

Lecture 3

CRM 3314
University of Ottawa
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2005

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Propaganda

- “Information designed to control, not inform.”

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Propaganda

- During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.
 - George Orwell
- If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it people will eventually come to believe it.
 - Attributed to Paul Joseph Goebbels (Hitler's propaganda minister).

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Propaganda

- The biggest cost of the drug war propaganda may be the systematic reduction about people's ability to think intelligently about drugs. Society faces genuinely terrifying, immensely complex problems in the last decade of the twentieth century. The environment, educational institutions, value systems, health institutions, and economy all need urgent attention. But the obsessive concern with drug problems stirred up by incessant propaganda distracts us from these to the point of collective stupidity.
 - Bruce Alexander, *Peaceful Measures*, p. 71

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When I first visited Russia, in 1986, I made friends with a musician whose father had been Brezhnev's personal doctor. . . . 'It must have been strange being so completely immersed in propaganda,' I said. 'Ah, but there is the difference. We knew it was propaganda,' replied Sacha.

That is the difference. Russian propaganda was so obvious that most Russians were able to ignore it. They took it for granted that the government operated in its own interests and any message coming from it was probably slanted - and they discounted it.

In the West the calculated manipulation of public opinion to serve political and ideological interests is much more covert and therefore much more effective. Its greatest triumph is that we generally don't notice it - or laugh at the notion it even exists.

“Lessons in how to lie about Iraq,” *The Observer* (UK), August 17, 2003

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Making Propaganda More Powerful -- “Fright Factors”

- Particular danger to women, children, future generations
- Threat of death or injury arousing dread
- Poorly understood by science
- Contradictory statements by responsible sources
- Hidden, irreversible damage
- Identifiable victims

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The Classic Example – Crack Babies

- Anytime you think you want to legalize drugs, go to a neonatal unit.... They are 100 and 200 percent capacity... and the reason is crack babies being born. Babies in the hospital 42 days. Typical cost to you and me is \$125,000. Again and again and again the mother disappears in three days and the child becomes a ward of the state because he's permanently and genetically damaged.
 - H. Ross Perot, US presidential candidate (*Cracked Coverage*, 211)
- Babies “like no others, brain damaged in ways yet unknown, oblivious to any affection.”
 - *Rolling Stone Magazine*, Oct 8, 1990
- “Babies born to crack addicts tend to suffer low birth weight, brain damage and malformation. Intensive hospital care for each crack baby costs about \$90,000.”
 - *New York Times* (1989)

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“Crack Babies” 1

- Research paid for by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia states, “Although numerous animal experiments and some human data show potent effects of cocaine on the central nervous system, we were unable to detect any difference in Performance, Verbal or Full Scale IQ scores between cocaine-exposed and control children at age 4 years.”

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“Crack Babies” 2

- Among the general population there has been no detectable increase in birth defects which may be associated with cocaine use during pregnancy.
- The lack of quality prenatal care is associated with undesirable effects often attributed to cocaine exposure: prematurity, low birth weight, and fetal or infant death.

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“Crack Babies” 3

- Criminalizing substance abuse during pregnancy discourages substance-using or abusing women from seeking prenatal care, drug treatment, and other social services, and sometimes leads to unnecessary abortions.
- Provision of quality prenatal care to heavy cocaine users (with or without drug treatment) has been shown to significantly improve fetal health and development.

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“Crack Babies” 4

- Sources can be found at:
- <http://www.drugwarfacts.org/pregnant.htm>
- *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance* 216-18

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“Meth Babies” – the new “Crack Babies”?

A single dose of the drug speed during pregnancy could be enough to cause long-term problems in babies, according to University of Toronto researchers. **Pregnant mice** exposed only once to methamphetamine had offspring with reduced motor co-ordination and other neurodevelopmental effects.

“We’ve known for a while that meth abuse during pregnancy is associated with low birth weight, cleft palates and other malformations, but this is the first research demonstrating that even a single exposure can cause long-term damage,” Peter Wells, a University of Toronto pharmacy and pharmacology professor, said Tuesday in a news release.

“It’s pretty remarkable that a single low dose can have such an effect.” . . . “It has clinical implications, because it shows that the fetus is exquisitely sensitive,” Wells said. . . . Wells plans to study women and infants who have been exposed to speed or similar drugs to see if the human damage is consistent with his mouse findings.

“One dose of meth during pregnancy could harm baby,” CTV.ca, July 26, 2005
http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/1123400800980_117/?hub=Health

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Propaganda fostered by media laziness?

