

Drug deaths: Sins of commission or sins of omission?

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Published: May 3, 2017

Drug Deaths Thanks to our president the Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte is in the news again: “He is very popular over there” [and we need him to support our brand new glorious and magnificent Manila Trump Tower]. His extrajudicial execution of 7000 of his citizens for suspected drug use is a sin of commission. But that does not bother either of our respective leaders.

Nor are we much bothered by the heroin overdose deaths in our country that the NIH reports are, over the last ten years, six times greater these committed murders. These are sins of omission; we do nothing about them. EMS personnel now have a drug, Naloxone, that counters the narcotic overdose, and its use is increasing, but not as fast as are the deaths. Sins of omission, passing the injured man on the other side of the road, are just as onerous and revealing of our natures as are those of commission.

A Better Way to Deal with Drugs Black market success always reflects the desires of the populace and the best way to cope with a black market is to make it legal. It is also, in the case of drugs, the easiest way to make them safe. Drug wars don’t work. Portugal legalized all drugs in 2001 and a CATO report on the results ten years later show improvement in every way.

Even better would be to institutionalize the problem by putting it under health care. In this situation: use would be the safest; the drugs would be standard (and the cartels would be starved to death); the users could be encouraged regularly about better ways to solve their problems, and; it would transfer several billion dollars from the informal economy to the formal where it could be far more beneficial.