

The Cannabis Revolution: What You Need to Know

Stephen Holt

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This is a balanced review of the known medical effects of and uses for a plant whose legal situation is in flux.

Stephen Holt's timely *The Cannabis Revolution* covers considerable ground when it comes to the medical future of marijuana. The book presents a balanced view of medical cannabis, despite the author's open support for legalization. It also contains a disclaimer that due to marijuana prohibition in the United States, the content lacks the supporting evidence that would be made possible by solid studies.

Some of the volume's statements will likely not be what cannabis enthusiasts want to hear. For example, the author makes the case that lack of regulation can make marijuana dosages and levels of treatment chemicals inexact, a fact that will be significant to many medical professionals but which is unlikely to persuade lawmakers toward leniency.

One of the book's overarching themes is the need for further study of marijuana as a medical substance. The author presents the diversity of maladies that may be treatable using the herb, from nutritional issues to ADHD; this serves as a good indication of the need for greater medical study of this controversial plant.

References, which are listed at the back of the book, are generally fairly current and are a useful source of further research avenues for interested professionals. In addition to medical topics, Holt covers legal ground that doctors may not be completely aware of, including contemporary state, national, and international laws covering marijuana use.

Holt also makes the point that marijuana could potentially become a source of income for pharmaceutical and recreational industries, which will bring the myriad of complexities that accompany potentially profitable substances and large corporations. Incorporating this broader context gives the volume scope, implying that all doctors should at least be interested in this issue.

The book is part of a certification program run out of the author's self-founded, New Jersey-based Holt Institute of Medicine. While the certification program is the book's stated purpose, the author also mentions that the content is useful information for medical doctors who are interested in marijuana's clinical potential. Throughout, the author avoids plugging himself, which lends the text legitimacy and a strong sense of earnestness.

Holt's volume is far from a pie-in-the-sky marijuana gospel, nor is it completely negative toward medical marijuana use. Overall, it comes across as a balanced review of the known medical effects of and uses for a plant whose legal situation is in flux.

If for no other reason than to provide background knowledge, *The Cannabis Revolution* will be a good resource for medical professionals who lack other definitive marijuana guides.

ANNA CALL (July 8, 2016)

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