



David J. Bentel, D. Crimonology

photo/suellen bilow

(The Crisis of Drugs, Combat and the American Soldier in Vietnam)

by David J. Bentel, D. Crim.
and David E. Smith, M.D.

"The last few months over there were unbelievable. My first tour there in '67, a few of our guys smoked grass, you know. Now the guys walk right in the hootch with a jar of herion or cocaine. Almost pure stuff. Getting smack is like getting a bottle of beer. Everybody sells it. Half my company is on stuff."

- returning G.I. -

Congressional Representatives Murphy (D-Ill.) and Steele (R-Conn.) in making public their report this week on the state of the drug problems among our military in Southeast Asia, estimated that in some units, heroin addiction may be as high as twenty five percent. A recent report of the Special Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, called Inquiry Into Alleged Drug Abuse in the Armed Services, concluded that "40-50 percent of the men entering military service have at least experimented with drugs principally marijuana; some 20 percent of our military personnel may be marijuana users, and upwards to 10 percent of our personnel in Vietnam could be using hard narcotics."

Chronic addiction as well as widespread use of mind-altering drugs among our combat forces now appears to match the state of the current epidemic among young civilians at home. In New York City, O.D. or overdose of herion is the leading cause of death for young people between fifteen and thirty years of age. Fatal doses in military units are now being observed and recorded even though many cases are ambiguous or difficult to determine.

A major "fact" to emerge in recent months is that heroin, morphine and raw opium are unusually cheap and available."

Crude opium is even more common than morphine or heroin and cheaper. Smoking opium, is the most common way of utilizing low morphine content opium. Marijuana "joints" are dipped in opium, heroin, or other drugs and have created a new style of smoking, the O.J. or "opium joint."

Heroin sold in Vietnam today in 100, 250 and 300 mgm. clear plastic vials or "caps" is more than 97% pure. Considering both the potency as well as the toxicity of such drug, lethal overdoses are more common. Also a more rapid rate of addiction is followed by more severe and long term withdrawal symptoms. The new heroin is so strong that smoking or sniffing (something like 14% of the active ingredient can be taken directly into the blood stream by sniffing) produce pronounced physical addiction with typical withdrawal symptoms.

A number of studies carried out by the Department of Defense and the Army, with neither fanfare or publicity, reveal that abusive drugs are not only available as never before but being sought after and consumed at rates not

Johnny comes marching home again -- stoned!

ABOUT THE AUTHORS: David J. Bentel, D. Crim. is Co-director of the University of California Drug Abuse Information Project. David E. Smith, M.D., is Founder and Medical Director of Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic and Co-director of the University of California Drug Abuse Information Project.

previously believed possible. A recently completed study of this nature by an Army psychiatrist now practicing in the Bay Area, examined the drug habits of Army veterans of Viet Nam returning to be discharged (only honorable discharges) at the Oakland Army Terminal or in the state of Washington. Statistics for only the first quarter of 1971 (actually only until the end of March 1971 when the study was ended) found that out of a sample of just over a thousand young enlisted men (rank E-6 or below), 23% admitted to having used heroin in the last 30 days before being "recycled" to the States, and over a quarter of the total sample admitted to using herion, morphine, opium or other narcotics drugs illegally during their "tour" in Vietnam. Many of these, "regular" users of heroin, were found to have traces of morphine in their urine when tested upon return.

Although twenty percent of returning veterans in this sample who used illicit or non-prescription drugs overseas had used heroin or opium, such figures do not suggest how much larger must be the total sample who used marijuana, amphetamines, barbiturates including abusing alcohol sometimes during their entire military career.

Marijuana however, is still the drug most often used by American ground troops besides alcohol.

In Vietnam, marijuana is cheap, potent, and readily available like most other drugs. In fact, Vietnamese marijuana is considered by many as the most potent grown anywhere. In assessing the effects of the drug there-

plene. Entire companies, it is reported, are refusing to go into combat and are breaking with established military tradition, and discipline.

Returning veterans of the last recent months report not only problems of drugs and deteriorating morale, but a pervasive crisis of identity in a complex system which is based mainly on tradition and authority. One G.I. summarized his recent experience by stating, "I went into the Army as gung-ho as anybody. But right now, morale is terrible, everything is off-limits, and just above everybody is stoned."

