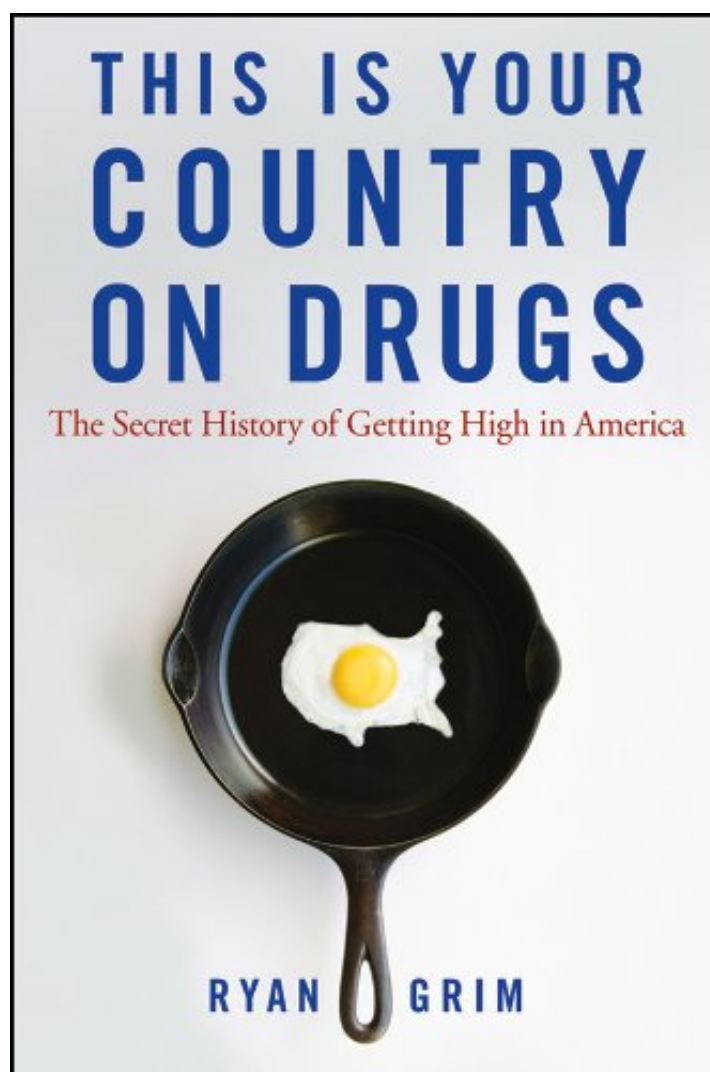


This Is Your Country on Drugs: The Secret History of Getting High in America

by
Ryan Grim



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Synopsis

Everything we know about drugs—from acid to epidemics to DARE and salvia—turns out to be wrong. Stock up on munchies and line up your water bottles: journalist Ryan Grim will take you on a cross-country tour of illicit drug use in the U.S.—from the agony (the huge DEA bust of an acid lab in an abandoned missile silo in Kansas) to the ecstasy (hallucinogens at raves and music festivals). Along the way, Grim discovers some surprising truths. Did anti-drug campaigns actually encourage more drug use? Did acid really disappear in the early 2000s? And did meth peak years ago? Did our Founding Fathers—or, better yet, their wives—get high just as much as we do? Traces the evolution of United States's long and twisted relationship with drugs. Gives surprising answers to questions such as: how did heroin become popular, when did the meth epidemic peak, and has LSD gone the way of Quaaludes. Based on solid reporting and wide-ranging research—including surveys, reports, historical accounts, and more. Not since Eric Schlosser ventured underground to marijuana's black market in *Reefer Madness* has a reporter trained such a keen eye on drugs and culture. A powerful and often shocking history of one of our knottiest social and cultural problems, *This is Your Country on Drugs* leads you on a profound exploration of what it means to be an American.

