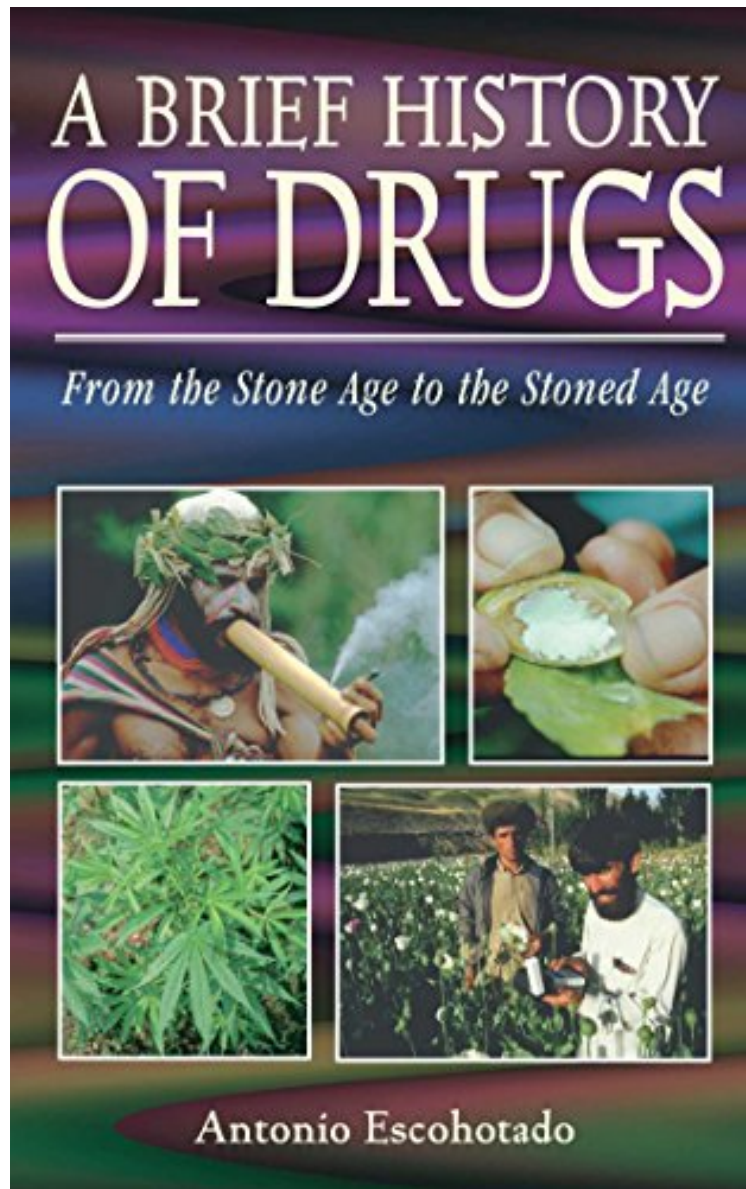


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## A Brief History of Drugs: From the Stone Age to the Stoned Age

*Antonio Escohotado, Ken Symington*

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**Antonio Escohotado, Ken Symington : A Brief History of Drugs: From the Stone Age to the Stoned Age** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Brief History of Drugs: From the Stone Age to the Stoned Age:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A very readable book about mind alterations and its modalities throughout the ages. By Marcel L. Escohotado does a great job at reviewing the changing status of various substances

throughout the world and throughout the ages. Mind altering substances have fascinated and frightened humanity since the dawn of time, and have most likely been pivotal in the emergence of shamanism and primitive religions. Contrary to pagan religions, monotheisms have been generally suspicious of mind alteration, leading to various forms of prohibition throughout the ages, up to the temperance movements in the 19th century US, and global prohibition of certain psychoactive substances and the infamous War on Drugs in the 20th century. The end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21 century have witnessed a spectacular return of the repressed, with the upsurge of narco-trafficking and illegal drugs on one hand, and the explosion of psychopharmacology on the other. The book could use some updating as things have changed quite a bit since its publication, and prohibitionism is coming under growing pressure. For some update, I would suggest World War D - The Case against prohibitionism, roadmap to controlled re-legalization. To the best of my knowledge, "World War-D" is the only book looking beyond the War on Drugs, and explaining the potential pitfalls and benefits of alternatives. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A true guide to the real drug problem By Santiago Roel I believe Antonio has nailed the issue and the true interests behind the scenes: The obscure desire to control and profit from prohibition by dark government in alliance with religious hierarchies, the military and private corporations. The failed war on drugs is really a war against the individual and collective liberties. His historical and philosophical perspective is useful for anyone trying to understand the core of the matter. The book is well documented and fun to read. Congratulations to Antonio Escohotado. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not Perfect, but ... Best book I've found on the subject! By VA 6 If you are looking for a good world history of drugs, this is the best I've been able to find. It's not a perfect book. For example, a bibliography would be nice. Given the book is a translation, the writing is sometimes clunky. However, the material is hard to match. I really learned a lot about the topic. If the complete Spanish version had been translated into English, I would jump right into that as well. Read and enjoy!

