

1 in 3 Americans on Opioid Painkillers

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OPIOID PAINKILLERS**

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More than one out of three average Americans used a prescription opioid painkiller in 2015, despite growing concerns these medicines are promoting widespread addiction and overdose deaths, a new federal study shows.

Nearly 92 million U.S. adults, or about 38 percent of the population, took a legitimately prescribed opioid like OxyContin or Percocet in 2015, according to results from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

“The proportion of adults who receive these medications in any year seemed startling to me,” said study co-author Dr. Wilson Compton, deputy director of the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Politsturm: America has a serious public health problem with the abuse of prescription medication. One area that is often left out of the discussion of this important problem is the production and distribution of opioids. OxyContin and Percocet are manufactured by Purdue Pharma LP and Endo Pharmaceuticals, respectfully. Purdue is a limited partnership that has made the founders billionaires. Endo Pharmaceuticals is a publicly traded stock whose executives earn millions of dollars primarily of the production and distribution of opioids.

The irrational capitalist economic system rewards the individuals who are contributing to the opioid problem. Private individuals are profiting off the misery and grief of the larger population. Capitalism alienates and exploits the mass of working people by extracting a profit in production. It then adds insult to injury by selling ever increasing quantities of these drugs to the immiserated and most vulnerable people. The fact that these drugs can be detrimental and addictive, as is the case with opioids, is of no concern to the capitalist. The capitalist system has no way of escaping the ever increasing contradictions of its own design. At one end there is the worker who just would like relief from daily suffering. At the other end is the capitalist who is the beneficiary and enjoys the suffering of the worker, for it makes him rich. The “opioid crisis” is the as insane as the capitalist system under which it emerges.

Sources: 1, 2, 3