АМЕРИКАНСКИ СТУДИИ: ИЛЕГАЛНИТЕ ДРОГИ МЕЃУ АМЕРИКАНСКАТА МЛАДИНА

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Апстракт: Ако „иднината се купува со сегашноста“ (Самуил Џонсон), тогаш цената која сега ја плаќаат американските генерации на зависници од дрога е очигледно преголема во однос на иднината во која е вложена нивната хипотека од дрога. Денешната младина во однос на своите родители, а посебно на предците, има многу повеќе експериментирано со дрога и алкохол, додека негативното влијание што овие активности ќе го имаат врз нејзиното образование е тешко замисливо. Со денешните генерации на школска и универзитетска возраст кои се под директен напад од нарко-дилерите, нарко бизнисот и нарко картелите во кои се вклучени, се јавува прашањето: каква општествена вредност носи легализирањето на супстанцата за која статистиката докажува дека е погубна по националното здравје, без разлика на возраст, пол, етничка или класна припадност. Кое би било севкупното влијание на легализираната илегална дрога врз општеството, националната продуктивност, образовниот сектор, здравствената индустрија, врз спортскиот и атлетскиот живот како и врз духовното и морално самочувство, ако дрогата биде легализирана во име на слободата и човековите права, иако со тоа цели генерации ќе станат онеспособени, без здрава улога во културата и цивилизацијата?! Овој научен труд се занимава со кус преглед посебно на постари статистики со цел новите податоци да станат поистакнато очигледни во споредбената анализа на академско ниво и на ниво на медиумска информираност за темата. Клучни зборови: Американска нарко-култура, социјална патологија, „дизајнирани дроги“, халуциногена еуфорија, оштетување на мозокот, самоубиство, рак, ниво на зависност, оштетена меморија, концентрација, краткорочно внимание.

AMERICAN STUDIES: ILLEGAL DRUGS AMONG YOUNG AMERICANS

Marija-Emilija Kukubajska, Ph.D. Abstract: If “the future is purchased by the present” (Samuel Johnson), then the price currently being paid by American generations of students in drug addiction is evidently exorbitant for the drug-mortgaged future that will belong to them. Today’s young adults are more likely than their parents and certainly their grandparents to have experimented with drugs and alcohol, and the negative impact these activities will have on their education can scarcely be imagined. With current generations of school-age children and university students, under direct assault by narcotics traffi ckers, drug runners and drug cartels that employ them, the question arises: what is the value to society of legalizing a substance that has been statistically proven as deleterious to the health of the nation, without regard to age, sex, ethnic background or class? What would be the overall impact of legalization of illegal drugs on society, on nation’s industrial output, its educational sector, its health industry, its sports and athletics life and even its spiritual and moral sense of self, if drugs are legalized in the name of freedom and human rights but entire generations become incapacitated, without healthy roles in a culture and civilization!? This paper gives intentionally a brief account of older statistics in order the new statistics on this matter to become strikingly obvious in comparative analysis on academic and IT media level. Key words: American drug culture, social pathology, “designer drugs”, hallucinogenic euphoria, ecstasy, brain damage, suicide, cancer, addiction rate, impaired memory, concentration, attention span. According to statistics from The National Institute on Drug Abuse in the United States, the average age of fi rst alcohol use is twelve, the average age of fi rst drug use is thirteen, and this age is constantly decreasing. The same Institute indicated that as many as 93 percent of all teenagers in the U.S., before entering college or university, have had some experience with alcohol by the end of their senior year in high school, and at least 6 percent drink daily. (Tener, 1984). These statistics are powerful and they speak to a phenomenon that, ever since the liberal 1960s in America, demonstrates the capability of undoing