A clear-eyed look at the instrumental role drugs have played in our cultural, social, and spiritual development. First American publication of the surprising European bestseller. Examines everything from the ancient use of ergot and datura to the modern phenomenon of "designer" drugs such as Ecstasy and crack cocaine. From remotest antiquity to the present era of designer drugs and interdiction, drugs have played a prominent role in the cultural, spiritual, and social development of civilizations. Antonio Escohotado demonstrates how the history of drugs illuminates the history of humanity as he explores the long relationship between mankind and mind-altering substances. Hemp, for example, has been used in India since time immemorial to stimulate mental agility and sexual prowess. Aristotle's disciple Theophrastus testifies to the use of datura by the ancient Greeks and further evidence links the rites at Eleusis to the ingestion of a hallucinogen. Similar examples can be found in cultures as diverse as the Celts, the ancient Egyptians, the Aztecs, and other indigenous peoples around the world. Professor Escohotado also looks at the present-day differences that exist between the more drug-tolerant societies like Holland and Switzerland and countries advocating complete repression of these substances. The author provides a comprehensive analysis of the enormous social costs of the drug war that is coming under increasing fire from all levels of society. Professor Escohotado's work demonstrates that drugs have always existed and been used by societies throughout the world and the contribution they have made to humanity's development has been enormous. The choice we face today is to teach people how to use them correctly or to continue to indiscriminately demonize them. "Just say no," the author says, is not an option. Just say "know" is. Antonio Escohotado is a professor of philosophy and social science methodology at the National University of Distance Education in Madrid, Spain. He travels widely, offering lectures and seminars on the subject of drugs and history.

"A fascinating and informative history of humankind's checkered and often ambivalent relationship with psychoactive plants and drugs. From the role of the opium poppy in ancient Mesopotamia and the ergot-based mystery cult of Eleusis, through the opium wars in China and the persecution of medieval herbalist witches, up to the 'psychedelic rebellion' of the sixties and the insanities of the current 'war on drugs,' Escohotado covers an enormous subject with scholarly acumen and brings the light of reason to bear on topics often shrouded in bigotry, ignorance, and cupidity. Highly recommended!" (Ralph Metzner, Ph.D., author of *The Unfolding Self and Green Psychology*) "This book examines natural substances used by different cultures to alter the mind. Makes for interesting, thought provoking reading." (American Herb Association, Vol 16:4) From the Back Cover PSYCHEDELICS / SOCIOLOGY A fascinating and informative history of humankind's checkered and often ambivalent relationship with psychoactive plants and drugs. From the role of the opium poppy in ancient Mesopotamia and the ergot-based mystery cult of Eleusis, through the opium wars in China and the persecution of medieval herbalist witches, up to the psychedelic rebellion of the sixties and the insanities of the current war on drugs, Escohotado covers an enormous subject with scholarly acumen and brings the light of reason to bear on topics often shrouded in bigotry, ignorance, and cupidity. Highly recommended! --Ralph Metzner, Ph.D., author of *The Unfolding Self and Green Psychology* From remote antiquity to the present era of designer drugs and draconian interdiction, drugs have played a prominent role in the cultural, spiritual, and social development of civilizations. A Brief History of Drugs shows how the story of drugs

illuminates the story of humanity, exploring the long relationship between human beings and mind-altering substances. Marijuana, for example, has been used in India since time immemorial to stimulate mental agility and sexual prowess, and a census in 312 c.e. revealed nearly 800 stores in the city of Rome devoted to selling opium. Similar examples can be found in cultures as diverse as the Celts, the ancient Egyptians, the Aztecs, and other peoples around the world. Professor Escohotado also examines the present-day differences between drug tolerant societies like the Netherlands and Switzerland and countries advocating complete repression of these substances. He provides a comprehensive analysis of the enormous social costs of the drug war that is coming under increasing fire from all corners of society. Ultimately, *A Brief History of Drugs* demonstrates that drugs have been used by all societies, and the contribution they have made to humanity's development has been enormous. The task we face today is to better understand them, instead of continuing to indiscriminately demonize them. Just say no, says Escohotado, is not an option. Just say know is.

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