- Victoria RCMP officers say they're seeing an increase in methamphetamine use. The drug is known on the street as speed, ice, crank, or crystal meth. Crystal meth is highly addictive, extremely destructive, and seems to be well on its way to becoming Victoria's drug of choice. Corporal Pete Zubersky says it's the 'poor man's cocaine.' . . . instead of a high lasting only an hour or two, it can last over 10 hours.
- Tolerance builds immediately. Zubersky says there is "a lot of violence associated with it." Saanich police constable Dan Mayo says crystal meth addiction is also spreading in high schools.
 - ▶ "Crystal meth 'drug of choice' in Victoria," Vancouver Sun, January 20, 2003

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Propaganda? Media Laziness? (Cont'd)

- Methamphetamines can cause a variety of health problems. They are linked to irregular heart beats, high blood pressure and irreversible blood vessel damage in the brain that can lead to strokes.
- Overdoses result in extremely high body temperature and convulsions.
 - ▶ "Crystal meth 'drug of choice' in Victoria," Vancouver Sun, January 20, 2003

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Propaganda? Media Laziness? (Cont'd)

- The energy it [crystal methamphetamine] first fuels later turns to aggression, paranoia and even psychosis. Worse, doctors say, damage could be permanent as they find increasing evidence that the drug alters the structure of the brain. . . . In short, it makes people crazy. The longer people use the drug . . . the worse the damage. Some psychiatrists say meth can bring on schizophrenia, one of the most crippling of all mental illnesses.
 - ▶ "Toxic drug causes lasting damage to brain," Vancouver Sun, January 10, 2004

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Propaganda? Media Laziness? (Cont'd)

- **Headline:** "Major meth ring busted by RCMP"
- **Story:** "The RCMP has busted a major crystal methamphetamine trafficking ring based out of Naicam after an 18-month investigation resulted in the arrest of three suspects and warrants for two others."
 - ▶ Melfort Journal (Sask.), January 18, 2004

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What the mainstream media do not realize, or do not want to realize, is that while the repetitious drug war "victory" story sells newspapers and gets rating points, it also sells a deadly and wasteful drug war to an all-too-gullible American public. If the Fourth Estate won't tell America that the drug war is broken beyond all repair, who will?

Michael Levine, "Fight Back: A Solution Between Prohibition and Legalization," in Timothy Lynch, ed., *After Prohibition: An Adult Approach to Drug Policies in the 21st Century* (Cato Institute, Washington, D.C.: 2000) 91 at 103.

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Journalism -- Bias, Sensationalism?

Headline: IQ bounces back after smoke clears: No lasting effects – even for those teenagers who smoked an average 37 joints a week for three years, say researchers

The Ottawa Citizen, April 3, 2002

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Journalism -- Bias, Sensationalism?

- Smoking Grass Can, Duh. . .
London Free Press (04/02/02)
- Pothead Become Dopes
Toronto Sun (04/02/02)
- Smoking Pot No Risk To IQ, Study Says
Globe and Mail (04/02/02)
- Pot Does Rot Your Brain
Edmonton Sun (04/02/02)
- Effect Of Pot On IQ Temporary, Study Says
National Post (04/02/02)

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Journalism -- Bias, Sensationalism?

By smoking five or more joints a week, users are lopping four points off their IQ -- which is roughly the effect felt by children whose mothers smoked crack cocaine when they were pregnant, or consumed three alcoholic drinks a day.

As long as they habitually smoke weed, they have every bit as good a jump on life as a former crack baby, or someone growing up with fetal alcohol syndrome. Like the rest of this luckless fraternity, they're now at much higher risk of dropping out of school or being fired from their job. And they may discover the brutal joys of addiction -- scientists now believe that today's highly potent marijuana (roughly five times as strong as that sold on the street 30 years ago) can be psychologically and physically habit-forming.

"Bogart that joint," Editorial, *The Globe and Mail*, April 3, 2002

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Sensationalism

"U.S. SEIZURES OF CANADIAN POT RISES 259% SINCE 2001"

OTTAWA - Seizures of Canadian-made marijuana by U.S. authorities have increased 259 per cent since 2001 but still constitute only about two per cent of all such seizures at U.S. borders, says a joint assessment.

