Cannabis Pride: How LGBTQIA+ Activism Paved the Way for Our Industry

"Marijuana was so central to life in the Castro—a weave of medical and sexual freedom—that it mushroomed into a full-fledged movement...

In the first week in November 1978, San Francisco's Prop W passed by 58% with endorsements from Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk, who were friends with Peron and the cannabis community.

Three weeks later, homophobic cop, Dan White, walked into San Francisco City Hall and assassinated both Moscone and Milk, two wildly popular public officials. "White Night" riots broke out. Police cars became fair game...Dan White eventually killed himself.

Later, Peron told me he believed the 58% success of the legalization initiative ultimately caused the assassinations."

-- "Cannabis' Undeniable LGBTQ+ Connections Run Deep", Pebbles Trippet

“I think a lot of the movers in the marijuana movement have been gay, but they have Stockholm syndrome. They just make themselves sound like the moderate and make me sound wild and crazy. In fact, I’m the only one who’s making any sense. I’ve had to endure that my whole life. Being a gay person, there’s a lot of ridicule and a lot of resistance. So that prepared me for the battle. I wasn’t giving up an inch.” -

Dennis Peron

Interview with Mike Robinson; 2017
mikesmedicines.com

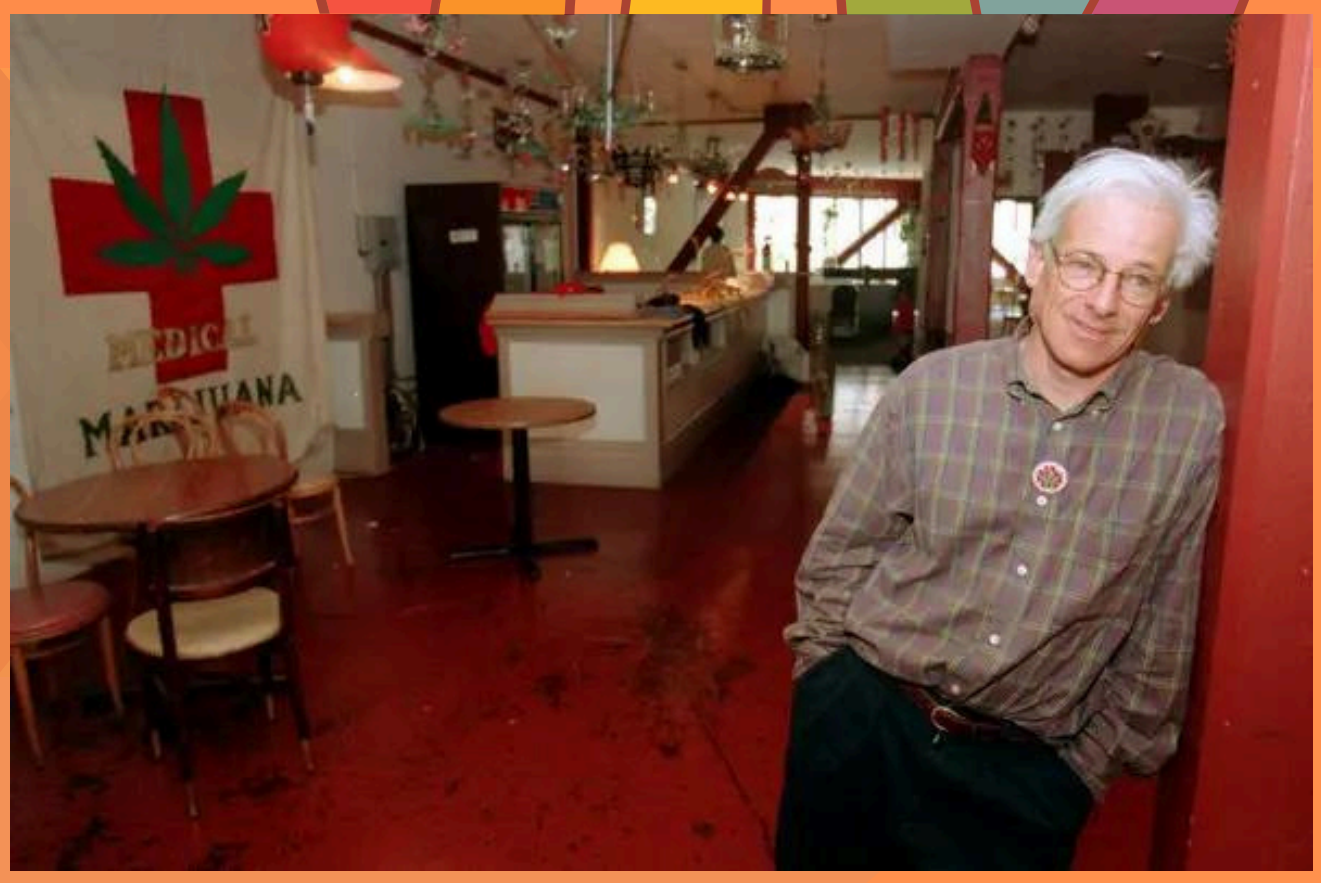
“One of the things myself and others were wondering at that time was, ‘Is the virus gonna kill us or is the medicine gonna kill us?’”

-Wayne Justmann, SF Buyers Club Patient and Advocate

Source: Sam Laird, 2018 - How LGBTQ+ Activists Fought Two Fronts At Once

Dennis Peron





Dennis is a **forefather** of the cannabis industry. After his partner Jonathan West died of AIDS in 1990, Peron intensified his efforts to **provide cannabis** to AIDS patients for symptom relief. He founded the **San Francisco Cannabis Buyers Club in 1991**, the **first public dispensary in the United States**. Peron's **activism** was instrumental in passing **Proposition 215** in 1996, co-authoring the Compassionate Use Act.

Despite these foundational contributions, Peron was openly against modern legalization efforts until his passing in 2018. Considering the current state of the market, he still has some things to teach this industry.

photo source: new york times 1997



Mary Jane Rathbun Brownie Mary

Known for distributing cannabis brownies to AIDS patients she called her “kids”, Mary volunteered at San Francisco General Hospital during the 1980s and 1990s. At the peak of the crisis, she baked an estimated 600 brownies a day to help ease patients' suffering. Living in public housing near Haight-Ashbury, she charged only for ingredients. Despite multiple arrests, her compassion, along with Peron, helped pass Prop 215 in 1996, legalizing medical cannabis in California, the first state to allow dispensaries.

“If the narcs think I’m gonna stop baking brownies for my kids with AIDS, they can go fuck themselves in Macy’s window” San Francisco City Hall, 1992



Thank you.

