

Written by Maury Brown
Tuesday, 20 August 2013 19:55



How are we supposed to feel about A-Rod? There's a pill for that

In a sense, listening to Bryant Gumbel's closing commentary on HBO's *Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel* dovetails off

my column yesterday for Gammons Daily (see [The Blame for PEDs in Baseball Begins with You](#)

). While the title of my article seems to imply that you, Mr. or Ms. Baseball Fan, are at the root of the PED problem in sports, the piece really speaks to the many blames that got us there, with fans ultimately in control. Gumbel hits on something in this closing commentary that speaks to the issue as well: America is a drug-happy society. We take pills for a myriad of issues. Going further, we take hGH for anti-aging. We take steroids—legitimately so—to address a host of ailments. As Gumbel notes, how do we really feel about

[Alex Rodriguez](#)

when we're pill-popping crazy?

"Finally tonight, what are we supposed to do with Alex Rodriguez? Embrace him? Pity him? Scorn him? I can easily understand any or all of those reactions because I think he's a liar and a fraud. But what I don't understand are the expressions of shock and outrage over his alleged

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drug use because, frankly, this country's crazy about drugs.

Modern Americans reach for a drug for any and everything – for problems real and imagined. It's why we consume more pills than any nation on earth and why TV ads are relentlessly selling us Xarelto, Abilify, Stelara, Proxal, and dozens of other drugs we never ever guessed we supposedly needed.

Americans are only about five percent of the world's population yet we take 80% of the world's painkillers and a whopping 99% of the world's Vicodin. We have four million kids on Ritalin, 22-million women on antidepressants, over 30-million adults on sleeping pills, 32 million on Statins, 45 million on another drug I can't even begin to pronounce. The list goes on and on.

So think what you will of Alex Rodriguez but when so many moms and dads are active parts of a national drug epidemic, let's stop crying that a ballplayer's the one setting a bad example for kids. And let's skip the expressions of outrage and shock because however you may choose to view A-Rod's alleged drugs use, there's no denying the ugly reality that that's become the American way."

Source: HBO's *Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel*



Maury Brown is the Founder and President of the [Business of Sports Network](#), which includes The Biz of Baseball, The Biz of Football, The Biz of Basketball and The Biz of Hockey. He [writes for Baseball Prospectus](#)

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