

History of commonly abused drugs

After attending the rap sessions on drug abuse, it was determined to investigate the history of some of these talked about drugs, for instance one of the most common and widely used is alcohol.

The first use of alcohol probably occurred in prehistoric times. Organized production of the drug dates back to Egypt in 3,700 B.C., where a beer brewery is described in historical records. About one thousand years later, the ruler of Crete was already collecting taxes on wine. The Arabs introduced distilling into Europe in the Middle Ages and whiskey originally meant "water of life."

Today approximately 8 million Americans are users of alcohol. It has also been estimated that 90 per cent of college students are users of alcohol.

More people are drinking more alcohol in more forms and in more places than ever before, to such an extent that in the United States alone the legal alcoholic beverages industry grosses close to 12 billion dollars per year, which is more than is spent on education.

Americans are now consuming roughly 650 million gallons of distilled spirits, 100 million barrels and 6 billion bottles or cans of beer, 200 million gallons of wine, 100 million gallons of illegal moonshine whiskey, and unmeasurable amounts of legal homemade wine and beer.

As far as alcohol abuse is

concerned there are conservatively at least 25 million alcoholics in the world, with the highest rate in France, where as much as 10 per cent is reported to be alcoholic. Other countries of course have problems similar to America's with deaths and injuries from drunk driving, disability and death from cirrhosis of the liver, divorce, crime, and job losses. Many as yet have failed to either recognize or define this as a major problem.

Marijuana: Historically, marijuana, or what seems to be marijuana, was first mentioned in 2,500 B.C. in a Chinese pharmacopoeia. Those who considered pleasures or happiness immoral began to speak of the plant as the "Liberator of Sin," while others who found it desirable as an apparently effective medicament for ailments such as arthritis, malaria, or constipation began speaking of it as the "Giver of Delight." Somewhere between 1500 and 800 B.C. the plant came to be used in India for its mind altering effect, being used primarily for religious and medical purposes. It was considered holy and described as a sacred grass during the Vedic period. One legend speaks of the guardian angel of mankind living in the leaves of the plant, and another describes the plant as springing from the nectar dropped to earth from heaven.

There seems to have been

little use of marijuana in the western hemisphere until the middle of the 19th century, when it was taken up by a number of French and American writers, who in a sense popularized it as hemp or hashish.

In the form of hashish, it has been widely used for hundreds of years in the Middle East, and in the early 1900s it came to the United States as marijuana, used by Mexican laborers.

Growing easily in diverse climates, it is now used by 280 million people in all parts of Africa, North America, Brazil, the West Indies, India, Pakistan, the Middle East and other regions and countries.

Speaking in the 1930s former U.S. Commissioner of Narcotics, Harry Anslinger, exclaimed, "Much of the most irrational juvenile violence and killing that has written a new chapter of shame and tragedy is traceable directly to this hemp intoxication."

While most medical and scientific researchers do not dismiss marijuana as harmless, they do agree with Dr. Donald Louria, M.D., who says, "It is almost ludicrous that our society, faced with so many important problems, should expend so much time, energy and intellectual endeavor on a matter as trivial as the wonders or evils of the various products derived from this inoffensive and ubiquitous plant."

Marijuana is not a narcotic, although in virtually every state, laws based on the knowledge of 30 years ago still classify it as one.

Jonathan Cole, psychiatrist, says, "The most toxic reaction is legal; you can get arrested for using it."

Tobacco (Nicotine): When Columbus arrived in the new world, Indians were practicing the inhalation of rolled tobacco leaf, placed in one nostril and then lit up. The

Indians told Columbus that this practice relieved tiredness and monotony. Within half a century, Spaniards were totally converted to tobacco.

Sixteenth century English explorers had observed Indian women smoking and had casually related this practice to the sexual ardor and passion they experienced with these women. The English shipped tobacco home and by 1614 there were 7,000 tobacco shops in London alone.

It now constitutes an eight-billion dollar a year industry and Americans alone smoke more than 544 billion cigarettes in a single year, despite the fact that (1) nicotine besides being a stimulant, is one of the most potent poisons known; (2) there are toxic substances in cigarette paper; and (3) there is an overwhelming evidence of death and disability resulting from tobacco coal tars.

Caffeine: Probably the most widely used of all mind-altering drugs is caffeine, in the form of coffee, tea, chocolate, and colas, because of the regularity and multiple doses involved in ordinary use, wide availability, relative mildness and low cost.

