

Pot or Marijuana

by Ann Bogle

In college in Madison, near U.W., a non-Ivy-League school—unless you ask Sam Chauncey, Secretary of Yale, who placed it ahead of Princeton—I attended a block party on Mifflin Street. There was a stage for bands. The street was closed to traffic. The street was full of us, students. Hash brownies were for sale for fifty cents. Beer might have been available. How could beer not have been available? We were in Wisconsin. A front man for one of the bands (it was still daylight) opened black garbage bags full of marijuana joints and began to fling them to the crowd. My question—I was a shy, too-smart undergraduate, and no one would guess that I was too smart, since I was shy—who rolled all those joints? Thousands of joints were strewn to the Madisonians. That is a lot of joints. I didn't ask—who paid for the pot?

I attended from August 1980 when John Anderson ran for President as an Independent until August 1984 and stayed two years more to work as a trained bookkeeper for a veterinarian, Mike Kohn of the Petinary. Mike had to sue someone later to keep his business name as his own. He won. I got the job among a field of fifty candidates. He wanted college-educated at market rate, \$5 an hour, above minimum. Every six weeks or so, he and I would argue. I would argue. He would listen. He raised me twenty-five cents each time. I suppose that is a bad habit for me to have gotten into—to get pissed about rates and to fight to get a raise, but that is how I got raises, until I reached \$7.50 an hour. Working there, I was a girl octopus. I answered the phone, set appointments, greeted clients, checked in pets for surgery and vaccinations, wrote invoices, and spent the morning on yesterday's accounts receivable. I filed. I earned \$4,800 the first year. That is \$1,200 less than the average black woman earned in the U.S. I was in my desk mornings by 8 a.m., the fifty-one-week year. I had health insurance that rejected requisite abortion expenses, including pregnancy tests that resulted in termination. Pregnancy seemed required in Madison to result in

termination, and children were not anywhere. It was a gay-influence town and also VietNam. It was training for living underground. I learned animal medicine.

