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Americas support for war ultimately supported an opium epidemic

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Propaganda in modern day and its use in the Middle East and the results of it

Abstract:

The United States war in Iraq indirectly influenced the opioid epidemic within the United States. Using data, we can see spikes in prescription and usage among both legal and illegal opioid use. Using terrorist attacks as public moral boosters the USA used fear for the overall allocation of resources, mainly drugs and oil.

Part 1: Introduction

FLASH! The speed at which information is shown to us. Today we live in the age of information constantly being bombarded by material. Most people find this material meaningless but I personally see a different side. Propaganda which was thought to be extinct after WWII The media uses propaganda for many purposes two of those main purposes being to keep a country's moral support similar to WWII, both of these changing how we view and interact in the world. Propaganda toward anti terrorism was used throughout American history in the allocation of resources. One of Iraq's main resources is opium. Through data we can see an increase in usage in drugs specifically opiates among us citizens and military post 9/11. The United States can only go to war with the support of its citizens, unfortunately our support through fear of terrorism

ultimately brought us to a war. The nation we went to war with supplies most of the world's opium, which intentionally or unintentionally crossed paths with a legal prescription market at home. The fact these two paths crossed directly affected civilians and military members and long-term damage continues to get worse today.

## Part II: Background Information: incentives for war and the use of American Moral

Media and Advertising is today's modern propaganda. All day every day you cannot escape being bombarded by hundreds of advertisements. Constantly being told what you need to impress others. They are getting good at it too these ads no longer describe a product but first emotionally attach it to you. Using your subconscious you already know what you want before you walk into the store. Sex sells they say that is why any product that can possibly make you more appealing to the opposite sex is clearly something you need. After you know what you need the media then tells you how you should think and feel about social issues we saw this in the most recent election. Either choice that you made to tune into would then make you a completely one-sided person many never truly trying to find the middle ground. While we do have a choice in media most of the time regarding politics, sports, and entertainment. When it comes to things like deep-rooted fear. These are things we take for granted. The media bombardment post 9/11 could leave no citizen to question why we would go to war. But history shows public fear and support is needed for war, and war's ultimate goal is of course the allocation and gain of new resources. While not something one would normally think long-term

our feelings brought us to a place to gain resources one of them being very valuable and very addictive.

In order for war to occur as a leader you must first have your nations support. Some wars are easier to gain support than others. For example, the American people were charged and ready to go by the time we entered WWII wanting to defeat the evil Nazi's. Whereas during the Vietnam war many Americans felt we did not belong there, many protests and young men avoiding the draft were a result of this disagreement, but why such a difference? The answer has to with propaganda. Propaganda as a whole is taken with a negative connotation but as seen in the definition it is anything used to sway a person's thought process. Propaganda was used in both of these wars but in different ways. In WWII it was quite easy to rally Americans together, prior to the attack on pearl harbor the American public was already aware of the evils across the sea, but due to politics we chose not to enter at first. The attack on pearl harbor made this evil tangible and created real fear. The government took advantage of this tragedy and decided to go to war. Using Ads like "Uncle Sam wants you" to get ready for war. This propaganda was very effective in winning the war, fear of the Germans and Japanese fueled the idea that the Americans could not lose. This same fear of Japanese created a different type of discriminatory propaganda causing the American people to imprison anyone of Japanese descent. The people had overdosed on moral and mimicked the people they were trying to defeat. The difference between this and the moral of the Vietnam war is that we were actually attacked as opposed to the threat of communism spreading. Although a legitimate problem the red scare was not as

impactful. This propaganda was spotted by many and the American people felt they could not afford its young lives in something like this. It seems the common theme in American war.

