

Legalization essay

Economics



Will Haley Mr. Johnson English IV 5 January 2010 Legalization of Marijuana

Thesis: Even though marijuana is illegal under federal law, a select handful of states have made the choice to allow doctors to prescribe it to patients that suffer from certain medical problems.

Intro A. Cultural phenomenon B. Growing acceptance C. Thesis II. Medicinal Uses A. Treatment for glaucoma, AIDS, and Cancer B. Alternatives to Marijuana C. Effects on MS patients III.

The Possible Start of Legalization A. Obama's new approach. B. Irvin Rosenfeld, the exception C. Start of state legalization IV.

Conclusion A. Marijuana still illegal B. Grant Krieger's arrest C. Problems remain for patients in need Over the past 15 years, a cultural phenomenon has been evolving. The acceptance of medical marijuana has been on the rise, and still is with positive result through thorough research (Parloff n. pag.

). Even though marijuana is illegal under federal law, a select handful of states have made the choice to allow doctors to prescribe it to patients that suffer from certain medical problems. Although the use of medicinal marijuana is illegal in the United States, researchers around the world continue to explore the potential that marijuana has in treating MS (multiple sclerosis), glaucoma, AIDS, and cancer. In Spain at the Instituto Ramon y Cajal, Dr. Fabian Docagne and his associates found that the use of HU210, the synthetic cannabinoid, reduced nerve fiber damage in mice with an MS-like disease. Savitex, a cannabis-derived oral spray, has been approved for treatment of neuropathic pain in individuals with MS in Canada. In the United Kingdom researchers reported that 40 percent of the people on the active

treatment of Savitex said they experienced a 30 percent reduction in spasticity compared to the 21 percent who took the placebo (Durand and Holland 56+).

People that suffer from glaucoma can seek treatment in marijuana because of its effects to reduce excess pressure in the eye. If glaucoma was not treated right, it could cause blindness. Marijuana's most famous side-effect, the munchies, is also good for treatment for people with AIDS, which causes people to lose 10 percent of their body weight. Nausea and inability to eat could cause early death in AIDS patients, but marijuana has proved as an effective remedy for this.

This remedy can also be used on cancer patients who go through chemotherapy (Onstad 164). " I've had patients who are vomiting 30 times from the radiation. It can rip an esophagus apart or cause dehydration" (Onstad 164).

In a United States survey it was said that 78 percent of cancer patients who smoked marijuana found that it had reduced their nausea. Many doctors are still not convinced that marijuana is the best solution to these medical problems. They suggest alternative pharmaceutical versions of THC. These synthetic versions on THC do not impress advocates of legalizing marijuana because the high doses of THC in these pills make patients feel higher than when they smoke marijuana. Most patients get sick of the pills and can't seem to keep them down after a while of taking them (Onstad 164). Lynn Harichy, a 36 year old female, was diagnosed with MS at the age of 18. After hearing about how marijuana could be used to treat the symptoms of MS,

her friend gave her a joint as a gift; as soon as she smoked it she found results almost immediately (Onstad 164).

Averaging a joint a day, Harichy found that the muscle spasms that racked her body ceased; the bouts of paralysis grew less frequent finally vanishing. Most important for Harichy, her mental state shifted. “ I could focus,” she says, and in her life, that matters: Harichy has been on a disability pension and is training to become a lab assistant. “ Suddenly, my thoughts were clear, more organized. I could concentrate in school because I wasn’t in pain. ” (Onstad 164). Harichy did not want to grow her own marijuana or use drug dealers because she cared for the safety of her children so she joined Toronto’s Cannabis as Legitimate Medicine (CALM).

This organization provided marijuana for those who needed it for medicinal purposes. There’s one problem with CALM though, it’s illegal. In late February of 2009, President Obama considered a new approach to the medical marijuana problem (Parloff n. pag.). “ His attorney general, Eric Holder, confirmed at a press conference that he would no longer subject individuals who were complying with state medical marijuana laws to federal drug raids and prosecutions” (Parloff n.

ag.). This could potentially lead to the same endpoint as the Twenty-First Amendment (Parloff n. pag.). Irvin Rosenfeld, a 56 year old male, has been smoking 10 to 12 marijuana cigarettes a day for the past 38 years. For 27 of those years the United States government has been providing him the marijuana.

The marijuana is used as treatment for his chronic pain and muscle spasms caused by a rare bone disease. At the age of ten doctors found that his skeletal system was filled with more than 200 tumors. This disease is called multiple congenital cartilaginous exostosis. He is one of four people in the United States whom are supplied with medicinal marijuana without being penalized by the government. Cases like these make the government's position on the subject embattled and untenable. Of the 52 states in America, 13 of them have let residents use marijuana for medicinal purposes (Parloff n.

pag.). With legalization of marijuana in California came the first vote for taxation of it in the city of Oakland in October 2009.

This came with the approval of 80 percent of voters (“ Puff puff” 28). Another 15 states are considering turning into medical marijuana states through votes, which can happen within the next year. Although the use of marijuana is helpful to those with severe medical problems like; MS, glaucoma, AIDS, and cancer it is still illegal.

Grant Krieger, a 44 year old male, suffers from MS. He was arrested for smoking marijuana in front of a court house. He was left with 14 to 30 days in jail and up to \$15, 000 in legal fees. Until marijuana is legalized it seems there will be no end to the marijuana problem that people with these medical conditions have (Sheremata 28). Works Cited Durand, Marcella, and Nancy Holland. “ Considering Cannabis. ” Inside MS 25. 3 (2007): 56-57.

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