American Drug War

Name of Writer
Affiliations

1. As you watch the movie, complete the following chart for at least five people depicted in the film.

| Name | Est. Age | Sex/Gender | Race | How are they depicted? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ralph Nader | 75-80 | Male | White | A political activist who speaks against the drug war |
| Cynthia McKinney | 55-60 | Female | Black | A political activist who speaks against wasting millions of innocent people that are jailed instead of big fishes |
| Celerino Castillo | 55-60 | Male | Latin | Former DEA agent represented as someone who talks about a bigger problem because there are more drugs today than a decade ago.  |
| Tommy Chong | 70 | Male | White | Actor, writer, and cannabis rights activist who says that Nixon started this war to sway away people's attention from the war in Cambodia |
| T-Rodgers | 45-50 | Male | Black | Co-founder of blood street gang who talks about the effect of drug dealers on gang members and distinguishes between them |

2. What trends did you discover? Is there any apparent stereotyping? Are minorities portrayed as having more of a drug problem than others have? Is this accurate or inaccurate?

Answer: The war against drugs is being used against poor people and not against people who benefit most from drugs which are the bankers that launder the money. The apparent stereotyping is that authorities don’t send nicotine addicts to jail nor they send alcoholics to jail so they shouldn’t send drug addicts to jail as well. There are some specific drugs that are associated with black people e.g. crack etc. This is however inaccurate as the narrator's own brother was addicted to it who is ethnically white. So specific drug use and addiction cannot be associated with a specific race and minority.

3. Which groups are generally targeted in “the war on drugs”? How and why?

Answer: Banning of cocaine was passed to protect white women from black men (*American Drug War*, n.d.). The targeted groups are generally black and Hispanic men as almost two out of every three person that are in jail for drug abuse.

4. Are minority groups disproportionately affected by current drug policy? How and why? Why is this Problematic? What are the consequences of this for members of these minority groups?

Answer: The drug policy was made for everyone but the attitude and perception of the authorities towards black men make it disproportional. Since 9/11 the gangs are now considered as new terrorists. The numbers of black people in cases of drug abuse are much more than that of white men. This is problematic because it creates a sense of racial disharmony among people.

5. What impact does the war on drugs have on?

a. The Lower Class?

The drug on war has given people knowledge about crystal ice and other stuff that they can now cook in the house. People in the lower-class need money and there is a lot of money in drug dealing. They have found it an easy way of making money.

 b. The Middle Class?

In the budget of the Year 2000, 20 B dollars were allotted to the war on drugs, these $20 B could have been used on better education, better health, and better infrastructure. People are kept deprived of their basic rights due to a meaningless drug on a war that has no end result.

 c. The Upper Class?

The upper class doesn't have any major issues with drug abuse. There is no crime on Wall Street so much upper class doesn't care at all. Moreover, low scale markets are much easier for police to penetrate than large scale markets. So even if there are drug addicts in Upper class they barely get caught.

6. What does statistical data tell us about regular drug users? What is the demographic profile of the typical drug user? Does our current drug policy (aka “the war on drugs”) appropriately target these users? Support your position.

Answer: Millions of Americans who are older than 12 years old use illegal drugs. In fact, the exact number of people using a drug is around 8 percent. Among that Marijuana and cocaine are among the top of it. The number of heroin users has also increased since the US's occupation of Afghanistan. Most people start abusing drugs during their early teens to the age of 25 years. In the 70s and 80s, music and drug abuse were closely related to each other. At least in the eyes of authorities black and Latin people are most affected by drug abuse because of their demographic backgrounds.

7. If you were in charge of US drug policy, what would you change and why? What specific policies would you put in place? Why?

Answer: If I were in charge of US drug policy I would have spent the majority of budget assigned to me on the rehabilitation process within the jail surroundings, rather than on the information network to catch them. The reason behind this is because nowadays modern drugs can even be cooked in your own house backyard as well so it is very hard to stop its abuse. However, I would have cooperated with border security forces to decrease its smuggling from other countries.

**References**

*American Drug War*. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD3snUVJiQE&list=PLQ\_Bo3hOPv9iIczNY5-q3Khllg1HCGrsN