

Patricia Crider

WRT 310

Research Paper

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The Lexicon of Youth at York County's Development Center

"You want the jawnt? I'll keep it a buck cause you're a sick oldhead, but I don't want no beef for being straight up, yo."

Introduction

Youth all over the world have made communication between themselves a bit of a mystery with the intention of keeping the adults "in the dark" when holding conversations. The use of slang has been popular for centuries and is always in constant change as new words are developed and words and phrases that have been "worn out" are dropped. There have been many attempts in the past to create a dictionary of in order to keep the adult population apprised of the ever changing lexicon, held in secrecy. This paper will attempt to remove the secretive nature of youth's language and make the lexicon understandable to the adults, thus improving the relationship between residents, staff, and family members at York County's Youth Development Center.

Before digging into the current slang of York County youth, a definition of slang is in order. Slang, according to Merriam-Webster's dictionary (M-WD) is defined as: "n.- words that are not considered part of the standard language and that are used very informally in speech especially by a particular group of people; an informal nonstandard vocabulary composed typically of coinages, arbitrarily changed words, and extravagant, forced or facetious figures of

speech” (np). The Urban Dictionary (UD) defines slang as the only reason it (the website) exists as it is a compilation of slang words “as defined by you since 1999” (np). It is reasonably the largest written example of slang words, currently--7,727,981 entries--and the definitions cover nearly every possible slangy use of a word. The Urban Dictionary is created by solely by online users. I used these two online reference sites as secondary sources to see if my primary source words had been previously noted.

Review of Literature

Slang has a bad name. Most people make assumptions about those that use it. “...slang is sloppy, vulgar, ugly and trivial. Its users are either uneducated individuals who don’t know any better, or educated ones who really should” (Coleman 1). In reality, this is not the case. What slang actually does is allow for a comfort zone in a person’s environment. In the case of youth, it has two meaningful uses to them. “First, slang helps them [youth] fit in with the group. The second is to exclude passers-by from their conversation” (Coleman 3). A youth removed from their home and thrust into an unfamiliar setting, such as a development center, will be uncomfortable with the new surroundings and faces. The desire to blend in will be great and an easy way to achieve that is to speak the lingo of the center. This lexicon can be a blend of old slang and newly “made-up” phrases and words unique to the location. “On occasion, slang can be offensive, because it singles out a particular group of people in an insulting or condescending way, or because it breaks taboos about permissible objects of reference in everyday speech” (Ayto vi). Those using this slang do not necessarily equate their words or phrases as offensive but instead as just another way to say something. “Slang doesn’t drive

other words from your head; it merely offers a range of alternatives that are more appropriate to a given context without having to think about it" (Coleman 18). Youth like to add color to their speech and find slang an easy way to do so that makes them feel like part of a clique where they are living and within that group an understanding is reached even if the stated sentence is nonsensical. It allows for the group to have a perception that their minds are all working on the same level while alienating the adults in their presence. Slang allows for saying things in a way where the youth will get away with words that would otherwise be considered an infraction of speech. "Many slang words are abusive, but many abusive words are not slang. Another group of words that are sometimes considered to be slang are swear words" (Coleman 20). There are no hard, fast rules as swear words or speaking abusively is not necessarily slang. For example, I can insult you by calling you a "jackass", which is not slang or a true swear word, or I could yell "fuck" if I drop a textbook on my toe, which is a swear word, but not considered slang in that context. Now if I described a physical action between two people in detail using the word "fuck" it would then possibly be offensive and would definitely be the use of slang.

"Slang words change in meaning and status, but they may also have varied meanings and statuses at any one time. This provides some explanation for the varied uses to which the word slang has been (and still is) put. It's often used either very loosely to mean 'not standard English' or more narrowly, 'any feature of language I don't like'" (Coleman 24). This explains the multiple meanings of words and phrases depending on the use of the word and the area or location of its use. Slang can have different meaning from one town to another in a state, from state to state, and to countries worldwide. "One of the commonest sources of slang is the figurative, extended, or narrowed use of Standard English terms. Often the difference between

slang and standard senses will be fairly small (Coleman 31). It is easy for youth to take a word and completely twist it around to have an opposite meaning from where it began in Standard English. Other examples may just take on the slightest change in meaning to give the word or phrase new life. This new life may be long-lasting as some slang words have endured for centuries while others are so fresh there is no written record of the meaning.

The short and long term time period for jargon is particularly true when referring to drug slang. "Slang terms in the drug subculture are constantly changing, as its ethnic, social, and demographic composition changes and as new illicit drugs roll in and roll out with the tides of fashion, including geographical variations" (Lingeman 1036). New drugs are constantly being created, in the streets, in labs hidden deep in the woods, and even in cute houses that offer no clue to the chemical compounds being mixed behind closed doors. With new creations, new words and phrases must be made so these compounds have names on the street to make the spread and sale of the drugs easy without ever calling them by their chemical names. The sheer number of slang words for drugs is book material in itself. "The pace of change in the usage of slang is curious in its own right" (Ayto vi) and when relating it to the underworld of drugs and crime the pace of change may never be fully developed.

