz and the ethnomethodological approach stemming from the work of Aaron Cicourel and Harold Garfinkel. See

Alfred Schutz (1967) and the derivative statement by Berger and Luckmann (1967). On the work of the phenomenological-ethnomethodological approach, see Aaron Cicourel (1964, 1968, and 1973), Jack Douglas (1971b), Harold Garfinkel (1967), Peter McHugh (1968), David Silverman (1975), David Sudnow (1967 and 1972), Matthew Speier (1973), and Roy Turner (1974). For an excellent summary of ethnomethodological developments since the inspirational work of Garfinkel, see Attewell (1974), and for an introduction to the subject, see Mehan and Wood (1975).

29. See Cicourel (1973, esp. Chs. 1 and 2), Douglas (1971a), Phillipson and Roche (1974), Pollner (1974) and Zimmerman and Wieder (1971).
30. As Roche (1973) points out:

Matza's work resonates to a limited extent the descriptive orientation to meanings, and the reconstructionist accounting of members' methods and recipes sounded in ethnomethodology.

Cf. Matza (1969, p. 110) where he states:

Like any good naturalist description, Becker's is one that may be regarded as having a use in the world. Taken from the natural world, made conceptual, it may be restored to the world as 'insight' or guide to action. Accordingly, it may be regarded as a 'recipe', a faithful summary of how to do what people have somewhat unwittingly been doing all along. Being faithful to the world, indeed paying homage to it, the recipe makes explicit two basic features of the natural social process of human subjects: consciousness and intention..... Within itself, the recipe pays homage to consciousness by telling us how to do what we have been doing less consciously all along; at its margin - at its invitational edge - it pays homage to intentionality. Here is how it can be done, says the recipe, if perchance you should want to. Because Becker's essay affirms both features of the recipe, it could have been titled 'How to Smoke Pot'. And because the recipe affirms consciousness and intention in the world, it may be regarded as the archetype of humanist naturalism.

31. As Zimmerman and Pollner (1971) put it:

We argue that the world of everyday life, while furnishing sociology with its favoured topics of inquiry, is seldom a topic in its own right. Instead, the familiar, common-sense world, shared by the sociologist and his subjects alike, is employed as an unexplicated resource for contemporary sociological investigations. Sociological inquiry is addressed to phenomena recognized and described in common-sense ways (by reliance on the unanalyzed properties of natural language), while at the same time such common-sense recognitions and descriptions are pressed into service as fundamentally unquestioned resources for analyzing the phenomenon thus made available for study. Thus, contemporary sociology is

characterized by a confounding of topic and resource.

Cf. Wilson (1971) whose distinction between normative and interpretive paradigms in sociology echoes the distinction between topic and resource made by Zimmerman and Pollner.

32. See especially the work of Garfinkel (1967), an excellent example of which is his demonstration that both sociologists and laymen make use of the 'documentary method of interpretation' in their work of assigning sense to their own and other persons' conduct.
33. See also Douglas (1967, 1970, 1971a), Cicourel and Kitsuse (1968), Cicourel (1972), Emerson (1969) and Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor (1975).
34. Exceptions include the early work of Casteneda (1970), Berke and Hernton (1974), Harner (1973), Stoddart (1974), and to a limited extent, Matza (1969).
35. These criticisms of Becker are not meant to imply that he was not appreciative of members' meanings of marihuana use; rather, my point is that Becker's work (and that of other symbolic interactionists) leaves room, indeed demands, further analysis of these meanings.
36. Cf. the confusion between common-sense and sociological models of deviance running through Becker's work, as pointed out by Pollner (1974).
37. In addition, during the early stages of the research a small open-ended questionnaire, on their conceptions of cannabis, experiences of its effects and views on its illegality, was given to members. The results are incorporated in chapters five and six.
38. The bulk of the research was conducted amongst students and ex-students who used cannabis regularly or heavily and whose involvement in, and knowledge of, the world of cannabis was extensive. This emphasis on experienced cannabis users is reflected throughout this thesis.
39. Bruyn (1966, p. 26) suggests that 'the method of participant observation

functions as a method for discovering human meanings in culture'. Becker and Geer (1957) define participant observation as 'that method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, either openly in the role of researcher or covertly in some disguised role, observing things that happen, listening to what is said, and questioning people, over some length of time'. They justify it in terms of the completeness of the data it provides:

The most complete form of sociological datum, after all, is the form in which the participant observer gathers it.... Such a datum gives us more information about the event under study than data gathered by any other sociological method. Participant observation can thus provide us with a yardstick against which to measure the completeness of data gathered in other ways, a model which can serve to let us know what orders of information escape us when we use other methods.

