



Drugs Unlimited: The Web Revolution That's Changing How the World Gets High

By Mike Power

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The very first thing ever bought or sold on the Internet was marijuana, when Stanford and MIT students used ARPANET to cut a deal in the early '70s. Today, you can order any conceivable pill or powder with the click of a mouse. In *Drugs Unlimited*, Mike Power tells the tale of drugs in the Internet Age, in which users have outmaneuvered law enforcement, breached international borders, and created a massive worldwide black market.

But the online market in narcotics isn't just changing the way drugs are bought and sold; it's changing the nature of drugs themselves. Enterprising dealers are using the Web to engage highly skilled foreign chemists to tweak the chemical structures of banned drugs?just enough to create a similar effect and just enough to render them legal in most parts of the world. Drugs are marketed as "not for human consumption," but everyone knows exactly how they're going to be used?what they can't know is whether their use might prove fatal.

From dancefloors to the offices of apathetic government officials, via social networking sites and underground labs, Power explores this agile, international, virtual subculture that will always be one step ahead of the law.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Fascinating and vividly written...His is an informed and thoroughly hip intervention into a public debate that is too often evidence-hostile and tabloid-panderingly disingenuous.” *?The Guardian (UK)*

“Power is a sure guide through this cyberworld, with its torrent of new tablets, capsules and powders...Power is not impervious to the moral ambivalences of this frenetic world...His conclusion that in the digital age, traditional prohibition enforcement is bound to fail seems as undeniable a fact as the M25.” *?Daily Telegraph (UK)*

“[Power] lifts the lid on forums where amateur chemists and dedicated drug experiments compare notes. Anyone who has remained unaware of the existence of the Dark Web will be genuinely shocked at what it's now possible to buy on the streets.” *?Herald (UK)*

“A compelling account of how the internet has revolutionized the global drug trade.” *?Playboy*

“An informed, entertaining and profoundly sobering explanation of the state of play in the modern day global narcotics trade....Power delves into the minutiae and oddities of the trade's development in illuminating detail. Some of it is technical, but it's rarely dry and often very funny.... Profoundly compelling.” *?Metro (UK)*

“A clearheaded look at a hidden subculture.” *?New Scientist*

“An authoritative and compellingly lucid account on one of the most important topics drug prohibition has created. Very few books have ever managed to convince me that the author truly understands this topic as well as Mike does. Remember to buy two and give one to your local politician.” *?Dread Pirate Roberts, Silk Road, December 2013*

“A stimulating read...a must-read for anyone interested in pharmaceuticals, popular culture or the ever-changing face of the web.” *?Skinny (UK)*

“A comprehensive report on how the Internet has revolutionized illicit narcotic sales. ... A compelling, accessible perspective on the global e-tail drug market.” *?Kirkus Reviews*

About the Author

Mike Power is a freelance investigative journalist living in London. He has worked for *The Guardian*, the *Mail on Sunday*, the BBC, and Reuters. In 2014 he received the Best Investigative Journalism Award, awarded by the Association of British Science Writers, for his piece "The drug revolution that no one can stop," which appeared in the online journal *Matter*. *Drugs Unlimited* is his first book.

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Joyce McDonald:

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