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# The Cyclical Nature of Moral Entrepreneurship

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A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Master of Liberal Studies Program

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

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by

Yvonne L. Wolf

May 2001

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Keywords: Moral Entrepreneurship, Rhetoric, Drug Wars, Discrimination, Racial Prejudice

## ABSTRACT

### The Cyclical Nature of Moral Entrepreneurship

by

Yvonne L. Wolf

The primary focus of this study was to determine how “moral entrepreneurs” were able to convince the American public to support their anti-drug crusades.

The methodology section consisted of information gathered from primary and secondary sources, and described why these sources were used.

Harry Anslinger and Richard Nixon were used as models to demonstrate how a cycle of moral entrepreneurship existed throughout the twentieth century.

By testing for a cycle of moral entrepreneurship through content analysis of various sources, including descriptive statistics, the same pattern was identified as dominating Reagan’s and Bush’s anti-drug rhetoric.

Lastly, possible limitations of the study and any implications that the study may have for the reader were discussed.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, the United States has produced many outstanding orators who have established and maintained a powerful influence over an entire nation through their rhetoric on a popular topic – social problems. “Rhetoric as such is not rooted in any past condition of human society. It is rooted in an essential function of language itself. . . . the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols” (Burke, 1962, p. 567). These orators essentially function as “moral entrepreneurs” (Becker, 1963, p. 147), who help develop and enforce rules regarding particular social problems usually based upon their moral beliefs. A common characteristic shared by moral entrepreneurs is that they have the ability to convince an audience that a problem exists, that it is troublesome and widespread, and that it must be changed (Loseke, 1999). They usually play upon people’s subjective values, such as the moral beliefs that they hold. Focusing on subjective values usually succeed when rhetoric includes a controversy between right and wrong. Consequently, if a social problem is considered bad and widespread enough, the probability of influencing change in social beliefs and legislation is more likely. According to social constructionist theory, although moral entrepreneurs may have good intentions and believe what they are doing is for the good of society, there are times when their recommended changes will not have a positive impact upon the public. Therefore, the moral entrepreneur may be more concerned with how the audience can be convinced of their argument as opposed to the outcome of the crusade (Loseke, 1999).

Throughout the twentieth century, moral entrepreneurs have convinced members of society that they are in the midst of a social cataclysm involving drugs as a social problem. To further their crusade, moral entrepreneurs’ rhetoric contained several prohibitionist themes: First, drugs are usually associated with a disliked group in society; second, for society to survive, drugs must be eliminated and outlawed; third, drugs are believed to be responsible for the corruption of youth; and fourth, anyone who questions the above assumptions is attacked and considered an enemy to society and the government (White, 1979).

With each successful moral crusade the outcome is the creation of a new set of rules. With these new ideas, new agencies are developed to regulate these new rules. For example, the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment “led to the creation of police agencies charged with enforcing Prohibition laws. With the establishment of organizations of rule enforcers, the crusade became institutionalized” (Becker, 1963, p. 155). In other words, what started out as a moral necessity is now law.

This researcher identified Harry Anslinger and former Presidents Nixon, Reagan, and Bush as models for moral entrepreneurship due to their powerful position in society and their ability to convince people of their anti-drug message. Additionally, each moral entrepreneur (with the exception of George Bush) came into their position after a period of relaxed attitudes toward drug use, but still successfully crusaded against illicit drug use.

#### Statement and Significance of the Problem

Through content analysis of historical data (early 1900s through the early 1990s), this researcher studied the rhetoric used by those deemed to be moral entrepreneurs and how their rhetorical arguments convinced the general public that they were in the midst of a drug abuse problem. Additionally, this researcher attempted to determine how particular members of the counter culture, such as addicts, minorities, musicians, and youth, were used as tools to substantiate various moral entrepreneurs’ rhetorical arguments and beliefs. Throughout time, people took these arguments at face value, instead of questioning their validity. Therefore, each generation experienced what the “policy would be toward those persons who disobeyed the rules about the use of chemical intoxicants. The conversion of these policy definitions into law often followed prohibitionist mass movements” (White, 1979, p. 1). This study examined a variety of techniques that moral entrepreneurs employed to instill certain beliefs about drugs through their rhetoric. In the process of achieving their aims, moral entrepreneurs discriminate against many different groups of people and violated their civil rights. To maintain equality and fairness not only in the criminal justice system, but also in society, it is imperative to question and determine why society continually makes the same decision: To listen to certain others’ opinions, as opposed to investigating various constructions of the truth.

## Definitions

*Moral entrepreneur/Moral crusader:* These two terms will be used interchangeably. There are two types of moral entrepreneurs/crusaders: rule creators and rule enforcers. The rule creator is interested in “the content of the rules” (Becker, 1963, p. 147-148). The moral entrepreneur does not feel that the existing rules are good enough to rid those deemed deviant from society. It becomes the responsibility of the moral entrepreneur to correct the problem and to protect society from immorality, and it is not surprising that crusades are often religious based (Becker, 1963). The second type of moral entrepreneur/crusader, the enforcer, is usually not interested in the content of law but rather in enforcing law obedience. This is important to the enforcer because these rules have created his or her job and have provided the enforcer with an important identity. The enforcer must demonstrate that a problem exists in order to justify this profession as worthwhile and to claim it will have a positive impact on society.

*Anti-drug crusader teams:* More than one person who shares the same ideology and is working toward a common goal.

*Teaheads:* Between the 1930s and the 1950s, those using drugs while frequenting a teapad, became known as a teahead.

*Teapad:* During the early twentieth century, there were people who allowed their apartment to be used by others as a safe haven when they wanted to use drugs after clubs closed at night.

*Moral panic:* When members of a society share a “strong, widespread (although not universal) fear or concern that evil doings are afoot, that certain enemies of society are trying to harm some or all of the rest of us” (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1999, p. 11).

*Social problem:* the existence of a problem that is considered to be wrong, widespread, and a threat to the public. However, most believe that this problem can be solved.

## Thesis Organization

Chapter 2 describes the methodology used to gather data from primary and secondary sources and to explain why certain data sources were used.

Chapters 3 and 4 discuss a pattern of moral entrepreneurship throughout the twentieth century.

Chapter 5 was designed to test whether there was a cycle of moral entrepreneurship during the Reagan and Bush era.

Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the information gathered and what the research findings suggest. It also includes some limitations to the study, and possible implications that the study may have for the readers.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODOLOGY

This researcher examined the rhetoric of moral entrepreneurs and the issues and people they targeted in order to influence public opinion. To accomplish this, moral entrepreneurs needed to create a drug problem and create a drug menace and an impending crisis in order to establish fear in the public's mind in hopes to gain the support of society so that they could successfully execute an anti-drug crusade.

To test this model of moral entrepreneurship, I examined various primary and secondary sources to not only determine if moral entrepreneurs' messages were getting to the public (these sources included *The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and the Gallup Poll), but also to determine if the public was influenced by their rhetoric. I also examined descriptive statistics provided by various independent and government agencies, to determine the prevalence of drug use by both the adult and youth population, and to see if their drug use behavior coincided with the rhetoric stated by moral entrepreneurs.

The moral entrepreneurs I focused on for this thesis are Harry Anslinger, and former Presidents Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and George Bush. I chose these leaders because of the powerful positions that they held. Moreover, each came into his political position and started an anti-drug crusade (with the exception of George Bush) after a period of relaxed attitudes toward drug use. It must be noted that although many factors played a part in each successive drug war, these campaigns were successful because they were persuasive speakers who ultimately gained the support of the American public.

#### Data Sources and Procedures

Given that the bulk of information consisted of text, content analysis seemed to be the logical method for analyzing the various documents, such as books, government studies and documents, journals, magazines, newspapers, and personal papers. Additionally, the research for this paper was carried out at East Tennessee State University Library, The Paterno Library at Pennsylvania State

University, and on the Internet.

#### Data Collection Strategies for Harry Anslinger's Era

Primary sources were obtained through two means: First, when researching Harry Anslinger's professional life, this researcher visited the Archives at The Paterno Library, at Pennsylvania State University. There were exactly 13 boxes that contained Harry Anslinger's personal and professional papers. Each box contained a number of files that held different types of information, such as memos, notes, speeches, published works, and other related information. On the one hand, this researcher attempted to remain open-minded and weigh the evidence objectively. On the other hand, realizing that a goal of this research was to discover how moral entrepreneurs convinced the public of their crusade, I felt it necessary to read each piece of information so that I could find information not only pertinent to the research, but also to get a better understanding of the individual whose work I was analyzing.

The secondary sources collected came in the form of textual data such as books, journal and magazine and newspaper articles, and other government documents. Additionally, I obtained descriptive statistics on illicit drugs (as provided by the Federal Bureau of Narcotic and the U. S. Public Health Service) such as drug use, drug seizure, and drug arrest rates, to determine if the numbers either supported or refuted Anslinger's claims.

Paging through Anslinger's papers, I discovered not only a wealth of information pertaining to his war on drugs, but I also found that he authored and typed all of his speeches, memos, and letters. Furthermore, Harry Anslinger also wrote thank you notes to those individuals whom he felt helped him in his crusade. This information allowed me to assume that he knew the importance of acknowledging those who helped him promote and sustain his mission.

#### Data Collection Strategies for Richard Nixon's Era

The bulk of the data for this era was collected from secondary sources in the form of textual data. The secondary sources consulted came in the form of books, journals, magazines, and newspaper articles, descriptive statistics (as provided by the Second Report of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse, 1974), and other government documents.

Various descriptive statistics on the prevalence of drug abuse among both the youth (ages 12-

17) and the adult (ages 18 and up) populations provided by the National Commission were compared to the statistics that President Nixon announced to the public. This helped determine if the numbers were similar or not.

#### Data Collection Strategies for Ronald Reagan's and George Bush's Era

This researcher used secondary sources to collect information during this time period. A major source consulted was the National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1997. This was a series of studies conducted by The University of Michigan for the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. This study surveyed a cross-section of high school seniors throughout the United States. Each year's data collection "takes place in approximately 125 to 145 public and private high schools selected to provide an accurate representation" (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 1998, p. 39). Each student was given a questionnaire and asked to answer questions relating to their drug use over several different time periods. For example, they were asked if they used drugs during the past 30 days, how often, and what kind. For this study, I examined the students actual usage characteristics during both a 30 day and daily use period.

Other secondary sources consulted were in the form of textual data to supplement the textual information, this researcher used descriptive "illicit-drug" statistics (self-reported drug use by both the adult and youth population) to check whether or not youth drug use behavior matched moral entrepreneurs' claims.

Another secondary source consulted was the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* in order to conduct a content analysis to determine if Reagan's and Bush's anti-drug message was reaching the public's eyes and ears. The time period examined was 1980 to 1992, the time period of the Reagan and Bush Presidential administrations. I searched under several different drug-related headings, such as drugs, drug abuse, drug trafficking, narcotics law and regulation of narcotics. First of all, I counted all of the articles that made reference to illicit drugs in the title, but did not name a specific drug. Second, I counted all the titles that made reference to specific drugs. I divided the drugs into four categories: Marijuana, cocaine, crack, and ecstasy. I chose these four drugs because most of the general public recognizes these particular drugs. I proceeded to count the number of times each one of

the drugs appeared in a title, and kept a tally of the total number. Third, I counted and categorized those articles that titled an article that fit into one of these four themes: (a) Drugs associated with disliked groups, such as drug addicts, drug dealers, minority groups, musicians, and youths; (b) Articles titled in such a way that it suggested that drugs should be eliminated and outlawed; (c) Articles titled so that it was suggested that drugs are responsible for the corruption of the youth; (d) And articles titled so that it suggested that anyone who questions the previous three themes is considered an enemy to both society and to the government.

Additionally, I selected and read a minimum of three articles (if available for that particular year) to determine if the content of the article was about a drug war and if it indicated whether the article supported the moral entrepreneur's anti-drug crusade or opposed it. In selecting documents to conduct content analysis, I attempted to include both conservative and liberal points of view with regard to the drug war. I tried to include authors who either supported moral entrepreneurs and their crusade or those who spoke out against it.

I also examined the rhetoric articulated during both President Reagan's and President Bush's tenure and analyzed what they were saying. Next, I looked at the public opinion polls (Gallup Poll) to examine the level of popular concern during that time period in order to determine how well Reagan and Bush were pushing their anti-drug message into the public's consciousness.