The war experience in Vietnam continues to be a source of nearly suicidal despair to many returnees, a high percentage of whom, besides having drug habits, needs psychiatric referral.

Drug using, drug peddling, and the style of the criminal underworld which both foster, do not stop necessarily when a service man is sent home with a discharge. G.I.'s bring home both their habits and their drug style with them. Drugs at home, however, are weak and costly. A five or ten dollar a day habit in Saigon or Pleiku would cost perhaps several hundred a day in the U.S. and particularly on the West Coast. So some "reinlist for the benefits" - going back to cheap dope. But more often, they go back home, take to the streets, and start "hustling." Often borderline psychotics or at least deeply disturbed human beings, they seek anonymity in the transient, marginal world of the street and the ghetto.

Drug use and drug dependence, are only a parameter of the much larger

synapse

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May 28, 1971

fore, dose and potency become even more crucial variables. Where in weaker U.S. form, marijuana will be consumed to the point only of producing relaxation, some minor time-space distortion perhaps with feelings of euphoria, the cheap, potent weed of Asia, taken in large doses, may be acutely hallucinatory and cause reality distortion, delusions, and may precipitate full psychotic episodes in those whose stress level (due to combat) or mental state may make them prone to a "psych emergency." Little recent data is presently available on this aspect of common drug use.

A common rationale for using drugs as strong sedatives was to block out the psychic pain of awareness and feelings of personal inadequacy and alienation. Apparently for the same reason as in the State, young men have turned to drugs as a means of coping with inadequate selves or an unendurable reality. They find they can instantaneously alter their mood and their world. Antiwar slogans and feelings were expressed as part of explaining their own drug use. Several discharged G.I.'s stated that their heavy indulgence in drugs began at the time they started reading anti-war materials in their barracks in Vietnam. There was frequent mention of the TET offensive in January of 1968, when they realized, they said, that "we already lost a war we had no business to be in anyway." Increasing drug use and abuse at least coincides with increasing deterioration of morale and general military disci-

problem of the returning Vietnam veteran. Instead of returning home proud to America many "vets" hide their service identity. "Everybody hates us and the war and acts like we are all Mai Lai killers," one soldier complained. Most report finding no understanding at home, and no jobs. By recent figures, there is at least 15% unemployed rate for veterans. These figures include all ranks of all services including older professionally trained personnel who possess highly demanding specialties. The unemployable rate would be much higher for the more typical young, unskilled, ex-combat veteran who may be part of a racial minority already marginally employed. Many G.I.'s returning don't even foster hope of finding decent work.

Thus the "drug problem" overseas has helped created a permanent population of estranged, alienated, second class citizens who will swell the ranks of the unemployed and add to the already growing number of addicted young Americans.



This week's Synapse will be the last issue of this academic year. Publication will resume in the fall.



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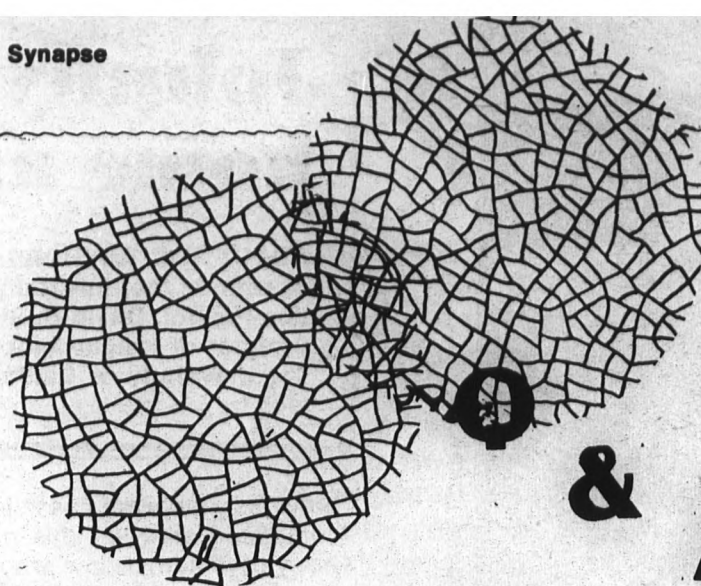
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Ed Blumenstock, Med Student IV

"Sure. If people enjoy pornographic movies, it's nice to have them on campus. I don't think it has anything to do with awareness and sensitivity though."

