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Pharmaceutical Mistakes of the Past - Part 1 of Series

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The UK Government steadfastly denies the medical benefits of Cannabis, they've classified it as a Schedule 1 Drug - "*Of no medical benefit*" - and resolutely try to ignore scientific evidence to the contrary.

Surely, you think, it must be that the Government know something that we do not. After all, the [Home Office](#) exists to protect the taxpayer from all the nasties that threaten our lifestyles. In this series of articles, we'll be debunking the myth that the [Home Office](#) have any justification in their stance.

We'll start with the easy fallacies and then work through;

- The Government has any credibility when it comes to judgement of Drugs
- Cannabis is a truly terrible, dangerous nasty drug
- The *Home Office* are protecting our children
- Cannabis is '*Of no medical benefit*'
- The current stance is based on scientific data
- The Home Office are doing this for the 'greater good'

I imagine those who have pursued this cause for a while are probably having a good laugh at some of these 'truths'. Since my 'discovery' of the benefits of Cannabis, I've had quite a few conversations with various people. Some of the above have been suggested, although most agreed that I have a right to use whatever medication works best.

So, let us begin:

The Government has any credibility when it comes to judgement of Drugs

DiaMorphine

Let's cast our minds back a few years: You're a worker living in 1910. You've a bad cough, so you go to see the doctor. He legitimately prescribes you a "non-addictive cough suppressant", perhaps with a brand name of Bayer. Guess what, you just took Heroin! This was perfectly legal in both the States and the UK.

In 1914, the US Government chose to control the availability of Heroin (shock horror, it appeared to be addictive) and so only allowed it to be used or sold for medical purposes. It took the US Government until 1924 to actually impose an outright ban.

In the UK, [Heroin is still medically available](#) albeit controlled.

Tramadol

As I've written, I was prescribed Tramadol as part of a pain management plan. It's claimed to be 'safe and non-addictive' and is fully licensed for use in the UK. A [quick Google](#) shows that 'non-addictive' is probably the wrong term to use. I would suggest "horrifically stinkingly addictive", and as someone currently suffering strong Tramadol withdrawals I strongly advise everyone to keep well clear.

I've predicted to many that when the patent/license for Tramadol expires (and the pharmaceutical company moves on to destroying lives with a new compound) we'll see it become a Class A alongside Heroin and it's mates. Am I right? Only time will tell.

Mephedrone

[Mephedrone](#) - Banned because of 52 deaths alleged to be Mephedrone related (by the UK Media), in fact only [two were mephedrone related](#). ACMD's Fiona Measham stated that the UK media's reporting of the matter involved the usual cycle of *"exaggeration, distortion, inaccuracy and sensationalism"*

Despite all this, the UK Government wishes us to believe it is a credible source of pharmaceutical information. It's certainly a useful source for anyone wanting to consume stereotypical prejudices backed by a large amount of waffle. Take the following quote;

Use of illegal drugs causes serious problems in our communities.

Drug addiction causes young people to drop out of school, and it makes parents lose interest in their children. It pushes people into lives of crime

and poverty, destroys ambition and ruins lives.

Drug dealing brings crime and violence to otherwise peaceful communities, and makes people feel helpless and afraid in their own home towns.

We're working hard to limit the damage drugs do.

Does this actually tell you anything useful about drugs? It tells us that illegal drugs are 'bad' and tries to justify it with some examples of the community effect. But think about it logically, what if they weren't illegal? Who'd need to enter a life of crime to fuel their addiction?

More to the point, kids (as apparently we are protecting them) wouldn't be forced into a life of crime by the Government. Under the current regime it goes like this;

1. Kid experiments once
2. Kid gets caught with a small amount of [INSERTDRUGNAME]
3. Kid gets charged
4. Kid gets convicted of possession
5. Kid gets criminal record
6. Kid can't get a job
7. Kid turns to crime as only viable source of employment

In 7 small steps, the UK Government just ruined the life of a minor and then has the cheek to blame it on a substance. Had the law been fairer, that kid could still have grown up to be the next Neil Armstrong (or whatever he/she wanted to be).

So can we really argue that the Government is infallible when it comes to drug policy? **I think not**, especially when the Government ignores it's own advisers.

I'll now provide a (risky) comparison;

We often hear of the [ill treatment of Muslim Women](#). Those that perpetrate these inhumane acts often justify their behaviour as being a result of their beliefs and culture. Beliefs that [many would argue are incorrect](#), not to mention extreme (in the case of a portion of the Islamic Community)

The UK Government denies access to medical cannabis to those that need it, to those that live their lives in pain as the result of diseases, injuries and many other horrible causes. This denial of access to *effective* medicine is justified as being for "cultural and historical" reasons.

Now, obviously there's a level of vindictiveness that is unique to the first example. However, both have one thing in common: both cause pain and suffering to others based on nothing more than a *belief*. Beliefs that others would dispute (whether theologically or scientifically).

My intention is not to compare the deep psychological trauma of domestic abuse to

the denial of medication, but there are similarities. I don't need to explain the serious psychological impact of domestic abuse, but I believe it would be prudent to detail the psychological impact of current drug policy.

- Imagine being told that you could end your pain, but doing so could lead to a 5 year prison sentence.
- Worse, doing so could lead to your friends and family being imprisoned (for putting a roof over your head)
- Using effective medication to end your pain could cost your job, your driving license and even your freedom.
- Anyone that helps you is a target for legal action
- You get accused of 'funding criminal gangs' but punished equally for growing your own (and thus depriving the criminal gangs of income)

Now some of these obviously have a lesser impact, but consider the most important. You're in a lot of pain, so much so that you are hurting those around you. All that can end, but if you are caught, those you love could also be prosecuted (even if you haven't told them).

I've been in this position, and believe me it is a **hard** decision to make. Quite frankly, the risk of harm in either decision makes suicide a very viable third option. It's very difficult to overstate the deep psychological effect this can have on a (in my case) already fragile mind.

I'll say again, just to be clear, domestic abuse is massively harmful and I do not wish to make it sound like it isn't. The reason I have used this example is that both stances are based on nothing but faith and belief. I mean no offence whatsoever to those who have been unfortunate enough to experience domestic violence.

Take Action

There are those less fortunate than you that need your help. Our voices alone are simply not enough to change this unfair stance. [Write to your MP today](#) and tell them that you're not happy, consider supporting the [Legalise Cannabis Alliance](#).

I'll leave you with the following quote;

We need to review our entire approach to drugs, dumping the idea that legally-sanctioned punishments for drug users should constitute a main part of the armoury in helping to solve our country's drug problems. We need to stop harming people who need help and support - Eric Carlin of [ACMD](#)

Next in Series: Cannabis is a truly terrible, dangerous nasty drug

Tags: [Access to Medicine](#), [Cannabis](#), [Drugs](#), [Freedom of Choice](#), [Guest Writer](#), [Health](#), [Healthcare](#), [Legalise Cannabis](#), [Medicine](#), [United Kingdom](#)

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