This researcher attempted to verify that the secondary sources consulted for the former Presidents Reagan Bush were written by credible authors. After careful review of each document, I wrote a brief synopsis of the written content in addition to recording my impressions of the information provided. This helped in analyzing the intended meaning attached to the rhetoric employed by both Presidents Reagan and Bush. This researcher also noted any information that insinuated reasons other than the original declared ones for an anti-drug crusade. This was important to note because historically drug prohibition has served "many aims and interests other than the declared objective" (Gordon, 1994, p. x) by moral entrepreneurs, and because drug prohibition still serves to marginalize those considered deviant: drug addicts, racial minorities, youths, and those who live on the periphery (Gordon, 1994).



## CHAPTER 3

### THE EARLY YEARS WITH HARRY ANSLINGER

The people of the early twentieth century witnessed several moral entrepreneurs, but none so influential as the first Federal Drug Commissioner, Harry Anslinger. He not only attacked the illicit drug trade, but his overzealous behavior helped create a new class of criminals: Drugs users and drug dealers.

According to Anslinger, two incidents during his youth caused him to detest drugs and drug users. This irrational feeling of hatred began when Anslinger was 12 years old and witnessed a neighbor's traumatic experience with morphine addiction. As he recounted the story, he said that he would never forget the woman's screams while she was going through withdrawal. The second reason Anslinger disliked drugs resulted from an experience while working on the railroad. Anslinger worked with a number of Italian immigrants who abused drugs and after witnessing numerous incidents of violence due to their drug use and the violence of their supplier, the "Mano Nero," also known as the Mafia (McWilliams, 1990), Anslinger decided that illicit drugs encouraged violent behavior.

#### Creating the Drug Problem

Due to increased international and national drug trafficking in the early 1930s, the government created a new department specifically designed to tackle the illegal drug trade: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics (FBN). Taking the post as the first Commissioner of the FBN, Harry J. Anslinger viewed himself as a "moral entrepreneur" (Becker, 1963, p. 147) responsible for protecting society from drug users who could tempt good Christians to commit wicked acts. He decided that it was necessary to stop those individuals whom he considered immoral and deviant, and the best way to accomplish this was through detoxification or incarceration.

Anslinger declared that America was in the midst of a drug problem and supported this statement by pointing out that during the years 1934 to 1939, the number of drug seizures increased from 96 to 794 annually (Anslinger Papers, box 1, file 9, ca. 1930-1970). Additionally, the number of drug-related offenses and arrests increased from January 1 to May 31, 1930.

Even though the Marijuana Tax Act was passed in 1937, an increase in marijuana seizures and marijuana-related drug arrests escalated. For example, in 1939 about 10,000 acres of growing plants were found. By 1940 that number increased to 13,000 acres, and a total of 788 drug arrests or drug seizures were reported (Anslinger Papers, box 1, file 9, ca. 1930-1970). By December 1946, there was a total of 2,339 narcotics violations (953 of those being marijuana), which was an increase of 1551 violations. This encouraged Anslinger to look closer at those people abusing drugs and to redirect his efforts in eliminating the drug problem.

### Identifying a Menace and Engineering a Crisis

Anslinger understood the necessity of establishing a drug menace in the public's mind. He knew that fear would become a part of that image, thus making his task of engineering a crisis easier. To accomplish this, Anslinger recognized the need to reach the masses. He encouraged articles to be written about the drug menace in addition to authoring a number of articles himself. Examples of headlines that appeared in the media were, "Marijuana: Assassin of Youth" (Anslinger & Riley, *Reader's Digest*, 1937, p. 18), "Youth Gone Loco" (Gard, *Christian Century*, 1938, p. 812) and "One More Peril for Youth" (Leach, *Forum*, 1939, p. 1). These headlines set the tone of the content of the articles that soon followed, ones that emphasized the alleged effects that marijuana had upon humans. Although there was no empirical research to prove or disprove these accounts, because reputable mediums were reporting these stories, many readers assumed they were true (McWilliams, 1990). The horror story angle was further supported by the "countless stories of heinous acts committed by users while under its effects" (McWilliams, 1990, p. 50). These headlines, in conjunction with the support of key political and social figures, were fundamental in the promotion of an anti-drug campaign.

Anslinger captured the intended audience's attention by amplifying those news and medical reports that suggested that ingesting marijuana would wreak havoc upon the user, both physically and psychologically. However, it must be noted that

Much of those frightfully devastating reports, of course, were emanating from Mr. Anslinger's office and being received by a grateful yellow-tinged press. The Bureau was beginning to amass

scores and scores of case histories of crime and insanity due to marijuana. Even the most tenuous connections were accepted with open arms. Anslinger at times would go overboard in his zeal to generate negative publicity about the green plant. (Sloman, 1979, p. 50)

To maintain society's interest, Anslinger recognized that he must play upon not only peoples' fears, but also their prejudices. In the beginning, the Mexican population was an easy target. To establish the credibility of this argument, Anslinger submitted a letter to the House Hearings (1937), that described how marijuana-smoking Mexicans acted like "sex-mad degenerates" (Mauss, 1975, p. 258). Moreover, Anslinger presented various reports that described how police departments in various Southwestern states were experiencing problems with the local Mexican community. Law enforcement complained that the Mexicans were getting loaded and causing trouble such as assaults, rapes, theft, and even murder (Sloman, 1979). However, the percentage of Mexicans arrested for drug-related offenses in San Francisco, California was 2.69 percent out of 112 cases. From July 1 to September 30, 1930, the number of Mexicans arrested increased to 6.61 percent out of 121 total cases (Helmer, 1975, p. 69). These numbers did not support the theory that a large number of Mexicans were arrested for drug-related offenses as claimed by Harry J. Anslinger.

Anslinger countered this by telling his favorite graphic tales that he had unconditional proof of the drug's direct relationship to criminal behavior. His "Assassin of Youth" article told of a horrendous homicide committed by a young Mexican male named Victor Licata, who slaughtered five members of his family after experiencing marijuana-induced hallucinations (McWilliams, 1990).

Anslinger insisted that it was the government's responsibility to stop the spread of marijuana use, since local law enforcement was unable to quell the problem by themselves. His rhetoric emphasized that the degenerate Spanish-speaking residents could not control their actions when they smoked the evil marijuana weed (Mauss, 1975), and because there was a large number of Mexican marijuana smokers, local police were in dire need of the FBN's help and guidance.

