Legalization Of Drugs: Against Essay, Research Paper

Legalization of Drugs: Against

Everyone agrees that something must be done about the tremendous physical

and emotional health problems that drug abuse causes. Concern about the abuse

of drugs is so widespread that recent polls indicate it to be one of the most

serious problems in today’s world, threatening the security and freedom of whole

nations. Politicians, health experts and much of the general public feel that no

issue is more important than drug abuse. America’s other pressing social

problems- disease, poverty, child abuse and neglect, and corruption- often have

a common element; that is drug abuse. The use of illegal drugs such as cocaine,

crack, heroin and marijuana cause extensive harm to the body and brain. Yet,

even after knowing this many people want illegal drugs to be legalized in every

aspect. The last thing we need is a policy that makes widely available

substances that impair memory, concentration and attention span; why in God’s

name foster the uses of drugs that make you stupid? The campaign for drug

legalization is morally disgusting.The number of people who are addicted to

illegal drugs or are users of these drugs is quite shocking. Drug abuse is

clearly an injurious and sometimes fatal problem. The leaders of the

international economic summit in Paris in July 1989 concluded that the

devastating proportions of the drug problem calls for decisive action. On

September 5, 1989, President Bush called upon the United States to join in an

all-out fight against drugs. The United States Congress reports an estimated 25

to 30 million addicts of illegal drugs worldwide. Not all users are addicts, but

some of the 26 million regular users of illegal drugs in the United States are

addicted. Reports of child abuse to New York social services tripled between

1986 and 1988 and most of the cases involved drug abuse. Approximately 35

percent of the inmates of state prison were under the influence of illegal drugs

at the time they committed the crimes for which they are incarcerated. In some

parts of the country, that percentage is as high as 75 to 80! Another fact that

hits people hard is that out-right deaths from illegal drugs have quadrupled in

the last ten years! The proportion of 19 to 22 year olds who were at risk from

using illegal drugs rose from 44 percent in 1980 to 69 percent in 1987. Among

17-18 year olds the shift over the same interval was from 50 percent to 74

percent (Williams 226)! The abuse of illegal drugs is very threatening to

America’s future. These drugs are the cause of many problems and crimes. Among

these many drug users exist some people who continue to resist drugs and have

been called the real heroes of the drug war (Hyde, 372). Although, drug abuse is

a serious and threatening problem today, it can be brought under control with

acceptable means.

The use of illegal drugs such as cocaine, crack, heroin and marijuana have

been proved to cause unbelievable damage and harm to the body and brain. As well

as we know, AIDS is a deadly disease which people are very frightened of today.

When parents bring a child into this world the main concern is that the child

be healthy. It is an impossible deed for a drug addict female to give birth to a

healthy child. Babies who are born with the AIDS virus should thank their

mothers who were drug addicts and brought them into this world to pay for their

own mistakes! According to Patrick Emmet, author of Drugs in America, when

cocaine is smoked, it is absorbed into the lungs and carried to the brain in

about 8 seconds (152). It depresses the breathing center in the brain and

increases the risk of death from heart failure or overdose. Doctors believe that

when a pregnant woman uses crack, the drug can trigger spasms in the blood

vessels of the fetus, restricting the supply of oxygen and nutrients, in turn

causing problems in development. When a pregnant woman takes large doses of

cocaine, the placenta may tear loose, killing the fetus and putting the mother’s

life in danger. Even one use of crack can cause serious damage to fetus or to a

breast-fed baby. Heroin is another illegal drug that causes great harm and can

be life-taking too. When heroin is used it reaches the brain via the bloodstream

and is transformed into the depressant morphine. Heroin produces feelings of

euphoria, mental confusion and drowsiness. In addiction to many other effects on

the body, it depresses respiratory function (168). Thousands of heroin addicts

die from overdoses each year. Heroin users are also at great risk of getting

AIDS from the used of unclean needles. An estimated 60 percent of heroin addicts

in New York City carry the virus, and needle sharing among addicts represents a

major potential route for the spreading of the AIDS virus. According to a

National Research Council report in 1989, nearly 70 percent of the heterosexual

adults infected with the AIDS virus got the virus through an intravenous

connection. The U.S. Public Health service predicted about a threefold increase

in the cumulative total of reported cases of AIDS among addicts between 1989 and

1991. When marijuana is smoked, about two thousand separate chemicals are

produced, and many of the chemicals do not readily pass through the body. Some

are stored in fatty tissues of the brain, lungs, and reproductive organs, where

they remain for a long time. In a book titled, Drug Policy and Intellectuals,

Stephen Thomas points out that one of the areas of great concern about the

effect of smoking marijuana is the changes in the reproductive system (156).