Sort review

From Publishers Weekly. Starred Review. Admitting that "so much has been written on drug use and American culture that it would take weeks to roll all of that paper up and smoke it," journalist Grim plunges into the counterculture, the literature, the research, the opposition, the pharmaceutical interests, the media coverage, the kids and users, the heroes and the hypocrites to chart the evolution of drug use in America, covering every illegal high, taking on well-entrenched myths and turning up fascinating stories on current trends—beginning with the end of LSD. Backed by plenty of startling facts (i.e., 1984's drug-related criminal population was 30,000; by 1991 it was more than 150,000), Grim fashions a sharp critique of anti-drug programs ("exposure to anti-drug ads led to higher rates of first-time drug use among certain groups, such as fourteen-to-sixteen year olds and whites") and other policy decisions (President Clinton's approval of NAFTA led to an unprecedented influx of drugs across the Mexican border). Grim isn't all talk, however: he barely survives on-site research during drug riots in Bolivia, goes through a typically fraught trip on ayahuasca, and scouts the battlefields of the fight to legalize cannabis ("In San Francisco, pot clubs quickly outnumbered McDonald's franchises"). This lively, personable history should strike fans of Martin Torgoff's *Can't Find My Way Home* as a worthy follow-up. --This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition. Review* Admitting that "so much has been written on drug use and American culture that it would take weeks to roll all of that paper up and smoke it," journalist Grim plunges into the counterculture, the literature, the research, the opposition, the pharmaceutical interests, the media coverage, the kids and users,

the heroes and the hypocrites to chart the evolution of drug use in America, covering every illegal high, taking on well-entrenched myths and turning up fascinating stories on current trends—beginning with the end of LSD. Backed by plenty of startling facts (i.e., 1984's drug-related criminal population was 30,000; by 1991 it was more than 150,000), Grim fashions a sharp critique of anti-drug programs (“exposure to [anti-drug] ads led to higher rates of first-time drug use among certain groups, such as fourteen-to-sixteen year olds and whites”) and other policy decisions (President Clinton's approval of NAFTA led to an unprecedented influx of drugs across the Mexican border). Grim isn't all talk, however: he barely survives on-site research during drug riots in Bolivia, goes through a typically fraught trip on ayahuasca, and scouts the battlefields of the fight to legalize cannabis (“In San Francisco, pot clubs quickly outnumbered McDonald's franchises”). This lively, personable history should strike fans of Martin Torgoff's *Can't Find My Way Home* as a worthy follow-up. (July) (Publishers Weekly, July 27, 2009)“One of the theses of *This Is Your Country on Drugs* -- a cornucopia of unconventional wisdom about our relationship to mind-altering substances -- is that the popularity of drugs waxes and wanes according to a complex sum of factors.” (salon.com, July 20, 2009)“Mark Kleiman calls it “Atonishingly clear-headed and well-written, as if someone had taken David Courtwright and added just a splash of Hunter Thompson.” (Mark Klieman, TPMCafe)“A wide-ranging, fascinating romp through the history of America's insatiable appetite for all manner of drugs, from opium to crystal meth, all the way up to the possibly soon-to-be-illegal hallucinogen *Salvia divinorum*.” (The Philadelphia City Paper)--This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition.From the Inside FlapIt's time to stock up on munchies, twist the caps off your water bottles, and get on the bus! You're about to embark on a cross-country tour of the complex, bizarre, and surprising history of drug use in America, a history that takes you from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, through New York's nineteenth-century opium dens, on to the Summer of Love, into the Midwestern "methedemic," and right up to today—where California has effectively legalized marijuana and the rest of the country is thinking of doing the same.In *This Is Your Country on Drugs*, journalist Ryan Grim challenges everything you thought you knew about America's drug culture and how and when it began, who contributed to its growth, who opposed it and why, and what makes one drug surge in popularity and another fade.You'll get the inside story on the huge DEA bust of an acid lab in an abandoned missile silo in Kansas that may have caused the disappearance of LSD in the early 2000s; find out how the temperance movement of the nineteenth century encouraged the use of opium, cocaine, and other narcotics; and discover the link between drugs and the birth of the modern mass media.Drawing on many sources, both historic and contemporary, Grim asks penetrating questions about America's drug habit. Has the war on drugs done anything to reduce drug use? If all drugs were made legal, would we end up re-criminalizing them? Did our founding fathers—and especially their wives—get high just as frequently as twenty-first-century Americans? Is the crack epidemic really over, if it ever even existed? Did Ronald Reagan inadvertently cause the cocaine boom of the 1980s by going after pot smokers? Did NAFTA open the door for Mexican