It must be noted that some common themes that dominated Anslinger's collection of horror stories were to do with race, social status, and morality. The most commonly identified offenders were either Black, Hispanic, or lower-class Whites (Mayor's Committee on Marijuana, 1944). This led

many people to believe that it was up to the civilized Whites to guide Mexicans and Blacks in the right direction. By stating that crime was escalating and marijuana use increasing, anti-drug crusaders and politicians created a problem and then put a face on it. In effect, this justified intervention and control of certain sectors of the population.

During the Great Depression the Bureau lost more than \$700,000 of operating funds in a three-year period (McWilliams, 1990). Desperate to keep the Federal Bureau of Narcotics a separate agency, Anslinger felt pressured to take a different approach in his crusade. Anslinger recognized that the Mexican menace tactic was quickly becoming passe. Anslinger decided that he needed to refocus his crusade, and knowing that “anti-marijuana rhetoric . . . particularly as it was related to violent crimes, proved to be the most effective in mobilizing public opinion of the Bureau. . . . If the FBN was to stop the illicit drug traffic in the country, it needed legislative assistance” (McWilliams, 1990, p. 62).

He next turned his attention to jazz musicians, a group known to use marijuana extensively. Commissioner Anslinger, along with many members of society, was concerned about the group most affected by this menace, the youth. Because many popular cultural icons (especially jazz musicians) used marijuana, the youth, avid consumers of music, were quick to experiment with it. Many members of society feared that if they did not vocalize the possible destructive properties of marijuana, they would eventually encounter some disastrous consequences. To spread the word quickly, and substantiate his moral crusade against those individuals associated with drug abuse, Anslinger, with the help of several prominent newspapers and magazines, painted vivid portraits of evil drug users. They emphasized that

Publicity concerning . . . musicians who have served time for possession of marijuana did much to spread curiosity and interest among legions of their teen-age fans who idolize the professionals and attempt to imitate their habits. (Anslinger Papers, box 9, file 54, ca. 1930-1970)

Therefore, Anslinger decided that it was important to focus on those musicians who were influential in the spread of drugs use. Although this new villain was not as fearsome as the drug-using scourge in prior years, musicians were exactly what he needed to reach young ears. Moreover, most of

the general public supported Anslinger because they despised many of these musicians. They did not approve of the content of their songs, which promoted drug use (Sloman, 1979). Because this new scapegoat was neither politically or socially strong, and because they cared only about music and little else, they were considered easy prey. Due to the lack of social and political power during that period, jazz musicians were unable to defend themselves, and therefore became the scapegoat for the anti-drug movement. Although Anslinger and the Bureau tried to justify the anti-drug campaign for moral reasons, it appears that their reasons were not exclusively moral (Mauss, 1975), for he tended to target only those on the periphery.

Consequently, jazz musicians became the new criminal and their weapon was their music that promoted drugs. A number of jazz songs and instrumentals were thought to incite one to abuse drugs through their lyrics. “A partial list of them, published in *The Melody Maker*, includes such provocative titles as *Smokin’ Reefers*, *Chant of the Weeds*, *Reefer Man*, *Muggles*, *Viper Drag*, *Viper’s Moan*, and *Texas Tea Party*” (United States Public Health Service Office of Public Health Education, 1936, p. 3). Additionally, the places that people went to listen to these musicians were thought to encourage drug use. Once inside the cabarets, the nightclubs, and the tea pads, people enjoyed prohibited pleasures, which confirmed the notion that this environment supported drug use.

Anslinger’s obsession with the link between jazz musicians and drug use was evident when he testified before the Senate Committee in 1948. He requested an increase of enforcement agents to combat the enormous number of people violating the marijuana laws. When the Committee asked who was doing such a thing, Anslinger responded that the culprits were musicians, and that he did not mean good musicians, but jazz musicians (Shapiro, 1999).

It is obvious that Anslinger’s anti-drug campaign was now geared toward the jazz musician, and since jazz music was an extension of the counterculture, Anslinger worked hard to eliminate it.

### Cultivating Support

To successfully capture public attention, Anslinger endeavored to gain the respect and support of prominent figures in the political arena. Eventually he gained not only the general public’s support, but also the confidence, respect, and support of several powerful groups that included religious and

temperance organizations. These groups were massive, influential, and could easily and quickly spread Anslinger's beliefs and mission statement (Shapiro, 1999). Amazingly, Anslinger accomplished a feat virtually unheard of: He developed and maintained political ties with "key members of both parties and gained the support of dozens of interest groups and lobbies, making himself virtually immune to opposition within or outside the federal government" (McWilliams, 1990, p. 47). To strengthen his crusade he surrounded himself with supporters from the medical field who were generally respected by most members of society.

Anslinger was such a convincing speaker that some of his supporters played an important role in the promotion of Anslinger's crusade. For example, Dr. A. E. Fossier, of New Orleans, was an integral part of the anti-drug campaign. Dr. Fossier delivered a paper before the Louisiana State Medical Society in 1931, titled "The Marijuana Menace." "Dr. Fossier claimed that marijuana in large doses produces, excitement, delusions, hallucinations, . . . with a tendency to willfull damage and violence" (McWilliams, 1990, p. 48). Dr. Fossier claimed that marijuana created criminals and begged government officials of New Orleans to recognize the magnitude of the marijuana problem. He recommended that they should publicize this information to warn society of this deadly menace. He believed that marijuana would spread to other areas very quickly, and the only way to deter its popularity would be to alert all members of society of its deadly effects. This supported Anslinger's rhetoric concerning the link between drug abuse and violence, thus starting a "nationwide crusade against a drug whose properties and effects were more feared than understood" (McWilliams, 1990, p. 50).

At first, jazz musicians successfully avoided law enforcement and verbal attacks because of the support they received from the music community. However, when a prestigious jazz magazine, *Down Beat*, joined Anslinger's crusade, jazz musicians knew that they were in for a tough fight. The reason that *Down Beat* joined in the crusade was because they feared that the jazz "musician was becoming synonymous with the weed hound" (Shapiro, 1999, p. 52), and they believed that this gave the jazz community a bad reputation. With *Down Beat* magazine supporting the commissioner's moral crusade, Anslinger made 1943 the year of "a concerted Bureau attack on the music teaheads" (Sloman, 1979,

p. 139). A second blow to the musicians and the music world in general, was that not all jazz musicians supported the notion that drug use had a positive effect on music composition. For example, Cab Calloway stated that marijuana and other narcotics did not generate artistic music writing, but rather destroyed the “musicianship of the individual [and] imperiled the welfare and economy of the bands in which they play” (Anslinger Papers, box 9, file 54, ca. 1933-1937). Calloway did not believe that jazz musicians improved their techniques while high on drugs. He believed that drugs weakened their performance because it slowed down their reaction time and confused their thinking. A final blow to jazz musicians was when radio stations showed their support of the drug crusade by not playing jazz songs that contained explicit or even speculative drug lyrics. Jazz musicians not only lost their income, but they also risked forfeiting their one true love, their ability to express themselves through their music. The radio business did not admit that this was a direct result of government pressure, but one can conclude that there was some verbal exchange because for many years radio stations resisted political and governmental influence on the type of music played. Because this decision by the radio industry was so drastic, jazz musicians knew that in order to maintain some dignity, they needed to appear accommodating.

