

SWOSU Hosting Legalization of Marijuana Debate This Tuesday

02.10.2005

Bob Stutman and Steve Hager will debate the pros and cons of the legalization of marijuana this Tuesday, February 15, at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford.

The debate, which begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center, is part of the university's Panorama series. Admission is free, and the public is invited.

Taking to the front lines of the drug wars, Bob Stutman made a 25-year career as one of America's highest profile drug busters. A Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agent so visible, the Columbian Cartel had at one time targeted him for assassination.

Starting his law enforcement career as a street agent in Washington (DC) in 1965, he was quickly promoted to field supervisor, the youngest agent to ever attain that position. From there his career spanned to director of training in 1969 in Baltimore (MD) where his program became the model for the entire DEA. By 1971, Stutman headed up international training efforts, instructing foreign officers in investigations against drug trafficking. He was instrumental in setting up training programs in 45 countries.

Domestically, between 1976 and 1979, Stutman was the director of congressional affairs where he assisted in the drafting of legislation as it pertained to DEA jurisdiction. His duties occasioned Mr. Stutman to converse on drug policy with numerous dignitaries including former U.S. presidents, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Pope Paul VI.

In 1979, Stutman went back to street action and became Special Agent in charge of the DEA offices in the New England states, then onto the nation's largest office in New York in 1985.

Approximately 5,000 investigations were launched during Stutman's tenure, leading to more than 15,000 arrests. The office's conviction rate for these cases in federal and state courts exceeded 90%. During his tenure, the office was responsible for the seizure of more than 25 tons of cocaine, almost half of the total U.S. seizures of heroin, and the seizure of more than \$400,000,000 of drug traffickers' assets.

His numerous television appearances include interviews on 60 Minutes, Nightline, The MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour, 48 Hours, Firing Line, Good Morning America, The Today Show, The Phil Donahue Show and Face the Nation. His best-selling autobiography entitled Dead on Delivery was published by Warner Books and his extensive speaking tours have brought him before hundreds of audiences in over 70 countries.

Steve Hager was born in Urbana, Illinois. He founded his first underground newspaper while still in junior high school. Later in high school, Steve founded The Tin Whistle, an underground student-run newspaper that was distributed to four large high schools in central Illinois and banned in all of them. Briefly he went to Sweden to avoid the draft, then returned to the U.S. and managed to escape the Vietnam War, which he strongly opposed.

Steve earned a masters degree in journalism from the University of Illinois and came to New York City to find a job. He worked for a variety of newspapers and magazines including The New York Daily News and wrote two books-Hip Hop, the first history of rap, and Art After Midnight, a history of the East Village art movement. He also wrote one film script, Beat Street, that was produced by Harry Belafonte for Oeion Pictures.

Steve was hired by High Times Magazine over 15 years ago and became the editor-in-chief shortly thereafter. He created The Freedom Fighters, a national marijuana legalization group, and The Cannabis Cup, the “academy awards” of marijuana. Besides editing the magazine, Steve currently directs and edits all video content on hightimes.com. Steve’s main goal is establishing the counterculture as a legitimate minority group whose basic rights of freedom of religion and pursuit of happiness have been denied. His latest book is Adventures in the Counterculture: From Hip Hop to High Times.

For additional information about the debate, call the SWOSU Public Relations & Marketing Office at 580.774.3063.