Similarly, Psathas suggests:

The method of participant observation...(and)...the extension of this method into disguised participant observation, in which the observer actually becomes a member of the group and performs a role within the group which others take to be his real identity rather than a role 'put on' for the sake of collecting data, enables the observer-researcher to experience the role from within. That is, by having to perform in that world, he must develop and adopt the perspective that goes with that world. (Psathas, 1968, p. 519)

See also Blumer (1969), Bruyn (ibid), Denzin (1970), Douglas (1971b), Filstead (1970), Lofland (1971) and McCall and Simmons (1969) for discussion of qualitative methodology, especially participant observation. Douglas (1972), Becker (1963) and Polsky (1967) provide discussion of participant observation specifically in relation to the study of deviance.

40. See, in particular, Berk and Adams (1970), Carey (1968) and Douglas (1972) on the 'problems' of doing participant observation research among deviant groups.

41. As Schutz (1967, p. 40) puts it:

The participant observer or field worker establishes contact with the group studied as a man among fellowmen; only his system of relevances which serves as the scheme of his selection and interpretation is determined by the scientific

attitude, temporarily dropped in order to be resumed again.

For extended discussion of the notion of 'relevance', see Schutz (1970) and Schutz and Luckmann (1974).

42. There is clearly a tension here between the sociologists' constructs and those of the members. Common-sense constructs are typically grounded in different kinds of logic to those adhered to in the construction of sociological accounts. Schutz has recognized this elsewhere (Schutz, 1944):

the knowledge of the man who acts and thinks within the world of his daily life is not homogeneous; it is (1) incoherent, (2) only partially clear, and (3) not at all free from contradictions. (reprinted in Schutz, 1964, p. 93)

There is, then, an inevitable disjunction of some kind between 'common-sense knowledge' and 'sociological knowledge'. Even so, phenomenologists are not willing to dismiss common-sense knowledge simply because it does not measure up to scientific canons of logic. For phenomenologists, common-sense knowledge which provides the source of their data, is something that is drawn upon in sociological work, and is to be respected as well as explicated.

43. Cf. Goodenough (1964) who states that

A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves.

44. See Schutz (1944) for a sociological conceptualization of the essential features of the perspective of the 'stranger'.

45. To meet this criterion entails the construction by the sociologist of 'personal ideal types', which consist of 'puppets' equipped by the sociologist 'with just that kind of knowledge he needs to perform the job for the sake of which he was brought into the scientific world' (Schutz, 1964, p. 64). Cf. Scott (1968) and Frake (1964) on the criterion of members' competence and Matza (1969, p. 110) on the criterion of 'good naturalist description'.



Chapter Two: Social Types of Cannabis Users

1. John McKinney (1969) points out that the constructed type refers to the social scientist's 'second order constructs', that is, constructs of the constructs held and used by common-sense members. The extent to which sociologists' constructed types constitute adequate sociological reflections (ie. 'faithful' reflections) of members' first order constructs is problematic and, as is indicated in the discussion which follows in the text, is often apparently an irrelevant consideration.
2. McKinney (ibid) uses the term 'existential types' to refer to the members' first order constructs whereby they differentiate between objects, events and persons in their social worlds.
3. For other examples of the use of the constructed type in the sociological study of illegal drug use, see Schaps and Sanders (1970), Schwartz, Turner and Peluso (1973), and Young (1971).
4. According to Goode (1970, Ch. 2), the marihuana smoker is more likely to be young than old, male rather than female, urban rather than rural, of upper middle class family background, likely to have been to college, more likely to be a jew than a gentile, more likely to express no religious preference, more likely to hold liberal or radical views, likely to be sexually permissive, and not likely to have 'authoritarian' attitudes.
5. While Johnson did find that the standard demographic variables of sex, religiosity, political orientation and cigarette use were all predictive of the kind of person who becomes a cannabis user, he concluded 'that the most important factor in explaining the respondent's marihuana use is the use of cannabis amongst his friends'. See Johnson (1973, Ch. 4).
6. See Matza (1969) on the 'appreciative' perspective in sociology. This is not to suggest that sociologists using the constructed type have not been appreciative, that their constructs have not adequately reflec-

ted first order constructs (it is clear that sociological accounts vary in this respect), nor that sociologists using constructed types have been proponents of the 'correctional' perspective.

7. See also Carey (1968), Finestone (1957), Keniston (1968), Sutter (1972) and Young (1971).
8. Had such a course been taken it would clearly have been possible to typologize cannabis users in terms of such dimensions as types of drugs used, extent of use of a particular drug or combination of drugs, extent of use of a particular drug on particular occasions, relationship to market structure, amount of money spent on drugs in a given period, extent of involvement in distributing drugs, knowledge of drugs, and amount of time since first using a drug. The construction of such a typology would illustrate two central features of drug use in the setting in which this research was conducted. These features are (1) diversity of drug use, and (2) fluctuation of drug use. That is, firstly, it would be clear that students in this research had used (in addition to the use of the 'staple' drug, cannabis) a wide variety of drugs with varied frequency, to different extents, in contexts of different amounts of drug experience and knowledge and were differentially involved in the distribution of drugs. Secondly, it would be clear that users moved in and out of different kinds of involvement with different kinds of drugs, different quantities used and different relationships with sources of supply. It would also be clear, however, that such a picture or typology would be of problematic relevance to the ways in which cannabis users themselves made sense of the 'structure' of the world of cannabis use and thereby typologized other users.
9. The data upon which the subsequent analysis is based were collected through the use of the following procedures: (1) through asking users in interviews for their comments on the social types of drug users which they recognised in the world of cannabis use, (2) through asking users in interviews and during the course of other conversations about

the meaning of the social types of 'head', 'freak', 'political head', 'real head', 'non-head', and 'real freak', (3) through participant observation of everyday social interaction between cannabis users wherein the variety of social types mentioned in (2) were observed in use.

