

# PCP correctness

## Legalization solves America's ineffective drug war

Columnist



Jon Apgar  
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The phrase "war on drugs" is used today more often as a punchline rather than a serious political stance on a chronic problem for America. The reasons are obvious. Billions of dollars have been wasted in a futile attempt to stop the flow of drugs into America. Ineffective laws have been created and implemented with the vain hope drug dealers will actually respect the laws and fear imprisonment.

Both Republicans and Democrats live in this fantasy world, where more money spent in an effort to fight drugs will make the problem just go away.

Meanwhile, drug dealers still buy Mercedes and gold jewelry while millions suffer from drug addictions.

Politicians' attempts to stop the flow of drugs look good only on paper. In their minds, an increased police force coupled with stricter laws will scare people into avoiding drugs.

But the cold, hard reality is that drugs are rampant in America and easily smuggled into our country. Politicians need to stop proposing "feel-good" drug policies and start looking at the problem from a different perspective.

The biggest problem with drug policies today is their emphasis on harsh punishments for drug offenders.

Republicans sit on their own Cloud Nine in this dreamland—They want to implement the death penalty for convicted drug dealers.

The death penalty rarely deters anyone except the person about to be executed (if even them), and this law would not stop drug dealers from peddling their goods.

Drug dealers fear drive-by shootings or brutal paybacks from rival dealers, not rich white politicians threatening them with 10 years on death row.

Members of the Pat Buchanan fan club, who think money and legislation are keys to combating drugs, should realize the war on drugs is a big failure.

More money and more police are unable to stop drug dealers. The real solution is the legalization of drugs.

The idea has been called "crazy," "abominable" and many other phrases not fit to print. Dr. Jocelyn Elders was removed from her post as Surgeon General for even suggesting the idea.

The reason people fear legalization is their unwillingness to admit defeat in the war on drugs.

Consider the facts. The war on drugs has not reduced drug use or the number of dealers, and random confiscations amount to only a fraction of a percent of the total amount of drugs on the streets. Taxpayers' money is being flushed down the toilet.

If drugs were legalized, dealers would go out of business. Crime associated with dealing would become a moot point if someone could purchase them legally.

Consider alcohol. Alcohol is legal and regulated by the government. There are no "alcohol dealers" on street corners, nor is there crime associated with the sale of alcohol.

If drugs were legalized, the government could regulate their sale and impose taxes on them.

The billions of dollars saved by eliminating unnecessary and ineffective drug enforcement agencies could be used for rehabilitation efforts for addicts.

Despite fears, the legalization of drugs would not increase drug use. Those who want to use drugs do so now, regardless of legality. Making drugs legal would not incite those who previously declined drugs to suddenly become addicts.

Scores of murders occur every day in America due to drug traffic. It is a tragedy politicians continue to enforce failing drug policies while ignoring a viable—yet unpopular—alternative.

If politicians were not so worried about re-elections and favorable images with voters, Captiol Hill bureaucrats might actually consider the benefits of drug legalization.

Legalization might be the first drug policy to actually decrease crime.

Sometimes the most unorthodox ideas turn out to be the most beneficial ones.

# Vanity diminishes female self-esteem

Columnist



Kate Shropshire  
 Freshman biomedical science major

Society's warped concept of how women should look leaves many maturing young girls constantly displeased with themselves.

From puberty on, and sometimes even earlier, young boys and girls are faced constantly with society's images of the "perfect mate."

Images of perfection are thoughtlessly utilized in numerous advertising campaigns when, in reality, such an object of perfection remains elusive.

For young boys, this subterfuge surfaces in ads relating to sports, cars, beer and other certain aspects of conditioned male interest.

For girls, Seventeen and YM magazines serve as delusional guides which dictate the route towards the "Most Desirable Female of the Month" award. Graduates of this brainwashing school can then move up to Cosmopolitan which can teach women successfully how to earn promotions "the other way."

After such bombardments from new-and-improved special interest groups, such as glamour media, the effects of the persuasion becomes ingrained in America's youth. The media underestimate the harm of their power as young women turn to anorexia and bulimia in order to attain the perfect body.

Becki Elkins-Elkins-Nesheim, coordinator of Women's Programs at Texas A&M, said agrees society definitely has expectations of women and said she attributes much of the problem to the media.

"The most powerful way of communicating this message is the media," she said. "It is hard to say where the idea originated from. Parents, school, and peers play a roll as well. Parents and grandparents ask more questions pertaining to who you are dating rather than how are your classes."

If a girl fails to get a date for a Saturday night, she will attribute her misfortune to the size of her rear end and the lack thereof in her bust line. Rarely do women exclaim "I look fabulous in this dress." Instead, they often say, "I see I am wearing the Thanksgiving turkey on my hump."

With men it is a totally different story. Men rarely express disapproval when looking in the mirror. Actually, men seem to have a more confident air, which unfortunately most women lack. This automatic acceptance heightens men's toler-

ance of themselves and decreases their tolerance of women.

Elkins-Nesheim said she recognizes the decline of self-assurance in young women as they become accustomed to society's potent and permeating ideals.

"Girls are confident 'til around the age of eleven or twelve," she said.

"Then we see a decline of confidence due to emphasis on dating and how you look, rather than who you are."

With such environmental influences, it is extremely difficult for women to be content with themselves. An inherent fear of the opposite sex seeing them naked, hence exposing their flaws only diminishes any sense of self-worth they have.

When men expect women to resemble Playboy bunnies, it is no wonder women's security is tossed out with the garbage. Men even have expressed disappointment at seeing a girl naked for the first time only to realize Penthouse toys are a figment of the imagination.

Elkins-Nesheim said she sees these prospects of the sexes as a precursor to unwholesome attitudes.

