

Cape York Cannabis Project artwork posters

The posters featured below were produced as part of the Cape York Cannabis Project and focus on the impact of cannabis use on Indigenous culture. This project is part of the Weed it Out initiative run by Queensland Police Service and James Cook University.

Smoking Dope is Not our Culture

*"You can call it gunja, weed or
marijuana, it is affecting our people,
our children and the community.
Our culture is fading away because of it.
Smoking dope is not our way of life..."*

L.R. Conroy 2010 ©

Cape York Cannabis Project
NHMRC project grant #601002

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What Indigenous peoples say about cannabis:

Words from Lotus Glen

"Kids see their parents do it so the kids do it."

"What parents do, the kids follow."

"It breaks up family."

"You take drugs, drugs take you, it'll take your relationship, your house and everything."

"Leaders in our communities are letting it happen."

"Some people abuse it."

"Decriminalise it."

"I felt like I had no life."

"The thing (gunja) was taking control of my life."

"I thought I was smart enough to control my own mind, but I found out I wasn't."

"When people carry pain inside, that's what makes us drink and smoke."

"I get 'bucket bong' fluid on the lungs."

"Boredom an issue Nothing to do."

"You become a different person."

"Even the old fellas smoke it with alcohol, I stabbed my Aunty, but didn't remember I'd done it."

"Woke up the next morning and the cops were there."

"If you over abuse it you start to get into harder drugs, like heroin. Some fellas I know, they on the needle now."

"Alcohol bans are good, but what's replaced them?"

"Alcohol was the problem - Liquor Licence taken away - then younger ones started sniffing and smoking gunja."

"In schools there used to have culture session, boomerang making etc, kept us in touch with all that stuff."

"Education for the young."

"Find a way to talk to the kids - sports."

"We need to work with the kids."

"You should focus on young ones, aged 10. That way you can stop them before their brain changes."

"They start young."

"Kids don't know the effects."

"Can't get brain cells back."

"Young fellas don't know about gunja - if you get the word out, they might change their way."

"In our country, it's getting worse - the little fellas are starting because they see their brothers and friends doing it."

"We need to tell young one, this is how it can affect your life (tell them our story as inmates), then they can tell the next generation."

"Wrong message around gunja - kids think it's cool."

"Raising awareness as a community as a whole."

"Go bush, no drugs out there."

"Too much emphasis on money business - you don't always need money i.e. going hunting, connecting with country."

"Take young fellas fishing."

"Mens groups can do something about it - traditional cooking."

"Youth centre in our community - run by the council."

"Take them camping, show them where they came from, show them what they have to eat to survive."

"Get everyone involved in hunting and fishing."

"If you get people to work on cultural things - the other problem will go away."

"Need positive role models."

"Older people need to make the change for younger people."

"I want to change it for the next generation."

"I don't want to see my kids do it."

"Damage to custom and culture has happened over time, kids need to see this story and how it affects the present day."

"Slowly, slowly they steal something from you and you don't even realise."

"For us in here - We don't want the young ones to follow bad footsteps. They look up to us. They got no one else to look up to."

"We can see this issue from far away - clear for us."

"Gunja makes you become a different person - respect and love is lost."

"Nothing given back to parents."

"Community elders are important."

"When the love goes, the respect goes."

"People don't respect elders these days."

"How did we get to this point?"

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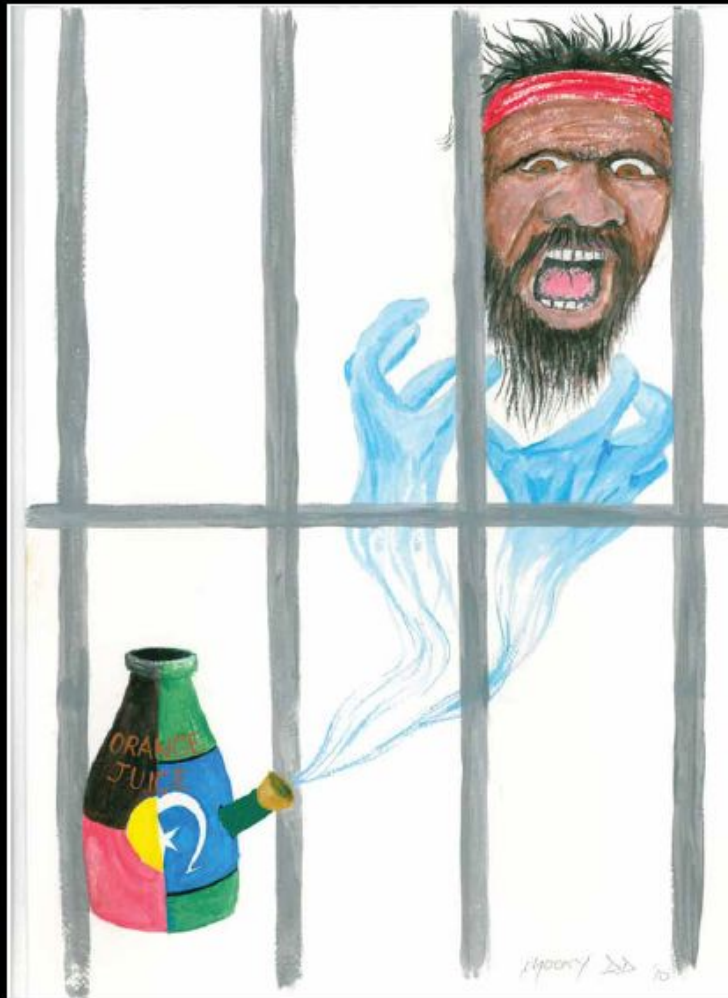
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YEARS

WHEN IT'S GOT YOU, IT WON'T LET YOU GO



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