10. This is not to suggest that this list of social types is an exhaustive one. Other types would include 'acid freaks', 'acid heads', 'beer freaks', 'boozers', 'junkies', 'hippies', 'weekenders', 'plastic hippies' and 'wine connoisseurs'. Interesting as possible foci for future research into social typing as these may be, they are excluded from this investigation on the grounds that they are not specifically related to cannabis use. This is not to suggest that cannabis users did not also see themselves in terms of any, some or even all of these social types mentioned here; rather, it is simply to point that the social types examined in this investigation were the most widely employed at the time of this research.
11. Cf. Carey (1968) on the 'recreational user', and Schaps and Sanders (1970) on 'light', 'light-moderate', 'moderate', 'moderate-heavy' and 'heavy' users.
12. See chapter five on the other meanings of the construct 'into' as used by cannabis users.
13. Whilst non-problematic from this member's point of view, this clearly raises the question of how this recognition is achieved.
14. Cf. Young's (1971, pp. 117-118) distinction between reformist and ideological drug users.
15. See Becker (1960), Kanter (1968) and Stebbins (1970) on sociological conceptions of the construct 'commitment'. See also Ritzer and Trice (1969) for an attempt to 'test' Becker's 'side - bet theory' which misunderstands the nature of the concept. Cf. Goffman's (1961, pp. 88 ff.) use of the concept.

16. Cf. Sudnow (1965) on the methodology of deciding whether a crime is 'normal' or not.
17. The notion of 'interpretive rules' is derived from the work of Cicourel (1970, 1973). However, as Coulter (1973) points out, 'Cicourel's own inventory of 'interpretive rules' looks hardly like rules members might formulate for conceptualizing concrete actions or utterances; in fact they are simply Schutz's postulates for orderly intersubjectivity'. In the present work, the notions of 'interpretive rules' and 'interpretive work' are used in an embracing way to include both the more basic, universal and invariant features examined by Schutz and the (as it were) less basic, more specifically contextual interpretive work undertaken by cannabis users in the course of their cannabis use and other cannabis-related activities. It must be said, however, that, given the substantive focus of this work, the main emphasis is on the latter rather than on the former. Cf. Schutz's (1964 p. 95) notion of the 'recipe' as both a scheme of expression and interpretation.
18. Cf. Sudnow (1965).
19. To my knowledge there is no such work on this particular topic. Cf. Garfinkel (1967), Wieder (1974a, 1974b) and Hargreaves, Hester and Mellor (1975) for such work in other contexts.

Chapter Three: Categorizing Cannabis

1. See for example, Dewey et al (1969), Hollister (1971) and Lewis (1972).
2. Cf. the descriptions of the properties of cannabis from 'literary' points of view contained in Andrews and Vinkenoog (1967) and Solomon (1969).
3. This reflects the 'bias' towards 'regular' or 'heavy' users noted in chapter one.
4. The use of interpretive strategies and interpretive rules is based on a number of presuppositions. In particular, it presupposes what Cicourel (1973) refers to as 'interpretive procedures' or what Schutz (1964, 1967) refers to as 'idealizations'.
5. The categories to be described were derived in the course of participant observation of members' use of them. That I was able to make sense of their utterances as referring to types or categories of cannabis presupposes that I had arrived at a point where I could appreciate the meaning of their cannabis-related talk and, indeed, that their talk was cannabis-related at all. In other words, my appreciation of members' categories of cannabis presupposed that I had acquired members' common-sense knowledge in terms of which that talk was intelligible to me. The process whereby this state of affairs was realised involved my use of the documentary method of interpretation (among other 'interpretive procedures') as a means of building a stock of knowledge of members' categories and making sense of their utterances on particular occasions. Time and space precludes a full analysis of how such sociological sense was made of the world of cannabis use; it would, in effect, require an ethnography of ethnographic work. For example of such work, see Wieder (1974a, 1974b).
6. Members did not refer to hashish that was not subsumed under the category 'black' as 'non-black'. I use the latter term only for heuristic purposes in this exposition. Instead, as will become appar-

