

# Racist Marijuana Enforcement

David Zokaites

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# Some History

- Marijuana criminalized under cover of racist lies by Harry J. Anslinger
- Unconstitutional Marihuana Tax Act of 1937
- Protected certain industries from hemp
- Nixon's war on drugs was used to crush protest
- Strategy by John Ehrlichman
- Not designed to promote health

# Big Business

- Criminal cannabis helps:
- Drug companies (pharmaceuticals, less competition)
- Alcohol, tobacco (more drugs)
- Prison industry (more “customers”)
- Criminal justice industry
- Fear mongers in media, politics

# Current Problems

- Blacks and whites use at same rate but
- SD blacks 5x more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession. See "Extreme Racial Disparities Persist in Marijuana Arrests" on <https://graphics.aclu.org/marijuana-arrest-report/>
- 4.5x in Minnehaha County, South Dakota
- 116.5x in Franklin County, Massachusetts
- SD has highest USA marijuana arrest rate, Massachusetts lowest. 707 vs 4.5 per 100,000. See [https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field\\_document/042020-marijuanareport.pdf](https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/042020-marijuanareport.pdf)

# Some Causes

- Implicit racism
- Law enforcement focuses on high crime areas while ignoring legal theft (regressive taxation, housing bubble)
- Minorities, poverty, trauma, crime, abuse, single parent families, ... cluster together
- People target suspicious people, actions
- Exceptions (minorities) are inherently suspicious
- Right wing governments tend to be authoritarian

# Simple – Difficult – Solution

- Change government motives
- Truth, science, compassion not greed, dominance, dishonesty
- Scientific studies show marijuana is safer than recreational alcohol
- Medical cannabis to relieve pain, calm anxiety, control chemotherapy nausea, stimulate appetite for cancer patients, reduce opiate use, ...
- Legalize marijuana

# Supporting Goals

- Help criminal justice employees understand their implicit biases
- Address cluster of social ills: economic segregation in housing, no generational wealth for poor, income inequality, poverty, trauma, crime, abuse, single parent families, cyclical incarceration and addiction, ...



# Have A Colorful Life