Chronicle Herald, February 1, 2005

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■ Propaganda

- ▶ The language of drug policy
 - Drug "addicts"
 - Use = abuse
 - "Drug-related" crime
 - "Trafficking", "narco-traffickers" – connotation and extended meaning
 - Cocaine, heroin (visceral reactions)
 - Demonization/dehumanization of users – "Scum"
- ▶ The "Science"
 - Exaggeration of the **problem** (Edmonton cocaine problem)
 - Exaggeration of the **success** of current policies
 - Misdescription of alternatives – "legalizers" – and their motives
 - Misdescription of **policy** cause and effect – terrorism
 - Misdescription of **drug** effects ("gateway," addictiveness, crack babies)

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Misdescription of policy cause and effect

- Government claims that the drug trade is so lucrative, and must therefore be attacked through the criminal law
- Ignores completely the role of government policies of prohibition in making the trade lucrative

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Language

- Drug traffickers
- "Weasel" words

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“Weasel” words

Deliberate or negligent misuse of language, leading to deception

- “Associated with,” as in “associated with lack of motivation”
- “tied to”, “linked with”
- “Drug-related,” as in “drug-related crime”
- “Abuse”
- Drug trade finances organized crime, terrorism

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- The amount of caffeine consumed by the average Finn annually.

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Midescription of effects – Deliberate or negligent?

Drugs are bad not because they’re illegal. They’re illegal because they’re bad.

– John Lawn, former head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

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Drug effects and potency

“Marijuana is about 15 times more potent today than it was 10 years ago. Marijuana today is as potent as cocaine was 10 years ago.”

Paul Szabo, MP (Liberal), Debates of the House of Commons of Canada (Hansard), Monday, October 30, 1995. Mr. Szabo was chair of the all party committee appointed in 1994 to examine Bill C-7, which became the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*

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- There has been no long-term marked upward trend in the potency of herbal cannabis or cannabis resin imported into Europe. In all EU countries, with the possible exception of the Netherlands, most cannabis consumed is imported, although systematic data on the availability of home-produced herbal cannabis are currently lacking.
- Taking into account the market share of different cannabis products, the effective potency has remained relatively stable in nearly all countries for many years, at around 6–8 %. The only exception is the Netherlands, where, by 2001, it had reached 16 %.
- Statements in the popular media that the potency of cannabis has increased by 10 times or more in recent decades are not supported by the limited data that are available from either the United States or Europe.
 - European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, *Annual report 2004: the state of the drugs problem in the European Union and Norway*, p. 90

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Effects??

- “Able to poach a victim’s brain like an egg, a new drug being sold on Central Florida’s nightclub scene has set off a statewide alert after being **tied to six deaths.**” Paramethoxyamphetamine, or PMA – Orlando Sentinel, Sept 28/2000
- “Their internal temperature skyrockets and they literally cook from the inside out.” “One PMA pill can kill,” Const. Rob Cullen said. “Once you take it, there’s no way to get it out of your body.” Toronto Sun, Oct. 15/2000
- Health Canada considers PMA one of the most dangerous hallucinogens in the world. It doesn’t have the same initial intensity as ecstasy, so users often take more pills, causing an overdose of an already dangerous drug. – Vancouver Province, Oct 15/2000

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Methamphetamine

- Dr. Mary Holley, an obstetrician who runs the Albertville, Ala.-based Mothers Against Methamphetamine ministry, said her interviews with male and female meth addicts revealed that sex in the No. 1 reason people use it. “The effect of an IV hit of methamphetamine is the equivalent of 10 orgasms all on top of each other lasting for 30 minutes to an hour, with a feeling of arousal that lasts for another day and a half,” said Holley. **But the euphoric effects do not last long.** Dr. John Standridge, an addiction specialist with the Council for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services in Chattanooga, said meth and similar stimulants initially “rev up the dopamine nervous system in the brain. They rev it up and burn it out.”
- ▶ Bill Poovey, “Meth’s sexual effect explains addictions,” Associated Press, December 3, 2004

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Methamphetamine as described by UK charity, “Drugscope”

- The drug’s euphoric effects are similar to but longer lasting than those of cocaine.
- The drug alters mood in different ways, depending on how it is taken. Immediately after smoking or injecting, the user experiences a rush that lasts only a few minutes and is described as extremely pleasurable.
- Even small amounts of methamphetamine can produce euphoria, wakefulness, increased physical activity, decreased appetite and increased respiration.