- ent, members used a variety of categories to refer to such hashish.
7. This is not to imply that members did not regard Nepalese or Afghani hashish as always being of superior quality to other kinds. Clearly, it seems that it is possible to acquire poor quality batches of such hashish. This list of preferences is simply meant to indicate that hashish from Nepal and Afghanistan was regarded by members as being more consistent in its high quality.
  8. These types of marihuana are those which were used most frequently by members. It was also believed that marihuana could grow in many other countries, though it had not been actually encountered.
  9. What, in other words, are the 'individual documentary evidences' that members make use of in documenting types of cannabis (the 'underlying pattern'). Cf. Garfinkel (1962).
  10. This story, reported to me by one of the users in the investigation, seems to have some basis in fact. A method involving the use of leather aprons in the manufacture of 'charas' is described in N. Taylor (1963).
  11. See chapter seven for an analysis of cannabis transactions.
  12. Cf. Sudnow (1965) on 'normal crimes' and the categorization as such.
  13. Cf. Garfinkel (1962).

Chapter Four: Using Cannabis

1. In Schutz's (1944) terms, the focus in this chapter is mainly on the 'expressive' aspect of recipes. Schutz's later work (Schutz and Luckmann, 1974) elaborates the notion of knowledge of recipes. A distinction is made between the following types of knowledge: skills, useful knowledge and knowledge of recipes. See Schutz and Luckmann (ibid), esp. pp. 105-111.
2. There are, of course, some exceptions to this in recent criminological work. See for example, Letkemann (1973) and Klockars (1974).
3. Becker (1963) p. 168.
4. As has already been pointed out, there have been several ethnographic studies conducted in the USA on drug use. One possible exception to the lack of ethnographic studies in England is the work of Plant (1975). The latter work, however, provides little information about what 'drug-takers in an English town' actually do when they take drugs, how they organise their drugtaking activities, how they interpret their drug experiences and what their drugtaking means to them. In short, the 'culture' of drugtaking is paid only cursory attention.
5. The data upon which the subsequent analysis in this chapter is based were gathered almost exclusively through participant observation of cannabis use.
6. See Lofland (1969) esp. pp. 69-72 on the concept of 'hardware' and its role in 'facilitating' deviant acts.
7. Though a number of books containing 'cookbook knowledge' or recipes for using cannabis in various kinds of food were available at the time of this investigation, by far the most widely used method of eating cannabis was that involving the baking of cakes.
8. It would appear that where the substances contained in 'THC' (tetrahydrocannabinol) have been taken for chemical analysis, they have invariably

been found to be some other drug. See the Interim Report of the Canadian Government Commission of Inquiry (1971), p. 109.

9. See Schutz and Luckmann (ibid), pp. 105-111 on the notion of 'specific' knowledge.
10. Using a joint in this way obviates the need to use a chillum and thereby solves the problem of incriminating evidence that is presented by possessing chillums. See chapter eight on problems of disposing such evidence.
11. See Schutz and Luckmann (ibid), pp. 105-111 on the notion of 'useful knowledge'.
12. See Goffman (1971, pp. 108-118) on the concept of 'remedial work'. The 'function' of remedial work, according to Goffman, 'is to change the meaning that otherwise might be given to an act, transforming what could be seen as offensive into what can be seen as acceptable'. He distinguishes three main varieties of remedial work: accounts, apologies, and requests.
13. This is not meant to imply that a person will be defined as deviant if he declines to smoke cannabis. Neither is it to suggest that students are constrained to use cannabis by some coercive subculture. In this respect, the present research would not support the conclusion of Johnson (1973, p. 9) when he states, 'there is one conduct norm central to participation in the drug subculture: Thou shalt smoke marihuana'.
14. This practice of passing a 'communal' smoking implement around the group and sharing the cannabis contained in it differs markedly from customary usage in Morroco, according to Mikuriya (1970). As he observed:

It is the custom to have the person who offers a supsi pipe load it, light it, and wipe the mouthpiece before handing it to the recipient. The recipient inhales the smoke deeply, but promptly exhales. He does not pass the half-smoked pipe to another, but continues to smoke leisurely until the first crackle is heard, as the heated ash approaches the bottom of the bowl. He then expels the remaining burning plug by blowing into the pipe. He either cleans, refills, relights, and passes the cleaned pipe to



the next person, or passes the cleaned pipe and allows the recipient to use his own supply. In a group, often more than one pipe is used.

There appear to be both similarities and differences in customary practice in the USA and in England. See, for example, the study by Boughey (1967) of four different groups of marihuana users in the USA.

