

Nickolas Diaz

Miss Brittany

3 Period World Literature

June 4 2020

Marijuana Should be Illegal in the US

Did you know that legalizing marijuana increases crime? In fact, “marijuana related crimes has increased every year,”(Rene Chun). Marijuana should be illegal in America because marijuana is harmful, it is harmful to others, and it is addictive. It also increases crime and it also boosts the economy.

There are many names for marijuana, a few of them are called “pot, tea, grass, and weed. There are also many ways to use it like cigarettes, handheld [pipes](#), water pipes or called a bong, blunt which is like a pipe, and most foods and drinks”(Smitha Bhandari). “The Chinese first used it in 2700 BCE as a valuable medicine and for smoking. In the nineteenth century it was used to treat gonorrhea and angina pectoris. In the mid 19th century marijuana was used to treat many more illnesses. In 1960s marijuana was mostly illegal, but in the 1990s it was legal for medical use in many states like Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington. In 2012 Colorado and Washington voted to make marijuana recreational. Many other state soon made marijuana recreational”(Kara Rogers).

My first point is that marijuana is very harmful to the body. In fact Marijuana can cause many different side effects especially in the absence phase. "Craving for marijuana, decreased appetite, sleep difficulty, and weight loss reliably, Aggression, anger, irritability, restlessness, and

Diaz 2

strange dreams increased significantly during one abstinence phase,"(Alan J). The abstinence phase is when the long time, addicted marijuana user doesn't use marijuana for a while. This abstinence phase, or withdraw periods are especially dangerous because it will force the the person who is using marijuana to use it daily even when the person wants to stop.

Additionally, people who use marijuana can have some really bad side effects. "Using pot may raise the user's chances for clinical depression. It might heighten the user's senses [worsen senses], distort the user's sense of time, hurt their motor skills and make driving more dangerous and it can make it harder to focus,"(Smitha Bhandari). Since it is hard for marijuana users to stop, many of the users will have theses long term effects. Since using marijuana for a long time can heighten senses and hurt the motor skills it will especially hurt anyone physically who plays sports. The distortion of time and harder to focus will also affect students mentally. Undoubtedly marijuana can also kill the user over time. "Pot smoke can inflame and irritate your lungs [just as much as smokers]. Marijuana makes your heart work harder. In fact the heart can jump to 70 to 120 beats per minute for 3 hours"(Smitha Bhandari). The inflame and irritate the lungs only can apply

when people smoke it with cigarettes or pipes. Foods and drinks that have marijuana in them cannot inflame the lungs. However there is no way to avoid the heart problem because every type of marijuana can make people high. To sum it all up, using marijuana is harmful because of the withdrawal and longterm effects and the heart and the lung problems.

The second reason marijuana should be illegal is that it can hurt others. Teens are especially prone. “The percentage of 12 to 17 year-olds using marijuana is higher in every legal marijuana state. For example, 16.21% of Colorado teens and 18.86% of teens in Alaska reported

Diaz 3

marijuana use in the past year”(ProCon.org). This is bad because the legal age to use marijuana is 21. The teens will have to get to from their parents or friends or from illegal dealers. Making marijuana illegal will make it harder for the teenagers to get the drug. Teenagers are more susceptible to get addicted to the drug because they are more naive than adults. Since their brains aren't fully developed marijuana can have worse mental effects. Without a doubt Marijuana can lead to more car accidents. “Marijuana-related traffic deaths rose 62% following the legalization of marijuana in Colorado(procon.org). Some of those deaths can be teens because teens are less responsible than adults. The reason that marijuana increases car accidents is because marijuana decreases motor skills and most importantly it can make people high. A reason the marijuana traffic death rose is because more people will use marijuana if it is legal. Marijuana can also effect

newborns negatively. “Mothers who smoke pot while pregnant face a higher risk of giving birth to underweight or premature babies. But researchers don’t know enough to say if they will have other problems” (Smitha Bhandari). Even though the researchers don’t know if the newborns will have future problems, the babies will probably not be as strong or smart growing up because marijuana affects the body mentally and physically. Plus the mother could influence the baby or give marijuana to the newborn when they grow up. Marijuana hurts others by getting teens hooked on marijuana and it increases traffic accidents and it can hurt newborns.

The third reason is that Marijuana should be illegal is that it is addictive. “Marijuana is made of two important chemicals THC and CBD. CBD is used for medicine while THC is used for getting high. Both chemicals cancel each other out.”(Ben Cort). Unmodified marijuana has more CBD and therefore it cannot make people as high as modified or modern day marijuana

Diaz 4

which has more THC and less CBD. Today marijuana is more dangerous because of the percentage of THC. Furthermore marijuana THC to CBD levels are rising each year. “THC to CBD rise to 14:1 in 1995 to about 80:1 in 2014. Today marijuana is so potent it can cause psychosis” (Ben Cort). Since every year THC levels rise, the more addictive it can be. Legalizing marijuana will make the marijuana industry want to research to increase the THC levels in marijuana. For this reason the marijuana industry’s products are not safe.

