

# War on drugs in the house i live in

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



## **Introduction**

In the film, “ The House I Live In” states that “ Since 1971, the War on Drugs has cost over one trillion dollars and has accounted for more than 45 million arrests, which makes America the world’s largest jailer” (Jarecki, 2012). We meet those who are condemned in the face of the War on Drugs. We see that the courtroom legislation is disproportionate and oppress lower-class drug users, with a 100 to 1 minimal sentencing ratio in comparison to crack versus powder cocaine. We see evident footage of law enforcement agents being compensated for the quantity, instead of the quality, of arrests. The film “ The House I Live In” reveal the “ War on Drugs”, and its extensive imputation portray a disturbing image of the present-day, drug-damaged America. The purpose of this essay is to prove how time and time again that required minimal sentences are purposely intended to aim at minorities, mostly African Americans, as they are most likely to be arrested for drug crimes in the most disastrous war in the united states known as the “ War on Drugs”, a war that is invisible by society, but one of the biggest destructive wars in our nation today.

## **Primary Themes Addressed in Film**

That being the case, continuous indications reveal that the U. S. is losing its War on Drugs in an extreme way. Still, there’s no end in sight. Making changes would mean politicians would lose widespread support by the public, but that is exactly what’s needed to save the nation corrupted by drug addiction. The film, “ The House I Live In” is in dire need of a remedy to help a hurting nation. A nation that feels threatened amours itself as

opposed to the perceived threat. In the words of a New Mexico sheriff, “Everybody’s gotta have an enemy.” First the opium-smoking Chinese, then the cocaine-snorting Blacks, and eventually the marijuana’ed Mexicans (Jarecki, 2012). These conscientious people became seen as the rivals of the state who stole job positions from the white people. Rather than arresting them because of their skin color, the U. S. government cunningly banned the drugs they were using, then jailed and removed them from society. This information shows exactly how the criminal justice system stereotypes and misuse the power given with the downfall of the production industry, the War on Drugs hit blue-collared workers who were whites of middle America, cultivating its bias to factor in class. When the drug war was compared to the Holocaust, it really became proven real just how severe the ramifications of the drug war in America is. An Oklahoma jailer points out the misconception in incarcerating people not because they’re dangerous or threatening and you are frightened by them, but because, as he puts it, you’re infuriated at them. That madness has charged a policy of mandatory minimum sentences that are not balanced and affects African Americans and the disadvantaged. Jarecki depicts an astonishing history associating the criminals of drugs with the financial need to degrade the country’s minorities. This emphasizes that while drugs are an enormous problem in America, the resolutions the government seems to find excelling are more damaging than beneficiary.

Furthermore, in underprivileged neighborhoods, selling drugs is often the only quick way to make money. poor people struggling to make ends meet, that sell drugs are easy targets for the law enforcement officers, most of whom practically believe their efforts are making completely no difference.

In the words of Dennis Whidbee, a negligent father and drug dealer who is facing a very long mandatory minimum sentence says, “ I didn’t know how to stop doing what I was doing.” The only viable employer, the only job that puts food on the table and keeps the community active is drugs (Jarecki, 2012). Kids are not encouraged or supported to go get an education. Legitimate and fair jobs are not available. drugs are everywhere. Human intuition is entrenched in the will to survive, and in the deprived, most demoralized American communities, drugs equals survival. Another example was a personal narrative, Nannie Jeter who is an African American woman who helped raise Jarecki growing up. She treated him as if he was her own child. Jarecki knew her kids and used to played with them, and was very loving towards Jeter’s family. What he did not understand, however, is that when his own family hauled to a new house far away and asked Nannie Jeter to keep working for them, she had to leave her kids alone for a lengthy amount of times in order to work. Jeter’s children stayed in an urban city that ultimately led to one of her son’s being involved with drugs, developing to an addiction, and conclusively to his death. Jeter’s feeling of loss and personal regret are distressing. Jeter got out of poverty and injustices in the south, only to go to the urban north where other kinds of problems occurred such as poverty and discrimination occurred. It’s a never-ending cycle.

Moreover, Richard Nixon, who introduced the term the “ War on Drugs,” is often understood as hardheaded and intolerant of drug use and an individual who had “ no sympathy for the users and pushers,” he nevertheless originally wanted two thirds of the money spent fighting drugs to be spent for treatment rather than incarceration. The film makes clear his stance that

“ law enforcement is not enough,” (Jarecki, 2012). The increasingly cold and impractical outlook to addiction as a crime rather than a health issue divides the U. S from other advanced countries and has created the biggest prison population on earth. According to Inciardi (2008), “ The medical establishment argued that addiction was a physical disease and should be treated as one” (p. 35). Drug abuse is primarily a medical problem, not a crime against society. For instance, they could take the draconian policies opposing the drug addicts, dealers and should be adjusted and rather than locking these people into prisons, they could go into rehabilitation centers to help guide them in the right direction rather than sending them into prison. For example, Jarecki suggests sentencing project and policy alliance to assist in reforming the sentence policies. We even hear from the US District Court Judge Mark Bennett concerning the devastating results of the maximum sentencing laws. He has no option but to give life sentences to defendants arrested for possession of drugs. That is a crucial way the prison system has escalated into a billion-dollar industry.