Joseph LeClair, Orthodontics I

"No, I don't think so. I don't believe there is a bona fide relationship that exists between the two things."



Rhodan

"They should probably go to an orgy instead."

Fred Armstrong, Lab Technician, Dept. of Pediatrics.

"I think so. I think they should show the movie so that people could get something out of it. I don't see anything wrong with it."

Norman Livermore, Medicine I

"That's two questions: whether they should be shown and whether they should be shown for those reasons. Whether or not they're shown should be irrespective of whether they're health professional people or not. Just because they're health professionals doesn't necessarily mean that they should see the movie more than somebody who is not a health professional. Whether they should be shown for those reasons is irrelevant because you cannot show a movie for a specific reason. The impact of the movie is entirely a function of the motivation and personality of the viewers."



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

friday, may 28

AM: "Bal Anat" Belly Dancing at 12 noon in MU Gym. The Silent World" with Flash Gordon shorts including "Trapped in the Turret." at 7:30 in Med Sci Aud. The uncut version will be presented at 8 p.m. in Pauley, for \$1.50. Sponsored by Cal Sailing Club. Tickets Millberry Union.

friday - saturday, may 28,29

pongbloods at Friends and Relations Hall, 660 Great at 8:30 p.m. Admission \$3 to benefit the National Law- for the Traditional Indian, and Soledad Prisoners contact 863-5193

saturday, may 29

will hold a picnic at Angel Island this Saturday May 29. th Schmidt at 664-9283.

sunday, may 30

will meet this Sunday at 7:30 p.m. at 120 Adolph Sutro. from 610 Parnassus 6:45 p.m. Guest speakers.

tuesday, june 1

7:15 NOON LECTURE PROGRAM: "Association of th Genetic Variations in Ear Wax." Dr. Nicholas L. Pen- tive Medicine, Division of Ambulatory and Communi- ber, Cancer Research Institute; Associate Director, F. At 12 noon in Room 332, HSE. G. W. Hooper Foun- f International Health.

friday, june 4

INFERENCE: "Clofibrate and Cholestyramine." Daniel r of Medicine and Pharmacology, Head, Division of iversity of Kansas. At 12 noon in 989 M. :30, "On the Waterfront" in Med Sci Aud. Gen. \$1 and

saturday, june 5

GRAM: "Tuberculosis and Mycobacteriology Today." nact Continuing Education in Health Sciences, UCSF.

classes

TWO COURSES in Wine Tasting and Appreciation will be offered this summer under the sponsorship of the Committee on Arts and Lectures. Starting the first week of July and continuing for eight sessions, a Beginning class will be taught Tues- day evenings and an Advanced class will be offered on Thursday evenings. Each session will conclude with a tasting of wines discussed that evening. Cost will be \$12 for the Beginning and \$25 for the Advanced Course. Instructor for both evenings will be Mr. Hurst Hannum, co-author of *The Fine Wines of Cali- fornia* recently published by Doubleday. Further information may be obtained at the M.U. desk in late June or by calling Bob Blumberg at 863-5418.

of interest

ASUC DINNER/MEETING: to introduce the new Executive Council of the ASUC on June 2, in Women's Residence Lounge from 5:30-8:30. Phone 2010 for reservations.

ASUC TAKES ON NEW ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: The Associated Students of UCSF voted overwhelming for Plan 2 in its elections held last week. This plan calls for ASUC to be headed by an Executive Board constituted of the Presidents of the Gradu- ate Nursing Organization, Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing and Dentistry and an Executive Director. The Executive Director will be elected by the entire Associated Students as per mail ballots which they will receive by June 3, 1971 and returned to the ASUC office before or by June 7, 1971 for tabulation.

RAFFLE TO BENEFIT FREE CLINICS: A raffle is being held by the first year dental class to raise funds for various free dental clinics in the Bay Area. The amount of mon- ey to be available will be determined by the response to this raffle. Prizes will include a high-speed air turbine handpiece; a low-speed belt-driven handpiece; and a laboratory coat. Tickets are \$1.00 and may be bought in 5185 on any afternoon, and from fresh- man dental students, before June 14. Clinics to benefit from the raffle include the Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic, La Clinica de la Salud, and the "Tooth Trip."