Anslinger, and many of his supporters, revealed their racially prejudiced colors when they stated that if jazz music were allowed to blossom, the purity of the White race would be polluted by massive interbreeding (Shapiro, 1999). It was thought that illicit drug abuse would infect pure, white citizens with craziness and uncontrollable urges, causing them to act like savages (Shapiro, 1999). Anslinger regarded jazz musicians as moral degenerates, because they used drugs and because their songs glorified the indulgence of illicit substances and debauchery. Consequently, he decided to make it his personal mission to incarcerate every deviant type. Between 1943 and 1948, Anslinger ordered federal agents to keep data on jazz musicians so that the government could eventually use this evidence against them to arrest and incarcerate them. These files became known as “The Marijuana and Musicians File.” They contained the names and offenses of all jazz musicians who were convicted of marijuana possession, dealing, or both. Many agents were opposed to this tactic and Anslinger did not receive much support. Nevertheless, Anslinger continued to encourage law enforcement officers to do

their duty, because he believed that jazz music encouraged drug use through subliminal messages. He felt that good Christian people were too innocent to realize that they were being turned onto illicit substances through jazz songs (Sloman, 1979). Due to the initial success of the anti-drug movement (and subsequently the anti-jazz musician movement), drug abusers were stigmatized, which convinced many individuals to associate minorities, musicians, or both with drug use (Shapiro, 1999).

In 1951, the Boggs Act was passed by Congress and this law required federal judges to deliver harsh mandatory minimum sentences to convicted drug offenders. The perpetrator's first offense was punished by minimum mandatory jail time, but for a second and subsequent offense, the perpetrator faced not only jail time, but also had no chance for probation, parole, or a suspended sentence.

In 1956, the Boggs Act was amended to become the Narcotics Control Act and made for even harsher penalties and longer jail sentences. Even more shocking, government officials took legislation a step further: They required that anyone convicted of a drug offense was to register with Customs agents in order to obtain a certificate to leave the country. They also required that all non-convicted drug abusers register with the government before obtaining permission to leave the country. Upon return, the certificate was returned, or else the holder of the certificate would be arrested and jailed for up to one year (Shapiro, 1999). It is obvious that certain citizens' civil rights were curtailed, even though no solid justification for this law could be offered.

### Contradictory Evidence

Although illicit marijuana seizures increased by 1946 (Anslinger files, box 13, file 1, ca. 1930-1970), empirical evidence provided by The United States Public Health Service refuted Anslinger's claim that drug addiction was on the rise due to jazz musicians. This agency conducted a survey in 1924 and found that the rate of addiction was one in every 1,000 of the general population. In 1941 another survey was conducted and the results indicated a large decrease of drug use among the general population (Anslinger Papers, box 9, file 54, ca. 1930-1970). Proponents of moral entrepreneurs may assert that this was a result of the anti-drug campaign, but these results may also indicate that drug use was not as prevalent as many moral entrepreneurs claimed. By today's standards, such a large difference seems suspect. Furthermore, in 1944, The LaGuardia Committee Report, viewed as the best



drug study in a social, medical, and legal context, concluded that the use of marijuana “does not lead to morphine or heroin or cocaine addiction. . . . [Therefore], the publicity concerning the catastrophic effects of marihuana smoking . . . is unfounded” (Schaffer Library of Drug Policy, 1999, p. 1). And in 1937, Anslinger showed his support of these data by testifying that marijuana did not lead to experimentation with other drugs. He viciously defended that marijuana was a “loner drug,” one capable of addiction, and therefore a user would not want to use any other drug. However, by the mid-fifties, when this argument did not suit his needs, Anslinger reversed his argument and stated that he now believed marijuana led to experimentation with other drugs, especially heroin, and since “heroin was the next big drug, and what better way to breathe a little life into the marijuana menace than to link it to the deadly scourge” (Sloman, 1979, p. 169). In 1955, Anslinger appeared before a Senate Committee investigating illicit drug traffic, he stated that marijuana was a gateway drug, and using it would lead to the use of other drugs, such as heroin. In his testimony Anslinger told the Senate that these drugs have led to terrible crimes such as “sex slayings, sadistic slayings, and matters of that kind. . . . There have been many brutal crimes traced to marihuana” (Belenko, 2000, p. 147).

Another contradiction to Anslinger’s earlier claims was although many crimes are linked to marijuana, he did not consider use of it as a predictor in determining criminal behavior. He added that other variables such as mental illness and poverty also contributed to the probability of a drug user committing a crime (Belenko, 2000). Anslinger may have changed his claims from years before, when he deemed it necessary to establish a link between drugs, immoral behavior, and crime. That link was important because it kept Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in business. Now that the Bureau was well established, the story changed.

#### Contributions From Anslinger’s Anti-Drug Crusade

By the time that Anslinger retired from the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in 1963, he helped to facilitate the arrest and prosecution of many drug addicts and recreational users, and also helped to create a new class of criminals: The drug addict, the musician, the youth, and the minority. By accomplishing this feat, Anslinger not only managed to save the Federal Bureau of Narcotics during a time of crisis (for example, the Depression), but he also managed to redefine the addict from a medical

standpoint to a criminal one. Anslinger was so dedicated to his crusade that even after several years of retirement, he continued to fight against drug users. He never missed a chance to battle against the reefer crowd and continued to spread his anti-drug gospel whenever the opportunity presented itself (Sloman, 1979).

## CHAPTER 4

### THE NIXON ERA

#### Rockefeller's Legwork

“Many people have suggested that a culture arises essentially in response to a problem faced in common by a group of people, insofar as they are able to interact and communicate with one another effectively” (Becker, 1963, p. 81). The 1960s started out relatively quiet with regard to anti-drug rhetoric and legislation, but this tranquil period did not last long.