## **Relating Film to Course Material**

Similarly, when connecting the film, *The House We Live In* to what we have been learning in class is the idea when a new drug enters the marketplace, a movement of fearfulness and propaganda is released by the government in order to proceed through laws that, in standard situations, wouldn't make it over the drawing panel as discussed in class known as moral panic. Such was the situation of crack cocaine, chemically indistinguishable to the powder but used predominantly by poor African Americans and put into the mandatory minimum sentences for all drug offences, whether violent or not, and placed

an incarceration ratio of 100: 1 for crack and powder cocaine. This proposed that an individual spotted with 5 grams of crack cocaine was viewed the same as someone with 500 grams of powder cocaine and that the two would be specified the same mandatory minimum sentence of five years. This made me think about the sociological aspect of things and thought about the conflict theory we discussed in class and how there's a power differentials between different groups in society and the fact that the crack epidemic is strongly related on things such as social class, income, power, and locale. For the most part focuses on structural conditions such as poverty, joblessness, economic equality. Also, as Judge Mark Bennett notes, this makes no sense because 'all crack cocaine comes from powdered cocaine (Jarecki, 2012). Crack cocaine is ingenuously the same as powder cocaine, baked in an oven with water and baking soda but according to Inciardi, it was referred to be "the most dangerous substance on earth" (Inciardi, 2008, p. 117). similarly, powder was viewed as the 'white collar' drug. Crack was viewed as unsafe, the substance of illegality because it is a lot cheaper in price and more meteoric way of ingesting cocaine for extreme addicts. It was also inferred to be the 'black drug', like the same way that we consider crystal meth as the white drug. But African Americans do not use crack cocaine more than whites. As a matter of fact, white people use it more. According to Julie Stewart, Director of Families Against Mandatory Minimums, exposes that "African Americans make up 13% of the population, and about 13% of crack users. Yet 90% of the crack defendants in the federal system are black" (Jarecki, 2012). Mandatory minimums are a significant cause of America's drug crisis. They compel the judge to give a 'one-size-fits-all'

sentence, even if the crime is nonviolent. These have had the effect of tremendously increasing the prison population, and further sabotaging justice. The House I Live In point out that a man jailed for life without parole for carrying three ounces (85 grams) of methamphetamine this is a chance to continue marginalizing and enslaving an entire community.

## **Overall Reaction to Film**

The film *The House I Live In* opened my eyes to the harshness of unfair law enforcement and the intense battle with war on drugs that seems to not have an end. It reveals that the U. S. is being defeated badly at the War on Drugs, and that the most unequipped citizens are experiencing the biggest let down. It was heartbreaking to say the least when hearing about all the stories from individuals at every level of America's War on Drugs. From the drug dealer to the aching mother, the inmates to the federal judge, it provided an aggressive look inside America's longest war, offering a clear picture and revealing its human rights importance while acknowledging drug abuse as a situation of public health, and looks into the disastrous misconception and deficiency that have developed from formulating it as a problem for law enforcement. As the Film director Jarecki notes, ' Watching arrest after arrest, I began to see for the first time the destructive impact of drug laws not only on those they target but on those who enforce them as well" (Jarecki, 2012). It also made me think just how effective it is on how financial and political manipulation has stirred up the war on drugs, regardless of constant evidence of its economic, Morals, and practical failures. prisons have become storage space for the lower-class, individuals put away so that someone can make money off their torture.

## Conclusion

To conclude, Jarecki's film makes an overwhelming case against the War on Drugs, using road footage, jail footage and the first-hand story of Nannie Jeter, the Jarecki family's long-term housekeeper, whose son was arrested. Jarecki lays out a clear and captivating case validating that the U. S. policy against intoxicating substances and, featuring, the people who use or sell them, amounts to a systematic affliction upon those with the fewest resources in the U. S which is a war established by race and class. Jarecki's film is a call for justice and equality and for a reasoned, humane approach to an intricate problem, one that over the decades has been extremely distorted. The war on drugs is extremely expensive and it has not been regulated. It has instead split apart families and communities. As well as stated earlier that it mainly is aimed at minorities and has filled the prisons with many nonviolent offenders instead of prosecuting murderers and rapists. lastly, for the battle against drug abuse to be successful, authority, individuals and community must work together side by side to fight against it.