Slang must be realized and recognized as an ever evolving language. "The genealogy of slang...often reveals a surprisingly tortuous and humorous or idiosyncratic development" (Ayto vii). This lexicon cannot be taken too seriously as it develops, finding a way into the speech of youth, offending adults or at least confusing them. It will reach a peak of use and most likely

fade out of existence over time. Like all good things, or not so good things, many slang words will come to an end or enter into standard usage.

Study Participants

To become better acquainted with the lexicon of youth, I made five trips to the York County Youth Development Center in York, PA, and spent time talking with the youth and staff at the center. The youth at the center range from age 10 to 20 but I spend the majority of my time speaking to the teenagers, ages 15 to 19 years old. My first visit the youth were a bit stand-offish so rather than push my research project on them I shot pool, played cards and ate snacks during their free time. By my second visit the curiosity of the notes I was scribbling in my composition book got the best of them and soon I had eager teens giving me terms and phrases faster than I could write. The youth loved the attention I was giving them in trying to understand their lingo and the fact that nothing they said seemed to faze me pleased them. The sentence at the beginning of this paper is a direct reference to their attitude in sharing information with me. They would give me the real information I was looking for because they thought I was cool even though I was old, but they didn't want to get in trouble for being honest. I assured them they could tell me anything and it would be confidential and they would not get in trouble with the staff for talking about or in slang. They were down for the task.

Methodology

My method for gathering data was simple: blend in. I sat with the youth during meal time, played games and watched them play kickball and ping pong. After awhile I just became part of the group and they spoke freely in my presence. As I mentioned, they developed an interest in the notes I was taking and soon asked to look through my notebook so they could compare what they believed the slang words meant against other youth and the staff members. Contradictions naturally arose leading to several definitions. Once the youth were on board and lost their concerns of “getting in trouble” for talking about what would usually be considered taboo subjects, their mouths ran a mile a minute. My study was IRB approved but I had no formal questionnaire or survey as I was learning the jargon first hand. It would have been impossible to prepare a paper survey in advance as I was unfamiliar with the terminology used in the center. I believe this worked to my advantage as the youth were excited to share their intimate knowledge of slangy words with me and in some cases, the youth learned from each other. As I gathered their lexicon I asked the youth and staff to put the words and phrases in sentences for me so I had a full understanding of the meaning in context. This was perhaps the most interesting and amusing portion of my study and I recorded some of their sentences in this paper.

Results & Discussion

To best present the results of my study with the youth and staff I have compiled their words and phrases into a dictionary-like arrangement. The definitions are often a combination of many youth and a few staff member’s contributions. I also have additional findings from books and online secondary sources to illustrate both the similarities and differences in

meanings of words and phrases over time. Similar definitions from secondary sources will be typed in bold. Note the Urban Dictionary (UD) does not list what part of speech the word is regarding noun, verb, adjective, etc. Not all of the youth's slang could be found in a current reference source which supports the theory of slang's ever changing life in the lexicon of youth. The discussion of this paper will have some examples and sentences that use the words and phrases making the meanings clearer and be typed in italics. If the example was given by someone specific I will note the source. Slang is meant to be confusing and misleading and this paper intends to remove that to assist in understanding what the youth are saying to or about each other, their family, friends, and adults. The amount of words and phrases I gathered was large so to make reading and comprehending easier, I broke them into seven categories: "sex & relationships", "family & friends", "crime", "drugs & addiction", "emotions & actions", "descriptive", and "things".

Sex & Relationships

Burnin'- n. having a sexually transmitted disease

1. **to have an STD** (UD np)

"That dude is burnin', no one will touch him!"

Chewy- n. oral sex performed on a male, a blow job

adj. something that must be crushed, ground or gnawed with teeth (M-WD np)

1. coke and weed combined. 2. Wookie sidekick of Hans Solo 3. **sucking a male's penis** (UD np)

"Hey baby, can I get the chewy?"

Chode- n. a short penis

1. **a penis that is wider than it is long** 2. The perineum (UD np)

Gunner- n. female who gives oral sex

- n. 1. a soldier who operate a large gun 2. one who hunts with a gun (M-WD np)
- 1. a person who is competitive, overly-ambitious and substantially exceeds minimum requirements 2. name for a medical student who will do anything to get ahead
- 3. nickname for fan of the 80's rock band Guns n' Roses 4. someone who operates a gun
- 5. a player, member or supporter of the North London football team Arsenal FC (UD np)

"She's popular with the guys as a gunner, a special kind of thot." L. Carpenter

Num nums- n. breasts

- 1. snack food 2. breast milk 3. something that is good 4. **boobs** (UD np)

Preemie- n. a guy who orgasms too fast

- n. a baby born before fully developed, premature baby (M-WD np)
- 1. a baby that was born prematurely 2. **short for premature ejaculation** (UD np)

Quicky- n. a fast sexual act, usually intercourse

- 1. **the act of intercourse in a short amount of time where the male receives the majority of the pleasure** (UD np)

"He wanted a quicky in the closet, but I was afraid of getting caught."