any good that might result from permanently increased investment in education, teacher training and curriculum reform. They also point to storm clouds in the 267 Годишен зборник 2011 Yearbook 2011 Филолошки факултет, Универзитет „Гоце Делчев“ – Штип Faculty of Philology, Goce Delcev University – Stip nation's future suggesting that a number of undesirable character traits and moral values might gravitate closer to the norm of deviant and unacceptable societal behavior. Some previews are evident even today. They include students' dilemmas about what normal behavior is, diffi culty in completing a project, an educational goal or a successful employment pursuit and career building. They also include lack of discernment when judging others, or immature, irresponsible but "politically correct" abstinence in judging others, treating the otherness without empathy, compassion and mercy, lack of spiritual love and increased complications and problems with intimate relationships, as recorded by The New England Journal of Medicine. (Brookhoff, 1994). It appears that once consumers or providers tamper with the fabric of life by introducing contraband substances that American wise forbears had the foresight to ban and make illegal, the consequences become more evident and dramatic. An article in the Journal of the American Medical Association noted that marijuana users had "55 percent more industrial accidents, 85 percent more injuries and a 78 percent increase in absenteeism". Findings published in this journal are being quoted in "Marijuana Research Review", Drug Watch Oregon, 1, July 1994. This research paper is intentionally using older statements, since statements as recent as 2010 demonstrate a critical shift in favor of pro-drug proponents, among whom more than 50 percent of Americans approve of marihuana legalization. Clinical statistics prove that more negative effects than allegedly benevolent ones related to marihuana consumption, are the physiological effects of prolonged marijuana use refl ected both on mothers and their new born children. A medical study related to drug abuse, published in the "Cancer" journal, fi nds that the children of women who smoke marijuana are eleven times more likely to contract leukemia. (Robinson, 1989) Another study found that, in addition to the danger of inducing leukemia in offspring, there is the increased risk of low birth weight and developmental problems, results that are compounded by a dramatic rise of psycho-somatic abnormalities, similar to those caused by fetal alcohol syndrome. This data is available in a publication of the U.S. Department of Justice: Drug Legalization: Myths and Misconceptions, p. 43, Drug Enforcement Administration, Seattle, WA. The capacity of drugs to damage human beings has not diminished, but has increased over the years. As the technology that rendered the drugs more potent improved, so did the corresponding harm that these substances render to the body. Young people are largely ignoring this signifi cant development against their life interest, and this sinister "badge of courage." results in heartbreaking statistics. One of the American former drug czars who fought against drug addiction, Lee Brown, estimated that the marijuana on the streets in the 1980s was up to ten times more potent that it was a generation earlier. Carleton Turner, the former National Institute of Drug Abuse director and head of the Marijuana Research Project at the University of Mississippi, concluded that "There is no other drug used or abused by man that has the staying power and broad cellular actions on the body than marijuana has. This statement has been widely ignored by the marijuana legalization proponents in the 21 century, yet its medical, social and cultural validity remains the same as in the Drug Awareness Newsletter of September 1988, and Peggy Mann's research paper "Reasons to Oppose Legalizing Illegal Drugs, September 1988. As we explore data on the increasing danger to American children and young adults posed by the widespread availability of dangerous, yet so-called "social" drugs, we come to one of the most dangerous of all, cocaine. There are various ways of ingesting cocaine: snorting, smoking and later inhaling, and it is the snorting that poses considerable physical danger to the user since it can virtually destroy the nasal septum, besides the CNS. Anna Rose Childress of the University of Pennsylvania noted that people "can become compulsively involved with snorted cocaine. We have many Hollywood movie stars without nasal septum to prove that". She further point out that when

