

Reading Guide #7: Liberty and Drugs

These reading guides are provided to assist you in your reading. I encourage you to read the material through, first, then go back to answer the questions. You are not expected to hand in written answers. You are expected to have responses ready for class discussion. Only the boldfaced questions will appear on exams. Page numbers refer to Arthur, *Morality and Moral Controversies*, 7th ed.

John Stuart Mill, "On Liberty," pp 358-366.

1. Does democracy prevent tyranny? Explain.
 2. **Describe Mill's Harm Principle. What does it say about paternalism?**
 3. **"Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign." (359) Explain. What limits does Mill recommend for this principle?**
 4. **On what does Mill's defense of rights depend?**
 5. **What are our liberties? Be specific.**
 6. **"The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way..." (360) Explain.**
 7. Why is liberty necessary?
 8. "[S]ociety is not founded on a contract..." (361) Explain.
 9. What rules of conduct must we follow as members of a society?
 10. Does the Harm Principle entail that we shouldn't help others? Explain.
 11. **According to Mill, may we harm people's reputations? Explain.**
 12. **"No person ought to be punished simply for being drunk; but a soldier or policeman should be punished for being drunk on duty." (364) Explain.**
 13. **What does Mill call, "[T]he strongest of all the arguments against the interference of the public with purely personal conduct..."(365)?**
 14. Why can't people voluntarily sell themselves into slavery?
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John Stuart Mill, "Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion," pp 521-524.

1. **"If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind." (521-522) Explain.**
 2. What are the two branches of the argument against censorship?
 3. In the first branch of the argument, what assumption do those who support censorship make? How might they respond to this objection? What is Mill's counter-argument?
 4. **What is the problem of "dead dogma", in the second branch of the argument?**
 5. **"He who knows only his side of the case knows little of that." (522) Explain.**
 6. What possibility do the two branches of argument against censorship ignore? Why is this important to recognize?
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Robert E. Goodin, "The Ethics of Smoking," pp 506-515.

1. **How does the question of whether the smoker voluntarily smokes decompose into two further questions?**
2. How do cigarette manufacturers argue that smokers give informed consent? How does Goodin respond?
3. **When is it appropriate for public policy to prevent people from relying on false beliefs that would harm themselves?**
4. Describe three cognitive defects that contribute to false beliefs about the harmfulness of smoking.
5. **How does Goodin defend his weak paternalism?**

6. **How does the addictiveness of smoking transform the voluntary acceptance argument?**
 7. **“The issue is not one of impossibility but rather of how hard people should have to try before their will is said to be sufficiently impaired that their agreement does not count as genuine consent.” (509) Explain.**
 8. How does the age at which one starts smoking affect the voluntary acceptance argument?
 9. **What external, or contagion, factors help justify public policy measures against smoking?**
 10. **How might one respond to the economic argument against smoking?**
 11. Why is publicizing the harmful effects of smoking insufficient?
 12. What solutions does Goodin recommend?
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Thomas Szasz, “The Ethics of Addiction...,” pp 499-506.

1. What is the World Health Organization’s definition of drug abuse? How is it an ethical definition?
 2. How does the World Health Organization’s definitions make drug abuse a legal problem?
 3. How do doctor’s opinions about masturbation differ from those about drug abuse?
 4. **Explain Szasz’s use of the tall buildings analogy.**
 5. **How do laws against drugs treat people the way suicidal mental patients are treated?**
 6. **How does prohibition increase the likelihood of accidental overdose?**
 7. **Why does Szasz favor legalization of all drugs?**
 8. Explain Szasz’s argument that addiction is not essentially bad.
 9. **Describe the two reasons for taking drugs Szasz discusses. Which reason explains why most abusers take drugs?**
 10. **“The fear that free trade in narcotics would result in vast masses of our population spending their days and nights smoking opium or mainlining heroin, rather than working and taking care of their responsibilities is a bugaboo that does not deserve to be taken seriously.” (502) Explain.**
 11. **According to Szasz, how would legalization affect the economy?**
 12. **How are drug laws inconsistent with gun laws?**
 13. What limits on the right of self medication does Szasz recommend?
 14. **How does our attitude toward sexual activity provide a model for our attitude towards drugs and the protection of children?**
 15. How does Szasz relate the distinction between facts and values to drug legalization?
 16. **How do attitudes about cigarettes fail to reflect the evidence?**
 17. How do our attitudes about drug use reflect ambivalence about personal responsibility?
 18. How would drug legalization lead to the end of medicine as we know it?
 19. What does the Constitution say about drugs? What does Szasz say this implies?
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Daniel Shapiro, “Addiction and Drug Policy,” pp 515-521.

1. **What is the “standard view” of drug addiction?**
2. **Why can’t cravings, tolerance, and withdrawal symptoms explain addiction?**
3. What factors entered into the reduction of use of heroin among users returning from Vietnam?
4. **“These informal rules and rituals teach most people how to use `alcohol responsibly.” (517) Explain.**
5. How are even heavy cocaine users often able to prevent their use from becoming out of control? What limit do these studies of cocaine use have?
6. How does expectation of a drug’s effects alter the experience of a drug?
7. What kinds of people are likely to succumb to addiction?
8. **According to Shapiro, what makes smoking hard to quit?**
9. **How does Shapiro’s analysis of the role of pharmacology in smoking undermine the standard view of addiction?**
10. **“The standard view that cocaine and heroin are *inherently* addictive is false, because no drug is inherently addictive.” (519) Explain. What conclusions does Shapiro draw from this for drug policy?**