Although American society and culture did not change as much during the sixties as popularly portrayed, important changes regarding illicit drugs and drug usage did take place (Farber, 1994). First, the drug addict's status changed to that of victim in need of medical attention, no longer a criminal who needed to be locked up. The scientific community decided to dedicate increased attention to drug abuse research, education, and treatment. This “reflected a growing respect for the mental health and medical professions” (Belenko, 2000, p. 262), and this sentiment was not only held by the private citizens, but also by government representatives such as Senator Jacob Javits, Senator Kenneth Keating, and later Senator Robert Kennedy. In 1966, the Narcotic Addict Rehabilitation Act was enacted and it required that certain persons charged or convicted of violating a Federal criminal law (and determined to be drug addicts), was to have the opportunity to go into a treatment program, in lieu of prosecution and sentencing, or confinement (Belenko, 2000).

Although many people changed their attitude in their approach toward the addict's drug problem, Rockefeller's rhetoric gave the public a reason to fear drug abusers and he succeeded in creating a social problem by playing on societal fears.

During the sixties, former New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller made a major impact on illicit drug legislation. When Rockefeller realized that his political career was in jeopardy, he latched onto the drug issue to enhance his tough drugs and crime image (Shapiro, 1999). With an increase in the number of addicts, and an upsurge in crime associated with drugs, the public feared that they would become victims of these dope addicts. Consequently, Rockefeller helped to establish some of the

toughest drug laws during the early seventies. He also set the standard which many others followed. Between the years 1967 and 1971, the number of individuals arrested on illegal drugs charges in New York State increased approximately 171 percent (Ferguson, 1975). This increase in arrest rates resulted from a particular piece of legislation: a statute that mandated judges to sentence anyone possessing four ounces or selling two ounces of a narcotic substance, to spend not less than fifteen years to life in prison. Moreover, these penalties did not take into account the circumstances behind the offense, and as to whether the perpetrator was a first time or a repeat offender (Muscoreil, 1998). Additionally, since such small amounts of an illicit substance were needed to trigger mandatory minimum sentencing, the plea negotiation process was severely restricted, even for nonviolent drug offenders.

Ironically, the combination of a harsher national drug policy and the anti-drug rhetoric did not eliminate the drug problem; rather, these factors contributed to the rise of the youth drug scene in several ways:

First, by emphasizing drug abuse it virtually dictated youthful drug deviance rather than other forms of deviance. Second, by publicizing . . . drugs . . . these pronouncements informed an entire generation of the broad range of mind affecting drugs. . . . Third, for many the warning actually serves as lures. And finally, the supposed facts provided to inform and guide young people. . . . [instead encouraged them] to flounder along without guidance they could trust to learn by their own trials and errors and those of their peers. (Brecher, 1972, p. 167)

Apparently, those who supported and enforced tougher legislation did not take into account that by calling attention to illicit drug use, they inadvertently promoted drug use by those who may not have ever experimented in the first place.

President Nixon recognized the need for a national campaign on illicit drug use, and acknowledging that Rockefeller was successful in his crusade against drugs and crime, and because Nixon followed in Rockefeller's footsteps and attacked what he perceived as America's number one public enemy (Johnson, Wanta, Boudreau, Blank-Libra, Schaffer, & Turner, 1996), illicit drugs.

### Creating the Drug Problem

Nixon stated that until approximately 1965, public consensus supported strict marijuana

enforcement laws. Even college students were virtually unanimous in their condemnation of marijuana smokers as social deviants. Many people felt that marijuana was a dangerous drug and associated with many forms of deviance, such as sexual promiscuity and crime. However, Nixon reported that by the late sixties, there were dramatic changes in attitude and behavior regarding drug use, especially among the young and college-educated, and he surmised that this led to an increase in marijuana use and drug arrests (Baum, 1996). For example, in 1965, 18,815 people were arrested for violations of state and local marijuana laws, and by 1973, this number rose to 420,700 (Eitzen & Baca Zinn, 2000, p. 522).

In 1970, approximately 1,900 people were reported to have died from legal and illegal drugs (Baum, 1996). The drug-related deaths of several rock musicians, in conjunction with the relaxed attitudes surrounding drug use, initiated an anti-drug crusade (Shapiro, 1999). It was thought that an acceleration of drug use would lead to an increase in crime (Ferguson, 1975). This motivated President Nixon to declare a war on drugs, not only to rid the country of its drug abusers, but also the crime surrounding drug use.

At this point in time, Nixon was successful in changing society's feelings toward the drug problem: An opinion survey, conducted by the White House in the early seventies, showed that "23 percent of Americans now believed drugs were the country's number one problem, up from 3 percent in 1969" (Baum, 1996, p. 55).

The combination of threatening images of illicit drug users, the increased number of drug users, and the alleged increase in crime associated with drug abuse, created an atmosphere of panic and fear. This was exactly the result that the Nixon Administration was looking for in order to strengthen his anti-drug crusade. President Nixon further strengthened his crusade by telling the public that drug-related deaths increased in 1971. The number of Americans who died from legal and illegal drugs combined rose only slightly, to 2,313 (Baum, 1996, p. 66). However, a report distributed by the Deputy Director of Operations, Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (1972), indicated that the number of heroin-related deaths decreased since 1968 (Ferguson, 1975). This indicates that the number of illicit drug deaths were not on the rise, but that the number of legally prescribed drugs were the leading cause of drug overdose deaths.

### Identifying a Menace and Engineering a Crisis

Nixon's success with instituting a panic was short-lived, because by May 1971, a government survey conducted by found that the concern regarding drug abuse dropped to number four in importance to the American public. Recognizing that the anti-drug crusade's success rested upon how the public perceived the drug problem, Nixon continued to hammer the same theme: Addiction causes crime. He even went so far as to say to Congress that "Heroin addicts steal over \$2 billion worth of property a year to support their habits" (Baum, 1996, p. 58). This is an amazing feat when one considers that in 1971, the total value of all property stolen in the United States was approximately \$1.3 billion. "Nixon was blaming a quarter of a million addicts for 153 percent of the property crime committed" (Baum, 1996, p. 58), and strangely, no one questioned those figures, nor did they dare to question the integrity of the statistics.

