

Pot Pulp Top Pick

By Michael R. Aldrich, Ph.D.

Marijuana Girl by the mysterious N.R. de Mexico is one of the first novels on the theme of the white teenage girl enslaved by dope, jazz, and prostitution —and in that sense one of the first “groupie” novels.

It is well written, with genuine characters and a feeling of empathy for Joyce Taylor, who gets turned on to marijuana by her boss, a newspaper editor who takes her into the City for cool jazz and warm sex. He’s married, and when they split up she seeks the jazz cellars, a lesbian girlfriend, and black musician lovers.

Marijuana leads to heroin and heroin leads to prostitution, the nice girl ruined. It’s the classic theme of the dope pulps, but written with sophistication. (One of Joyce’s lovers even quotes the LaGuardia Report of 1944 to the effect that marijuana is much less harmful than alcohol.)

Published in 1951 by Universal, *Marijuana Girl* may have been the first novel to spell marijuana with a *j*. The woman on the cover seems sedated and in despair. The teaser reads: “Joyce Taylor

would try anything —if it promised a thrill.”

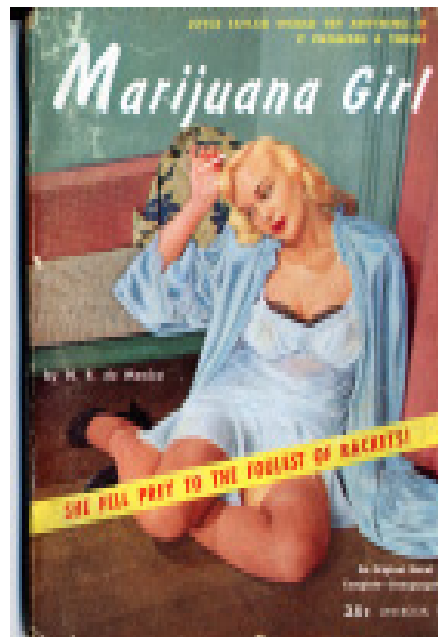
The woman on the 1960 Beacon edition cover looks more ready for action. Her robe is off, one strap of her slip is slipping, her hands are on her crotch, smoke is rising from her open lips. The text is more lurid: “She traded her body for drugs —and kicks!”

But *Marijuana Girl* is not porn, it’s pot pulp, a subgenre all its own.

I’ve not been able to discover the real name of the author, but he was evidently very familiar with the New York jazz scene of the late 1940s, the scene of the Beat Generation writers soon to follow. *Marijuana Girl* includes an extensive “Glossary of Jive,” in which marijuana and heroin terms of the era are defined.

“Jive” was meant to be unintelligible to the squares who might be listening in the subway. A slang to protect and identify, to separate the hip from the squares and the hustlers from the johns. And most of all, the drug users from the police.

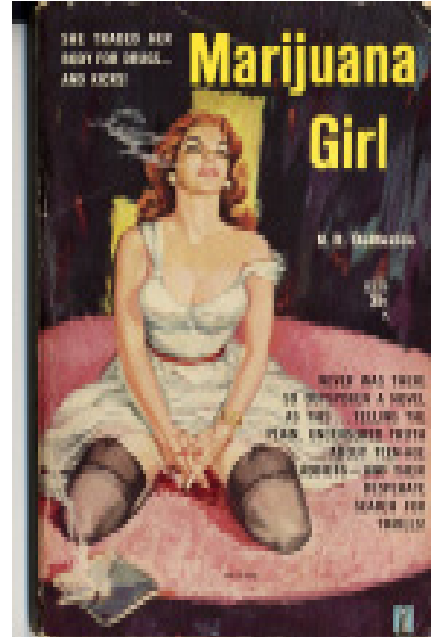
Note that the mid-20th-century hip-



Marijuana Girl by “N.R. de Mexico”; New York, Universal, 1951.

sters distinguished weed from “hard drugs.”

This is the Gone World of the beats — Dig it! Cool cats and chicks, charged on gauge. Give me five, man, you’ll

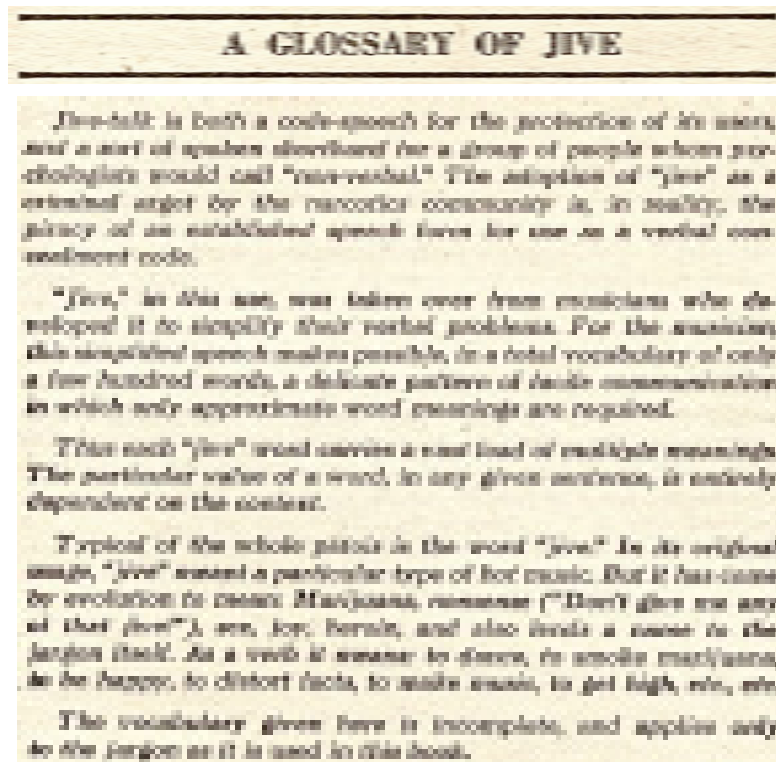


Marijuana Girl by “N.R. DeMexico”; New York, Beacon, 1960

flip your wig! Don’t be a drag, get hip to the jive!