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Propaganda – Historical/Hysterical

- “Persons using this narcotic smoke the dried leaves of the plant, which has the effect of driving them completely insane. The addict loses all sense of moral responsibility. Addicts to this drug, while under its influence, are immune to pain, and could be severely injured without having any realization of their condition. While in this condition they become raving maniacs, and are liable to kill or indulge in any form of violence to other persons, using the most savage methods of cruelty without, as said before, any sense of moral responsibility.”

▶ Edmonton magistrate Emily Murphy, in 1922, in *The Black Candle*, one year before the drug was added to the Schedule of the *Opium and Narcotic Control Act*

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- Cannabis is not a benign drug. Cannabis use, and in particular frequent and long-term cannabis use, has been associated with negative health and behavioural consequences . . . However, most cannabis use is sporadic or experimental and hence not likely to be associated with serious negative consequences.
- CAMH thus concurs with similar recent calls from many other expert stakeholders who believe that the control of cannabis possession for personal use should be removed from the realm of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act and the criminal law/criminal justice system.

▶ Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Spring 2000

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Racist Propaganda

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Politically advantageous propaganda

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"The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed (and hence clamorous to be led to safety) by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary."

H.L. Mencken

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House Republicans are attempting to lift long-standing restrictions on a \$1 billion anti-drug advertising program in a move that would allow the White House to use taxpayer funds to engage in partisan political activities and campaign against candidates or ballot measures favoring the legalization of drugs.

Under language included in a reauthorization bill authored by Rep. Mark Souder (R-Ind.), the prohibition would be lifted when the ONDCP director is acting "to oppose an attempt to legalize the use" of any illegal drug. . . . As written, the provision would allow partisan radio, print and television ads if the purpose were to oppose the legalization of drug use.

"Move Would Let Drug Czar Campaign," Roll Call (Washington, DC), May 22, 2003

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Drugs as a tool of conquest

Historically

- Alexander (at 10, 12, 63):
 - ▶ Cocaine and heroin as a German weapon (NYT 1918)
 - ▶ Opium as a tool for other races conquering the world (Emily Murphy)
 - ▶ "Red" China's attempts to destroy Western society by shipping large amounts of heroin to US (1950s)
 - ▶ Goal of communist drug dealers in Latin America to destroy US democracy

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Drugs as a tool of conquest

Today

- Flooding the West with high-potency heroin from Afghanistan (2001)
- "Drugs are a weapon of mass destruction that can be used against Western societies and help bring them down."
 - DEA intelligence chief Steven Casteel, DEA conference, December 2001, "Target America: Traffickers, Terrorists and Your Kids"

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TARGET AMERICA: TRAFFICKERS, TERRORISTS & YOUR KIDS
A National Symposium on Narco-Terrorism
December 4, 2001, DEA Headquarters

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Super Bowl Ads (U.S.)

- Ad 1: “Where do terrorists get their money? If you buy drugs, some of it may come from you.”
- Ad 2: Images of teenagers claiming drugs are “just fun” and images of other teens taking the blame for atrocities committed in other countries. “I helped murder families in Colombia,” says one kid, “I helped the bomber get a fake passport,” claims another.

– White House spends \$3.2 million to air two 30-second commercials during 2002 Super Bowl .

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Terrorism-Propaganda

- Drugs help supply the deadly work of terrorists. That's so important for people in our country to understand. . . . [T]he drug trade supports terrorist networks. When people purchase drugs, they put money in the hands of those who want to hurt America, hurt our allies.

– Remarks by US President George W. Bush on the 2002 National Drug Control Strategy, Office of the Press Secretary, February 12, 2002

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- What can I do, what can I as a citizen do to defend America? Well, one thing you can do is not purchase illegal drugs. Make no mistake about it, if you're buying illegal drugs in America, it is likely that money is going to end up in the hands of terrorist organizations. Just think about the Taliban in Afghanistan --70 percent of the world's opium trade came from Afghanistan, resulting in significant income to the Taliban, significant amount of money to the people that were harboring and feeding and hiding those who attacked and killed thousands of innocent Americans on September the 11th. When we fight drugs, we fight the war on terror.

– Remarks by US President George W. Bush on the 2002 National Drug Control Strategy, Office of the Press Secretary, February 12, 2002

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The idiot factor

Believing his drug use may be funding terrorism, a Frederick County [Maryland] man called authorities to his home to get his dope. . . . “I don't want to do anything to hurt this country,” he said.

Higgins, who admitted to possession of marijuana, received a suspended sentence and was ordered to continue in drug treatment.

“Pot Smoker Gives Up Drug Fearing Terror,” Frederick News Post (MD), February 7, 2003

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DEA – Propaganda?

