



Drugs and Drug Policy in America: A Documentary History (Primary Documents in American History and Contemporary Issues)

Steven Belenko

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Debates over the use and abuse of drugs, the laws controlling drugs in this country, and the question of whether or not certain drugs should be legally available have inflamed Americans since the 19th-century, and continue to flourish as America attempts to wage its war on drugs. Students can trace the history and development of these arguments, as well as the reactions to them, through this unique collection of over 250 primary documents. Court cases, speeches, laws, opinion pieces, and other documents bring to life the controversies surrounding the issues. Explanatory introductions to documents aid users in understanding the various arguments put forth, while illuminating the significance of each document.

Belenko traces the origins and changes in the nature of drug use and abuse in this country, as well as drug policy. Students can follow the evolution of the laws that have limited access to drugs such as cocaine and opium that were once legal in this country, as well as read the differing opinions in recent history on whether or not certain drugs such as marijuana ought to be legally available. The carefully chosen documents reflect the fact that our government's decisions have not always ended public controversy about how to deal with drug related problems and the very real consequences of addiction. The introductory and explanatory text help readers understand the nature of the conflicts, the issues being litigated, the social and cultural pressures that have shaped the debates, and the manner in which the passions of individual people have affected our drug policies.

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