

“Drug prohibition and criminality”

Guillaume Fournier, SEDET a CNRS and University of Paris 7 - Denis Diderot Social Sciences Research Laboratory

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The link between drug consumption and delinquency is complex and should not be interpreted merely as a relationship of cause and effect. Furthermore, the comparison of legal to illegal drugs confirms the idea that prohibition is a primordial factor in public disorder associated with psychoactive drugs. About available data, the majority of the research does not specify whether the offences were related to the breach of drug legislation or whether they were outright attacks on property or persons. For this reason, there is a consequential bias and overestimation from the outset as the majority of the legal proceedings were based on the application of drug prohibition laws detailed in many international conventions, and the greater part of these users were being tried for precisely use or distribution of illegal substances. For the fraction of users being tried for infringement of a law unrelated to drugs, the causal links are numerous and remain mysterious: was the crime committed under the influence of the drug (as is the case with alcohol and violence), with the aim to obtain resources to acquire a drug (whether addicted or not), or was it an appetite for transgression that drove the individual to lead a life of a delinquent *and* a user of illegal substances? It must also be noted that drug-using delinquents have a higher chance of being arrested by the police, this being a supplementary cause of their statistical overrepresentation.

In addition with these criminological issues, it must be admitted that "War on drugs" massively clogs the judicial system and makes its management problematic. Despite a growing amount of resources, the repression apparatus remain saturated, seriously compromising the efficient accomplishment of their missions.

Moving towards softer drug regimes raise the question of the fate of ex-traffickers: Would they engage in activities involving an increase in direct damages to the community in the case of an institution of a legal regulated market? All experience with cases of this kind seems to show that, on the contrary, the general violence level decreases significantly, as the end of the US alcohol prohibition, the Dutch and the Swiss experiences have shown.