Smash- v. sexual intercourse, fucking

- n. 1. loose change (c. 1821) 2. an alcoholic drink, especially wine (c.1959) 3. a party especially one that is noisy or unrestrained (c.1963) (Ayto 225)
- n. 1. someone or something that is very successful or popular 2. the sound made when something hits a surface violently 3. A hard downward hit in tennis or other games
- 4. Utter collapse (M-WD np)
- 1. **the action/process of fucking someone good** 2. to take a shit 3. to play Super Smash Mario Brothers (UD np)

"I'd smash him every day!"

Thot- n. a slut, girl who has sex with a lot of guys

- 1. **a hoe, whore**, abbreviation for "that hoe over there" (UD np)

"That chick Paris Hilton is a thot."

Family & Friends

Biddy- n. girl (plural biddies)

n. mainly derogative 1. a woman (c.1785) (Ayto 16)

n. 1. a hired girl or cleaning woman 2. a hen or young chicken (M-WD np)

1. **a hot girl** (UD np)

"Look at those biddies in the corner talking shit!"

Bruhs- n. short for brothers used to describe or greet male friends

1. **short for brother** 2. another way to say bro 3. a person you are cool with coming from either a male or female (UD np)

Cuz- n. short for cousin used to describe friends, like family

1. gang term identifying the user as a Crip 2. a cousin, friend, brotha, honey/homie 3. a shorter way to say because (UD np)

Day one or uno nigga- n. indicates being friends for a long time

1. **a person who has been completely down to earth and friendly with you since you first met them** (UD np)

"He's my day one nigga, don't fuck with him or you'll answer to me."

Fam- n. family but can be friends (close)

1. n. abbreviation for familiar 2. **abbreviation for family** (M-WD np)

1. a word used to describe the people that you trust dearly and consider family (UD np)

Ghost- v. indicates past friendship or no longer wanting to see a person again.

1. n. the soul of a dead person thought of as living in an unseen world or as appearing to living people 2. a very small trace amount (M-WD np)

1. the discarnate soul of a deceased human still occupying the physical realm 2. **Avoid contact with someone until they get the picture** (UD np)

"He went ghost after my lock up."

Having his seed or Seeded- v. phrase indicating pregnancy

"She wasn't happy until he seeded her."

Side chick- n. girlfriend who is not the wife or wifey

1. **the other woman; also known as the mistress** (UD np)

"All cool dudes have side chicks."

Wifey- n. a boy's main girl, not a side chick

1. wife (M-WD np)
1. a woman that you treat right, respect and feel good having her as your girl, wife material (UD np)

Whipped- adj. being attached to a girl's side, being someone's bitch usually a girl's

1. adj. exhausted, tired out (c.1940) (Ayto 285)
1. v. hit with a whip or something like a whip 2. To move (something) to a different position or remove (something) from a place quickly and forcefully (M-WD np)
1. **being completely controlled by your girlfriend or boyfriend, in most cases a guy being controlled by his girlfriend** (UD np)

Crime

5-0- n. police

1. **police officers** or warning that the police are approaching (UD np)

Bisquit- n. gun

1. **any type of small gun** (UD np)

Burner- n. gun

1. n. part of a furnace, stove, etc. where the flame or heat is produced 2. A device that burns something 3. A device in a computer used to record information (W-WD np)
1. a throw away cell phone typically used by drug dealers that can't be wire-tapped 2. **a handgun** 3. a large piece of graffiti (UD np)

Gat- n. gun

1. **n. a revolver or pistol** (c.1904) (Ayto 80)

1. n. a natural or artificial channel or passage (c.1723) (M-WD np)
1. **gun shortened from Gattling gun to just gat** (UD np)

Hold him/her down- n. when friends and family visit during a person's lock up

"Now that he's in detention for six months he needs his family to hold him down."

Locked up- n. when a person is removed from home to a development center, detention or prison.

1. **when you are in jail or any place you cannot get out of** (UD np)

Opp- n. referring to those against you, not from your "hood" or your friends, the police

1. short for Other People's Pussy or Other People's Penis 2. **abbreviation for opposition and refers to haters or cops** (UD np)

Pig- n. police

1. **reference to police officers** (c.1800) (Coleman 15)
1. n. applied contemptuously to a person who is annoying, greedy, etc. (c.1546)
2. applied to a thing that is difficult (c.1925) 3. **a policeman** (c.1811) 4. any various types of vehicles (Ayto 166)
1. n. a young domesticated swine 2. a dirty, gluttonous, or repulsive person 3. crude casting of metal 4. an immoral woman 5. Disparaging- **police officer** (M-WD np)
1. a swine 2. **derogatory term for a police officer** 3. a person who eats excessively 4. a capitalist 5. the meat of a pig, pork 6. an insensitive male, a male chauvinist 7. a fat person (UD np)

