

## MARIJUANA

### Moderate users typical

Interviews with 62 men under 30 indicate little psychological difference between subjects who have never smoked marijuana and moderate users of the drug. Significant differences were found between these two groups and chronic marijuana smokers.

The study indicates no difference between nonsmokers and moderate smokers on a range of basic psychological dimensions, including family relationships, sexual behavior, educational achievement, financial status, political position and personality structure.

Drs. Norman E. Zinberg of the Harvard Medical School and Andrew T. Weil of the National Institute of Mental Health suggest in the April 11 *NATURE* that the casual use of marijuana is now so extensive and accepted within this age group that it cuts across all other boundaries.

But the study reports that the chronic users of the drug exhibited extreme anxiousness and vague paranoia under interview conditions. They hold deeply negative attitudes toward society and generally describe their political beliefs as radical.

## SUICIDE

### A family affair

Suicidal behavior is likely to follow hostility and death wishes on the part of the suicidal person's family and close associates. This is the conclusion of a study Drs. Milton Rosenbaum and Joseph Richman of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine reported in the May *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY*.

When a sample of suicidal patients was asked, "Did you ever feel others would be better off if you were dead or away?" 19 out of 35 replied with an unambiguous affirmative and only 8 with an unqualified negative.

None of the 15 patients in a control group replied affirmatively.

A majority of the relatives in family interviews replied in the affirmative when asked, "Did you ever feel he (the patient) was too much of a burden?" The majority of the families expressed feelings of being fed up with the patient and believing they would be better off if he were dead or away.

The researchers are gathering further data on these and related questions to design a profile of the potential suicide's family.

## STUDENT REVOLT

### Profile of the protest-prone

The large urban university granting doctoral degrees is the type of higher educational institution most likely to encounter student protests, reports Dr. Harold Hodgkinson of the University of California at Berkeley in a Carnegie Commission on Higher Education reports excerpted in the May *Columbia University Teachers College RECORD*.

Of the 1,230 institutions sampled, 30 percent report increased protest, 44 percent no change, 1.5 percent a decrease, and 22 percent say that they have had no ex-

perience with student protest.

In high-protest institutions, 40 percent report an increase in the frequency of underground publications and films while only 17 percent of the whole sample report such an increase.

A common cause for student unrest has been the claim that teachers spend more time on research than with students. In 55 percent of the high-protest institutions faculty members increased hours spent in research compared to 34 percent in the national sample.

Two of the highest correlations in the faculty sector were increased faculty support of students who oppose administrative policies, and the number of faculty members who publicly advocate positions on national policy. On both of these variables the high-protest institutions have a percentage double that of the national norms.

## PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE

### Starvation ineffective for obesity

Prolonged starvation techniques prove ineffective in providing sustained weight improvement in severely overweight patients, a study shows. Only four subjects achieved some success in maintaining weight loss in a follow-up study of 25 superobese subjects, and those four developed psychological problems.

Drs. David W. Swanson of the Stritch School of Medicine and Frank Dinello of DePaul University in Chicago report in the April *PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE* that very obese people may have a weight below which they cannot function adequately.

During their hospital confinement, many of the patients had psychological problems. And of the four subjects who maintained their weight loss, two showed personal and occupational problems, another paranoid psychosis and the fourth psychological turmoil.

Those who regained their former weight became more stable, showing improved occupational functioning, apparent tranquility and good relations with others.

## PUBLIC OPINION

### Japanese youth and nuclear arms

Despite widespread and persistent antiwar attitudes and deep hostility to nuclear weapons among the Japanese at large, there is evidence of divergent expectations among post-World War II students.

In a 1966 survey of 414 male and female college and technical school students, 45 percent of the respondents believed Japan would start its nuclear weapons production within 10 years. Some 75 percent of those sampled expected Japan to have nuclear weapons within 20 years.

Dr. Yasumasa Tanaka of the Department of Political Science, Gakushuin University in Tokyo, interprets this data in the spring 1970 *PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY* as an indication that increasingly for Japanese youth the nuclear allergy of their parents is not salient.

He suggests that young Japanese some day will hold that nuclear arms are indeed undesirable, but necessary to national survival if nuclear proliferation continues outside Japan. The survey was taken before the signing of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, which is still to be ratified by Japan (SN: 2/14, p. 184).