“The DEA Museum will open a powerful new exhibit on September 10, 2002 that traces the historic and contemporary connections between global drug trafficking and terrorism.

Starting with the horrific events of September 11, 2001 and moving back in time to the ancient Silk Road, this exhibit, entitled Target America: Traffickers, Terrorists and You will present the visitor with a global and historical overview of this deadly connection.”

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DEA – Propaganda?

“The visitor will have many opportunities to explore the often-symbiotic relationships that exist between terrorist groups and drug trafficking cartels and the personal impact those connections have on the visitor.”

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Buying into Propaganda

DRUG USERS SHARE THE GUILT OF DRUG WAR

- Every recreational drug user (you too, pot smokers), has left fingerprints on the triggers of the guns used by the cartels and drug dealers to kill and maim those innocents that got in their way. You share direct responsibility for every life and relationship that has been destroyed through the marketing and use of illegal drugs.
 - You do not live in a vacuum and your recreational habit has dire consequences for innocent lives, well outside the miserable, selfish life you've chosen for yourself. If you can tweak, inject or light up knowing this, I pity you, your children and your loved ones. They will pay for your selfishness in this life; you will pay in the next.
- Joe Slobig, Letter to the editor, *North County Times* (Cal.), Dec. 1, 2002

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Laxness of the legal system – propaganda?

- “If the law were tougher, we would not have so many problems.”
 - Compare outcomes with countries that have very strict drug laws (e.g., United States)

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Propaganda Leading to Dishonest Education



Peter Randell

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A short while ago a constable paid a visit to our school on the vocation of briefing us on the effects of taking drugs. . . . The presentation, to say the least, was visually disturbing. It featured unnatural aging, hallucinogenic effects, destroyed brains, and discontented people. . . . Our class was also fed startling facts, such as on the first usage of crystal meth over 80 per cent of the users were addicted.

. . .

[The constable's] personal encounters with an undercover unit and extensive knowledge on drugs truly informed us of the dangers of taking narcotics. . . . In summary, the message was fairly simple: Drugs, no matter how innocent they appear, are addictive, destructive, and will show no mercy. They are brutal, crushing both dreams and lives alike.

Letter to the Editor, *Sherwood Park News* (Alta.), April 23, 2003

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Propaganda – Dehumanizing Users

- “The casual user ought to be taken out and shot, because he or she has no reason for using drugs.” – Darryll Gates, while Police Chief of Los Angeles
- “If you're a casual drug user, you're an accomplice to murder.” – Nancy Reagan
- “We're talking scum here. Air should be illegal if they breathe it.” – statement by a U.S. police officer
- "By Americans spending money on their drug habits, we are helping to support the Taliban government, which protects terrorism." – Ohio Congressman Rob Portman
- "If you quit drugs, you join the fight against terror in America" – US President George Bush Jr.

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Dehumanizing Drug Users (2)

- Canadian columnist Diane Francis sites with approval Ontario provincial court Judge Robert Dnieper whom, when sentencing on marijuana possession charges, said that the casual user of such drugs “is a murderer. He is the evil one.”
 - Chester N. Mitchell, *The Drug Solution* at 28
- Ethically, no trial is required before killing citizens suspected of drug dealing.
 - Former U.S. drug "czar" William Bennett, cited in Miller, *Drug Warriors and Their Prey*

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Demonizing Reformers

- “Legalizers”
- “Pro-drug” views
- A “fifth column” . . . well on the way to making widespread and growing drug addiction a permanent reality

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The sensational disclosure that the former [UK] deputy drug czar Mike Trace has assembled a secret network to pressurise governments into legalising drugs lifts a veil on an operation as sinister as it is extensive. The implications are simply astounding. Despite his official role in combating drugs in Britain, Europe and the United Nations, Mr Trace is revealed to be the driving force behind a co-ordinated international effort to disband the world's anti-drug laws by stealth.

. . . The scale of the network he is co-ordinating is astonishing. The British headquarters of his operation - created from the shell of the ailing drug charity Release - is being financed in part by the Open Society Institute, funded by the billionaire financier George Soros.