### Part III: Modern propaganda and lasting effects of terrorist attack

2019 some believe something like this could not happen again. They think propaganda is outdated and thanks to technology, we avoid obvious hateful posters as we walk down tragic events. A modern example of this is the tragic terrorist attack of 9/11/01 this attack was very real, very scary, and had the American people out of their seats ready to go to war to fight the so called insurgents. While war was likely prompted did America truly need to stay in Iraq for that long of a time period? Every time we attempted to leave the government kept our fear alive spending billions attacking people who had not seen hundreds in a life time. Many people to this day are still willing to give up freedoms in order for the promise of security. A great example of this was the Patriot act. The patriot act gave the government permission to know everything about you and live monitor your life and phone calls. You may say “what is there to worry about if you are doing nothing wrong” this avoids the fact that our right to privacy was directly stripped. Those who are willing to sacrifice freedom for security deserve neither. The patriot act is an example of the government using propaganda and fear to accomplish one of their special interests. The scary part is no matter how much security is promised there is no guarantee that a tragic event will not happen again performed by a lone wolf.

While these awful attacks performed by loan wolves are not to be taken lightly. They our government views these as the perfect fuel to keep the moral fire going. When you take a closer look it seems there is always something to be afraid of. Trust us the government we will take Care of you. During the cold war, the government told us they would protect us from communism. So for years after they used the red scare to enter the Vietnam war. Fast forward to 9/11 the government had a new fear technique calling them insurgents. People following Osama bin laden. We sent over and lost many great lives finding and killing these so called insurgents. However, was all of that really for the greater good or did our government have other interests of being in Iraq. Then again, during the gulf war we supplied and trained these now enemies, years later we find ourselves fighting them. Terrorist attacks prove to not only physically harm people but mentally affect people for years to come.

“One to 2 months following the events of September 11, probable PTSD was associated with direct exposure to the terrorist attacks among adults, and the prevalence in the New York City metropolitan area was substantially higher than elsewhere in the country. However, overall distress levels in the country were within normal ranges. Further research should document the course of symptoms and recovery among adults following exposure to the events of September 11 and further specify the types and severity of distress in children.

The coordinated attacks on the World Trade Center (WTC), the Pentagon, and commercial civilian aircraft on the morning of September 11, 2001, were the most deadly terrorist acts ever to occur in the United States. For those directly exposed, the attacks undoubtedly meet the "traumatic event" criterion for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as set forth in the current

edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Considerable research indicates that individuals directly exposed to a traumatic event are at increased risk for PTSD, for other psychiatric disorders, and for somatic symptoms and physical illnesses. Additionally, a review of research on the mental health consequences of natural and man-made disasters found that events that involve intentional violence are more likely to be associated with symptoms of severe psychological distress, including PTSD, than are disasters not characterized by human malfeasance.

Because there have been few such incidents in the United States, there have been few studies of their impact. Studies of the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Okla, are the most relevant. North et al<sup>4</sup> found that one third of a sample of 182 persons directly exposed to the blast reported patterns of symptoms that met criteria for PTSD 6 months later. Smith et al conducted random telephone interviews in Oklahoma City and Indianapolis, Ind (a comparison site), 3 to 4 months after the bombing and found that 43% of those living in Oklahoma City reported 4 or more stress symptoms compared with 11% of those living in Indianapolis.

Initial empirical information on the psychological effects of the September 11 attacks became available soon after the attacks. Based on a random-digit-dialing survey of 560 US adults conducted 3 to 5 days after September 11, Schuster et al reported that 44% of their national sample of Americans were bothered "quite a bit" or "extremely" by at least 1 of 5 selected symptoms from the PTSD Checklist. Results varied by sex, race/ethnicity, and distance from the WTC, and 35% of the adults surveyed said that their children had 1 or more stress symptoms. Galea et al<sup>7</sup> studied the prevalence of symptoms consistent with PTSD and depression among

