



After finally kicking a rather serious cocaine habit, Milhouse came to the shocking realization that he'd been dead for several years.

David Badders/DN

Risks outweigh pleasure Drug use equals mental anesthesia

I'm not a Nancy Reagan youth. The fact that drugs are against the law does not affect me. I don't believe civil law has any intrinsic value, although it may sometimes be practical.

Fear of the cops does affect me. As legal penalties become stiffer for pushers and users, and the ranks of narcs and Nancy Reagan youth swell, drug use has become the crime of the '90s. Knowing this, the risks of serious drug use outweigh any pleasure I might experience from using.

But that's just the point. I don't enjoy the drug experience. Even if drug use were easy and free, I wouldn't do it.

The drugs I'm talking about are the illegal variety and booze. The purpose of these substances is to alter your perception. They may change the way you think, feel and perceive time. They may erode inhibition or open the door to your subconscious mind.

I enjoy thinking and communicating. When my speech becomes slurred and I lose my train of thought, I have a hard time being understood. And then I babble incoherently, like the giant bug in Kafka's *Metamorphosis*.

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The purpose of these substances is to alter your perception. They may change the way you think, feel and perceive time. They may erode inhibition, or open the door to your subconscious mind.
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Now these are things that I might do sober, but being wasted only makes it worse.

It may be true that drug use enhances creativity. I know many musicians, artists and literary types who produce fantastic work under the influence, but it doesn't seem to help me. What use is an amazing discovery if I can't remember it in the morning?

As for loss of inhibition, that's never been a problem for me. I'm perfectly capable of being undignified while sober. If I'm offensive, I want to be aware of it so that I can fully appreciate the results.

I'm a control freak — I admit it. I have nothing against dredging the subconscious, or thinking streams of unrelated thoughts, but I want to be able to shut them off. I have a loose concept of time, but I don't like having no concept of time.

Everyday life seems chaotic, uncontrollable and unintelligible to me. Even on a good day it's hard enough to make sense of it and to still retain any kind of sanity.

Drug use doesn't seem to enhance my mental stability, or to make the world any easier to understand. It only numbs that part of me that strives for meaning and purpose.

I don't want mental anesthesia. I'd rather stumble around sober. There must be something out there that's worth the trouble. Odysseus left the land of the lotus eaters for just that reason. As pleasurable as that place might have been, his purpose was elsewhere.

I'm not suggesting that this is true for everyone. It's a personal choice, of course, and my choice is to not use drugs.

— Amy Wilson is a classics major and Divisions contributor

Writing technique creates new way to look at opposing views



By Scott Wesley
Divisions Cutup

This column is based on literary experiments called "cut-up techniques" conducted first by Brion Gysin and William S. Burroughs in the 1950s.

They took "found" articles, cut them into pieces or otherwise rearranged them.

Based on these reconstructions they wrote a new piece of literature, using the changed words and phrases as inspiration.

My source this time was the FACE OFF essays of last week's Divisions, and the final technique I used was to take alternate words from each essay (the first word from one essay, the second word from the second, and so on).

I came up with a composite essay about as long as either of the originals. Then I rewrote the composite.

This technique, or others like it, will recur in this semester's Divisions. Give it a try yourself.

Anyone with a pair of scissors and a pot of paste can play!

Even I, with my standards, believe the term will last forever. "Values" will inspire songs, and poems will be written around them, and yet, they will probably never acquire a full definition.

I often hear values cited merely to reach past time-worn defense safeguards in attempts to grab at the human heart.

One-third of "traditional" couples today are involved with infidelities in more than a conceptual way. Two-timing is rife, and the family has thus become unquantifiable.

Most heterosexual "values" can be reduced to couples passing their commitments to their children, who then have nowhere to look for support but their grandparents.

This in part explains why religion, love of country (and freedom), and a sense of duty are on the rise, and that the cause of societal distress is the hippies' responsibility in the minds of many twentysomethings.

Discovering what is so basically American about this moralizing requires that you remember that you are in with it, that you are involved beyond words. Perhaps if the words of that German philosopher had succeeded in pointing to the core of the problem... "God is dead!" said Nietzsche, but his metaphor was inadequate to the task.

For he did not kill religion along with God, and the wave of religious

need sweeps through the country, business as usual.

It can be no accident that we are the most recorded, most media-ted generation in history, and becoming substantial as children is the core of what growing up is about.

For that we need families, but we need only point to the cities to show the results of trying to uphold so-called "family values" at any cost.

What have you seen happen? Families gone down the rat hole, into poverty and despair, leading further to the second biggest increase in child abuse in this century.

On the flip-side, women have found new alternatives, new lifestyles and new means of support, as necessity mothers a new Goddess, Invention.

If Religion, more than God, has reaped the benefits of reinforcing monogamistic behavior tarnished by the pill but born again in AIDS, leaving unbelievers, that ragtag bunch of misfits and dreamers, to chomp at the entrails of the carcass of society left behind, then our generation must seek our true nature in higher climes than street drugs like religion provides.

Our responsibilities must not be let to fall, lest the wasteland of pious emptiness destroy our ability to write songs and poems.

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