



Changing Lives, Changing Drug Journeys: Drug Taking Decisions from Adolescence to Adulthood (Routledge Advances in Ethnography)

Lisa Williams

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This book describes how a group of young people make decisions about drug taking. It charts the decision making process of recreational drug takers and non-drug takers as they mature from adolescence into young adulthood. With a focus upon their perceptions of different drugs, it situates their decision making within the context of their everyday lives.

Changing lives, changing drug journeys presents qualitative longitudinal data collected from interviewees at age 17, 22 and 28 and tracks the onset of drug journeys, their persistence, change and desistance. The drug journeys and the decision making process which underpins them are analysed by drawing upon contemporary discourses of risk and life course criminology. In doing so, a new theoretical framework is developed to help us understand drug taking decision making in contemporary society. This framework highlights the pleasures and risks that interviewees perceive when making decisions whether or not to take drugs. The ways in which their drug journeys and life journeys intersect and how social relationships and transitions to adulthood facilitate or constrain the decision making process are also explored.

Qualitative longitudinal research of this kind is uncommon yet it provides an invaluable insight into the decision making process of individuals during the life course. The book will, therefore, be of interest to researchers and students from a variety of disciplines including qualitative research methods as well as sociology, criminology, cultural and health studies. It will also be an important resource for professionals working in health promotion, drugs education, harm reduction and treatment.

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