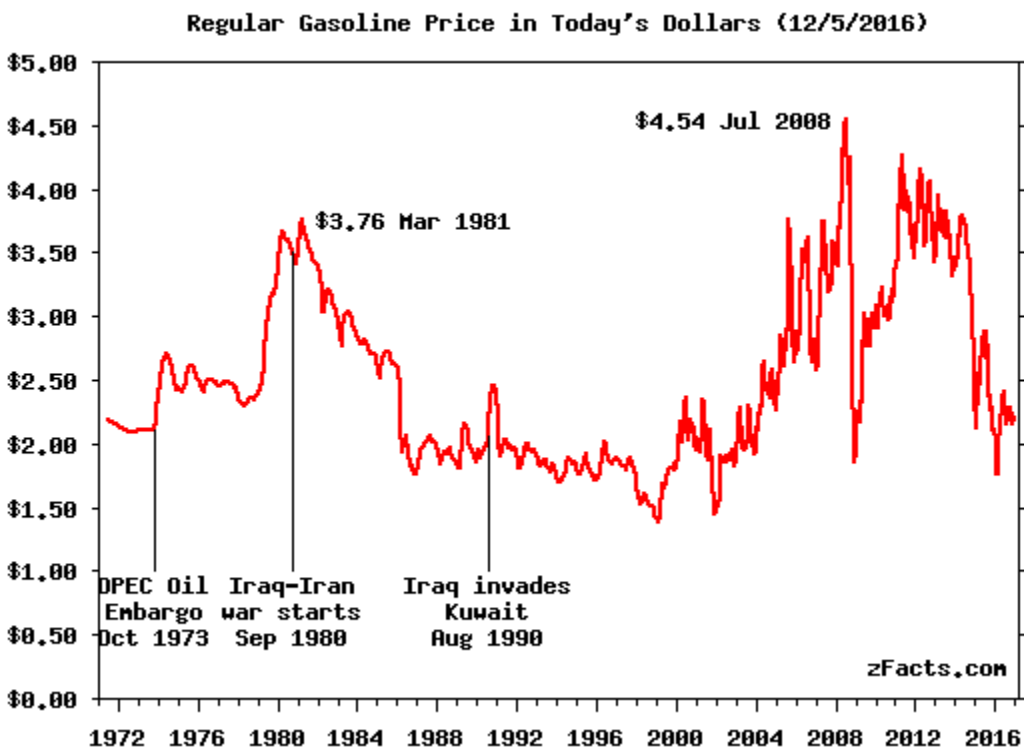
1008 adults living south of 110th Street in Manhattan using random-digit-dialing techniques with telephone interviews conducted 5 to 9 weeks after the WTC attacks. Findings indicated that 7.5% of the adults living south of 110th Street reported symptoms consistent with current PTSD, and 9.7% reported symptoms consistent with current major depression. Additionally, those living closest to the WTC site were nearly 3 times as likely to have PTSD as those living farther away. The studies reported to date have either focused on providing a broad overview of the country's reactions using survey assessments whose relationship to clinical diagnosis is unknown or documenting clinically significant distress among those most directly exposed to the events. In this article, we report findings from the National Study of Americans' Reactions to September 11 (N-SARS), a Web-based descriptive epidemiological study based on a national cross-sectional sample of adults. The N-SARS was designed to estimate the prevalence of symptoms of PTSD and clinically significant, nonspecific psychological distress in the second month after the attacks, both nationwide and in the areas most proximal to the attack sites, using screening instruments whose relationship to clinical diagnosis is well documented; and to examine the association of both direct and indirect exposures to the September 11 events with symptoms of PTSD and of clinically significant psychological distress. We also report on adults' perceptions of the reactions of children in their households.” (By- William E. Schlenger Schlenger WE, Caddell JM, Ebert , “*Psychological Reactions to Terrorist Attacks: Findings From the National Study of Americans' Reactions to September 11*”)

#### Part IV: Profits from war



Knowing the effects of a terrorist attack can be very useful to people with higher agendas. As you can see the mental impact of an attack is quite devastating and if most people experienced one they would do anything their government told them in the name of defense, and rightfully so. G.O.D. Throughout history country's go to war over resources and the control over them. This earth has not changed just the amount of resources we have and who controls them, with the growing scarcity the control has been more important than ever. The special interests I have been referring to are G.O.D these three letters represent the three main resources countries enter war. G stands for gold, O stands for oil and D stands for drugs. It is very interesting to find that Iraq is one of the world's largest holder of two of these things. First is oil, sources report that Iraq holds as much as 300bbl of oil which is potentially greater than Saudi Arabia at 250bbl of oil. Bbl. being the unit of measure for a country's crude oil supplies. U.S.A being the largest consumer of oil and its byproducts, it is in our best interest to either have great relations with Iraq. Prior to 9/11 we did indeed have good relations gas prices being at an all-time low. After 9/11 the economy saw a giant shift in oil prices. The Middle East controlling this resource caused people to pull out of oil stocks creating an even greater price rise. All this going on during our country's great recession really took a toll on the American people gas at almost 5 dollars a gallon. The longer we stayed in Iraq the higher the price rise. Now that the option of keeping good relations has disappeared the only option was to take control in whatever way we could. Chasing terrorist

groups and finding Osama kept the peoples intrest keeping America even longer in Iraq.



