BIG PHARMA, PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS, AND THE DEA
DRUG DEALING IN PLAIN VIEW

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Abstract

The U.S. Center for Disease Control reports that from 1999–2016 more than 350,000 people died from overdoses involving prescription and/or illicit opioids. In 2016 alone, deaths from prescription opioids and illegal opioids like heroin and illicitly manufactured fentanyl totaled almost 42,000. The number of overdose deaths involving opioids was 5 times higher in 2016 than in 1999. On average, 115 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose. In this article, Professor McGinley examines the evolution of the nationwide opioid epidemic over the last two decades focusing on the role played by drug manufacturers, drug distributors and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration in the flood of literally billions of “legal” prescription opioid pills inundating communities across the nation.