Plug- v. shoot with a gun

1. n. a poor or worn-out horse, a nag (c.1860) 2. a hopeless or incompetent person, a bloke, a fellow (c.1848) 3. a book that sells badly (c.1889) 4. v. **to shoot a person** (c.1870) 5. to strike or hit, to punch (c.1875) 6. to copulate with a woman (c.1901) (Ayto 171)
1. n. a piece used to fill a hole 2. A flat compressed cake of tobacco 3. A small core or segment removed from a larger object 4. Something inferior 5. An artificial fishing lure 6. A male fitting for making an electrical connection 7. A favorable publicity notice 8. v. to stop, make tight or secure by inserting a plug 9. to fill a hole 9. **to shoot (someone) with a gun** (M-WD np)

1. source from which to score drugs, principally marijuana
2. someone who is useless
3. term for gauged jewelry
4. Word of mouth endorsement
5. **To shoot someone to death**
6. To fuck someone (UD np)

"He plugged his neighbor but the asshole didn't die."

Sending a kite- v. writing a letter to a person in lock up

"My mom sends a kite twice a week."

Tool or tooly- n. gun

1. the penis (c.1553) (Coleman 15)
1. n. the penis (c.1553) 2. **a weapon** (c.1938) 3. to go or drive in a casual manner (c.1862) 4. to play around, to behave aimlessly (c.1955) (Ayto 265)
1. n. a handheld device that aids in accomplishing a task 2. something used in performing an operation or necessary in the practice of a vocation 3. a means to an end. 4. (vulgar) penis 5. one that is used or manipulated by another (M-WD np)
1. one who lacks the mental capacity to know he is being used, a fool 2. a fake person 3. a **gun, pistol** (UD np) 4. someone who tries too hard to fit in

Drugs & Addiction

420, 4:20, 4/20, 4-20- n. code for time to get high on marijuana

1. was thought of as the time of day some people got together to smoke pot but now means **"let's go get high"** (UD np)

Acid- n. Lysergic acid diethylamide or LSD abbreviated

1. **LSD** (c.1965) (Coleman 89)
1. the hallucinogenic drug **LSD** (c.1966) (Ayto 1)
1. adj. sour, sharp, or biting taste 2. rich in silica 3. **LSD** (M-WD np)
1. the really strong drug, known as **LSD** 2. the stuff that burns your face off if you somehow manage to get it there during chemistry class.

Bath salts- Methylenedioxypyrovalerone or MDPV abbreviated, known as synthetic cocaine

1. A street name for designer drugs which resemble bath salts and can induce violent behavior, visions of paranoia, nudity (using bath salts can raise internal body temperature) (UD np)

Blunt- n. marijuana cigar

1. money (c.1703) (Coleman 158)
1. adj. having a thick edge or point, not sharp 2. saying or expressing something in a very direct way that may upset some people (M-WD np)
1. **cigar hollowed out and filled with marijuana**, can be smoked in public (somewhat)inconspicuously (UD np)

Bud- n. marijuana

1. mainly of the more potent flowering tops of the **marijuana plant** (Lingeman 1037)
1. n. a small lateral or terminal protuberance on the stem of a plant that may develop into a flower, leaf or shoot 2. something that is not yet mature or fully developed 3. A buddy (M-WD np)
1. **marijuana** (UD np)

Burnt- adj. high on drugs

1. when one smokes too much weed and is in a permanent state of mellowness (UD np)

China white- n. heroin

1. **heroin** (c.1970) (Lingeman 1038)

C.I.- n. short for cigarette

"Dude lemme get a C.I., I'm out."

Deemsters- n. Dimethyltryptamine or DMT abbreviated, a psychedelic drug

1. **Dimethyltryptamine** (DMT) is a powerful, visual psychedelic which produces short-acting effects when smoked (UD np)

Dope- n. drugs

1. opium, a black gum shaped into pellets and smoked in a pipe 2. **Drugs**- marijuana, heroin and other illicit drugs 3. intoxicating fumes of airplane fuel, glue 4. Coca-Cola (Lingeman 1040)
1. **any mixture of drug** (c.1872) (Coleman 185)

1. n. a stupid person (c.1851) 2. **a narcotic drug** (c.1889) 3. Information about a subject especially if it is not generally known (1901) 4. To administer a drug to (athletes) (c.1900) (Ayto 55)
1. n. **an illegal drug** 2. a stupid or annoying person 3. a cola drink (M-WD np)
1. cool, nice, awesome 2. **A drug** (UD np)

Dro- n. hydroponic grown marijuana

1. **Hydroponically grown marijuana**, i.e., "homegrown" Pot grown indoors in hydroponic chambers, which regulate light, humidity, and temperature, usually a higher, more pure quality of weed than that found elsewhere (UD np)