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But that's not all. For Mr Trace's attempts to obtain additional funds from European sources disclose a vast and intricate web of non-governmental organisations, all beavering away at drug legalisation. This April, countries are to review progress at a UN drugs meeting in Vienna. Drug legalisers are now co-ordinating all their efforts to getting repeal of these three UN conventions onto the agenda at that crucial Vienna meeting. They are doing so by gaining a critical mass of influence over all the principal participants in that debate. . . . **And will the world now finally wake up to the fifth column in its ranks that is well on the way to making widespread and growing drug addiction a permanent reality?**

Melanie Phillips, “The International Drugs Fifth Column,” Daily Mail (UK), January 14, 2003

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Deception

Videotape footage of people using drugs and interviews with federal officials discouraging their use that was produced by the White House drug control policy office, violate a legal ban on official propaganda because they were presented to the public without any indication they were produced by the government, according to a decision released Thursday by the Government Accountability Office.

GAO, in response to a request from Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., examined a series of "video news releases" prepared by the Office of National Drug Control Policy from 2002 to 2004 to determine whether they violated a legal prohibition on "covert propaganda." . . .

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The videotapes were complete, prepackaged new stories, GAO found. They were sent to media outlets to be used "as news reports, without the need for any production effort," the agency wrote . . .

ONDCP's estimates show that the video footage reached more than 22 million households, GAO noted, “without disclosing to any of those viewers - the real audience - that the products they were watching, which 'reported' on the activities of a government agency, were actually prepared by that government agency, not by a seemingly independent third party.”

Shane Harris, “White House anti-drug videos violate propoganda ban, GAO says,” Govexec.com, Daily Briefings, January 6, 2005

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Censorship and Hidden Messages

- U.S. television network executives admitted yesterday that they have routinely submitted scripts for major TV series to White House officials to ensure that the shows contain government-approved story lines about drugs and alcohol. (ER, Chicago Hope, The Practice, Cosby, Providence, The Drew Carey Show and General Hospital, among others)
 - ▶ Globe and Mail, Jan 14, 2000

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- Local transit agencies allowing medical-marijuana and other kinds of drug-reform advertisements would be denied federal funding under a bill passed Monday by the House of Representatives.
-
- Deep within the \$373 billion omnibus spending bill is a paragraph that says no money from the bill can go to any bus, train or subway agency "involved directly or indirectly in any activity that promotes the legalization or medical use of any substance listed in schedule I of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act."
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- Rep. Ernest Istook, R- Okla., inserted the provision into the catch-all spending bill after growing irked at marijuana-decriminalization ads placed in the Washington, D.C., Metro transit system by Change the Climate, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit.
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- HOUSE BANS TRANSIT DRUG-REFORM ADS, Alameda Times-Star (California), December 11, 2003

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Censorship

- Drug Enforcement Administration remarks about stopping flow of funds to legalization movement as a result of arrest of Canadian "Prince of Pot," Marc Emery – Summer 2005

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Censorship

[US Drug Enforcement Administration Director Karen Tandy]: "Today's arrest of Mark (sic) Scott Emery, publisher of Cannabis Culture magazine and the founder of a marijuana legalization group, is a significant blow not only to the marijuana trafficking trade in the U.S. and Canada, but also to the marijuana legalization movement."

... "Hundreds of thousands of dollars of Emery's illicit profits are known to have been channeled to marijuana legalization groups active in the United States and Canada. Drug legalization lobbyists now have one less pot of money to rely on."

Joel Connelly, "Pursuit of drug case all smoke, no fire," *SeattlePost-Intelligencer*, August 5, 2005

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Impact of drugs vs. Impact of drug policies on "social pathologies"

- "Drug use threatens everything, everything that is best about our country. It breaks the bond between parent and child. It turns productive citizens into addicts. It transforms schools into places of violence and chaos. It makes playgrounds into crime scenes. It supports gangs at home. And abroad, it's important for Americans to know that the trafficking of drugs finances the world of terror, sustaining terrorists."
 - US President George Bush Jr.

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Impact of drugs vs. Impact of drug policies and "social pathologies"

- "Illegal drugs obliterate morals, value, character, our relations with each other, and our relation to God."
 - William Bennett, while US Drug :Czar" (Baum, 266)

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Impact of drugs vs. Impact of drug policies and “social pathologies”

- “You see, there is a moral reason for this fight. There is a moral reason to achieve this grand national objective, and it's this: drugs rob men and women and children of their dignity and their character. Illegal drugs are the enemies of ambition and hope.”
 - Remarks by US President George W. Bush on the 2002 National Drug Control Strategy, Office of the Press Secretary, February 12, 2002

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Impact of drugs vs. Impact of drug policies and “social pathologies”

- “There is no good evidence that drugs cause any substantial part of the social pathology that is attributed to them. On the contrary, there is good evidence that social pathology causes destructive forms of drug use.”
 - Alexander at 17
- Example? Post Sept 11 increase in drug use.

