

## DEV 110 Sample Essay: Persuasion

### Legalizing Marijuana



Marijuana supporters are almost as varied in their advocacy of the beneficial qualities of the drug as are its opponents in their allegations of its dangers. The supporters are generally eager to neutralize the arguments stating the drug's harm. There is almost a complete agreement on their side regarding the absence of damaging effects of marijuana. They usually consider "pot" far less dangerous than alcohol. In terms of psychological harm, most users of marijuana oppose the possibility of any significant psychological dependency upon the drug. Likewise, pot smokers vigorously establish clear-cut differences concerning the dangers of various other drugs, such as amphetamines (speed), alcohol, and LSD. The pro-marijuana people usually base their arguments for legalization on pure hedonism. They want the legal right to use pot because it gives them pleasure. However, there are verified results of pharmaceutical and medical research that indicate several dangers in smoking pot. Although many Americans eagerly support the issue of legalizing marijuana, I am convinced that the legalization would prove to be a regrettable decision. There are many down sides to the drug, and I believe that it should definitely not be legalized.

First, I consider the legalization of marijuana unwise because of its intoxicating effect upon drivers. Current research proves that marijuana definitely impairs the smoker's dexterity and discernment when he or she is operating a car. Driving under the influence of a marijuana high is similar to a person operating a car while under the influence of alcohol. The driver feels confident that he or she can control the vehicle, but in reality his or her abilities are severely impaired. With the possible increase in the highway death toll, the thought of legalizing the drug and unleashing marijuana intoxicated drivers on the public seems devastating.

Second, I regard the legalization of pot to be unwise because there would be a greater availability of the dangerous drug for our nation's youth, a significant portion of our population. Long term pot smoking can cause a breakdown in intellectual activity, and worse, produce a state of pathological drowsiness. Furthermore, evidence concerning the effects of pot on the respiratory system is also frightening. Emphysema, a respiratory disease that usually occurs in later years, has been found to occur often in youthful pot smokers. With such evidence it seems absurd to make pot legally available.

The third basis for my convictions about the pot issue concerns the probability that once controls are lifted from the drug there would be a market for more powerful, dangerous forms of the drug. Most physicians oppose the use of marijuana on the grounds that it leads to the use of more powerful, truly dangerous, and addicting drugs. For many, the less potent drug acts as a kind of introduction to the more potent forms; that is, once the users discover few or no side effects from the use of pot, they are more likely to consider experimenting with stronger forms of the drug and possibly the use of more addictive drugs.

In conclusion, since the negative aspects of pot undeniably surpass its positive effects, I am thoroughly convinced that the legalization of the drug would prove to be a tragic mistake.

## Quit Punishing Pete



Every couple of months, the media will pick up a story about an athlete breaking the law or violating a sport's guidelines. The public's immediate response is to bash the player and then to forget about the incident. But not in the case of superstar Pete Rose; his violation of baseball's "No Gambling on Baseball" rule has caused baseball's Council to ban him from baseball for life. While other violations by other athletes are excused or only punished by a fine, Pete Rose is handed the stiffest punishment in sports. Because of his cocky attitude and his outspoken opinions, the biased "Anti-Pete" baseball Council has made a terrible decision. They should reinstate Pete Rose back into baseball, so he can get back to managing and being an ambassador for the game.

Pete broke into baseball in 1963 and drew immediate criticism by running to first base after walking on four balls; he was the first player in history to do this unusual ritual. At the All-Star game in 1971 in Cincinnati, Ohio, Pete further tarnished his image with the starving media by colliding into Ray Fosse at home plate, giving Ray a career-ending shoulder injury. To the delight of the media and baseball's Council, Pete's final blow came in 1987 when he was charged with betting on baseball; however, Pete claims that he never bet against his team.

While his background may not earn him "Sportsman of the Year" award, his numbers and results rank him among the greatest players of all-time. He is first in hits, games, at-bats, and is among the top in six other offensive categories. Pete always showed leadership on and off the field with his on-going charity work for children.

Among the professional athletes in pro sports, there are rapists, drug addicts, ex-convicts, alcoholics, and spouse abusers. The second overall pick in the 1995 NFL draft was convicted of rape--then exonerated--and is now playing pro football. Darryl Strawberry has been suspended three times from baseball for cocaine abuse--then reinstated. In 1979 ex-convict Ron Leflore was allowed to play baseball and led the major leagues in stolen bases. Ron was praised and had a made-for-television movie about his rehabilitation. Pitcher Steve Howe has been suspended from baseball eight times for alcoholism and is currently making a comeback in the minor leagues. Red Sox' outfielder Will Cordero is a repeated wife-beater and has never been fined or suspended from major league baseball. Shall we mention Mike Tyson, who is expected to fight after twelve months of a "Banned for Life" sentence? Yet Pete Rose can't even throw out a "first pitch" at any level in pro baseball.

There is no doubt that Pete Rose is guilty of violating one of baseball's rules. But after seeing what he has done for the sport, and the examples of the endless forgiveness of fans and pro sport committees, Pete Rose deserves his credit and should be forgiven of his acts. Thus he should be reinstated into baseball and be eligible for the Hall of Fame. It is time to forgive and forget.