Tea reached America in 1655, through Dutch importation to New Amsterdam, (New York). Tea consumption achieved its greatest heights in England, where in the 1950s a medical member of the House of Commons stated, "The National intake of pure caffeine is about 50 million pounds annually. Some persons consider ten cups of tea per day normal consumption. It is apparent that some people who would never think of drinking beer intoxicate themselves by taking excessive amounts of caffeine through their tea."

Per capita consumption of tea in England is now in

excess of ten pounds per year for every man, woman, and child, or roughly 15 to 20 grains of caffeine per day.

The coffee arabica plant has become the most widely cultivated drug or beverage plant since its origin in ancient Ethiopia or Abyssinia. It was used as a drug to keep the sleepy awake and is mentioned in an 11th century Arabian Medical text. It quickly came to be used by the Catholic monks and the Moslems to keep from dozing during periods of religious reverence.

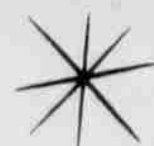
In the 1850s coffee reached northern Europe through the German explorer Reuwall, and in the early 1600s it reached England via Persia.

Today Americans alone use 40 million 132 pound bags of coffee per year. This amount of usage is equivalent to 20 pounds of coffee for every man, woman and child.

Some of the above information has been taken from a journal used in Helena, Montana, entitled, "New Space Drug Program," and from the Alcohol and Drug Information Service, Portland, Ore.



One of the popular demonstrations at Saturday's Artifactory was in stained glass work. Greeg Sweek and his brother, Mike (not pictured) demonstrated the techniques of making stained glass windows, lampshades and other objects. On display to the group of 50 people who looked on was a Tiffany-type shade made by Mike Sweek, valued at \$400. The Sweek brothers took up stained glass work as a hobby about a year ago.



Exhibitors happy with Artifactory

The third annual Artifactory, sponsored by the Heppner Branch of AAUW closed its doors late Saturday afternoon.

Participation by exhibitors seemed to be about the same as last year, but more exhibitors were selling more of their items. Attendance was good throughout the day, AAUW officers said.

Highlight of this year's show were the demonstrations. Dr. Margaret McDevitt and Vera Simonton of Pendleton were firing pottery to the rear of the Degree of Honor building until 5 p.m. Their demonstration of Japanese raku pottery drew many interested people. Earlier in the day crowds gathered around the demonstration table inside the building to watch stained glass craftsmanship, the making of string pictures, and corn husk dolls, silk screen dyeing and leathercraft.

AAUW members plan to hold the show again next year. Co-chairwomen for this year's show were Ann Doherty of

Heppner and Karen Beck of lone.



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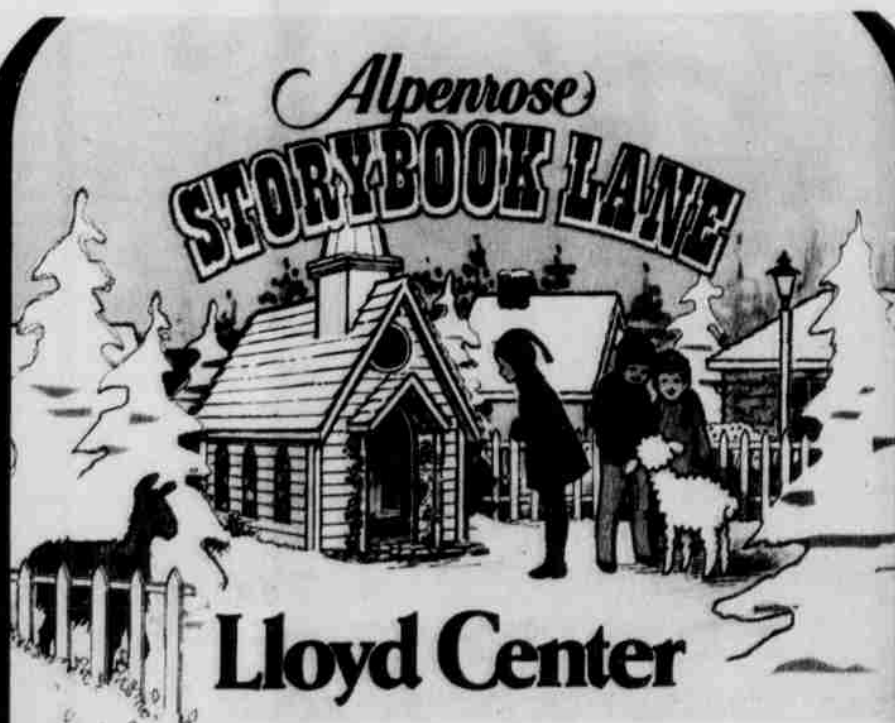
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