cocaine is smoked, “it seems to have incredibly powerful effects that tend to set up a compulsive addictive cycle more quickly than anything we have ever seen”. (Siegfried, 1989). Unfortunately, for the young people of America, the relatively recent advent of crack cocaine, an extraordinarily cheaper but far more potent version of the earlier powder form, has presented a much more attractive option to adolescents. According to Mark Gold, founder of the Nationwide Cocaine Hotline, the cost to an addict using crack is one-tenth the cost one would have paid for the equivalent in cocaine powder in the 1980s. Gold concludes that about one in fi ve twelfth-graders have tried cocaine before pursuing a university degree, and that number will probably increase because of the price and easy availability of crack cocaine. Economic reality has an impact on the world of illegal drugs as well. The so-called “designer drugs” evolved as a result of a need to produce the same effects more inexpensively and to reduce the stigma of illegality. Compounded in laboratories for a fraction of the price that it costs to acquire commonly abused drugs, designer drugs, like MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine) increasingly gained in popularity and in the 1990s became a growth industry. Drugs, like MDMA are known to give the user a cocaine-like rush with hallucinogenic euphoria. Interestingly, MDMA’s antecedent ECSTASY was sold legally for a few years despite the National Institute on Drug Abuse fears that it could cause brain damage. In 1985, the Drug Enforcement Agency outlawed MDMA, although it is widely available. (Ehrlich, 1975). With this evidence cataloguing the detrimental effects of exposure to drugs and the consequences of protracted drug use and dependency, it is time to examine the possible merits of the case for the legalization of illegal drugs. One argument among Americans in favor of decriminalizing illegal drugs is that illegal drugs will no longer be sought after as the “forbidden fruit”. It is very unlikely that legalizing cultivation, processing, transport and distribution of a lucrative product in the U.S., like cocaine, will bring a dramatic reduction in the price and thus make it far more widely available. Cartels and syndicates that control these activities are unlikely to surrender them to government control in America. Rather, it is in the nature of cartels to create scarcity regardless of whether there is a reason for it to exist or not. Government control would broaden the war against drugs on international drug trade level, yet, since the government has proven insuffi ciently effective and experienced in this area, it probably would not prevail. If we compare the international drug trade with America’s experience with Prohibition in the 1930s, paradoxical comparisons emerge. When Prohibition was in effect, alcohol consumption declined by 30 to 50 percent and death from cirrhosis of the liver fell dramatically. (Gold, 1991). Another study revealed that suicides and drug-related arrests also declined by 50 percent. Signifi cantly, after the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1933, alcoholism rose, along with alcohol-related crimes and accidents. Decriminalization may increase drug use according to the “Drug Legalization: Myths and Misconceptions” published by the U.S. Department of Justice in 1994. It should be also noted however, that, a comparison of the relative dangers posed by alcohol (as seen in the above example) and cocaine, indicates that alcohol has an addiction rate of 10 percent, while cocaine has an addiction rate of seventy-fi ve percent, according to the same DOJ publication. The question arises of whether America, as a society, and as a government, would stand to gain or to lose should illegal drugs be decriminalized. Logic initially suggests that if these drugs were legalized, then the cost of policing, litigation, social and public health burdens would decrease, since the drug trade would emerge from the shadows and become regulated commerce like everything else. But that logic would be superfi cial. Actually, the costs to employers in terms of accidents, absenteeism, drug-related illnesses and even suicides are likely to rise, just as in the example comparing Prohibition before repeal and after repeal. Statistics from states in the U.S. that have decriminalized marijuana tend to bear evidence of this statement. In California, within the fi rst six months of decriminalization of drugs, arrests for driving under the 270 infl uence of drugs rose 46 percent for adults and

71.3 percent for adolescents. (Mann, 1988). Marijuana use doubled in Alaska and Oregon when it was decriminalized in those states, which is another paradox. (Roques, 1995). It is also worth noting that Justice Department fi gures show that fully one-third of all inmates used drugs before committing their crimes, according to Dallas Times Herald, 21 August, 1983. In such circumstances where drugs were legal and their recreational use was sanctioned by society and court system, a range of downfalls could be expected: a slump in industrial productivity, workmanship and earnings, drop in school attendance, weakening of the entire educational system, with moral decadence in all areas. William Bennett, a former drug czar and secretary of education during Ronald Reagan's administration has articulated a common sense perception in his article on the failure of the intellectuals to prevent catastrophes in the Drug War: "I did not have to become drug czar to be opposed to legalized marijuana. As Secretary of Education, I realized that given the state of American education, the last thing we needed was a policy that made widely available a substance that impairs memory, concentration, and attention span. Why, in God's name, foster the use of a drug that makes you stupid?" (Bennett, 1990).

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