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Douglas N. Husak

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decriminalizing drugs
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Practical Ethics series editor: Colin McGinn



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Douglas N. Husak : Legalize This!: The Case for Decriminalizing Drugs (Practical Ethics Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Legalize This!: The Case for Decriminalizing Drugs (Practical Ethics Series):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A clear voice in a debate filled with hot airBy Boris YakubchikThis

is a book that provides (what seems to me) solid reasons to decriminalize drugs. Backed up with statistics and clear arguments, the author demonstrates how the major replies in support of prohibition are not sound or at best - shaky. To sum up briefly Husak's words - the right question to ask is not "why should we decriminalize?" but "why should we criminalize?". Clearly we must have a good reason to put someone in jail, and we can come up with a myriad of reasons for crimes such as theft and rape; but why should one be penalized sometimes with harsher jail-times for taking a drug? The responses to this difficult question are analyzed clearly in this book, and (I think) shown to hold no water. For a more philosophically serious book, read Husak's book "Drugs and Rights" (and for more - see his "Overcriminalization" - out Dec 2007) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must read. By especial Takes the failed drug war to new levels 0 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Lack of discussion of freedom to use prescription drugs damages his arguments By J. Clemons Some good information, but chapters are too long and poorly organized, particularly the chapter on arguing for criminalization. This chapter needs to be broken down into subsections. This would be okay, but there are only three pages on prescription drugs and Husak's casual dismissal of legalizing prescription drugs is devastating to his overall point of view. If doctors should control the use of pain meds, like Vicodin or Percocet, why shouldn't illegal drugs be placed in the prescribed category and give all power to doctors and pharmacies. This book contains some excellent ideas, but overall it fails to adequately address the legalization of all drugs. I don't think Husak really cares about the stranglehold drs have on tranquilizers and pain meds, when these easily should be legal, if marijuana or cocaine is legal. Also, he doesn't convincingly make the case that people should be allowed to use drugs for recreational purposes. This is a hugely disappointing book--as are virtually all books that see the War on Drugs as a problem. Finally, there is absolutely no hope for legalizing drugs until prominent physicians speak out for legalization.

Recreational drug users (other than those who take harmful substances like alcohol and tobacco) are regularly imprisoned. Nearly half a million drug offenders are incarcerated in US jails, more than the total number of prisoners in 1980 and more than the entire EU prison population. In some states more is spent on maintaining the prison system than on education. Current drug policies lead to immense personal suffering, as well as police corruption, organized crime and contempt for the law, and make drugs more dangerous because they are illegal and thus not subject to proper controls. Politicians from all sides of the political spectrum are beginning to ask: is it worth it? In arguing that criminalization is unjust, Douglas Husak explodes many of the myths that surround drug use. In some years, more than half of high school seniors take drugs, yet the US is not overrun with drug-crazed addicts. Horror stories of the dangers of drug use abound, but the truth is more prosaic; although recreational drugs are sometimes bad for users, there are between 80 and 90 million US citizens who have used illicit drugs without ill effects.

In his remarkable book, philosopher and legal scholar Doug Husak brings the drug debate to a new level. Avoiding hyperbole, he reasons along lines that should appeal to the majority of just, sensible human beings. That he does this so well is perhaps the more remarkable because, justifiably so, he is outraged at the incarceration of, and threats to, Americans whose entire identified criminal behavior is using a substance other people dislike. Stanton Peele, author of Love and Addiction, The Truth About Addiction and Recovery: The Meaning of Addiction About the Author Douglas Husak is Professor of Philosophy and Law at Rutgers University. He is the author of Drugs and Rights and Philosophy of Criminal Law.