15. See Goffman (1961) on the concept of 'focused gathering'.

Chapter Five: The Effects of Cannabis

1. See, for example, the work of Meyers (1968), Thompson and Proctor (1953), and Weil, Zinberg and Nelsen (1968).
2. Weil et al (ibid), reprinted in David Smith (ed) (1970), pp. 11-34.
3. Cf. Becker (1953, 1967), Berke and Hernton (1974), Goode (1970) and Mikuriya (1970).
4. Becker (1973, p. 26).
5. Becker (1953), reprinted in Becker (1963, p. 46).
6. One of the problems which Becker poses is how the user moves from being socially labelled but not self labelled as high to being both socially, and self, labelled. Becker suggests that this occurs in a process of social interaction. He says that the user 'picks up concrete referents of the term being high and applies these to his own experience'. How this occurs, what the concrete referents are, and how they are applied are matters which Becker does not illuminate.
7. It can be argued that Becker's (1953) account of the production of initial effects confuses a strictly sociological model of drug effects with a common-sense model of them. From the former point of view, drug effects are those which are defined as such, whilst from the latter perspective, drug effects are 'objective' facts waiting to be discovered and achieved. Cf. Pollner (1974).
8. See, for example, Berke and Hernton (1974) and Goode (1970, 1972).
9. This, of course, is a problem which applies to all accounts; they are relative to the situations of their production.
10. Cicourel sees 'descriptive vocabularies as indexical expressions' as one of a number of interpretive procedures, including the 'reciprocity of perspectives', 'normal forms', the 'etcetera principle', 'talk itself as reflexive', and the 'retrospective-prospective sense of occurrence'. See Cicourel (1973), esp. pp. 87-88. See also note 17, chapter 2.

11. Cf. Schutz (1967), pp.11f.
12. Members were oriented to the stronger psychedelic drugs such as psilocybin, mescaline and LSD as being more effective in this regard.
13. See Berke and Hernton (1974) on the related notion of the 'experiential region'.
14. Cf. Boughey's (1967) description of reactions to the use of cannabis in four different social settings.
15. Cf. Matza (1969), pp. 140-141.

Chapter Six: The Morality of Cannabis Use

1. Becker (1963), p.73, derives this stereotypical portrait from the work of Anslinger and Tompkins(1953), pp. 21-22. For more recent analyses of conventional stereotypes of drug users, see Rooney and Gibbons (1966), J. L. Simmons (1969), Young (1973) and Auld (1973).
2. These others include Carey (1968), pp. 52-56, Goode (1970), Ch. 4, and Priest and McGrath (1970).
3. See, for example, the work of Cressey (1953), Hartung (1965), Jacobs (1967, 1970), Matza (1964), Scott and Lyman (1968, 1970b), and Sykes and Matza (1957). See also Lofland (1969), pp. 84-101, for a review of the role of different types of 'accounts' in making deviant acts 'subjectively available'.
4. See Zimmerman and Pollner (1971) on the distinction between topic and resource.
5. Thus, for example, Cressey (1953), pp. 94-95, states:

...a rationalization has been considered as a verbalization which purports to make the person's behaviour more intelligible to others in terms of symbols currently employed by his group. It follows from this kind of definition that the person may prepare his rationalization before he acts, or he may act first and rationalize afterward. In the cases of trust violation encountered significant rationalizations were always present before the criminal act took place, or at least at the time it took place, and, in fact, after the act had taken place the rationalization often was abandoned. If this observation were generalized to other behaviour we would not say that an individual 'buys an automobile and then rationalizes', as in the example above, but that he buys the car because he is able to rationalize. The rationalization is his motivation, and it not only makes his behaviour intelligible to others, but it makes it intelligible to himself.

Similarly, Sykes and Matza (1957) p. 251 (in Wolfgang, Savitz and Johnston (1962) suggest:

These justifications are commonly described as rationalizations. They are viewed as following deviant behaviour and as protecting the individual from self-blame and the blame of others after the act. But there is also reason to believe that they precede deviant behaviour and make deviant behaviour possible....Disapproval flowing from internalized norms and conforming others in the social environment is neutralized,

turned back, or deflected in advance. Social controls that serve to check or inhibit deviant motivational patterns are rendered inoperative, and the individual is freed to engage in delinquency without serious damage to his self image.

6. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of questions which one could ask from a phenomenological point of view. In addition, one could address the more fundamental issue of the interpretive procedures involved in making phenomena 'account-able' at all. Cf. Garfinkel's (1967) work on this topic.
7. The notion of 'accounts' synthesises symbolic interactionist work on members' motives (eg. C. Wright Mills (1940) and N. N. Foote (1951)) and their conceptions of the morality of their acts. According to Scott and Lyman (1970a), p. 112,

An account is a linguistic device employed whenever an action is subjected to valuative inquiry....by an account we include also those non-vocalized but lingual explanations that arise in an actor's 'mind' when he questions his own behaviour.

The problem here is that the only way to research 'non-vocalized' accounts which are assumed to be employed prior to action is to ask questions designed to reveal them. The extent, however, to which accounts vocalized after infractions to inquiring audiences correspond to the non-vocalized accounts in use prior to infractions is clearly problematic.