The second major resource of americas special intrest and our main focus was the drugs aka opium. What many people do not know is that iraq produces 90% of the worlds opium supply. Now you may ask yourself why would america be interested in this devilish thing. I asked myself the same and was asonished to find that american troops did indeed guard these opium feids rather than destroy them. This shows that we must value this resource enough to protect it. Propaganda being used to tell the american people we are still searching for terrorists.

Part V: War in the middle east and its relation to us opium epidemic

To find out why America would go through all this for just a plant. First we must define exactly what opiates are and how they affect the human body. These drugs mainly are painkillers with very high addiction rates. Withdrawals can be serious and even deadly. Heroin, morphine, and other opiates all come from one plant the opium poppy, while you might recognize its cousin on your bagel these are a little more dangerous. Starting with trade between Chinese and Americans the west has always had a fondness for pain killer drugs. However, we definitely were not the first. Prior to our epidemic, the Middle East has been suffering for years.

“Opium abuse is a serious public health threat in Iran and in neighboring countries. Opiates are the most commonly used drugs, notably in Asia and Europe, while heroin is the most widely consumed opiate, worldwide. Two thirds of opium which is not converted into heroin is consumed in just five countries: Iran (42%), Afghanistan (7%), Pakistan (7%), India (6%) and the Russian Federation (5%). According to the United Nation World Drug Report (UNWDR), the highest proportion of opium addiction in the world is reported from Iran; it is estimated that 2.8% of the population over age 15 years old are addicted, while the world consumption rate is about 0.5%. As a pain killer opiates have been used in Iran for centuries, although use and trade are officially illegal with harsh penalties, opiate trafficking and consumption are major health problems in the country. The current situation forced the government to implement a number of actions including support and treatment for addicts and rehabilitation centers to initiate prophylactic measures” – by (Aflatoonian MR, Sharifi I, Hakimi Parizi M, Fekri AR, Aflatoonian B, Sharifi M, et al. (2014)” A Prospective Cohort Study of Cutaneous Leishmaniasis Risk and Opium Addiction in South Eastern Iran.”)

The numbers showing the opium use rates into a country we invade is quite troubling “opiates specifically heroin have a euphoric effect and extreme dependence rate among its users. The feeling is so strong “In fact, 53% of individuals who have ever used heroin become dependent, as opposed to 11% of alcohol users and 15% of marijuana users” - (Randy,Brown\_ “WISCONSIN MEDICAL JOURNAL Wisconsin Medical Journal 2004 • Volume 103, No. 420Heroin Dependence.”)

Now a few years after accomplishing our special interest we pulled our troops out. Now all the evidence I've shown so far may seem like one big conspiracy theory. Two major coincidences have occurred recently in regards to both oil and opium. Americans are now seeing an all time low in gas prices even lower than prices seen in the 70's. Simultaneously America is facing one of its largest opium epidemics in history. Prescription opiates are being given out at all time high. Illegal heroin is also hit an all time high, heroin is now cheaper and more powerful than ever. All of these things seem a little more than just coincidence. In 2002 using our peer reviewed sources we can clearly see the beginnings of our opium epidemic. While Americans were overseas obtaining resources, doctors at home became prescription happy and with the help of large drug companies created the perfect storm for an absolute epidemic. This prescription craze started in the late 1990's with doctors simply attempting to help their patients. This help feel is not only highly addictive but damaging to the body. “Through a variety of mechanisms, opioids cause adverse events in several organ systems. Evidence shows that chronic opioid therapy is associated with constipation, sleep-disordered breathing, fractures,

hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal dysregulation, and overdose. However, significant gaps remain regarding the spectrum of potentially opioid-related adverse effects. Opioid-related adverse effects can cause significant declines in health-related quality of life and increased health care costs.” (Baldini, Angee). With all these harmful effects we see why would doctors prescribe these at such high rates? This did not go fully ignored in the medical community and people started to realize doctors had other incentives aside from helping patients.

