



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on March 20, 2019

## Booker Slams Fellow Democrats for Making Light of Pot Use

Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.), one of multiple candidates seeking the Democratic Party presidential nomination, has launched an attack on fellow Democrats who have admitted to using marijuana, while at the same time having expressed no concern about pot users who face reduced job prospects or even jail time for such use.

Booker's ire was directed particularly at Senator Kamala Harris (D-Calif.), who actually laughed about her previous pot-smoking during a recent radio interview. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) also recently admitted to using pot in his younger days.



Campaigning in Davenport, Iowa, Booker told MSNBC that he was in favor of reforming drug laws generally, and marijuana laws specifically, but he added that Harris' making light of her own pot-smoking was not a laughing matter. "The privileged can break laws and not have to worry about it. There's no difference between blacks and whites for using marijuana, or even selling marijuana, but blacks are almost four times more likely to be convicted," Booker claimed.

"Now we have presidential candidates, senators [an obvious allusion to Harris and Sanders], bragging about their pot use while there are kids who can't get a job because they have a nonviolent offense for doing things that two of the last three presidents did."

One of those presidents would include former President Barack Obama, who even wrote of his experiences in his 1995 book *Dreams From My Father*, recalling that he had used both marijuana and cocaine ("maybe a little blow"). Yet, upon becoming president in 2009, Obama vigorously enforced federal drug laws against pot and other drugs.

Booker says he never smoked marijuana because of fears that he, as a black man, could expect no mercy from the justice system. Unfortunately, Booker made no mention of the deleterious effects that chronic pot use could have on a person. For example, the largest study ever done on the topic of daily marijuana use found that it increased the chances of psychotic disorders — in which a person could lose touch with reality — by five times.

But Booker's point, that fellow Democrat Senator Harris was guilty of making light of pot use, is still valid. While Harris enforced California's laws against pot use quite intensely when she was that state's attorney general, upon launching her presidential campaign she went on the radio and responded, "Half my family is from Jamaica, are you kidding me?" to a question about legalizing marijuana use.

"I have, and I did inhale," Harris laughed, in reference to the famous Bill Clinton remark that he had tried pot, but did not inhale. Obama, when he ran for president in 2008, in a probable dig at his principal Democrat primary opponent, and Bill Clinton's wife, Hillary, famously said, "When I was a kid,



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I inhaled. That was the point.”

Harris received swift criticism for her flippant remark, even from her own father, Donald Harris. “My dear departed grandmothers ... as well as my deceased parents, must be turning in their grave right now to see their family’s name, reputation, and proud Jamaican identity being connected, in any way, jokingly or not with the fraudulent stereotype of a pot-smoking joy seeker and in the pursuit of identity politics. Speaking for myself and my immediate Jamaican family, we wish to categorically disassociate ourselves from this travesty,” Harris’ father told the *Jamaican Global Online*.

Before Harris reversed her stance in 2018 and endorsed marijuana legalization, her 2010 senatorial campaign manager, Brian Brokaw, had said, “Spending two decades in courtrooms, Harris believes that drug-selling harms communities. Harris supports the legal use of medical marijuana but does not support anything beyond that.”

But, of course, times they are a changing, and it is not just Democrats who seem to flip-flop on this issue. Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich came out in 1996 in favor of imposing the death penalty for someone convicted of importing more than two ounces of certain illegal drugs — including marijuana, after having called for its legalization in the 1980s (for medical use). When Gingrich was in graduate school in the 1960s, he used marijuana himself. Like Obama, however, Gingrich appeared to blame the “times,” using the adolescent “everybody else was doing it” argument. (Obama said in defending his own pot use, “Teenage boys are frequently confused.”)

Gingrich told *New York* magazine, “That was a sign we were alive and in graduate school in that era.” Does this mean the many others of that era, who did not use pot, were not “alive?” Marilyn Quayle directly refuted this argument a few years earlier, at the 1992 Republican National Convention, when she said that not every boomer smoked pot, demonstrated against the government, and enlisted in the sexual revolution. Gingrich, Obama, and Harris all seem to use variations of the argument that something is acceptable if “everyone else” is doing it — but as Mrs. Quayle so well put it, not everyone else *was* using pot.

Bernie Sanders told the hosts of the Breakfast Club that he, too, is for the legalization of marijuana, and admitted to smoking it a “few times,” but that it “didn’t do a whole lot for me. My recollection is, I nearly coughed my brains out.” (There is an obvious joke one could make at this point about Sanders and his brains.)

Sadly, none of the above politicians took the position that marijuana is really a *state* issue under the U.S. Constitution, and the federal government should not be regulating substances in the first place.

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