Some publisher should consider bringing out a third edition. Till then, check your local used book store.

A Glossary of Jive (1950)



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N. R. DE MEXICO

ball— To have a good time, to enjoy; as “to have a ball.”

beat— out of supply (of money or drugs).

beat for— lacking

beat loot— poor pay, small money

best, the— very nice, pleasant

big deal— the main transaction or thing; also, a large purchase of drugs or marijuana.

blow— to play an instrument (any instrument)

bug— to make crazy, to drive insane.

bugged— emotionally disturbed.

cap— capsule (of heroin)

carry a monkey— to be addicted; to require a heavy dosage of a narcotic.

cat— person, particularly a person who knows music or frequents musical circles.

charge— marijuana (in general), also, a single shot of heroin.

charged— high on marijuana or narcotics

chick— girl; woman

clean— with no supply (of marijuana or narcotics)

cold turkey— to be abruptly deprived of drugs; as “a cold turkey cure.”

connection— a person with a source of supply (of drugs).

contact— a source of supply (of drugs).

cool— relaxed, happy, safe, comfortable, good, pleasant.

cure— usually, gradual or progressive depri-

vation of a narcotic.

cut on out— leave, depart.

cut out— to leave.

deck— a measured quantity of narcotic.

dig— to understand, see, follow (as a conversation), like, enjoy; also, attitude; also, line of business.

drag— a discomfort; an unpleasantness; to make uncomfortable; to be an unpleasant person.

drug cat— an unpleasant person

end, the— wonderful! terrific!

fall in— fit in with the group.

fall out— to leave.

five, give me— shake hands

fix-man— a narcotics pusher.

fix— a supply of narcotics.

flip— to lose emotional control; a disturbed person

flipped— emotionally disturbed; more rarely, insane

flip your wig— go crazy.

gauge— marijuana

get off— to quit the use of drugs.

get on— to get high

get straight— secure a supply of marijuana, narcotics or money.

gold— money.

gold in front— payment in advance.

gone— powerful, as “This is real gone

gauge.” Also, happy.

goofball— narcotic pill; also, an unbalanced person.

goof off— blunder.

grass— marijuana

great— nice; okay.

greatest— very nice; pretty good.

groove— to enjoy oneself; also, solid, legitimate, as “He’s in the groove.” Also, spirit, mood, or style, as “that Dixieland groove.”

habit— addiction; also, degree of addiction, as “a three-cap habit, a five-cap habit,” etc.

hard stuff— any of the narcotic drugs, as distinguished from marijuana.

hassle— fight, argument.

have eyes— to want, desire, as “I got eyes for that chick.” Also, to be in love with.

hay— marijuana.

hemp— marijuana.

high— intoxicated.

high on lush— intoxicated on liquor.

hip— in the know.

hook— in a narcotics addict, the physiological requirement which compels him to return again and again to the drug.

horse— heroin.

hot— passionate, as to “play (music) hot”; compare Italian classical music terminology, *con fuoco*, i.e. with fire.

hung up— in a state of depression; unable to function.

hustler— harlot.

in the groove— exactly right (from the fitting of a needle into a phonograph record track).

in there— participating; meeting social or musical demands.

jam— to improvise. See: session

jive— music, marijuana, etc. etc

john— client of a hustler.

joy pop— injection of heroin beneath skin (rather than into vein).

junky— heroin addict.

kick— the emotional state accompanying being high; any strongly pleasurable emotional state.

kick a habit— to break a habit; specifically, the drug habit.

lay on— to give some of, as “I’m going to lay a stick on you.”

light up— to get high.

lift— sensation of being high.

loot— money.

mainline— injection of heroin into a vein.

make it— to achieve a goal; to get along in a given situation

Mexican grass— imported marijuana.

narcotics rap— jail sentence for possession of narcotics.

O— an ounce of marijuana.

ofey— Negro word for unliked white people.

on— high; also, addicted.

O-Z— an ounce of marijuana.

pad— home or apartment.

pot— marijuana

pro— hustler

pusher— drug or marijuana seller

put down— to reject or refuse.

riff— solo musical passage, often improvised.

set— group of musical numbers played by orchestra between rests.

sent— made happy.

session— a group gathering of musicians to play, particularly to improvise.

sharp— fashionable in a flashy manner; also, shrewd, clever

shoot— inject (heroin) with a hypodermic needle.

skin-pop— same as joy-pop; also, accidentally missing vein while injecting heroin.

sniff— to take heroin by inhalation.

solid— Understood!

square— bourgeois, conventional, provincial, stupid, ill-informed, not hip.

stash— concealed supply of drugs; to conceal.

stick— marijuana cigarette.

stick deal— sale of pre-manufactured marijuana cigarettes, as distinguished from sale of marijuana in bulk.

straight— supplied; stocked up.

stuff— marijuana, heroin, cocaine.

through the ceiling— very high.

turn off— to become sober; to come down from a “high.”

turn on— to smoke marijuana; to take narcotics.

uncool— dangerous, unpleasant, uncomfortable, unsatisfactory.

weed— marijuana.

white stuff— heroin; cocaine.