Abstract

This chapter explores links between psychostimulants and creativity in the arts. These links are set in the context of an overview of the association between mind-altering drugs in general and specific branches of the arts, particularly literature. The economic impact of the psychostimulants both historically and in today’s world has been substantial and this is mirrored in the culture of the countries involved with the trade in these special commodities. As with other families of addictive drugs, the psychostimulants are sought out more frequently than is the norm by creative individuals who then may represent the drugs in their art or associate the drugs with their creativity. The creative process is outlined and it is noted that if a drug helps at all with creativity then the specific properties of the drug may link it to a particular stage of the creative process. Stimulants are particularly associated with the evaluation and elaboration stage of the creative process and in particular nicotine and caffeine have been used in this way.
by writers when putting words on paper. The ability of psychostimulants to boost convergent thinking is the main mechanism at work but this is at a cost as divergent thinking is diminished. The other findings of note in this review are that particular venues based around the consumption of a psychostimulants can act as a creative hub-café culture in Paris and Vienna and early modern Europe” and that particular drugs can come to define an artistic grouping as with the Beats and the group around Warhol who had a preference for amphetamine.

Keywords
Caffeine; Nicotine; Cocaine; Amphetamine; Methamphetamine; MDMA; Methylphenidate; Novel psychoactive substances; Creativity; Addiction

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