Drug Use
By: Rachel D. Ridnor
Sociology Department

Big Picture

What is a Drug?
- Any chemical substance, besides food or water, that affects your mind and body (Macionis)

Changing Contexts

Taking Action
Brainstorm

- Based on that definition
  - What can be considered a drug?

Blurred Lines: Japanese Magic Mushrooms

- 1990 banned
  - Hallucinogens
  - Not “magic mushroom”

- Result
  - Legal selling
  - Magic mushroom loophole

- Loophole closed 2008

Brainstorm

- Based on that definition
  - What can be considered a drug?
  - Which of these drugs emerged in your lifetime?
New Drug Spotlight

- "Butt Hash"
- Satire

Take Home Point

- What is a drug varies…
  - By place
  - Overtime

Alcohol: Social Perception

- Popular with colonists
- Irish & German immigration
  - Negative perception
  - Prohibition 1920

- Current perception?
Alcohol: Learning to Drink

How did you learn about alcohol?

- Low problem drinking
  - Regular part of life
  - View neutrally
  - Not rite of passage
  - No tolerance alcoholism
  - Light drinking home model
  - Groups
    - Italians
    - Jewish
    - Chinese
    - Lebanese

*From Preventing Alcohol Abuse (1995) David Hanson

Alcohol: Learning to Drink

- High problem drinking
  - Drinking special
  - Strong response
    - Sinful
      - Magical substance
  - Rite of passage
  - Drunkenness favorable
  - Learn alcohol outside home

*From Preventing Alcohol Abuse (1995) David Hanson
Alcohol: Learning to Drink

- How did you learn about alcohol?
- What effects did your learning process have on you?
  - Did you follow the process outlined?

Cigarettes: Image

- Sex
- Romance
- Fun
- Attractive
- Masculinity

- Sex
- Romance
- Fun
- Attractive
- Masculinity
- Changing?
Cigarettes: Changing Views

- Public perception
  - Health menace
  - Unsophisticated
- Results
  - Restricted areas
  - Advertising restrictions

*From *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes: Cigarette Smoking as Deviant Behavior* (1979) Gerald Markle & Ronald Trower

Cigarettes: New California Laws

- Illegal to smoke
  - Inside workplace 1994
  - Inside restaurants 1998
  - While driving a minor 2008
- Trends
  - Smoke free campuses
  - No smoking near buildings

Why do you think this is happening now?

Marijuana: Historically

- Used throughout history
- Past uses
  - Medicinal
  - Relaxation
  - Hemp products
- 1937 Marijuana Tax Act
  - Tax stamps?
  - Illegal
Marijuana: Propaganda

Marijuana: Current Standing
- Local: Medicinal legal
  - Los Angeles
  - Vending machine
- Federal: Illegal
- Do you think it will soon be legal? Why or why not?

Changing Contexts: Cocaine
- As tonic (until 1929)
  - Hysteria
  - Depression
  - Headaches
- Now
  - Illegal
  - Crack vs. Cocaine
    - Old Laws
    - New Law: Crack-Cocaine Equitable Sentencing Act of 2009 (not passed yet)
Advertising

- Restrictions
  - Smoking ads
  - Illegal drugs
- Anti-drug campaigns
  - Are they effective?

Drug Education

- D.A.R.E program
- Two-sided
  - Reduces abuse
  - Stimulates interest

Decriminalization: Netherlands’ Success

- Drug perception
  - Immoral
  - Fact of society
  - Limit associated harm
- “Coffee shops”
  - No advertising
  - No hard drugs
  - No minors
  - Small quantity sales
Decriminalization: Netherlands’ Success

- Advantages
  - Experimenters not criminalized
  - No drug crime circles
- Results of policy
  - Age start drugs decreased
  - Low rate hard drug users
  - Marijuana not gateway
  - Hard drug users stable
    - Limited health damage
    - Low HIV infection
    - Integrated into society

Decriminalization: Switzerland's Failure

- Problem
  - Zurich’s “Needle Park”
  - HIV spreading
- Government solution
  - Crackdown counterproductive
  - Provide clean needles
- Results
  - Draw more drug users
  - Park overrun
  - Public scared

Decriminalization: Switzerland's Failure

- Reform
  - 1992 park closed
  - Heroin offered in clinics

Why do you think the program worked in the Netherlands, but not Zurich?