Drone- n. Methylenedioxypyrovalerone or MDPV abbreviated, a psychoactive drug

1. n. a stingless male bee 2. one who lives on the labors of others 3. an unmanned aircraft or ship guided by remote control (M-WD np)
1. someone who follows an ideology or some other form of idealization blindly and uncritically 2. **the drug Mephedrone** (UD np)

Dutch- n. marijuana cigar wrapper

1. n. British for a wife (c.1889) (Ayto 62)
1. adj. relating to Germanic languages 2. each person paying their own way (M-WD np)
1. a brand of cigar, Dutch Master, commonly used in rolling blunts 2. you and your date split the expense, or each pay for your own ticket 3. of or pertaining to the Netherlands 4. To get in trouble (UD np)

Ecstasy- n. methylenedioxymethamphetamine or psychedelic drug MDMA abbreviated, street name Molly

1. n. a state of great happiness 2. An **illegal drug** that produces a feeling of excitement and pleasure (M-WD np)
1. Methylenedioxy n. methylamphetamines a **psychedelic** amphetamine and was supposedly patented in 1913 by some German chemical company to be sold as an appetite suppressant, but they decided against marketing the diet pill and had nothing to do with it. It was banned federally in 1985. (UD np)

Feen or Fiend- v. wanting something badly –n. person who wants something badly such as a drug

1. term for narcotic and illicit drug users since the early 1900s; **drug user**, drug abuser, drug addict (Lingeman 1040)

1. n. an evil spirit, demon or devil 2. a cruel person 3. a person who is very enthusiastic about something (M-WD np)
1. **craving a certain substance, usually a drug** 2. person who is really weird or crazy 3. devil or someone evil (UD np)

Fried- adj. high on drugs

1. adj. drunk (1926) (Ayto 74)
1. adj. cooked in hot oil 2. unable to think clearly because you are tired (M-WD np)
1. word that describes the state of being after smoking marijuana 2. feeling experienced while under the influence of LSD (UD np)

Glass- n. methamphetamines

1. crystalline **methamphetamine** (Lingeman 1040)
1. n. a hard usually transparent material used for making windows and other products 2. A drinking container (M-WD np)
1. high purity methamphetamine (UD np)

Herb- n. marijuana

1. used to connote a benign natural substance- **marijuana** (Lingeman 1041)
1. n. a seed-producing annual, biennial or perennial that does not develop woody tissue but dies down at the end of the growing season 2. A plant or plant part valued for its medicinal, savory, or aromatic qualities 3. **marijuana** (M-WD np)
1. a stupid person 2. **weed** (UD np)

Joint- n. marijuana cigarette

1. paraphernalia for injecting narcotics—particularly the needle (c.1920s) 2. a **marijuana cigarette** (Lingeman 1042)
1. n. a place, a building 2. a place of meeting for people engaged in some illicit activity such as drinking or drug-taking (c.1821) 3. a stall, tent, etc. in a circus or fair (c.1927) 4. hypodermic equipment used by drug addicts (c.1935) 5. **a marijuana cigarette** (c.1952) 6. prison (c.1953) (Ayto 115-16)
1. a place of resort, especially an opium den or speakeasy (c.1821) 2. A marijuana cigarette (c.1952) 3. Hypodermic equipment (c.1935) (Coleman 77,88)
1. n. a point where two bones meet in the body 2. a place where two things are joined 3. a particular place 4. prison 5. **a marijuana cigarette** (M-WD np)

1. **a rolled marijuana cigarette** 2. where two separate pieces of material are bonded together 3. portions of the anatomy that can move 4. building or other place 5. prison or jail 6. a rap song

K²- n. synthetic marijuana

1. n. a thousand, used especially with reference to salaries offered in job advertisements (Ayto 118)
1. drug in the united states that looks a lot like potpourri but gives out effects very similar to marijuana, sometimes called roses. It is actually **synthesized THC** but does not come up on a drug test (UD np)

Miley- n. cocaine (reference to Miley Cyrus, the singer)

"You got Miley for tonight? I'm ready to fly."

Moon rock- n. methylenedioxymethamphetamine or MDMA abbreviated, also called Molly

1. heroin mixed with crack for smoking (Lingeman 1043)
1. Crystals of pure, or very nearly pure, MDMA (UD np)

Noddin' off- v. high on heroin

1. A term used to describe the **high of heroin**, often mistaken as being very tired, but it is more like "nodding" in and out of semi-consciousness. (UD np)

'Ports- n. abbreviation for Newport 100 cigarettes

1. Short for Newport, which is a brand of cigarette (UD np)

Rig- n. needle

1. n. the penis (c.1964) (Ayto 191)
1. v. to fit out (as a ship) with rigging 2. clothe or dress 3. To furnish with special gear 4. to put in condition or position for use —n. 5. **equipment or machinery that is for a particular purpose** 6. A large truck that is attached to a trailer 7. The way the sails and masts are arranged on a ship or boat (M-WD np)
1. **needle/syringe used for shooting up veins** 2. Attractive male or female (UD np)