meth to take over the Midwest? Why do Americans use drugs at a far higher rate than any other people in the world? Why do we put alcohol in a class different from every other drug? Grim's answers are, to say the least, startling. He also offers thoughtful insights into why different people and groups use different drugs. In a hilarious anecdote about a concert by Andy Warhol's speed-driven performance-art troop Exploding Plastic Inevitable before an audience of pot-smoking, acid-dropping hippies at San Francisco's Fillmore Auditorium in 1968, Grim reveals the connection between lifestyle and drugs of choice, as well as what happens when drug cultures collide. Complete with revelations about the role of major pharmaceutical companies in both the introduction and eventual criminalization of such drugs as heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, and others, *This Is Your Country on Drugs* is more than a powerful, fascinating, and often shocking history of one of our knottiest social, cultural, and criminal problems; it is a profound and disturbing exploration of what it means to be an American. --This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition. From the Back Cover Seven surprising consequences of the U.S. approach to drugs—find out the facts in *THIS IS YOUR COUNTRY ON DRUGS* Past antidrug campaigns actually encouraged drug use. A few years ago, America stopped dropping acid altogether. The meth epidemic peaked a long, long time ago. NAFTA opened the border and created a bonanza for cocaine and meth traffickers—just as President Clinton knew it would. President Reagan may have inadvertently caused the crack epidemic. Kids today are doing fewer illegal drugs than kids from any time in the recent past, and for a surprising reason. The fastest-growing drug in America is a legal hallucinogen you can buy on the Internet. --This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition. About the Author Ryan Grim is the Huffington Post's senior congressional correspondent and has written for Slate, Rolling Stone, Harper's, and the Washington Post. --This text refers to an alternate kindle_edition edition. Read more

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What people say about this book

Book Shark, "This is your review on Caffeine. This Is Your Country on Drugs: The Secret History of Getting High in America by Ryan Grim" "This Is Your Country on Drugs..." is the interesting history of getting high in America. "Gonzo" journalist Ryan Grim takes us on a first person tour through many interesting topics covering the impact of policies on the drug use of Americans and why it has been an utter failure. The book is composed of following fourteen chapters: 1. The Acid Casualty, 2. A Pharmacopoeia Utopia, 3. Prohibition, Inc., 4. America's Little Helper, 5. New Coke, 6. D.A.R.E. to Be Different, 7. Border Justice, 8. Kids Today, 9. You Trip, 10. Blowback, 11. Conflicts of Interest, 12. Puff, Puff, Live, 13. Cat and Mouse and 14. Acid Redux. Positives: 1. For those of us who know little about the drug history in America it was an insightful read. 2. Accessible, conversational and even humorous tone throughout. 3. Well researched book that covers our history with drugs. 4. Plenty of interesting historical tidbits throughout. 5. Mr. Grim does a wonderful job of explaining the impact of policies on the drug culture of America. Interesting how even well intentioned policies fail and why. 6. Jaw dropping to know what drugs were allowed in early America versus now. Bayer Heroin pills, who knew? 7. You get to know the interesting history of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and their social impact. 8. Where did cannabis first come from?? You will know after reading the book. 9. A famous dictator was injected daily with speed, find out. 10. The history on attempts to legalize marijuana. 11. The concept of supply and demand. The impact of NAFTA. 12. The book is as up to date as any book is on the topic. 13. Some great quotes... "Prohibition helps create the very conditions that make prohibition ineffective." 14. Absurd criminal sentencing for minor drug dealers. 15. Interesting statistics abound. 16. Some good and useful links. Negatives: 1. There is no bibliography. For a book that makes many references this is a crime. The author does make some references in the body of the book but it's a far cry from a typical bibliography. An appendix with notes does not suffice. 2. Glorifies the use of drugs at least that's my impression. 3. A table with most popular drugs with descriptions by era would have been nice. 4. In general, it doesn't get into the drugs impact to the individual user as much as I would have liked. In summary, "This Is Your Country on Drugs..." was an interesting book to read. It reads fairly quickly because of the interesting topic and conversational tone. It also was quite enlightening and from my point of view politically even handed despite the apparent bias in favor of drug usage. What keeps the book from getting a 5-star review was the lack of a bibliography, lack of a drug table/chart to be used as a reference and the apparent glorification of drugs. In short, a worthwhile, educational read that has something for everybody."

