

Drug Overdose Deaths in the USA

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Often called the opioid crisis, (*I don't remember when "opiate" fell from lexical grace, but it has*) it's the tragic, recent increase in drug overdose deaths in the USA, mainly from poppy seed derived heroin and a dangerously powerful synthetic form called fentanyl.

Q: Esteemed Committee, have humans always had a few among us attracted to psychoactive drugs?

C: Only when discovered, accidentally.

Q: Why has there been a sharp increase in heroin deaths in the USA but not nearly as much as in other countries?

C: Wealth; producers attempt to sell where the prices are best. The USA makes a better effort to stop drugs than other nations, increasing risk, prices and profits. Combined with a higher relative consumer wealth compared to producers, these cause a focus on the USA as an export market.

Q: There have to be social factors also.

C: Of course. Marijuana acceptability, alcohol and others.

Q: What are the other factors?

C: Social and financial stress.

Q: What are these?

C: In the USA, there have been increases in divorce, technological advancements, peer pressures, cultural conflicts and standards of well being. These effects are not evenly distributed, they can never be. Personal circumstances mixed with a localized pressure from one or several of these factors often open the door to escape.

Q: How do drugs become involved?

C: Someone who likes a drug, likes others who share the habit, hobby or interest. This flows naturally from and through all things; humans are social just as you are as your soul. It is natural to discuss, offer and share interests and activities, Some reject, others accept, some enjoy.

Q: What about the money?

C: Economics are an expression of human behavior and choice. There is always a willing supplier where consumers offer money, a subject we have discussed often. Illegality of a product or service mostly affects price.

Q: Why the overdose increase?

C: More users is the principal cause; the percentage of users who ingest a dangerous to lethal amount does not vary much, however there are problems with the synthetics.

Q: The problems are?

C: Imprecise measurement.

Q: Why are there more users in the USA? Why are more people willing to try drugs, then to move up to more potent ones?

C: To fill voids.

Q: Voids in?

C: Personal satisfaction, contentment and peace.

Q: How do we fill voids in our lives?

C: Find another person's void and fill it. If you are receiving the filler, do not criticize, reject or pass negative judgment; accept. This has fallen from favor with many people.

Q: Why has this fallen from favor?

C: Self involved behavior, reinforced by technology.

Q: How do Americans reduce drug overdose deaths?

C: Educate the general public about the dangers. Pay attention to and raise children as members of a family and community, not tasks to be managed as part of self fulfillment. Reduce the restrictions on drug production and sale, legalize nearly everything now consumed. The reduction in risk thus prices will stop profit seeking investment now involved with prohibited drugs, and will shift to companies and networks already established for legal drug production and sale.

Do not get divorced so often when there are children. American women, as a group, now enjoy emphasizing male partner shortcomings more than ever before, yet desire male partners more also. As a result, the large majority of divorces are begun by women and these changes have sharp effects upon the children. More people are becoming vulnerable to the seduction of mental escape.

American males, as a group, enjoy female company and intimacy more easily in current times than has been the case traditionally, and have ever less incentive to form a more permanent bond. Birth rates in the USA have fallen below the reproduction level and the population would shrink but for immigration and reproduction among newcomers, as has been the case through the history of the USA.

The focus on growth, success and images attached to them have burdened younger Americans, among whom nearly all the overdose deaths and abuse occur.

The vast majority see material gain, comfort, wealth and status as keys to happiness and university educations as an essential step to reaching the four columns of material gain, comfort, wealth and status upon which the illusion of happiness appears to rest.

This has led to both high costs of education and high debt assumed to obtain the education, while academic rigor and performance have dropped.

Q: How does this relate to drug overdoses, given how university educated people are less likely to die from drug abuse?

C: First we will say, if alcohol is included as a drug, the gap narrows.

A student unable, either because of money or ability or desire, to attend a university is certainly aware of the majority in her or his age group who do. S/he feels outcast in some ways because of this, and among the outcast because of this perception, the initial refuge drugs offer becomes more attractive.

Then we say, as we observe, humans in the USA - because this the area about which you have asked - now consider the university education a minimum requirement for a career. The minority who do not achieve it often see their future boxed in, without hope or meaning.

Q: Y'all made an interesting comment about academic rigor. Please expand.

C: Many complaints arise that universities are indoctrinating the student body, and we say this is true and false, simultaneously. The true portion is the suppression of competing ideas; there is nothing amiss when new concepts, ideas and bodies of ideology are introduced. This is good, it is progress and leads directly to the term commonly used, progressive. The downfall becomes the automatic notion that existing ideas require replacement by suppression. Progress collapses when this is introduced; it paints a picture of indoctrination.

The false part of the indoctrination accusation is, that it is done intentionally. Traditionally it has been done with clear knowledge that ideas are being exposed to their subjects with a specific goal, condition and level of control. We refer to your human book with the title "1984" by British author Eric Arthur Blair, whose pen name appears on the book, George Orwell. There are intentional forces who would like to indoctrinate the young population of the USA and do make attempts, however the population involved is too vast for this to be successful. The presentation of ideas is done with true belief, that indeed in the professor's heart this is the better way.

This approach disappoints, because it arises when exclusion and separation are pursued. This is not human nature.

Q: So why would a non-college educated student in the USA be affected by university student ideologies?

C: This young person observes the group identity, desires it and feels marginalized because s/he does not participate in such a group.

Q: I have often wondered how many drug overdose deaths are suicides. How many?

C: Across the USA over the past several years, nearly one quarter. Very few are categorized as such, because there is no clear evidence, such as a written note. The professionals involved have suspicions however do not speculate, for obvious reason. The higher recent rate of suicide in the USA overall, without including drug abuse overdose suicides, is cause enough to refrain from guessing or speculating. We caution you who have read this, not to assume that one quarter

of the drug abuse overdose deaths in your region, area or vicinity are intentionally taken lives. There are large variations.

