

Smack: not of us

Excerpt from *The Fire Next Time*

Fifth Estate Collective

1969

Up to 1949 the most important symbol in the ghetto was the knife, from then on it became the needle.

In 1956 the first wave of smack (heroin) hit the young black people of Harlem, an attack on the poor youth of the ghetto that served to “pacify” the oppressed people of the city. In New York over the last ten years smack has been used to break up gangs of poor whites, blacks, and Puerto Ricans.

In all the heavy communities of America people have noticed a marked increase of smack use and all that follows from an influx of hard drugs—rip-offs, burns, murders, uptightness. We’ve got to try to understand why there has been more and more smack use in our communities and in the communities of our brothers and sisters.

Smack is big business. The smack dealers on the street get their smack from the Mafia or the Syndicate and most of the dealers are strung out themselves, dealing to support their own habits.

William Burroughs called smack the perfect capitalistic commodity because you do not sell it to the people, you sell the people to it (smack), and once they’re hooked all you’ve got to do is supply the dope.

Our brothers and sisters are getting fucked up behind smack. Smack does not come from our lives, from our communities. It comes from the Mafia businessmen who control the largest “corporation” in America.

Herman Khan, Pentagon egghead researcher, the head of the RAND (research and development corporation), did a study for the U.S. Government on the strength of the Mafia and concluded that “the Mafia is so powerful that all the U.S. can do about it is negotiate.”

Why would they want to negotiate? They work well together in their destruction and oppression of people.

One of the reasons we see so much smack is that smack slavery is an attack on our people by the power structure of this country.

Drugs like LSD, pot, mescaline, can help people have experiences that are about learning to live in new ways. The youth culture in this country is linked to these life-giving experiences.

WE ARE NOT ABOUT SMACK OR SPEED OR THE SYSTEM OF LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY THAT IS OPPOSED TO OUR SEARCH FOR LIFE.

Nixon has called for newer and stiffer drug laws against psychedelics, but the spread of destructive drugs goes on, and each day more and more people—the youngest people who hit the street first get fucked up behind smack and speed.

If we see ourselves as a community of people who are trying to live a new kind of life together, we must come together to deal with the problems that face us. One thing that we know America is about is isolation.

Many of us are trying to be hip in response to the isolated futures that this country has laid out for us. We must come together in a coherent and progressive way to get rid of smack and begin the creation of a community that relates to all of our brothers and sisters.

[excerpt from *The Fire Next Time*, publication of the Weatherman faction of Students for a Democratic Society]

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