During this same period, Nelson Rockefeller led a successful anti-drug crusade of his own in New York. Nixon noted that Rockefeller's techniques were working and decided to employ a similar strategy. "Nixon borrowed from him many rhetorical images and the statistical hyperbole linking heroin and crime in the public's mind" (Epstein, 1977, p. 45). Rockefeller claimed that a "reign of terror" (Epstein, 1977, p. 40) existed in many New York City neighborhoods. Of course, the media aided Rockefeller by highlighting race and class issues: "Almost always the mothers are from the black, Puerto Rican and slum areas of town" (Epstein, 1977, p. 45). To convince the public that they had reason to fear these groups, Rockefeller reinforced his rhetoric by telling the public that all addicts, young or old, male or female, were out-of-control menaces, who were willing to rob, steal, and kill for a drug fix (Epstein, 1977).

To reinforce the epidemic, Rockefeller's estimates of the size of the addict population "proved to be conveniently flexible over the years 1966-1973" (Epstein, 1977, p. 41). One example of this strategy was how he showed the need for greater policing measures in New York. Oddly, the number of New York City addicts rose from "25,000 in 1966 to 150,000 in 1972 to 200,000 in 1973" (Epstein, 1977, p. 41). Conversely, when he wanted to convince certain audiences that his draconian drugs law were successful, he decreased the number of addicts.

As previously mentioned, Nixon knew that his prior anti-drug crusade strategies were not totally successful. He claimed that in order to keep the nation from entering a state of pandemonium, a zero tolerance policy was to be enforced. To secure his position on the drug war and to increase law enforcement, harsher penalties, and monetary funding, Nixon stated to Congress that

We must now candidly recognize that the . . . present efforts to control drug abuse are not sufficient in themselves. The problem has assumed the dimensions of a national emergency. I intend to take every step necessary to deal with this emergency. (Epstein, 1977, p.173)

President Nixon rationalized calling drug abuse a national emergency by citing official statistics supplied by federal agencies. According to government statisticians, the national number of drug addicts and drug abusers increased from “68,000 in 1969 to 315,000 in 1970 to 559,000 in 1971” (Epstein, 1977, p. 174). These data were based upon a compilation of reports from local police departments, who submitted their numbers to the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. Due to the significant increase in the official number of addicts during that three-year period, President Nixon ventured to suggest that there was a drug epidemic, and if not brought under control, it would destroy the nation (Epstein, 1977). What Nixon did not tell the public was that the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) applied a new formula to the 1969 estimates, which produced a “quintupling, then an octupling, of the estimated number of addicts” (Epstein, 1977, p. 174). There was not a dramatic increase in the number of new addicts, as portrayed by the government and the media, rather, this new formula, based on the presumption that only a small fraction of addicts come to the attention of authorities, was a statistical reworking that inflated the numbers (Epstein, 1977).

Nixon amplified the public’s fear by insinuating that every time a person became addicted, he or she would “infect” at least six more individuals with this disease. Nixon wanted society to be aware that drugs were enslaving thousands of people to the life of crime and addiction, and that this should be cause for national concern (Epstein, 1977). Luckily for Nixon, White House strategists were able to fabricate an epidemic, even though data taken from various treatment centers indicated that “addiction had been on the decrease for several years” (Epstein, 1977, p. 177). Fearing that these numbers might

by questioned, President Nixon presented a more convincing argument for attacking the drug problem by highlighting stories regarding the “newborn addict” (Baum, 1996, p. 68). Nixon appealed to society’s ethical and moral fiber by quoting statistics found in credible sources such as the New York Times Magazine and Time Magazine, that an estimated “550 addicted babies were born in New York the previous year out of a total of 117,000” (Baum, 1996, p. 68). He convinced many people that there was a need for federal government to become more involved in the drug war, especially at the local level. Nixon successfully campaigned for more federal drug-enforcement intervention that led to a budget increase: The budget went from approximately \$65 million in 1969 to over \$719 million in 1974 (Baum, 1996).

In 1972, politicians claimed that heroin addicts’ drug-related crime cost the United States approximately \$10-15 billion dollars, yet crime statistics collected for that year showed that “only \$1.28 billion worth of property was stolen” (Baum, 1996 p. 69). Through his harsh rhetoric and intense media coverage, Nixon managed to convince society that all drugs were equally dangerous, and by 1973, the treatment budgets were drastically reduced (Baum, 1996). Drug abusers no longer could anticipate treatment for their addiction, instead they feared the likelihood of incarceration.

During the early part of the twentieth century, jazz musicians, minorities, and lower-class youth were considered a threat to the morality and the safety of society. Therefore, these groups were used as scapegoats to further the agenda of those wishing to change popular attitudes toward the laws regarding drug use. Nixon campaigned against particular groups of people and once again “set in motion, using the same case history format of the earlier drives against the weed” (Sloman, 1979, p. 225). Addicts, youth, and musicians were once again targeted by moral crusaders.

The rock and roll menace. With the renaissance of the reefer song, musicians became a prime target for Nixon. However, now “the songs were rock and roll anthems as opposed to the sly, whimsical jazz ditties” (Sloman, 1979, p. 231), and unlike in earlier crusades, the moral crusader’s berth now faced an antipodal problem: The appearance of the rock performer. They were not the “Black performers” of years past (Shapiro, 1999), but were predominantly Caucasian, long haired, wild acting, and crazily dressed. What further complicated the situation was that the youth, avid