Q: How many poisonings occur, where the deceased had no intention to die but passes on anyway, because the concentration, especially of fentanyl, was excessive?

C: These are few. The suppliers do not want addict deaths and loss of business. Less than strict production procedures have led to this, however the large majority of drug overdose deaths occur because a lethal quantity is consumed; the desire to chase ever elusive feelings before the body began to adjust its tolerance to the effects.

Q: The drug legalization idea is not popular in the USA at all.

C: There are powerful forces who require prohibition for their livelihood, such as law enforcement, lawyers, courts and judges. The need for these services would fall sharply and quickly, so this aspect represents resistance.

Q: I mean the general public, especially family and friends of abusers or victims.

C: Just as there can be little if any consolation to a murder victim's family to overhear how safe the area is where the killing happened. This might be true, however only a sustained zero incidence resolves this.

The notion that a greater percentage of Americans would abuse serious drugs if lower price and greater availability were possible, is not true, but is a widely held belief nevertheless.

Q: Why? Why do Americans believe this?

C: Training, custom, habit and fear.

Q: Looking back on what's been described, the ways to reduce drug abuse and deaths seem like right wing conservative doctrine.

C: How well humans and Americans apply a label, and then gaze happily upon it.

What a human decides to call anything is almost useless in this process. The meaning, contents and hopes are what matter to human happiness.

Drugs allow an escape; few of you will flee what attracts you. When the escape is the more attractive choice, the eventual effects do little, often nothing, to make escape less attractive. All of you value escape highly, depending on the circumstances and understanding of getting away.

The lure of escape can be neutralized quickly with the lure of love. This means belonging. When any human sees how s/he belongs to a group of humans which has meaning for all, this group will attract.

The discomfort of losing employment includes the sting, pain, hurt or shame of being rejected and excluded, feelings of inferiority. Finding new employment restores these somewhat; humans enjoy the power to reject and exclude, and do so with determination especially when the money justification can be made. Flight from a job before stagnation, or termination against the

employee's preferences, occurs as a development of the apparent economic dynamics but the emotional aspect is just as significant.

The attraction of drug consumption eases exclusion and rejection caused by many things in American life, such as education, social groups, religions, neighborhoods, mating and other things, much the way a new job eases the sting from loss of the previous.

Q: You mentioned mating in the USA, and while it's not related to drug abuse or overdose deaths, it is something worth asking, so I will; why are rates of marriage low, average age high and the large majority of divorces initiated by women, not men? Are these parts of the general social stress feeding the escape drug consumption provides?

C: Yes, these effects are cause, symptom and result. Career promotions are far more likely to cause a change, a reduction or ending of a romantic relationship. This was not the case even recently in the USA. The majority of unmarried young women today in the USA automatically exclude from four fifths to nine tenths of potential mates based only on physical height; this delays age of marriage and lowers the rate. Such young unmarried women generally fail to ever marry such a mate or come to realize the standard was unrealistic, which requires excessive to impossible stretches of time if considered absolute.

The focus on physical appearance, characteristics, race, ethnicity and health are sharper now than ever, despite common pleas for inclusion and tolerance. How many different traits such as named in the previous sentence are being mentally emphasized by any one person can vary, however across the population it is elevated over several decades ago. These considerations have lead to what you have asked.

Low rates of marriage have developed because cohabitation is easier and often preferable. Men fear financial ruin from broken marriages, women fear permanent single status from demanding marriage as a minimum requirement.

Lastly, most divorces are initiated by women for two reasons, emotional dissatisfaction and money, often both. Women see marriage as road leading towards personal happiness primarily, not for friendship, companionship and the great satisfaction of becoming a mother and successfully raising her children.

When a wife's emotional frustration grows painful, because she sees her husband failing to provide her with thrills, excitement, enjoyment, affection and attention in the ways and amount she prefers, life without the apparent burden becomes more attractive. When money will make her nearly if not equally secure, divorce becomes attractive and has become increasingly so in the USA because of these factors.

Q: OK back to drug overdose deaths, last question: if all drugs were legalized and treated more like alcohol, y'all have said clearly that use and abuse would not increase overall. How much reduction might be possible?

C: This depends on education and awareness, not legalization. The pitfall would be the bubble gum approach, which we shall explain briefly.

Bubble gum problems at a school cause new prohibitions and punishments, which will decrease use. Some students will skirt & flout the rules, some will profit from them but the pitfall will be when an enforcement apparatus created to eliminate bubble gum overdoes its searches for contraband gum, after fewer and fewer incidents occur, each remaining violation bearing a greater and heavier proportion of enforcement effort. This on the surface seems logical; apply more of the same which was already successful, to achieve even better success, or hopefully perfection. Experience will have taught the savvy administrator that diminishing marginal returns apply to many circumstances and, that perfection is an illusion.

Related to drugs, a bubble gum enforcement approach which is imposed after education and awareness, mixed with looser restrictions will see reductions in crime and uses, but will long established habits of punishment be applied such that success is undermined?

We suggest motor vehicle collisions and injuries or deaths from impaired drivers who are under the effects of the drugs now more legalized than before. We do not recommend this, no drug or medication which affects motor control, perception and reactions should be consumed before operating machines, so there would be penalties for heroin consumption and driving. Will these rules be violated to what degree and will serious injuries or deaths resulting risk renewed application of penalties and restrictions?

This would return consumption, problems and related crime back in the direction of the current situation.

Q: Esteemed Committee, thank you.

C: Our pleasure to answer these questions.