

Essay on Drug Abuse

Friedman, Richard. "A Rising Tide of Substance Abuse". *The New York Times*. 29 Apr. 2014

The article bemoans the increasing rate of substance abuse among baby boomers. The drug habits of the baby boomers are facilitated by their considerable health and wealth due to improved living standards over the past century. The habit is terrifying since drug abuse is considered to be a habit for young people. The research notes that baby boomers who grew up in the 60s and 70s when experimenting with drugs was the in-thing are more likely to use illicit drugs than the previous generations before them. A 2011 study conducted by The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration revealed that drug use among those in the 50-59 age group increased from 2.7 percent in 2002 to 6.3 percent in 2011. In 2010, a study established that approximately 14-20 % of the elderly population had one or several mental health or substance abuse disorders. Drug abuse among the elderly is a catastrophic time bomb because elderly people have a significantly low ability to metabolize drugs.

Fulton, Greg. "I Lived Breaking Bad". *Salon*. 02 Sep. 2014

The author narrates the nasty experience he had when using the increasingly popular drug "Meth". Meth became known to the American Public through the epic drama "Breaking Bad" whereby the lead character evolves from a complacent high school teacher into a ruthless "meth cook" and drug dealer. The author laments that he could not bring himself to watching the problem since he could relapse from watching the effects of the drugs on other people. He describes the destruction and euphoria of Meth as more addictive than that of any other drug in the market. In 2008, when the program debuted he had stayed clean for 27 years but could still remember its exact smell. The physical, mental, and visual sensations of the drug are unlike anything he has ever experienced. The fact that Meth is relatively cheaper and available as compared to other drugs makes it the drug of choice for most substance abusers. It is the most addictive drug on earth according to the UN World Drug Report. According to the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), its power is ten times that of Cocaine. The reason that meth is so addictive is because it has a similar chemical structure with the brain's dopamine that releases feelings of reward and pressure. Cocaine stays in the system for 1 hour while 50% of Meth stays in the system for 12 hours. Fighting off Meth addiction is a mountainous task for a drug addict.

Mnookin, Seth. "The Ever-Present Danger of Relapsing". *Slate*. 04 Feb 2014

The one struggle that drug addicts constantly face is the danger of relapsing. This became apparent when Philip Seymour Hoffman died of a drug addiction. He became sober at the age of 22 and stayed clean for 23 years only to relapse again and veer off the cliff. The author writes that the root causes of addiction are elusive because they are a mixture of the environment, exposure, and genetics. The fact that there is no scientifically backed method of recovery makes it difficult for drug addicts to stay clean. Attempts at recovery are often characterized by a brief period of relapses. The author remembers relapsing after only two years and graduating from alcohol to heroin during the period. Once an addict reopens the channel of chemical relief it is usually too late to save him or her.

Schuman, Rebecca. "The Campus Alcohol Problem that Nobody Talks About". *Slate*. 04 Dec 2014

Binge drinking on campus is never acknowledged as a problem since it is overly glamorized and celebrated. It is accepted as an essential component of college culture. The excessive drinking results in assaults, overdoses, and other forms of undesirable behaviour. The sad reality is that binge drinking in colleges is out of control, gross, and depressing. The most tragic fact is that students do not care about the consequences of such self-destructive behaviour. The author states that the blame should not be put on students alone since faculty members are equally afflicted. There is a firmly established drinking culture in academic circles which makes college administrators reluctant to tackle the alcohol problem in the institutions. Students learn to binge drink from the best-their lecturers. There are professors who are always reeking of booze and nurture hangovers on a daily basis. Some professors go to the extent of drinking with their students. If the alcohol problem in college is to be tackled, efforts have to be directed at both the students and faculty members.

Walton, Alice. "Your Brain May Be Wired For Addiction (But You Don't Have to Surrender)". *Forbes*. 02 Jun. 2012

The author begins by acknowledging that addiction is one of the most rampant mental health problems. Use of both legal and illegal drugs affects millions of Americans. The author zeroes in on a study that established the strong role that genetics and family background play in addiction. If one is nurtured in a family environment where drug use is unrestricted, he or she is likely to develop an addiction. The researchers studied pairs of drug addict and non-addict siblings. The researchers also featured a control group of non-siblings. The siblings, irrespective of whether they were non-addicts or addicts, took comparatively longer to halt their behaviour than members of the control group. Scientists discovered that the structures of the siblings' brains predisposed them to addictive behaviour. There is strong evidence that some brains are "wired" towards addictive behaviours such as substance abuse. However, having such a brain is not an excuse for indulging in drug abuse. Self-control is crucial as indicated by the fact that half of the siblings were non-addicts in spite of the genetic predisposition.

Works Cited

- Friedman, Richard. "A Rising Tide of Substance Abuse". The New York Times. 29 Apr. 2014. Web. 09 Dec. 2014. Retrieved From: <http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/04/29/a-rising-tide-of-mental-distress/>
- Fulton, Greg. "I Lived Breaking Bad". Salon. 02 Sep. 2014. Web. 09 Oct. 2014. Retrieved From: http://www.salon.com/2013/09/01/i_lived_breaking_bad/.
- Mnookin, Seth. "The Ever-Present Danger of Relapsing". Slate. 04 Feb 2014. Web. 09 Dec. 2014. Retrieved From: http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/medical_examiner/2014/02/philip_seymour_hoffman_s_drug_death_the_science_of_addiction_recovery_and.html
- Schuman, Rebecca. "The Campus Alcohol Problem that Nobody Talks About". Slate. 04 Dec 2014. Web. 09 Dec. 2014. Retrieved From: http://www.slate.com/articles/life/education/2014/12/drinking_problem_in_academia_alcohol_abuse_among_faculty_members.html
- Walton, Alice. "Your Brain May Be Wired For Addiction (But You Don't Have to Surrender)". Forbes. 02 Jun. 2012. Web. 09 Dec. 2014. Retrieved From: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/alicegwalton/2012/02/06/your-brain-may-be-wired-for-addiction-but-you-dont-have-to-surrender/>