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FAN LETTERS

Dear Editor:

A basic inequity in fees exists here for dental students in clinical summer session. Junior dental students at U.C.S.F. are called to pay fees in excess of \$100 while U.C.L.A. students pay only for the optional student health service. Dental students already have the highest expenses of students on campus.

Precedent for tuition-free clinic exists here in that near-graduation seniors may work in clinics without paying summer session fees. In addition, students are not charged when working in clinics during quarter break.

In fact, students are reimbursed for room and board while working on school rotation mobile clinics assignment.

Further, summer session runs on a reduced day schedule and junior students receive no organized instruction. At the same time, they must provide many of their own supplies and equipment.

Chancellor Lee recently stated that two-out-of-three students on this campus now receive financial aid. The percentage of dental students receiving aid is higher.

An explanation is due

these students...

**PETER MILGROM
ASSOCIATED DENTAL
STUDENTS, PRESIDENT**

to all graduating medical students.

The 50,000 Interns and Residents of America are moving towards having a national voice. Your opinions and your representation are solicited. A second *National House Staff Conference* will be held this year in November in Atlanta, Georgia. It is up to all of you, regardless of your political viewpoint, to make your voice and that of your hospital, heard at the next convention.

For further information, contact your nearest regional representative. I would also like to have information about activities at your hospitals for the newsletter I shall be co-editing.

Sincerely,
Anthony Bottone, M.D.
Co-Editor, Newsletter for the
Coordinating Committee,
National
House Staff Conference

national heroin symposium

A two-day national symposium on Heroin will be held on June 19-20 in the Med Sci Auditorium at the University of California, San Francisco. DR. DAVID BENTEL will be panel moderator for a panel on "Vietnam, Heroin and the Military," at the Sunday morning session. The National Heroin Symposium is under chairmanship of DAVID E. SMITH, M.D., Medical Director, Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic; Assistant Clinical Professor of Toxicology, UCSF; and Editor, "Journal of Psychedelic Drugs" and JOHN LUCE, Extension Specialist in Drug Abuse Education, Department of Continuing Education in Health Sciences, UCSF; Public Affairs Director, Haight Ashbury Free Medical Clinic.

Co-sponsored by the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic, the UCSF Dept. of Continuing Education in Health Sciences, the Psychopharmacology Study Group and the Student Association for the Study of Hallucinogens, the symposium costs \$30 to include lunches on Saturday and Sunday and a Saturday night happening. A limited number of scholarships covering one-half the registration fee have been made available through the Diana Linkletter Fund. Interested persons should write the Symposium explaining their academic standing and reasons for wishing to attend. Address inquiries and applications for enrollment to: National Heroin Symposium, Continuing Education in Health Sciences, University of California, San Francisco 94122. Phone 666-2483.

Editorial policy

The Synapse welcomes the contribution of well written articles, letters, and poetry during the summer from UCSF patients, students, staff, and faculty for publication during the 1971-1972 school year. Challenging and thought provoking copy will be given preference over pedantic and announcement type articles. If you have complaints over aspects of this campus, please also include feasible solutions. The ancient Chinese poetic dictum that any thought can be expressed in 12 lines applies in general to all submitted copy. Please be brief, use well chosen words, and try to avoid the jargon used by so many in our culture to display their technical vocabulary.

Loren Pickart, Editor-in-Chief

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synapse

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Announcements should be submitted to the Millberry Union Central Desk by noon Monday the week of publication or call 666-2211. Letters and articles are cordially invited. All copy should be typed and double-spaced. Letters shall be published at the discretion of the Editor and must be signed; however, the name may be withheld if so desired by the writer. Slanderous letters will not be published but will be read eagerly by the editorial staff.

The Synapse seeks to act as a forum for responsible dialogue between the authors and the readers of the campus community representing a spectrum of belief and action. Articles published in the Synapse represent the viewpoint of the authors and not necessarily those of the editorial staff.

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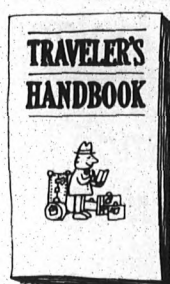
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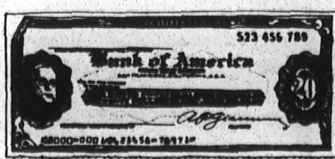
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