“At that time, pain specialists and advocacy organizations in the United States began to argue that the nation faced an epidemic of untreated pain. In turn, the American Pain Society advocated for the recognition of pain as the “fifth vital sign” and an increasing number of professional and consumer groups pushed for the increased use of opioids for pain management. Coinciding with this shift in medical perspective was the introduction and extensive marketing of OxyContin (oxycodone) for the treatment of non-malignant pain. OxyContin sales representatives visited doctors across the United States, leaving them with gifts, free patient samples, and invitations to all-expenses-paid symposia — all actions that are known to impact prescribing. The widespread adoption of opioids for pain relief was further facilitated by marketing strategies that downplayed OxyContin’s addictive potential and targeted primary care doctors, who continue to prescribe the majority of opioid pain relievers in many nations.

The shift towards opioids for pain management led to a dramatic increase in prescription opioid production. From 1996 to 2012, global OxyContin sales increased from US\$48m to over US\$2.4bn. The worldwide increase in OxyContin parallels that of other opioids, such as

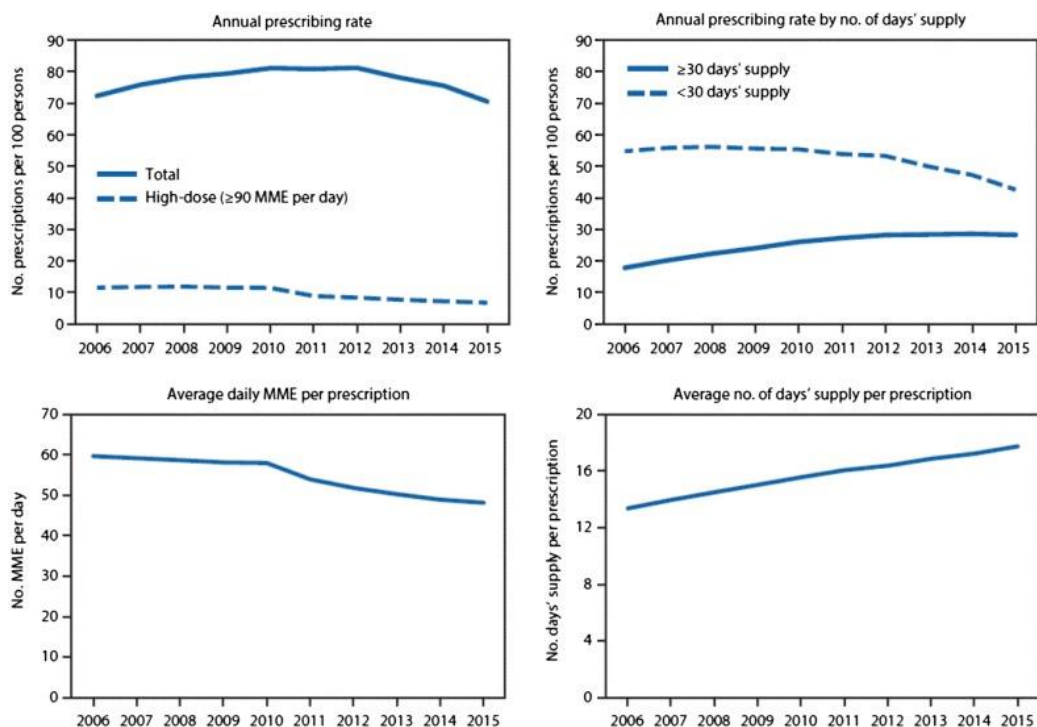
morphine and codeine, which, similarly, experienced an unprecedented rise in production and sales. Over the same period, the number of prescriptions written for opioids increased in many nations. In the United States, the number of prescriptions written for opioids increased by 300% between 1991 and 2009. In Canada, the number of prescriptions written for oxycodone increased by 850% between 1991 and 2007.

