



HIGH: The true tale of American Marijuana

A
John Holowach
Film

Feature Documentary

100 minutes
This film is not yet rated

PRESS NOTES

Press Contact:

Robert W. Schubring
Producer
Invisible Hand Productions
2723 Avonhurst Dr
Troy, MI 48084-1062
Phone +1-734-320-3435
Fax +1-248-647-1916
rschubring@cappc.org

Sales:

Bob Lee
LongTale LLC
3699 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 850
Los Angeles, CA 90010-2737
Phone +1-323-733-1000
Fax +1-323-230-7408
World-Wide Licensing Rights Sales
Manager
rboblee@aol.com

SYNOPSIS

125-WORD

SYNOPSIS

A documentary that covers the war on drugs and its causes, effects, and victims in the United States and around the world. It includes a violent drug treatment program that tortured children; an overbearing drug czar that doesn't care for the people he hurts in his quest; patients who are being denied the medications they need; doctors being prosecuted for trying to help them; and a substance that we all know of, but nobody wants to talk about.

250-WORD

SYNOPSIS

HIGH is a documentary that covers the war on drugs and its causes, effects, and victims in the United States and around the world. It includes a violent drug treatment program called Straight Inc. that tortured children and corrupted families, all in the name of a cult image about the evils of drugs and homosexuality. The program was founded by a man who climbed the political ladder and now holds a position of power and influence in Washington.

There's the overbearing drug czar that doesn't care for the people he hurts in his quest to rid the world of narcotics, even if it means destroying lives and lying to the American people.

And perhaps most horribly, the stories of patients who are being denied the medications they need to survive, doctors being prosecuted for trying to help them, and an uncaring drug agency that wants nothing more than to take down as many people as possible, casualties be damned.

At the center of it is a plant that's been hanging around for over twelve-thousand years, and fuels the unfair practices of today.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT & RESEARCH NOTES

Background

I began this project about two-and-a-half years ago, when I realized that so few people have any idea of what it means to support the "war on drugs," who's running the program, the significance of allowing ourselves to be deceived by government misinformation on the subject, and just what drugs are. This project is the result of years and years of research and reveals a few important things about the drug war that only a small amount of people have been privy to, including the power being a drug cop imbues upon you, the money that changes hands and is taken from taxpayers to support such efforts, and how thousands are suffering needlessly in the government's quest to eliminate vice. Watch with an open mind, and consider with a skeptical eye, but don't dismiss, and listen to what is happening in the world.

Research

As I say in the film, I began to research this project back when I was still in high school (freshman year, to be precise). I spent years – on and off – discovering just what marijuana was, its history, how it's used, and how the current model of prohibition-over-harm-reduction began.

Of course, full research didn't begin until about three years ago, when I realized that documentary films were just beginning to get a lot of play in both the media and with the general public, and I felt that I could most accurately express my thoughts on the subject through this increasingly popular form of entertainment.

Research came from a variety of sources, mostly scientific studies and government survey data, as well as historical information. I had to dive into the history of prohibition and how it began, as well as how it came to the current level that it is. Also, I had to separate out the most reliable and useful data concerning drug prohibition and its effectiveness.

Of course, scientific data can only take you so far, and interviews with people involved – either directly or peripherally – with the war on drugs. Some came from academia (such as Prof. Lyle Craker or Prof. Jeffrey Miron), but most were found through a combination of internet chains of interest, or mentions by other interview subjects.

In the end, I amassed a huge database of information that I used to document and provide a thorough and complete thesis in the film.

INTERVIEWS

Jim Babka..... President of DownsizeDC.org
 Ricardo Cortes..... Author of *It's Just a Plant*
 Prof. Lyle Craker..... Professor of Plant, Soil, and Insect Sciences at UMass
 William Earnshaw..... Was enrolled in Straight, Inc. in his youth
 Wes Fager..... Son was enrolled in Straight
 Dr. Paul Heberle..... Being prosecuted for misuse of medication
 Phil Hirschkop, Esq..... Lawyer, worked on Straight cases
 Allison McKim..... Co-President of NYC Chapter of DanceSafe
 Prof. Jeffrey Miron..... Professor of Economics at Boston U (currently at Harvard)
 Siobhan Reynolds..... President of the Pain Relief Network
 Keith Stroup..... Founder of NORML
 Maia Szalavitz..... Writer/Author, Drug researcher

PAIN PATIENTS

Tim Burton
 Richard Deluca
 Dan Feldman
 Jennifer Gardner
 Robert Holmes
 Sue Jeffries
 Lisa Mello
 Pat Rotunda
 Mary Rudenski

FILMMAKER BIOS

JOHN HOLOWACH – WRITER / DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

John Holowach was born in Youngstown, OH and has lived in a suburb of the area ever since. He has been interested in filmmaking since he was a child, and has been researching drug policy for the past five years. Though he prefers working in narrative features, his documentary - *HIGH: The true tale of American Marijuana* - was forced onto him when he saw the injustices inherent in the drug war system. He is currently planning several projects, including a new media one.

ROBERT SCHUBRING – PRODUCER / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Bob Schubring is a native of Troy, Michigan, and attended Birmingham Seaholm High School, where he auditioned to be the piano player in the musical that gave ER's Laura Innes her first starring stage role. He abandoned the arts for a career in technology, matriculating in 1976, and graduated Wayne State University in 1980 as a chemist. Turning to public matters, he worked on several forensic investigations, and co-founded Citizens Against Police and Prosecutorial Corruption (www.cappc.org) in 1998. He ran for Congress in 2002 as a Libertarian, squeezing 8,000 votes out of a multimillion-dollar race while raising and spending less than \$200 to campaign. HIGH is Bob's first foray into documentary film production. He brings back to the artistic arena his talent at the fine art of cost containment. Seeing promise in director John Holowach's commitment to factual accuracy and sharing a desire to expose the unprecedented miscarriage of justice that Americans call the Drug War, Bob joined the project as Producer, set a budget, and funded nearly all of the filming and editing of HIGH. Bob, who is single and has never used marijuana, considers it too dangerous for any American who ever used banned drugs, or who has children of school age who might be enticed to bring banned drugs home, to produce a film like HIGH, for during the three decades the Nixonian Drug War has raged, the line between lawmen and the lawless has become invisible and the opposing armies of this war are almost indistinguishable.

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www.TrueHigh.com