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Social pathologies and drugs – The Media

Five years ago, Jessica Weirich was a straight A student from an upper-middle class family **without a care in the world**. No one would have suspected she would soon be strung out on heroin and crack and selling her body to feed her addiction.

... Now 18 and clean for the past year, Ms Weirich said her downward spiral started with a few drinks on Christmas, New Year's Eve and her birthday. Like a lot of teenagers, she smoked pot a few times in Grade 8. She tried ecstasy and started having sex with older guys. Later that year, she became pregnant. She had an abortion, but missed a lot of school and her grades suffered.

In Grade 9, there would be more pot and even LSD, but the big changes came when she made friends with street kids in downtown Ottawa. “I always used to put all this pressure on myself to do well in school. I looked at these street kids and it was like they didn't have a care in the world,” she said.

... Jessica's story is the extreme of what can happen when teenagers experiment with drugs, said Carin McLean, a youth outreach services supervisor with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

“From Honour Roll to Skid Row,” *Markham Economist & Sun* (ON), June 25, 2005

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Exaggerating the Problem

- “Truckload of cocaine a month used in Edmonton”
 - ▶ assume: 30,000 pounds in truck = 13,620,000 grams
 - ▶ Edmonton metro adult population: approx. 672,000
 - ▶ 0.7% used cocaine within past year = 4,740
 - ▶ 5.5% of those used within last month = 260
 - ▶ Therefore, 260 users used 13,620,000 grams of cocaine within last month = 52,400 grams each
 - ▶ cost of crack \$80/gram (per Edmonton police)
 - ▶ Therefore average monthly user used \$4,192,000 of cocaine a month = \$50,304,440 per year for **each** monthly user
 - ▶ Total cost of cocaine used in Edmonton yearly: **\$13,079,040,000**

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Exaggerating the Problem

- “Epidemic”
- “It's on every single corner in Abbotsford.”
- “There's not a corner in the city you can't buy crack.” – Edmonton Police Service spokesperson
- Cannabis potency
- “drug-induced addiction” – Alexander
- Use of street value when describing value of drug trade??

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Justifying failure

- “The drug problem would be much worse if we hadn't done this”

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Exaggerating the Successes

- Use of “street value” when describing value of seizures
- Ignoring “failure” rates
- Ignoring the consequences of “successes” – increased acquisitive crime
- “The man in charge of the world's fight against illegal drugs said the war was being won and he believed world production of opium and cocaine could be eliminated within the next eight years.”
– Reuters, quoting Pino Arlacchi, ED UNODCCP, Oct 12/2000

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Propaganda – street value

“On April 1, 2002, the OPP-RCMP Joint Corn Theft Squad will hold a press conference to discuss the recent arrests, in the case of the hijacking of a truck from a farm field in Northumberland County last November. **The truck was loaded with 700 bushels of freshly picked and shelled corn. Police estimate the value of the stolen corn at \$1.25 million.**”

“Inflation Is Alive, Well In Police Drug Squad Reports,” *The Independent* (Ontario), March 27, 2002

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Propaganda – street value

How can we be sure this is a joke? After all, the math works out. Corn currently brings a farmer only about \$2 per bushel, but the same corn could be processed into “gourmet” corn chips, packaged in one-ounce bags, and sold for \$2 a bag in the stands at a major sporting event.

Let's see ... 56 pounds per bushel times 700 bushels = 39,200 pounds, multiplied by 16 ounces, gives us 627,200 bags of chips, with a total “street” value of \$1,254,400. In other words, this corn is priced using the same sort of accounting principles police use for marijuana -- figuring out what the raw crop will be worth, if it is grown to prime quality, broken into small lots by a whole hierarchy of distributors, and eventually sold in quantities of a gram or two at grossly inflated prices.

“Inflation Is Alive, Well In Police Drug Squad Reports,” *The Independent* (Ontario), March 27, 2002

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Impact of Propaganda (Alexander)

- stimulates new, violent efforts by police
- stimulates new markets for drugs
- makes it difficult to end wars once they have begun and been buttressed by such propaganda
- creates sense of hopelessness for people who have used drugs
- teaches people to distrust all authoritative information about drugs
- generates acceptance of extreme measures [tougher penalties, reverse onus, surveillance, asset forfeiture, violence against users]
- deflects attention from alternatives, causes (“social pathologies”) behind harmful drug use
- dehumanizes drug users and sellers
- “Collective stupidity”

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- Propaganda
 - ▶ Gateway drugs?

