

NEW YORK  
CITY BAR

COMMITTEE ON DRUGS AND THE LAW

**NEW YORK CITY'S MARIJUANA ARREST POLICY  
THIRTY YEARS AFTER DECRIMINALIZATION**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2008, 6:30 P.M.  
42 WEST 44<sup>TH</sup> STREET, NEW YORK NY 10036**

In 1977, New York State decriminalized possession of personal use amounts of marijuana. Nonetheless, researchers report that New York City is now the national leader in detaining individuals for possession of personal use amounts of marijuana.

Beginning with the advent of quality of life policing, the New York City Police Department dramatically increased the number of arrests for marijuana possession: from 1997 to 2006 the Department arrested 362,000 people for possessing marijuana; in 2006 alone it arrested 33,000 people for possessing marijuana. The Department also commonly holds marijuana possession arrestees in detention for up to 24 hours pending arraignment.

Published research indicates that the marijuana possession arrests are not in central business districts, and that the police primarily make the arrests in Black and Hispanic neighborhoods.

Join the Committee on Drugs and the Law for a discussion of the costs and benefits of New York City's marijuana possession arrest policy.

**MODERATOR**

**John H. McWhorter**  
Senior Fellow, The Manhattan Institute  
Columnist, New York Sun

**PANELISTS**

**John A. Eterno, Ph.D.**  
Chairperson and Graduate Program Director, Department of Criminal Justice, Molloy College  
Managing Editor, *Police Practice and Research*  
NYPD Captain (ret.)

**Bruce D. Johnson, Ph.D.**, Director, Institute for Special Populations Research,  
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**Harry G. Levine, Ph.D.**, Professor of Sociology, Queens College and the Graduate Center,  
City University of New York.

**Edward D. McCarthy, J.D.**  
Criminal Defense Division, Legal Aid Society of New York

**Deborah P. Small, J.D.**, Executive Director, Break the Chains

*Co-sponsored by the Corrections Committee*