Speed- n. amphetamines

1. **amphetamines** 2. caffeine pills 3. diet pills (Lingeman 1043)

1. **amphetamine** (c.1967) (Coleman 89)
1. n. an **amphetamine drug** often taken intravenously (c.1967) (Ayto 234)
1. n. the rate at which something or someone moves or travels 2. The quality of being quick 3. The sensitivity of a photographic film, plate, or paper expressed numerically 4. A transmission gear in vehicles 5. Someone or something that appeals to one's taste 6. **A stimulant drug especially an amphetamine** (M-W np)
1. an **amphetamine, a stimulating drug** that triggers the brain's reward system giving the user feelings of pleasure (UD np)

Spice- n. synthetic marijuana

1. n. any of various aromatic vegetable products (as pepper or nutmeg) used to season or flavor foods 2. Something that adds interest or excitement (M-WD np)
2. known as "**synthetic marijuana**", "legal/fake weed", "K2" etc., is a drug created by spraying herbs with synthetic chemicals that, when consumed, allegedly mimic the effects of cannabis. It's effects are much stronger than those of natural marijuana, and although not thoroughly researched, are known to be dangerous (UD np)

Trippin' balls- v. high on psychedelics

1. **being under the influence** of a substance that is extremely altering your mental and/or spiritual state (UD np)

"We'll be trippin' balls tonight playing Grand Theft Auto, you wanna join?"

Unk- n. person addicted to crack, crackhead

1. used to refer to **crackheads** in the D.C. metro area (UD np)

White girl or lady- n. cocaine

1. [from the color] **cocaine** (Lingeman 1043)
1. term for **cocaine** (UD np)

Yack- n. cocaine

1. to chatter inconsequentially (c.1949) 2. a watch (c.1789) (Coleman 45, 139)
1. to throw up 2. **cocaine** 3. to talk continuously (UD np)

Yayo- n. cocaine

1. the misspelled word llello 2. **cocaine**

Emotions & Actions

Beef- n. having a problem with someone, Beefin'- v. angry or physical confrontation with another person

1. n. massive, bulky, brawny (c.1867) 2. -v. **A protest or complaint** (c.1899) 3. To strengthen, add vigor, power or importance (c.1941) (Ayto 14)
1. n. to put muscle into (c.1860) 2. to slaughter an animal for beef (c.1869) 3. **to complain** (c.1865) 4. -v. to inform against a criminal (c.1899) (Coleman 33, 177)
1. n. meat from a cow 2. -v. to increase or add substance, strength, or power 3. **to complain** (M-WD np)
1. **to have a grudge with another person** 2. **to fight another person** (UD np)

"Lori and Pattie are beefin'. Or Lori and Pattie got beef." -L. Carpenter

Good looks- v. watching out for someone

1. abbreviated for good looking out 2. casual way of saying thank you 3. **to let someone know you appreciate their effort to help you out** (UD np)

Heated- adj. angry, about to fight

1. adj. including a system that provides heat 2. marked by anger or passion (M-W np)
1. Warm. To be raised in temperature 2. Angry, annoyed, pissed off, frustrate 3. Intense (UD np)

Mad- adj. very, extra, too much so, extreme

1. n. madness, fury, anger (c.1834) (Ayto 131)
1. approval (c.1941) (Coleman 64)
1. disordered in mind 2. carried away by intense anger 3. carried away by enthusiasm or desire 4. affected with rabies (M-WD np)
1. **a lot, really, extremely** (UD np)

No smoke or Don't want no smoke- n. not wanting problems with someone, no beefs

1. **No beef or conflict**; to ask for peace or announcing surrender (UD np)

"I don't want no smoke with Pattie, she might put the hurt on me." -L. Carpenter

On blast- pp. to call someone's actions out in the open

1. **to embarrass someone or to make someone look stupid** (UD np)

Squashed it- v. forgiving someone, letting beefs go

Straight up- n. the act of being real, honest, forward

1. without ice 2. **To be honest** (UD np)

Turn up- v. to party, get drunk, create a ruckus, act out

1. **getting loose, being wild** 2. Engaging in sexual activity 3. **Consuming large amounts of alcohol or drugs** (UD np)

Turned down- n. depressed

Yo- interj. multiple uses- interrupter, to get someone's attention, expressed excitement, almost always used at the beginning or end of a sentence.

1. a contraction of "you're" 2. an informal address or title to one whose name is not known to another; can be used as an interrogative address 3. a **declarative or imperative exclamation**, whether alone or within a sentence

Descriptive

Bad- adj. sexy, pretty, good

1. n. 1. enthusiastic approval 2. a mistake or fault (c.1986) (Coleman 31, 33)
1. adj. 1. low or poor quality 2. Not correct or proper 3. not pleasant, pleasing or enjoyable (14th century) (M-WD np)
1. **a sexy woman** 2. taking blame for your actions 3. a lot, much 4. **good** 5. **pretty, attractive** (UD np)

Cop that- v. to get something

1. British to obtain, to steal, to buy (c.1700) 2. to get or purchase illicit drugs (c.1890) (Lingeman 1039)
1. **about to get something**; possess something (UD np)

Craycray- adj. crazy

1. **really crazy** (UD np)

"Did you watch Jerry Springer? Those chicks are craycray!"

