

# Re: Legalization: only way to beat "Terrorism's Harvest"

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.econ/2004-08/0346.html>

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**From:** Les Cargill ([lcargill\\_at\\_worldnet.att.net](mailto:lcargill_at_worldnet.att.net))

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Kent Paul Dolan wrote:

> "Les Cargill" <[lcargill@worldnet.att.net](mailto:lcargill@worldnet.att.net)> wrote:

>

>> Kent Paul Dolan wrote:

>>

>> *The empirical case for second hand smoke damage is*

>> *weak at best,*

>

>

> *In what universe?*

>

> *Here are some URLs that are \_not\_ from "smoker's*

> *rights" sites and \_not\_ from dedicated anti-tobacco*

> *fanatic sites.*

>

> <http://www.the-aps.org/press/journal/7.htm>

> <http://www.oma.org/phealth/2ndsmoke.htm> (the source,

> though a "neutral" pro-public health organization,

> is adamantly against tobacco, but the references are

> a wealth of information on consequences of second

> hand smoke)

> [http://mo.essortment.com/secondhandsmok\\_rxgs.htm](http://mo.essortment.com/secondhandsmok_rxgs.htm)

> <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/abstract/40002655/ABSTRACT>

>

> *Nuts with that, there are 97 of these, read them*

> *yourself and stop making silly noises:*

>

>

>

> <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/search/allsearch?mode=quicksearch&WISindexid1=WISall&WISsearch1=tobacco>

>

>

Most of those require a login. Feh.

I've gone through considerable reams of the various treatises on this subject. It always comes down to very low valued correlations. These correlations are not significant. There are too many other things to control for – concentrations, previous propensity for disease, other factors.

I don't care if people smoke or not. I just see this as clearly an example of the newish "intolerance" in public policy.

I am not even saying that there is no harm. I am saying that the harm has not been clearly established.

The URLs above all\* point to various things that do not constitute a coherent, clear indictment of secondhand smoke as a public health hazard. Look, the people who carried the laws forward don't even try to say they know it's bad, they say "Yes, but what if"?

\*For a random sampled value of "all".

<snip>

>

> *Ye gods, I'm so antique that my typos can be fairly*

> *written off to senility. Do you have that excuse?*

>

Mostly, I think.

> *Anyway, if you are getting your medical guidance*

> *from South Park, quite a bit of your thinking*

> *becomes more clear.*

>

NO, I am saying that the writers of South Park seem to have a clearer vision of how the public process should work than the various specialists who write the papers you've enumerated.

What is quite clear to me is that what were once more or less public spaces are increasingly disappearing. People are increasingly required to pretty much stay home and suckle the glass teat, when they are not working. If you don't see that as a problem, then you don't see it.

<snip>

>>*Preemptive behavior–shaping is long on unintended*

>>*consequences and short on results.*

>

- >
- > *I'd call putting muggers in jail long on \*intended\**
- > *consequences.*

Equating smoking in a restaurant to mugging is exactly the sort of rot that bothers me about this. Nobody is proven to be harmed by this.

<snip>

- > *It is a sad commentary on humanity that any*
- > *consideration of "means" in and of themselves is*
- > *rarely applied, much less disqualifying to some*
- > *pre-chosen ends.*
- >
- > *For example, people prefer to live long lives free*
- > *of avoidable diseases. Thus smokers are banned to*
- > *the far corners of the universe, while smoking. Is*
- > *this morally superior to classifying smokers as*
- > *addiction prone persons and eliminating them from*
- > *the gene pool purely in the interests of improving*
- > *the human species?*
- >

You nor I will not live forever, no matter what. The culture seems to love to sell us things that are promised to cause immortality, but it's a damned lie.

And the little exercise in eugenics belies the hysteria behind all this, I think.

At one point, people tolerated other people better than they now do. Another quaint notion.

You cannot tell me that the shift in mores is in any way the result of education over a fifty year span. It is also not due to some increase in scientific knowledge.

No, it's simply the process of identifying a Them, and Putting Them In Camps.

<snip>

- >
- >
- > *Which part of the RICO statute, of the Kent State*
- > *University use of lethal force against unarmed*
- > *students, of the recent posting of machine gun*
- > *wielding thugs around financial centers leaves you*
- > *with the impression that Americans are not already*

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- > *slaves to their governments, and the same for people*
- > *everywhere?*
- >

But having trivial things made gross by obsessive attention to small differences in people is exactly the mechanism through which a society destroys itself.

I don't believe we're at full stop, yet. See, this is why this bothers me – it's inch by inch, yard by yard. First they came for the smokers, then they came for me.

- > *We can only avoid the necessity of governments by*
- > *better personal behavior that is 100% observed in*
- > *the population, and somehow humans haven't evolved*
- > *anywhere close to that level yet.*
- >

100% is a nice number, but it's not achievable.

<snip>

- > *We accept some form of social oppression, because*
- > *folks, en masse, cannot resist the urge to swing*
- > *that fist the extra four centimeters. Trying to*
- > *pretend otherwise isn't fruitful of functioning*
- > *societies.*
- >

Unfortunately, I don't believe we identify that last four centimeters in this case if we wanted to.

- >
- >>*I know, I know – how quaintly Jeffersonian. Yup.*
- >
- >
- > *Thomas Jefferson had this wonderful ability to see*
- > *humans as they are, rather than as he wished they*
- > *would be. If you admire him, consider emulating him.*
- >

Oh, I see 'em clearly enough.

- > *xanthian.*
- >
- >
- >

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Les Cargill