8. This is because previous symbolic interactionist work (for example, Cressey (1953), Sykes and Matza (1957), and Matza (1964)) has been largely concerned with members who accept the rules they break (cf. Lindesmith and Strauss (1968), p. 397) and that they need accounts to permit them to neutralize the moral bind of the rules being broken. Their accounts may be described as 'accommodative'. To anticipate subsequent discussion, it may be suggested that when rules are not accepted then 'neutralization' becomes unnecessary.
9. The distinction between voluntaristic and involuntaristic replies to motivational questions is drawn from L. Taylor (1972).
10. I draw this distinction from D. H. Hargreaves (n. d.).

11. See Schutz (1967), esp. pp. 21f. and 69f. on the concept of the 'in-order-to motive.'
12. Taylor (1972), for example, reports that sex offenders made use of the following voluntaristic replies to his motivational questions: 'desire for special experiences', 'wish to frighten or hurt', and 'refusal to accept normative constraints'.
13. As used here, the 'trigger' stands midway between the voluntarism of purpose and reason and the involuntarism of predisposition.
14. See Schutz (1967), esp. p.69f., and Schutz (1967a), pp.91-96 on the concept of the 'genuine because motive'.
15. This would follow from Becker's (1963), p.42, point that 'marihuana use is an interesting case for theories of deviance, because it illustrates the way deviant motives actually develop in the course of experience with the deviant activity'.
16. For many members, and in particular for those who referred to themselves as heads or freaks, using cannabis was a 'natural, social thing', as taken for granted an occurrence as the taking of tea for their parents. Zimmerman and Wieder (n.d.) make a similar observation in their investigation of the life of a number of self-named freaks (ibid, p.57).
17. As C. Wright Mills (1940), reprinted in Manis and Meltzer (1967), p.356, states: 'the differing reasons men give for their actions are not themselves without reasons'. How the lack of reference to moral conceptions in members' accounts is to be accounted for, or, more generally, how the production of any kind of account is to be accounted for, are interesting topics for future research. At this point it may only be suggested that my motivational questions were seen as non-threatening and that, as a consequence, there was no apparent warrant for the production of accounts which justified or excused the use of cannabis in moral terms. In any case, it may be said that the kind of account given will depend on the purposes of the person providing the account

- and on what purpose he imputes to the person asking for the account.
18. This procedure is adopted in Priest and McGrath (1970).
  19. This simply attests to members' capacity for self-labelling. The importance of self-labelling was somewhat neglected in the early work of the labelling approach (eg. Lemert (1951), Erikson (1962), Kitsuse (1962) and Becker (1963)). In the interests of making explicit the symbolic interactionist roots of labelling theory, several writers have drawn attention to this neglect of self-labelling and in particular, the secret deviant. See, for examples of these criticisms, Gibbs (1966), Lorber (1967), and Mankoff (1971). A related criticism of the work of the early labelling theorists is that of the overemphasis on the passivity of 'deviants'. See, for example, Schervish (1973), Taylor, Walton and Young (1973) and Walton (1973).
  20. See chapter eight for an analysis of members' precautions against discovery by (in particular) agents of social control.
  21. This suggests that a distinction may be made between accommodative and non-accommodative accounts or, as Matza (1964) pp. 41-42 has pointed out, between apologetic and radical justifications.
  22. This may be said to constitute a non-accommodative use of the 'condemnation of the condemners'.
  23. See the Report by the Advisory Committee of Drug Dependence, Cannabis, (1968).
  24. Cf. Matza (1964) and Sykes and Matza (1957) on the use of this 'technique of neutralization'.
  25. Becker's respondents also make use of this 'rationalization'. See Becker (1963), pp. 75-76.
  26. See Matza (ibid) and Sykes and Matza (ibid) on the concept of the 'denial of the victim'.
  27. See Schur (1965) on the sociological use of the concept of 'crimes

without victims'.

28. Members possessed knowledge of a variety of drugs, both legal and illegal, besides cannabis. This variety included drugs which were of 'mind-expanding' potential (such as psilocybin, mescaline, LSD, DMT, and STP) and those which had a more 'physical' effect (sometimes referred to as 'body dope'). Examples of the latter included 'speed' (amphetamines), 'downers' (barbiturates), mandrax, 'tranks' (tranquillizers), 'coke' (cocaine), 'smack' (heroin) and other opiates. Cannabis (both hashish and marihuana) was classed as the mildest of the potentially mind expanding drugs.
29. Cf. Matza (1964) and Sykes and Matza (1957) on the concept of the 'condemnation of the condemners'.
30. Findings of 'scientific' research which were contrary to their own 'research findings' and beliefs about cannabis were dismissed, thereby confirming their basic assumptions about the harmlessness of the drug. Thus, scientific experiments on animals which had 'proved' some harm were dismissed on the grounds that they were inapplicable to humans; experiments on humans which had revealed brain damage were rejected on the basis of their 'biased samples'; and mass media reports on the harmfulness or potential harmfulness of cannabis were repudiated on the grounds that they were instances of 'media manipulation'.
31. This argument is also the conclusion of Johnson's (1973) work on marihuana users and drug subcultures.
32. Sociologists could also profitably examine how the view of cannabis as immoral is sustained by the opposite kind of 'morality work'.
33. This, of course, presupposes that I had acquired the common-sense knowledge as a result of participant observation which enabled me to appreciate members' moral meanings of cannabis when I heard them.