Errol Icel, "The 30,000' View of Insanity. This book starts out with two premises, both involve supply and demand, and which then shows us where we are today. I have only read half this book, and will post more it when I finish. The first premise involves the supply of LSD. I have to admit, I've heard this before myself some time ago, and also what was substituted. So I know he

is right there. The second involved Reagan, and despite the claims of detractors of this book, I'm at that right age to remember the 80's becoming the age of Speed/Coke/Capitalism, and the anti-drug ad that through reverse-psychology promoted it. I also remember the pot dealers turning into coke dealers by the mid-80's. The lesson we failed to learn is that we are a speed culture going back to WW2. So we have supply and demand and of course, the new wave of mind manipulation, public relations. Public Relations which the Reagan administration spent tons on to turn him into the God-President he is seen as today. Our own Claudius. Read about VAL's and F.U.D. to understand what I mean. That's my view of the first few pages. Then the book becomes a history lesson going back to the Whiskey Rebellion. In other words, the Prohibition trauma we suffer began with the birth of this nation. I understand better the left leaning mechanism that not only delayed Women's suffrage but perhaps the end of slavery as well. This book, so far, doesn't take ideological sides, and neither should you. I remember as a student being bored with history books, but loved the sidenotes to history printed in those textbooks because they had context. This is THE comprehensive history of our Country. And instead of having a non-theologian talk to us about theology, this author is trustworthy in that he understands and conveys the subject matter through intellect and experience. The question is, "Can you handle the truth"? This book will make drug companies, the government and the drug war clear to you. The only other option to this book, is to read all the drug war propaganda past and present that comes from our government, and realize that it's the complete opposite of the truth."

Tom Dilberger, "interesting book. This is an interesting look at how drugs developed over the years in this country, but the last 2-3 chapters broke down a bit - too many statistics. But I recommend this book overall."

Discreet Me, "Sometimes it's a bit too detailed and boring.. Outstanding detailed coverage of the history of the ill-conceived war on drugs. Sometimes it's a bit too detailed and boring."

Amanda, "Fascinating, especially for non-fiction!. Fascinating and well researched. So interesting - all the things I never knew about our sordid history with legal Rx drugs (and alcohol) as well as illegal drugs. I bought this copy b/c I can't remember where I loaned my original hardcopy!"

Jimmy Green, "Four Stars. Very good read"

Tyler, "Interesting book, great transaction. Fast ship, book looks great, reads great. Learn about the history of drugs, and about why the war on drugs concept is fatally flawed. So mysterious! But so intriguing."

LAB, "Very interesting book!. I was very impressed with this book. It was nice to finally read a book on drugs that did not put them in a bad light, or be totally for prohibition. The content was

varied including; history of specific drugs, stats on popularity throughout the ages and the war on drugs. It was well researched and informative while remaining very interesting. Definitely would suggest this book to any of my friends. Lent it to my mother the other day who let me know that she is also really enjoying it.”

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