Legalize Marijuana Essay, Research Paper

Marijuana?Legalize it?

One question that has haunted Americans for a long time is ?Should the use of marijuana be legalized?? Some say, ?Yes?, while others say, ?No?. Owning marijuana was made a criminal offence in 1937 when Congress passed the Marijuana Tax Act. Even with this new law, people continued to use the drug. Here we are years later, still without a satisfactory answer to the question. There are many reasons that marijuana should be made legal, but there are also reasons that it should not. Through out this essay, I am going to compare and contrast some of the pros and cons of the legalizing of marijuana.

Many people think that the legalization of cannabis would lead to health problems, such as, the use of a harsher drug and to psychological and personality problems that can come from using marijuana. These individuals feel that the negatives of marijuana use far outweigh the positives, and feel that the use of marijuana should remain illegal. To some people marijuana is considered a ?gateway? drug. Legalizing marijuana may lead to the use of much more harsh drugs. I know someone who is currently sitting in a prison on multiple drug charges. He is sentenced to eight years in a minimum-security prison. When my friends and I think back about how his life got so messed up, it?s weird to think that it started out as simple as smoking pot. Once someone experiences a ?high?, they may want to experience it again, and when pot does not do the trick anymore, they may turn to stronger drugs. Many people out there have no idea what it is like to be ?high? so to speak. If marijuana were legalized, those people would try the drug, like it, and then perhaps move on to much more damaging drugs.

Legalizing marijuana could very well cause Americans to suffer from psychological and personality problems. THC is the active chemical in marijuana that causes the user to feel ?high?. This chemical is most destructive to the user?s body and mind. The THC from smoking one marijuana cigarette can accumulate in the user?s body fat and stay there for weeks at a time. Smoking marijuana has been known to cause a lack of motivation, ambition, and creativity. Many users? lose interest in life and become very lazy. People who use marijuana often find it very difficult to concentrate on anything more challenging than television. Marijuana causes a decreased attention span and feelings of isolation. High school and college students who are regular users of marijuana find themselves to be struggling with inner turmoil; feeling depressed, scared, and often suffers from very low self-esteem. To a frequent user, smoking pot leads to judgment, logical thinking, and memory to become impaired. Smoking marijuana is proven to have many negative psychological and personality effects on those who choose to smoke it.

Marijuana also has many medical benefits. Marijuana has undergone analysis for its use as a medicine and the results have shown improvements in the patients who were treated with this drug. It became popular as a medicine in the United States during the mid-nineteenth century. Then, marijuana was primarily used to treat general headaches, migraine headaches, depression, muscular tension, insomnia, and menstrual cramps. Today, marijuana has proven to be beneficial in the treatment of many more medical conditions including glaucoma, cancer, and asthma.

Right now, the use of marijuana for medical purposes is only legal in California. In 1996, voters in California approved a law that eases regulations on medical marijuana. The federal government cannot take action against California doctors who recommend marijuana to their patients. Supposedly, many people have benefited greatly from this bend in the rules.

Legalizing the use of marijuana could also have many economical benefits. The government seems to be always looking for new ways to tax people. Instead of spending all the money they spend on arresting people in possession of marijuana, the Government should put it on a shelf at the store and tax it like any other merchandise. Of course, just like acohol and cigerrets, there should be restrictions on who is allowed to purchase it, such as age. The legalization of cannabis would allow the United States to reduce government spending on enforcing drug laws and would allow the United States to enjoy new tax revenue from legal drug production and sales.

I believe that by legalizing marijuana, the crime rate might decrease in the United States. The streets of America might automatically become much better and safer places. The drug dealers would possibly be put out of business, and the shootouts over drug related crimes would likely end. Instead of drug addicts shoplifting, breaking into homes, and stealing from others to pay outrageous prices for marijuana from dealers, people who wanted to use marijuana could support their habit with honest jobs. Those who want marijuana legalized feel that they are not endorsing drug use, but are recognizing the rights of Americans to make their own choices.

On the other hand, if marijuana became legal, people really may take advantage of the situation. Since marijuana has so many bad side effects, it may be more trouble than it is worth. Take alcohol as an example. So many families today have been torn apart due to the abuse of alchohol. There are husbands and wives that spend all of their money on alcohol then end up having no money to pay the bills. Marijuana could have very much of the same effect. Not everyone has the mental capability to deal with drugs. The bad thing is, there is not too many ways of knowing if you do or do not have the mental stability until it?s way too late.

Seeing both sides of the issue, I came to the conclusion that marijuana should be legalized in order to help people suffering from terminal diseases such as AIDS, Cancer and Glaucoma. It should be the people?s choice to decide if the usage of marijuana is right for them. This is America; we are supposed to be a free country, so why can?t we choose our own medicine? Prohibition of marijuana over the past decades has not diminished the demand of the drug in the United States. I believe that marijuana is here to stay in our society and is only going through the stages that alcohol had during the prohibition era.

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