Heavy marijuana smoking reduces the level of testosterone, the principal male

hormone. It may delay sexual maturation in teenage boys and may possible reduce

sperm counts. The use of marijuana also has negative effects on the menstrual

cycle of females. Marijuana use during pregnancy increases the risk of death of

the fetus and of abnormal offspring. Some other effects of marijuana are

sedation, depression, hormone changes and brain damage. It is certain that the

smoking of marijuana leads to as much as a 50 percent short-term increase in

heart rate and a possible decrease in blood supply to the heart. It is crystal

clear that the use of these illegal drugs causes permanent and serious damage to

the body, brain and to innocent babies. Sometimes this deadly “sickness” stops

at distorting bodies and brains, but often goes to snatch the lives of their

users (Thomas 189).

Richard Williams explains in his book, Illegalizing Drugs, that the use of

illicit drugs causes the user to engage in violent acts. The need and craving of

these drugs forces the user to commit crimes such as robbery or murder. They

hurt themselves and innocent people usually become victims of such cases. These

drugs are addictive which may cause brain damage in the habitual user, and may

cause the user to engage in violence or self-destructive acts. Dealers arm

themselves with automatic weapons to protect themselves (124). Even the drug

abusers of the sixties had a slogan, Speed Kills. Young drug dealers have a good

supply of guns, and they do not hesitate to use them. The streets of many inner

cities are bloody battlegrounds where crack wars are fought. Bathrooms in

shelters for the homeless are transformed into part-time crack houses. Thomas

writes that crack pipes are hidden under mattresses next to the beds of people

who are only down on their luck (125). Last year one residential area in New

York, more than one hundred people were killed and most deaths were drug related.

The use of illicit drugs alters the brain’s thinking, acting and responding

capacity, which results in violent and self-destructing acts. Innocent people

are injured or killed simply in order to continue the distribution and the use

of these isgusting and correctly illegal drugs (78).

After being altered with the effects of the use of illegal drugs on bodies,

brains, societies and nations, some people are brave enough to come forward and

campaign for the legalization of illicit drugs will reduce the number of addicts

and users, crime and deaths (Hyde 29). I disagree with this theory because that

is exactly what it is- a theory. Sure, we don’t know what’s going to happen in

the future, but we can use our statistics and be somewhat logical. If illegal

drugs were to be legalized, millions of Americans were to be enticed into

addiction by legalization. The pushers would cut prices, making more money than

ever from the ever-growing mass market. They would immediately increase the

potency and variety beyond anything available at any government-approved

narcotics counter. Crime would increase if these drugs were legalized. Crack

produces paranoid violence. More permissiveness equals more use equals more

violence. Alcohol which is now legal, but was once illegal is proof that after

legalizing it more alcohol-related crimes and car accidents have occurred.

Millions of people, including and increasing number of teenagers, are dependent

on what has been called the most dangerous drug on earth: alcohol. Dr. Stephen

Cohen writes in his book, The Alcoholism Problem, “The harm that comes from

Drug X (alcohol) is much greater than the harm from heroin from all respects”

(151). Why should we believe that the legalization of illegal drugs will reduce

the number of users of these drugs? Actually, it’s quite logical these drugs

would be easily available if legalized, and the number of users will increase

because there won’t be any breaking of laws that will end imprisonment. Illegal

drugs should be kept illegal to secure the lives of those who are not addicts.

The drug problem in our nation today is overwhelming, but can be controlled

by numerous strategies. Reducing the supply of foreign that are causing serious

problems in the Unites States is an important part on the war on drugs. Another

way the drug problem could be controlled is if drug dealers were punished more

severely. Whipping posts, the death penalty, and long jail sentences might be a

start. The following suggestions were made at a meeting at a meeting of the

Senate Committee Drugs and Crime held on April 4, 1989, to reduce the drug

problem: put more police on the streets, both to arrest drug dealers and to give

people a visible sense of hope; increase the number of prosecutors so that

arrests are meaningful: increase prison capacity, perhaps by using army bases

that are being phased out; increase drug education in schools; help the coast

guard interdiction; and learn more about drugs from health authorities. No

single strategy will win this war, but approach is aimed at preventing drug

abuse, treating and rehabilitating a