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High Society Rag

The drums of the counter-culture may beat more softly these days, but the smoke signals linger on. Marijuana, according to recent surveys, is now smoked by 25 million Americans, at a rate of more than 7 billion joints a year. With that in mind, a group of enterprising hipsters started an underground magazine for the stoned society a year ago—and since then "High Times" has grown into a very visible bimonthly publication with a heady circulation of 250,000.

In contrast to the messy, gray look of most counter-culture publications, High Times is as glossy and slick as any straight magazine. But that's where the resemblance ends. The table of contents reads like a narcotic agent's nightmare, with titles such as "The Man Who Turned On the World," "Golden Days of Cocaine Wine," "Hemp Paper Reconsidered" and "I Was JFK's Dealer." The advertising hawks every type of drug paraphernalia from joint rollers and cigarette paper to grass-quality testing kits and hand-carved marijuana pipes. So far, Madison Avenue has not turned on to High Times, but co-publisher Andrew Kowal is optimistically looking forward to carrying blue-chip ads within the next year.

Dealers: Despite its limited advertising—and the refusal by top national distributors to put the magazine on their newsstands (it is sold by subscription, in head shops and on college campuses)—High Times is on a success trip. Kowal expects the circulation to reach 300,000 by the next issue. The editors are currently running an expensive full-page ad campaign in several national publications (such as Rolling Stone and New Times) asking readers to "demand High

Times from your local [news] dealer," and in a few months a troop of High Timers will embark on a 24-city promotion tour. "We're solid for at least two years," says editor Ed Dwyer, 27, who admits that the magazine will have to change its tone when and if marijuana is legalized.

"Basically, our readers are people who enjoy getting high and having a good time," says Dwyer, a former editor at Coronet. "People into the marijuana trade are into portraying themselves as men of the earth. What we're trying to do is put together a magazine that reflects the life-style of these people." While much of the magazine offers detailed prices and descriptions of dope, upcoming issues will contain fashion spreads of the Hell's Angels in T shirts, a cover story on turquoise jewelry, articles on voodoo drugs, erotic art in the Vatican and getting high on death, and an exclusive interview with the Dalai Lama.

Hammock: "This is sort of an outlaw magazine," chuckles Dwyer, whose small band of editorial hands works out of an airy loft in New York's Greenwich Village. "Most people come here expecting to see smoke wafting out of every office and people lying stoned in Mexican hammocks hitting a typewriter key every now and then. Sure, we turn on occasionally, but we don't encourage people to light up in the office."

High Times shares one of the lows of the drug culture—paranoia. Recently, the editors hired a company to comb the magazine's offices for bugging devices; they found the place clean. Narcotics agents read High Times (the Drug Enforcement Administration in Washington keeps it in stock), but so far they have not harassed the publication. Last month, however, when a newly hired



Pot boiler: Turning the readers' heads

office boy asked too many questions too soon, a private investigator confirmed the editors' worst fears: the curious new employee was an informer for the New York City Police Department.

—BETSY CARTER

Bar-Stool Psychiatrists

An old customer slumped into the Melody Mill tavern in Racine, Wis., on a recent Sunday night and took his regular seat at the bar. Instead of pouring the usual shot-and-a-beer, however, the barmaid engaged him in a series of neighborly conversations while refilling his glass endlessly with 7-Up. By closing time, the customer was still stone-cold sober. "I'm so glad we had a talk," the ex-alcoholic confessed to LaVerne Kowalski, the own-



Tony Rollo—Newsweek

ALL TOGETHER - SCRATCH!

The elevator in a Miami office building was jam-packed when a man in a T shirt raised his hand to scratch his shoulder. Immediately the tangy smell of just-baked pizza filled the elevator. Sniffing the cheese-and-anchovy aroma, one executive blurted out: "OK, where's the pizza man?"

There was no pizza man, it turned out—only a pizza shirt. T shirts, which have been emblazoned with a blizzard of visual messages, are now adding a second sense: smell. Carrying a patch filled with microscopic "BB's" of fragrance which release their odor when scratched, the T shirts were conceived as a promotional gimmick for advertisers. In New York, the Smell This Shirt Company is turning out orange-scented T shirts for Clairol's Sunshine Harvest Shampoo and perfume-saturated shirt-dress samples for Chanel No. 5.

The Smell It Like It Is Co. in Miami offers a smorgasbord of smells from bananas to root beer. The scented shirts, which cost from \$2 to \$6, last through four or five hand washings. "All the kids at school wear them," says 11-year-old David Ruttenberg of Miami. "They've got pickles, flowers, milk shakes, strawberry, chocolate and garlic. And when we all scratch together, it really stinks."