Dime- n. pretty girl

1. so plentiful as to be worthless (c.1930) (Ayto 51)

1. n. a coin of the US worth 1/10 of a dollar 2. a petty sum of money 3. packet containing 10 dollars worth of illicit drug (M-WD np)
2. 10 cents in American coin 2. a very **attractive person**, a perfect “10” 3. \$10 of any drug, short for dime bag. (UD np)

Dry- adj. dumb, boring

1. adj. having no or very little water or liquid 2. No longer wet 3. Having no or little rain 4. lacking freshness 5. marked by the absence of alcoholic beverages 6. **lacking embellishment** 7. marked by matter-of-fact, ironic or terse in manner of expression 8. lacking smooth sound qualities (M-WD np)
1. when drugs are hard to get in an area 2. **something plain or boring**

“His Facebook page is dry.” –L Carpenter

For real for real- adj. used twice to exaggerate a point, abbreviated frfr, serious

1. **used to imply complete seriousness** (UD np)

“I am soooo tired ..for real for real.” –L. Carpenter

Fraud- n. someone who doesn’t do what they say, a fake person

1. n. the crime of using dishonest methods to take something valuable from another person 2. **a person who pretends to be what he or she is not to trick people** 3. a copy of something used to trick people (M-WD np)
2. **imposter, fake** 2. messed up, lame, stupid (UD np)

Hype- n. extreme emotion, excitement, exaggeration

1. n. a drug addict (c.1924) 2. a hypodermic needle or injection (c.1929) 3. To stimulate (as if) by an injection of drugs (c.1938) 4. an instance of short-changing by deception (c.1926) 5. cheating, a trick (c.1962) 6. extravagant public promotion (c.1968) (Ayto 107)
1. a drug user 2. hypodermic needle (Coleman 84)
1. a narcotics addict 2.hypodermic shortened (c.1924) 3. **To stimulate, enliven, increase** (M-WD np)
1. a clever market strategy 2. a fad 3. **when someone gets excited about something** 4. a fun rowdy crowd 5. a drug users hypodermic needle or syringe (UD np)

Hurt- adj. an ugly person

1. v. to cause pain or injury 2. to be a source or cause of pain 3. to feel physical pain (M-WD np)
1. **a person, object, place, etc. that is most likely ugly or extremely unattractive** (UD np)

In a minute- pp. a long time

1. **When you haven't done something in a long time** (UD np)

"Pattie! I haven't seen you in a minute!" –L. Carpenter

It's the money- n. indicates the best of something

"We're going to Old Country Buffet? Awesome, it's the money, yo!"

Keep it 100 or Keep it a buck- n. phrase meaning to tell the truth, to be honest

1. **to keep yourself real and true, to be honest and stick to the way you are, no matter what anyone else thinks** (UD np)

Life of pie- n. a shitty life

"Things were good, and then I came here for the life of pie."

NPS- adj. abbreviation for No Pussy Shit meaning no immaturity or being a wussy (whimp pussy)

"We're playing tackle football, NPS."

Mad joe- n. feeling comfortable, hyper or really happy

"Did you see all her Facebook status updates? She is mad joe." –L. Carpenter

Oldhead- n. someone older

1. Philadelphia term for **someone who is older than you** (UD np)

On the low- n. phrase meaning to tell something in confidence, keep something secret

1. **to keep something a secret, don't tell no one** (UD np)

Poppin'- adj. compliment or comment on anything

1. to take drugs in the form of a pill 2. a greeting commonly preceded by "what's" 3. to be shooting groups of two or more people 4. **hot, in style, popular, cool** 5. A dance style (UD np)

"Your shirt is poppin' where'd u cop that from?" –L. Carpenter

RNS- n. abbreviation for Real Nigga Shit meaning the truth or the stated obvious

"He was plugged six times in the alley and that's the RNS."

Rollin'- v. laughing hard

"Don't get me rollin', I might puke."

Shook- n. scared

1. **scared**, afraid 2. hesitant 3. embarrassed (UD np)

Shot the fuck out- v. phrase meaning talking crazy

"That bitch is shot the fuck out."

Smooth- adj. cute, dressed up

1. used when someone does something of skill and makes it look easy 2. Used in sarcastic form when someone messed something up 3. Extremely cool 4. **nice looking** 5. An expression of pleasure 6. An iron (UD np)

"Did you see him in street clothes? He is smooth."

Thrown off- adj. a special kind of crazy, mentally disturbed

"She can't stay at the center cause she is thrown off."