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Canadian Police Association

- “Marijuana is internationally recognized as a gateway drug for other drug use.”

– Mr. Dale Orban, Detective Sergeant, Regina Police Service, testifying on behalf of the Canadian Police Association, before the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, May 28, 2001

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Canadian Police Association

Response to Senate Committee report

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- “It is clear that, despite people speaking to the contrary, it is a gateway drug. Most people who use other drugs started with marijuana. There is a time-order relationship, a strong, consistent **correlation** between first use and an order of substances.”

– Dr. Colin R. Mangham, Director, Prevention Source B.C, testifying before the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, September 17, 2001

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- “The Centre on Addiction and Substance Abuse out of Columbia University did a study in 1994. Their report was entitled, "Cigarettes, Alcohol, Marijuana: Gateways to Illicit Drug Use." Their study concluded that a 12-year-old to 17-year-old who used marijuana is 85 times more likely to use cocaine than one who does not use marijuana. On the strength of that statistical information, the **correlation** is eight times stronger than the link between smoking and lung cancer.”

– Mr. Dale Orban, Detective Sergeant, Regina Police Service, testifying on behalf of the Canadian Police Association, before the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, May 28, 2001

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- “It is true that all users of more dangerous drugs began with marijuana, but they also started out using alcohol, tobacco or other products. However, only a tiny proportion of those who use marijuana will go on to take harder drugs.”

– Ms Nicole Maestracci, President, Mission interministérielle de lutte à la drogue et à la toxicomanie (Interministerial Mission on Anti-Drug and Addiction Activities), France, before the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, October 1, 2001

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- If we examine people who have used drugs of low prevalence, such as cocaine and heroin, you find that they have almost all used marijuana before that time. At the same time, individuals who have used these drugs of low prevalence have used all drugs of high prevalence, including marijuana, alcohol, tobacco, pills, and fake amphetamine, a street drug containing mostly caffeine. We make a mistake by looking at users of low prevalence drugs and saying that marijuana contributed or led them.

- However, if we start at the other end, depending on the age group and the time of questioning, some two-thirds of users of marijuana in the United States have never used another illegal drug. We could say, that way, that marijuana is not a gateway drug, it is a terminus drug, that people are satisfied with marijuana and do not go on in two-thirds of instances to use other drugs.

– Professor John Morgan, CUNY, testifying before the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs (June 11, 2001)

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- "There is no conclusive evidence that the drug effects of marijuana are causally linked to the subsequent abuse of other illicit drugs."

► "Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base," Division of Neuroscience and Behavioral Research, Institute of Medicine (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999).

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■ The Institute of Medicine's 1999 report on marijuana explained that marijuana has been mistaken for a gateway drug in the past because "Patterns in progression of drug use from adolescence to adulthood are strikingly regular. Because it is the most widely used illicit drug, marijuana is predictably the first illicit drug most people encounter. Not surprisingly, most users of other illicit drugs have used marijuana first. In fact, most drug users begin with alcohol and nicotine before marijuana --usually before they are of legal age."

▶ "Marijuana and Medicine: Assessing the Science Base," Division of Neuroscience and Behavioral Research, Institute of Medicine (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1999).

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■ "The rate of past month illicit drug use among youths was higher among those that were currently using cigarettes or alcohol, compared with youths not using cigarettes or alcohol."

■ "In 1999, 5.6 percent of youth nonsmokers used illicit drugs, while among youths who used cigarettes, the rate of past month illicit drug use was 41.1 percent. The rate of illicit drug use was also associated with the level of alcohol use. Among youths who were heavy drinkers in 1999, 66.7 percent were also current illicit drug users. Among nondrinkers, only 5.5 percent were current illicit drug users."

– Summary of Findings from the 1999 (US) National Household Survey on Drug Abuse

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■ The World Health Organization's investigation into the gateway effect of marijuana stated emphatically that the theory that marijuana use by adolescents leads to heroin use is the least likely of all hypotheses.

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■ Over 72 million Americans have used marijuana, yet for every 120 people who have ever tried marijuana, there is only one active, regular user of cocaine.

▶ (US) National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Population Estimates 1998

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■ Source: reports cited at:
■ <http://www.drugwarfacts.org/gatewayt.htm>

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Effects on the Mind?

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