"I think we set women and men up by images which leads to unhealthy behavior," she said. "Some men think that with a little coaxing they can get women to attain that image."

Age can also be considered a factor in society's reliance on certain dream replicas, Elkins-Nesheim said.

"Men become more distinguished as they get older, while women become more invisible," she said.

As women fade into the shadows of their doubts, the potential pride and power of the woman is lost.

It is unfortunate when a woman's conformity to society's limits is placed above their value as a person. Women must stop believing their bodies are a myriad of defects to apologize for.

Elkins-Nesheim said she believes these distorted deviants of reality could and should be avoided.

"When we start talking about these issues we need to see that it doesn't need to be this way," she said.

Women are under no obligation to achieve attention or appreciation through personal reincarnation of the theoretical boy toy.



MAIL CALL

## International students add spice to Aggie pie

Columnist



Joshua Hill  
 Sophomore  
 English major

Many students fantasize about study-abroad programs and touring the world, but few take advantage of the part of the world that comes to Texas A&M.

Texas A&M students should broaden their perspective of the world and make foreigners' stay here at A&M educational through friendships with international students and teachers.

Lisa Klintworth of the Office of International Student Services, said A&M hosted 1,726 international students, about one for every 24 Americans.

Although it is true that sitting at a cafe beside the Eiffel Tower or treading the expanse of the Great Wall of China are unique experiences, much of the allure of other countries is the cultures and thought patterns of their peoples.

People must explore and understand other countries' image of America. International news, specifically the way other countries relate to the United States, is often puzzling to Americans, who usually do not understand that minds in other countries work slightly differently than Americans'.

Bonnie Cross, a sophomore Spanish major, works with the Baptist Student Ministry's conversation class.

"They have different perspectives on everything; they think differently about things in general," she said.

Yulong Wang, a visiting professor of English rhetoric from Qingdao University, China, said he sees the United States in much the same light as many Americans. He said America currently is the most powerful country in the world and should use that clout in the U.N. to guide world affairs to a more peaceful planet.

On the other hand, Mohammed Al-Mishil, a visiting chemist from Saudi Arabia, said he does

not agree with American foreign policy at all. He would prefer the U.S. to take a more hands-off approach.

A second interesting question is foreigners' view of their own countries. Even for those who pay close attention to the news, their view of other countries is somewhat distorted. Conversely, international students from some countries don't have a clear picture of their countries' activities because of tight social control.

For example, Al-Mishil said he adamantly believes that the Hebrews never had inhabited the Palestine area until 1948, when they were given the land according to their mythology. The hatred most Arabs have for Israelites is easily understood if their governments are teaching such lies.

Many Americans have had an image of China seared into their minds by the American media's treatment of Communism, the Chinese civil rights record of restricted childbearing, and the Tiennanman Square Massacre.

Many Chinese, however, disagree with the American image of their country.

"We have a different interpretation (about Tiennanman)," Wang said. "It is a very sensitive issue in our country. It harms the stability of our government, but some things were changed."

A third insight Americans can gain from fraternizing with internationals is the picture other countries have of the world and its future.

Complementing his respect for America's position, Wang quoted George Bush, saying "relations between the United States and China will

be the most important [of all nations] in the coming century."

He said he sees America and China leading the world across Bill Clinton's "Bridge to the 21st Century."

Al-Mishil had no grandiose plans, just day-to-day life and his practice of Islam, which I got to watch and learn about. He and I had several talks about Islam over an evening meal of lamb, spiced rice and dates during the holy month of Ramadan.

This cultural exchange is not, of course, one-sided. A group of Mexican exchange students, here for only three days, were so anxious to learn and experience American culture they almost denied themselves of sleep all together.

Internationals are eager to learn about America and Americans. Many of them are here just for the culture and training in English.

The English as a Second Language (ESL) program and the BSM's conversation class are just two ways students can help and be helped by internationals. Karen Smirmaul, a Junior biomedical science major, participates in the BSM program.

"It provides them a way to make friends with Americans; they probably wouldn't be able to otherwise," she said. "[Also, you get information about the country first-hand, not processed through the media.]"

Cross said he believes the label of "foreigner" can often be applied to Americans.

"You always profit from getting to know people, even people here," she said.

If students at A&M are to be informed and intelligent citizens, they need to have a clear picture of the world around them. The environment of this university provides an excellent opportunity for students to see the world through its people.

**"(International students) have different perspectives on everything; they think differently about things in general."**

Bonnie Cross  
 sophomore Spanish major

### Minister fails flock, misinterprets Bible

Response to the April 8 article, Pastor: Homosexuality is genetic, uncontrollable.

God's truth is plain and clear, people like Rev. Piazza manipulate the Bible to accommodate their own beliefs. He intentionally states that Christians frequently misuse the Bible to persuade and misguide those who are unfamiliar with the Bible.

However, it is he who manipulates the Word of God in an attempt to rationalize homosexuality. It is hard to comprehend how one would misuse or misread verses in the Bible when it explicitly says, "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable" (Leviticus 18:22), and "Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion" (Romans 1:27). There are other verses that make the same statement about homosexuality just as clear: Leviticus 20:13, Romans 26-27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, to name a few.

Rev. Piazza's comment that Jesus said both heterosexual and homosexual feelings and that he struggled with ways to live with his sexuality has no base. I can find no verse in the

Bible that says anything about Jesus' sexuality, much less homosexual feelings. This argument is ludicrous and has no foundation. It should be taken as one man's twisted, misguided opinion and not fact.

However, this does not mean that there is no chance of redemption for homosexuals. If they will simply give up their perverse lifestyle, be repentant of their sins and ask Jesus into their hearts, they can be forgiven and allowed to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

Bryan Hager  
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