The United States has been at the forefront in terms of prescription opioid consumption. In 2009, the United States consumed 99% of the world's hydrocodone, 60% of the world's hydromorphone, and 81% of the world's oxycodone. Yet while the magnitude of the prescription opioid abuse varies among nations, there is no question that the problem is a global one. The rising trend of problematic prescription opioid use has been found in Canada, Australia and Europe. For example, in 2011, 5% of all patients entering drug treatment programmes in Europe reported prescription opioids as their primary drug. More concerning is that the current estimate of the global extent of the problem is likely to be an underestimate given the absence of data collected throughout much of the world.”( Lyapustin and Alexander “the prescription opioid addiction”)

This over prescription ball that began rolling in the 90's collided with or 2001 terrorist attack of 9/11 we see dramatic number shifts in opioid use from 2002-2011.

“Prescription opioid abuse has increased dramatically in the past 20 years in the United States and, more recently, has spread to other countries as well (eg, Canada, several Asian countries).

The United States is the world's largest consumer of opioids, and as prescriptions increased from 76 million in 1991 to 219 million in 2011,<sup>5</sup> there were corresponding increases in opioid-related emergency room visits, treatment admissions, and overdose fatalities. An estimated 25 million people initiated nonmedical use of pain relievers between 2002 and 2011,<sup>9</sup> and by 2014, 10.3 million Americans were reporting the nonmedical use of prescription opioids” – (Theodore J. Cicero, PhD\*)

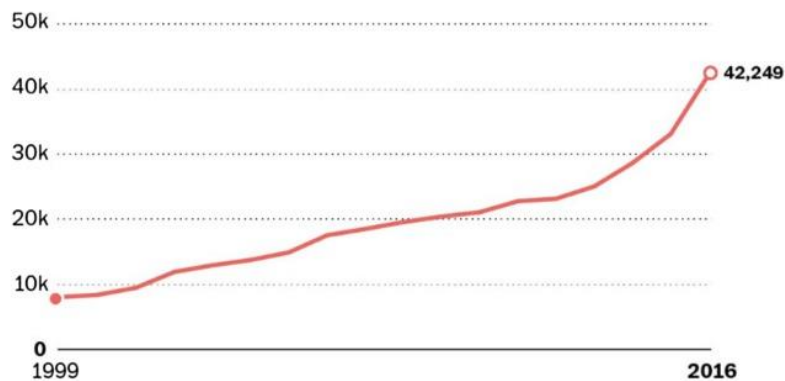


-(Jones “a brief History of the Opioid Epidemic”)

Using other graphs, we can see the affects much better

### Opioid deaths surge in 2016

Number of opioid overdose deaths, 1999 to 2016



WAPO.ST/WONKBLOG

Source: CDC

In this figure we can see a clear surge in perscription rates in the direct years involved in the middle east, this next figure shows deaths related to opiodes with a major spike in 2016. Another way we are able to see corrilation is looking at how not only United stated citizins are affected, but also United states military members “U.S. military veterans represent a particularly high-risk population for illicit substance use and abuse (18–20). Chronic pain is a significant problem among veterans” (Banerjee,Geetanjoli). Within our military many members experience chronic pain, in order to alleviate most of this pain solders are often prescribed opiates. Similar to patients here in America a soldier’s heroin addiction often starts with a prescribed opiate. Because these drugs are high tolerance inducing eventually a users habit reaches far beyond a prescription. So where it is hard to tell exactly what sparked these epidemics we can tell that both civilian and military use of opiates rise dramatically prior to our involvement in the middle east Post 9/11.



## Part VI: Conclusion

As you can see, the media uses propaganda for many purposes two of those main purposes being to keep a country's moral support similar to WWII, but it is also used heavily in advertisements, both of these changing how we view and interact in the world. But the main effects we can see is how the Iraq war indirectly affected the American people in the years to come. Specifically both our medication and gas markets have been completely affected.

Although correlation is not causation, we can correlate that American use of opiates dramatically increased with our involvement in Iraq. Unfortunately a prior prescription problem met with an opioid boom proves an awful cocktail for the American people.

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