Chapter Seven: Acquiring Cannabis

1. Limitation of time and space precludes extensive analysis of members' solutions to the other 'problem' associated with supply, namely that of distribution. In any case, distribution has received greater attention from sociologists working in this field. See, for example, the work of Goode (1969, 1970), Carey (1968), and Mandel (1967).
2. Cf. Goodenough's definition of culture cited in note 43, chapter one.
3. Cf. Schutz's (1970) pp. 35-45, discussion of 'interpretationally relevant moments' in the accomplishment of typifications of phenomena.
4. Becker (1963), pp. 63-64 makes this point.
5. Cf. Carey's (1968) and Mandel's (1967) typologies of sellers.
6. See, for example, Becker (1963), p. 65.
7. See chapter three for discussion of how members accomplish this 'cognitive task'.
8. Even if members sample the cannabis, they may still be 'ripped off'. A number of accounts were provided of members being invited to sample some cannabis before purchase, only to be sold something different later without their knowledge. This kind of occurrence, it must be pointed out, appears to be more common when there are large amounts of money involved in the transaction.
9. Carey (1968), p. 69, says that the amount of cannabis bought at any given time depends on how much the user has to spend, how much he can reasonably expect to use in the near future, and how much he can get. In addition to these considerations involved in deciding how much to buy, the following may be suggested: the buyer's purpose in purchasing cannabis (he may not simply be purchasing in order to use; he may wish to supply the drug to others as well), the convenience of buying particular quantities, and the risk involved. In addition, while it may be financially sensible to purchase large quantities with a view to minimising costs, many students in this research preferred to purchase

only small quantities fairly frequently as this obviated problems of distribution.

10. Cf. Carey (1968), p. 69, who states that usually fixed amounts of cannabis are sold: 'Marihuana, for instance, is generally sold on the West Coast by the ounce or the kilo. It is easier to get a kilo than a half pound'. Carey does not provide any discussion of why sellers should wish to sell only fixed amounts.
11. Other methods of acquiring cannabis, not considered here but worthy of further sociological investigation are (1) growing cannabis, (2) being given cannabis, (3) stealing cannabis, and (4) importing cannabis.

Chapter Eight: Avoiding Discovery

1. Most symbolic interactionist research, however, has been more interested in the problems created for persons who have already been discovered and labelled as deviant than in the impact of the threat of discovery or ban on the undiscovered or 'secret' deviant. See, for example, Goffman (1961), Lemert (1967), M. Ray (1964), R. Schwartz and J. Skolnick (1962) and Stebbins (1971). In addition, sociologists of a more positivistic persuasion have conducted extensive research on crime rates and legal sanctions. See, for example, W. Chambliss (1966), Chiricos and Waldo (1970), J. P. Gibbs (1968), K. Schuessler (1952), C. Tittle (1969) and Tittle and Logan (1973).
2. Becker (1963), p. 68.
3. That is, it can thereby contribute towards the emergence of secondary deviation. See Lemert (1967) on this concept.
4. These types are Schaps and Sanders' types; that is, they are constructed types. However, it is not made clear by these authors what relationship there is between them and the social types in terms of which the drug users in their research typed each other.
5. See below, section (iii).
6. In positivistic research such as that of Charles Tittle (1969), the 'certainty' of punishment is defined objectively as an index of the 'number of admissions to state prisons....divided by the number of crimes known to the police...' (ibid, p. 412). Such a conceptualization ignores members' subjective assessments of the extent to which they are certain to be punished. By way of contrast, in this chapter, the 'objective' certainty of cannabis users being discovered and punished is ignored in favour of their subjective assessments of the certainty of such eventualities.
7. Cf. Box (1971), p. 171-172, on the ties between the police and organ-

- izations such as universities, schools, commercial firms and professional organizations which have a binding effect on police activity.
8. Student residences off campus were seen as an intermediate category - less 'immune' than the college campus but less dangerous than certain public places. It must be noted, however, that some students' residences were known to have been the object of frequent police scrutiny and were thus defined as 'uncool'.
  9. As in the case of certainty, Tittle (1969), p.413, defines 'severity' objectively. He employs three alternative measures of the severity of punishment: (1) the mean time served by the prisoners released in 1960 who had been convicted on a robbery charge; (2) the median sentence for state felony offenders imprisoned in 1960; (3) the number of crimes punishable by death. In this chapter, the 'severity' of sanctions simply refers to members' subjective assessments of it.
  10. Cf. Auld's (1973) discussion of the functions of accounts of drug users under arrest and before the courts.
  11. It has, however, received some attention in other contexts. See, for example, Garfinkel (1967), Ch.5, Goffman (1968), P.Manning (1972), B.Schwartz (1968), Scott and Lyman (1968a) and C.Warren (1974).
  12. See Goffman (1968), Ch.2, on the distinction between the discredited and the discreditable.
  13. Goffman (ibid), p.58.
  14. This concealment strategy is also mentioned by Becker (1963), pp.67-68.
  15. See Schutz (1967), esp. pp.11f. and 315f. on the reciprocity of perspectives.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