Waz gud- v. questioning how someone is doing

Whack, wack or whacked- adj. crazy, dumb, stupid, not good –v. to kill someone

1. to adulterate heroin, cocaine, or other drugs. 2. an adulterant 3. phencyclidine (PCP). 4. **to kill** (Lingeman 1042)

Young boy, bol or bull- n. referring to a male younger or smaller in size

1. Philadelphia term to **describe a male younger than you** (UD np)

Things

Barbie- n. girl with surgically altered breasts, girl with a boob job

1. n. a barbecue (c.1976) (Ayto 12)
1. a plastic doll 2. **a plastic whore** (UD np)

Bread- n. money

1. n. **money** (c.1939) (Ayto 26)
1. **money** (c.1935) (Coleman 85)
1. n. a usually baked and leaved food made of a mixture whose basic constituent is flour or meal 2. food or sustenance 3. livelihood 4. **money** (M-WD np)
1. cash, **money** (UD np)

Bread crumbs- n. change, coins

"I'm down to just bread crumbs, can you spot me for lunch?"

Bricks- n. the streets, city life –adj. cold

1. a pound or kilogram of any drug 2. construction material 3. **the projects, ghetto** 4. **very cold** (UD np)

Cake- n. a big butt

1. n. to carry off the honors, rank first, often used ironically or as an expression of surprise (Ayto 32)
1. a sweet baked food 2. a flattened round mass of food that is baked or fried 3. **a block of compacted or congealed matter** 4. Something done easily (M-WD np)
1. **A female with a large ass** (UD np)

Kick(s)- n. sneakers, shoes

1. n. the fashion, newest style (c.1700) 2. A sixpence (outdated) (c.1700) 3. a pocket (c.1851) 4. **shoes** (c.1904) 5. an interest, enthusiasm, fad (c.1946) (Ayto 118)
1. v. to strike out with the foot or feet 2. to show opposition 3. to function with vitality and energy 4. the recoil of a firearm 5. to go from one place to another 6. to free oneself of 7. To have fun (M-WD np)
1. **shoes** 2. doing something fun 3. to use your foot to attack 4. to spend time with someone 5. to break or cease a said habit or tendency (UD np)

Jawnt- n. used to refer to anything

1. something 2. **Use to refer to anything you want** (UD np)

Sticks- n. the country

1. **in the boonies, in the middle of nowhere** 2. Video game controllers (UD np)

Stolo- n. stolen car

1. **stolen car** (UD np)

Whip- n. car

1. v. to defeat, overcome, to surpass (c.1571) 2. To steal (British c. 1859) (Ayto 284)
1. v. to hit with a whip or with something like a whip 2. To move to a different position or remove from a place quickly and forcefully (M-WD np)
1. **a car**, it has been said that it was used a long time ago when a whip would be used to steer the horse-drawn carriages. It is used in hip-hop fashion, and it has come represent any car not necessarily a really nice car (UD np)

Whip game- n. ability to drive a car

1. **how good you can drive** (UD np)

"He got great whip game from playing Extreme Racer 3."

Overall most of the slang words the youth used I was able to locate in another reference source with the exception of just a few. This didn't surprise me as most of the words did seem somewhat familiar though often they had meanings different than what I first expected. I believe it would be more surprising to the youth to learn what they believe is their "new, hot words and phrases" have actually been around for sometimes centuries. It was fascinating to find that some words were the opposite of their original meaning when used as slang. Also fascinating was the Merriam-Webster dictionary often listed the slang definition of words, something I had not expected. The most surprising aspect of this entire research paper was the youth's response when I allowed them to look through my notes prior to the actual writing of the paper. They would page through it, sometimes laugh or shake their head, and then look at

me and say, “I know all those words and I feel dumber after reading them. I don’t know why I talk like that.” Perhaps the gathering of all their slang into one notebook opened their eyes to just how ridiculous they sound when trying to “fit in” with the other youth at the center but having the ability to code switch (in this case, change from slang to proper English) is an important life skill that should not make them feel bad.

Conclusion

Just as Coleman noted, “Slang doesn’t drive other words from your head; it merely offers a range of alternatives that are more appropriate to a given context without having to think about it” and this language of the youth gives them more ways to say things among themselves. It’s clear they don’t think deeply about it because if they did, they would most likely stop talking in such a manner. I did not find the youth to be offensive or rude while I visited, taking in their speech and chatting with them for further explanation. Their use of slang is a bond that helps them fit in during a difficult time of their life and in my opinion does not automatically label them as delinquents. I can’t say that all the youth will leave the center and become upstanding citizens who speak proper English but there were some who recognize slang for what it is, a colorful additive to their speech that often has no genuine meaning out of context. To them it doesn’t matter, because their focus is in the here and now and their goal is to fit in until it is time to leave. Slang doesn’t hurt and it most certainly can help them survive a lock up by keeping it 100, leaning on their bruhs, and not being shook.

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