“The marijuana is grown inside and it is sprayed with lots of chemicals so much so that the workers have to wear hazmat suits. Marijuana sold today can contain 95% THC” (Ben Cort). The chemicals the workers put on the plants makes it possible for the industry to produce the 95% concentrate. The 95% concentrate Marijuana is extra dangerous because when the consumer uses it all the chemicals get absorbed into the body. Marijuana is addictive because marijuana is made of high concentrates of THC and it is filled with a lot of chemicals.

Another reason that marijuana legal can increase crime. Legalizing medical marijuana increased crime “ever since California’s 1996 medical-marijuana initiative, violent crime in his jurisdiction has increased”(James Graham). Legalizing marijuana allows criminals to sell weed which is unregulated and it could be more dangerous. Since it is legal criminals won’t get into trouble for selling any trouble for selling marijuana. If marijuana was illegal then the black market will shut down. In addition making marijuana legal can make marijuana more popular. “Legalization has led to a boom in the weed business, thereby increasing the supply of two things that tempt would-be thieves: the crop, and the cash it generates”(James Graham). Legalizing weed made marijuana more popular which in turn increased the supply of marijuana.

Diaz 5

Since there is no risk selling marijuana in the black market is more profitable because the customer and the buyer don’t have to pay taxes or have

regulations. Based on that fact most marijuana growers do not want to have a license to grow marijuana. “Out of some 32,000 farmers in the region, only about 3,500 had applied for a license by the end of 2017. Running an illegal “grow,” however, leaves them especially vulnerable to dope rips” (James Graham). Being an illegal farmer can have many risk such as having their crops being stolen by criminals. The criminals will do anything to make money even using firearms, putting the buyers and the farmers at risk. The illegal farmers can’t do anything except fight back because they will get in trouble if they call the police because they don’t have a license. Legalizing marijuana can increase crime because criminals can sell unregulated marijuana, it increased it’s popularity and the criminals can steal crops from the farmers without getting into trouble.

Making marijuana illegal can boost the economy. Marijuana can a cost a lot especially for the medicine, the automobile accidents and the crime. “Costs of marijuana use include paying for medical care, victims of driving accidents; increased crime; and from secondhand smoke” (prcon.org). All these thing can add up for the government and for everyone. The amount of money the government makes from marijuana taxes is not that much considering most of the marijuana is sold illegally. Making marijuana legal can also hurt the businesses. “Employees who screened positive for marijuana use had 55% more industrial accidents, 85% more injuries, and absenteeism rates 75% higher than those who tested negative. (procon.org). Since the people

that tested positive for marijuana got more injuries they they have to miss a lot more work than usual making the company lose more money. Another problem is that marijuana users have a lot

Diaz 6

more industrial accidents which could endanger others. The absenteeism part is because high effect when people consume marijuana. As bad as it is marijuana are being sold to children. "Marijuana is available in kid-friendly forms such as, products sometimes resemble familiar brands, such as Buddahfinger or KeefKat" (procon.org). It is easier to feed to kids because they can't distinguish the marijuana candies from the normal ones. These candies can make first time users to more likely to consume marijuana rather than smoking it because the candies look a lot better. Making marijuana illegal can save money on medicines, the automobile accidents and crimes. It can also help businesses and kids to not consume marijuana candies.

The problem is that marijuana is legal in many states. It should be illegal in the United States because marijuana is harmful, marijuana is hurtful to others, it is addictive, making marijuana legal increases crime, making marijuana illegal can boost the economy. According to Dr. Drew Pinsky, marijuana is extremely addictive."Dr. Drew Pinsky, a addiction specialist, said, When people are addicted to cannabis, cocaine and alcohol the drug they have the most difficult time giving up is the cannabis"(procon.org). It is more addictive because the body develops a stronger need than the other drugs. The body develops a need by having side or withdraw effects. This

stronger addition will make it harder for people to treat the addiction. The US has signed a treaty to stop recreational marijuana. "Three United Nations treaties set worldwide drug controls. The United States has agreed to limit the use of marijuana exclusively to medical and scientific purposes" (procon.org). Although they signed the treaty they broke it because some of the states made recreational marijuana legal. However if the US want to make marijuana illegal it will be easier because of the treaty. The United States should make marijuana illegal because it is

Diaz 7

more addictive than other drugs and because the US signed a treaty to reduce recreational marijuana.

In spite of the evidence that marijuana should be illegal, marijuana is not a gateway drug. "No animal experiments have found that exposure THC increases the likelihood of using any other drug" (Mitch Earleywine). The scientists tested if marijuana could be a gateway to other drugs. The scientist concluded that there was no connection. There was some tests that stated that it was positive but the author stated that it was biased. All the human tests were unreliable. "Data misinterpreted to support that marijuana causes crack addiction are comparable in support of church causing crime"(Mitch Earleywine). According to Mitch Earleywine the human tests were biased towards supporting marijuana. Legalizing marijuana can boost the economy. "Revenue from marijuana is expected to reach 70 million to be put to school production" (Alyona Minkovski). If marijuana was legal the

government could have more tax money. It could boost the economy by allowing the government to lower their taxes on everything. Making marijuana legal could be good for businesses. "It could create many jobs for dispensaries, the packaging places and the ad revenue"(Alyona Minkovski). If marijuana was legal it could create more jobs and therefore increase the economy. The unemployed percentage could drop and less people would be homeless.