1. See Preface footnote 12 for examples of such work.
2. See, for example, the work of Atkyns and Hanneman (1974), Cohen and Klein (1970), Grupp (1971), Johnson (1973), Knight, Sheposh and Bryson (1974), Kohn and Mercer (1971), Pearlman (1968), Suchman (1968), and Weppner and Agar (1971).
3. See Introduction, footnote 27.
4. Cf. Rock (1973) p.20.
5. This is particularly apparent in interactionist typologies of cannabis users, their explanations of drug experience and their motivational accounts of cannabis use. See chapters two, five and six respectively.
6. Cf. Garfinkel (1967) p.76.
7. See Rock (1973) for discussion of phenomenism and essentialism in the sociology of deviancy.
8. Cf. Mehan and Wood (1975), p.99ff.
9. Cf. Mehan and Wood (1975), p.101ff.
10. Cf. Rock (1973), p.21.
11. Time and space has also made it necessary to treat these invariant features as largely unanalyzed conditions underlying the conduct of this research and the production of this account. A full explication of these basic properties would in any case require an ethnography of the ethnography or a phenomenological study of a phenomenological study.
12. Cf. Stoddart (1974), p.180.
13. It is important to emphasize that it was not the purpose of this research to systematically investigate such influences. The account that follows is therefore necessarily speculative and draws on previous work where a focus on structural and contextual influences has been a dominant consideration. See, for example,

- Boughey (1967), Schaps and Sanders (1970) and Young (1971, 1971a, 1973a).
14. Although it was not the aim of this research to collect systematically demographic data pertaining to class background, a questionnaire administered in the early stages of this research to 70 students suggested that the majority, like those in Young's (1973a) study, came from middle-class non-commercial backgrounds. See Preface, footnote 10.
  15. Cf. Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts (1975) p.61, and Young (1973b).
  16. See, for example, Brake (1973), Cloward and Ohlin (1960), Cohen (1955), Downes (1966), Rock and Cohen (1970), and Young (1973a, 1973b).
  17. Cf. Downes (1966) for extended discussion of the concept of 'dissociation' in relation to working-class youth.
  18. Cf. Young (1971, 1971a).
  19. Cf. Young (1973b, 1971, Ch.6)
  20. Cf. Young (1973a, 1973b), McGlothlin (1975), Brake (1973), and Flacks (1970).
  21. Cf. Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts (1975), Brake (1973), Flacks (1970), McGlothlin (1975) and Young (1973a).
  22. Cf. Clarke et al. (1975), p.63ff, and Young (1973a), p.11.
  23. Young (1973a), p.12.
  24. Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts, (1975), p.61.
  25. Of course, geographical distance from adults who might otherwise inhibit deviant behaviour does not preclude the possibility that they will remain 'spiritually present' and thus continue to exert a restraining influence.
  26. On the relationship between social control and willingness to engage in deviant behaviour see Becker (1963), Box (1971), Hirschi (1969) and Young (1973a).

27. On deviant behaviour and the notion of social support see especially Box (1971), p.155ff.
28. Cf. Young (1971, 1973a, 1973b) and Brake (1973).
29. This, of course raises the question of how to explain this immunity. One explanation suggested by Box (1971, p.171-172) is that:

...police bureaucracies are embedded in a network of relations with other bureaucracies, and out of these there develop reciprocal obligations which, in part, have the effect of constraining the police from full law-enforcement...Police non-intervention is doubly rewarding: first, it keeps down the amount of work for the police to handle, and second, it fosters a sense of mutual respect between the police and high-ranking officials in other bureaucracies, for the latter like being permitted to keep their own houses in order.
30. It has subsequently come to my notice that after this research was completed, a certain student on the campus became a notorious source of supplies of cannabis to both students and non-students. Police reaction was to apprehend the student in his college room in possession of drugs. Hitherto such an event had not occurred. It may be speculated that as a result a new era in drug use at the university was initiated, with such developments as a tightened organization amongst the students and an increase in distrust, paranoia and fears of apprehension.
31. See Pollner (1975) on the notion of 'ironicizing experience'.
32. See Pollner (1974, 1975) and Schwartz (1976).
33. Cf. Rock (1973).
34. Cf. Mehan and Wood (1975) ch.5.
35. Cf. Rock (1973).
36. Cf. Young (1971a) and Werthman and Piliavin (1967).
37. Cf. Taylor, Walton and Young (1973), p.282.
38. Cf. Taylor, Walton and Young (1975), p.18.
39. See, for example, Chambliss (1975), Krisberg (1975), Pearce (1976), and Taylor, Walton and Young (1975).

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