All of the evidence that states that marijuana is safe can be reasoned with. To start off marijuana can be considered one of the stronger drugs although marijuana isn't a gateway drug, "Dr. Drew Pinsky, a addiction specialist, said, When people are addicted to cannabis, cocaine and alcohol the drug they have the most difficult time giving up is the cannabis"(procon.org).

Diaz 8

According to Dr Drew marijuana is one of the more powerful drugs which means that other drugs like cocaine and alcohol could be the gateway drug to marijuana. It is one of the more stronger drugs because the marijuana industry sells 95 percent THC in their marijuana. Future research could change if marijuana is a gateway drug. "No animal experiments have found that exposure THC increases the likelihood of using any other drug"(Mitch Earleywine). There could be future research to conclude that marijuana is a gateway drug because there is not that much evidence to say so or not. Legalizing marijuana won't boost the economy.

Making marijuana legal won't create that much tax money. "Out of some 32,000 farmers in the region, only about 3,500 had applied for a license by the end of 2017" (James Graham). The reason marijuana won't make that much tax money is because most farmers or about 90 percent are avoiding taxes and selling them illegally. They also force the government to spend more to arrest the criminals. Making marijuana legal would decrease the employment rate. "Employees who screened positive for marijuana use had 55% more industrial accidents, 85% more injuries, and absenteeism rates 75% higher than those who tested negative.(procon.org). The people would use marijuana would more likely to be fired from their jobs because they would be more likely to injure themselves and others and damage the machinery. They would also be more likely to absenteeism because marijuana gets people high. Marijuana isn't a gateway drug because it a strong drug and future research could change that. Making marijuana legal won't make that much tax revenue and it would reduce the employment rate.

Marijuana should be illegal in America because marijuana is harmful, it is harmful to others, it is addictive, increase crime, boost the economy. Marijuana is also harmful because of

Diaz 9

the withdrawal and longterm effects and the heart and the lung problems. It hurts others by getting teens hooked on marijuana and it increases traffic accidents and it can hurt newborns. Marijuana is addictive because

marijuana is made of high concentrates of THC and it is filled with a lot of chemicals. It can increase crime because criminals can sell unregulated marijuana, it increased it's popularity and the criminals can steal crops from the farmers without getting into trouble. It can also save money on medicines, the automobile accidents and crimes. It can also help businesses and kids to not consume marijuana candies. The problem is that marijuana is legal in many states. It should be illegal in the United States because marijuana is harmful, hurtful to others, addictive, increases crime, boost the economy. The opposition says the marijuana is not a gateway drug but marijuana is one of the more higher up drugs plus future tests could prove it wrong. The opposition also says that making marijuana legal would increase tax revenue and decrease the employment rate but it actually the opposite happens.

Marijuana should be illegal in America because marijuana is harmful, it is harmful to others, it is addictive, increase crime and it boosts the economy. The US would be in a better place if it kept marijuana illegal. Just think about all the deaths and the crimes that could be avoided if marijuana was illegal. There are many things that the reader should do about this but one small thing they should do is discouraging others from trying any drugs.

Work Cited

Alyona, Minkovski, "why legalizing weed just makes sense" *Youtube*, uploaded by Huffpostlive, Nov, 15 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvPbmKt-PRU>

Ben, Cort. "surprising truths about legalizing cannabis |Ben Cort| TedxMileHigh - Youtube" *Youtube*, uploaded by TEDxtalks, January 3, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmqtPaMMVuY>

"Marijuana." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 2020.
<https://www.britannica.com/science/pharmacology>

Mitch, Earleywine, *Understanding Marijuana: A New Look at the Scientific Evidence*, 193 Madison Avenue New York, New York 10016: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print

"Original Article", *Marijuana Abstinence Effects in Marijuana Smokers Maintained in Their Home Environment*, Volume 58, October 2001, American Medical Association.
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/articlepdf/481830/yoa20283.pdf>

Rene, "Chun. Ending Weed Prohibition Hasn't Stopped Drug Crimes."
TheAtlantic.com, *TheAtlantic.com*.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/01/california-marijuana-crime/576391/>

Richard, Williams. "why weed should be legal ft Barack Obama -
Youtube" *Youtube* uploded by Prince Ea, June 27 2016,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YWe5kjG35M>

Steve, Taylor. "three arguments why marijuana should stay illegal
revised" *Youtube* up loaded by Kurzgesagt-in a nutshell, June 10 2018,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kP15q815Saw>

"Should Recreational Marijuana be illegal". *procon.org*. ProCon.org.
<https://marijuana.procon.org/>

Smitha, Bhandari. "How Pot Affects Your Mind and Body." *webmd.com*,
WebMD LLC, <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/addiction/marijuana-use-and-its-effects#3>