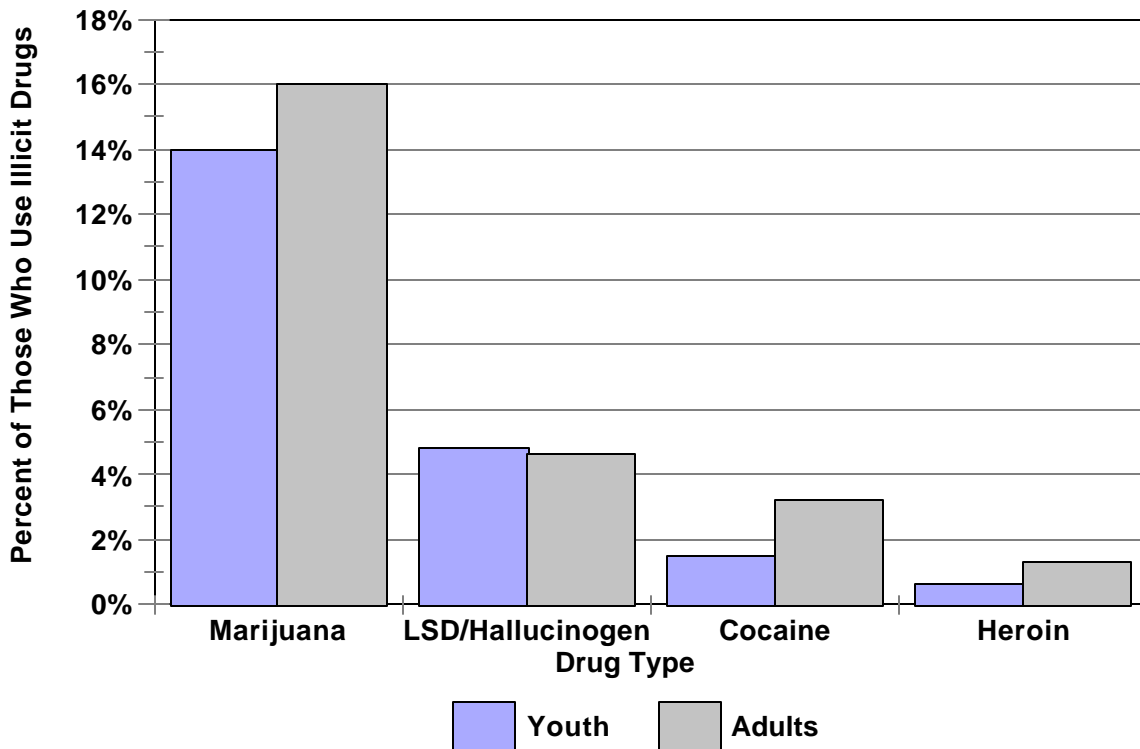
consumers of music, were embracing and glamorizing the rock musician (Shapiro, 1999), because music was part of a counterculture that “testified powerfully to the fragmentation taking place within society” (Farber, 1994, p. 208). Many song lyrics and certain practices expressed many peoples’ frustration, confusion, and dissatisfaction with various government institutions and regulations. The counterculture developed as a response to and a rejection of, mainstream culture in America (Farber, 1994). “The right to protest is an essential part of the American system of government” (Mauss, 1975, p. 201).

Not surprisingly, much of the older generation did not share the youth’s enthusiasm. Even executives in the music industry thought that rock and roll was awful sounding music. Rock music and its singers were described as “the frustrated bleatings of a bunch of nose-picking teenagers . . . and pseudosexual retchings” (Martin & Segrave, 1988, p. 11). Many people were convinced that listening to rock and roll made an individual anti-American, because it was widely reported that while listening to rock and roll, young people were burning the American flag, tearing up their draft cards, and belittling everything that their parents and their country supported (Baum, 1996). Many people believed that this behavior was a result of using marijuana and listening to rock music. This image was firmly entrenched into the American public’s mind and helped moral entrepreneurs to reestablish their argument that drug use and possibly even rock music, although not appearing consistently in major headlines, were forces that prompted immoral and deviant behavior and crime. Fortunately for Nixon, this image was not difficult to accomplish, especially when several rock bands played up their bad boy image to enhance their popularity with the younger generation.

Nixon, as previous moral entrepreneurs, played upon the public’s fear, anger, and prejudice, which helped his anti-drug crusade succeed (Baum, 1996). Nixon stated that domestic issues were of utmost concern and that society needed to recognize certain cultural and racial factors were the causes of the drug abuse problem. He stated that “the young, the poor, and the black” (Baum, 1996, p. 20), otherwise known as the “incendiary black militant and the welfare mother, and the hedonistic hippie and the campus revolutionary” (Baum, 1996, p. 21), were the true catalysts behind drug abuse. Because Nixon could not make it a crime to be young, poor, black, or even a rock musician, he decided to

target these four groups because they supposedly shared a common bond, illicit drug use.

By 1972, Nixon decided that the Federal government should move from a more macro-level of enforcement perspective to a more micro-level one. Nixon explained that this decision was a result of the new drug threat, the heroin addict. Although the heroin addict represented less than two percent of the adult population surveyed, and less than one-half percent of the youth population surveyed in 1972 (See Figure 1.), Nixon still established their menacing presence in the public's mind. Junkies were blamed for the increase of property crime, and during the Nixon era they were accused of stealing "as much as fifteen times the value of everything stolen" (Baum, 1996, p. 68) in the United States.



**Figure 1.** Incidence of illegal drug use, 1972

Source: Adapted from the Second Report of the United States National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse, 1974.

Note. This is a household survey so it does not include the transient street population. Total youth (ages 12-17) surveyed = 880; Total adults (ages 18 and over) surveyed = 2,411. See Appendix A.

Although Nixon was successful in promoting his anti-drug crusade, he understood the importance of cultivating public support and made that an integral part of his anti-drug campaign.

### Cultivating Support

Immediately after taking office, Nixon developed an anti-drug crusader team. He started with a young man named Jeff Donfeld, a devout Christian, who believed that not only were drugs unhealthy, but immoral. Although he did not have any personal experience with drugs or alcohol, Donfeld understood the political potential of an anti-drug campaign, which led to his appointment as head of drug abuse policy. Nixon, with Donfeld's help, started his anti-drug crusade by developing the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement (ODALE). They wanted the world to see that Nixon was not soft on drugs and that he considered the drug problem as one of his domestic priorities. Nixon determined the drug problem to be so widespread and out of control that he declared the drug problem a national emergency. Nixon perceived drug abuse as America's number one public enemy, and if that problem were left unaddressed it "would surely sap our Nation's strength and destroy our Nation's character" (Johnson et al., 1996). Initially, Nixon responded by increasing the federal budget for treatment, education, research, and law enforcement (Johnson et al., 1996), but eventually Nixon launched his first major war on drugs and drug users.

To be successful in his anti-drug crusade Nixon recognized the importance of gaining support from the public. He believed that this could be accomplished by incorporating "celebrities" into his campaign. One entertainer Nixon recruited was Art Linkletter. Nixon took advantage of the fact that Linkletter's daughter committed suicide, due to drug use, and appointed him head advisor on the national council on drugs (Epstein, 1977). Nixon was successful in recruiting a number of famous supporters but probably none so well-known, and popular, as Elvis, "The King," Presley. In December 1970, Elvis appeared at the White House and handed a guard a letter written to Nixon. Elvis Presley's letter stated that he was an admirer of Nixon's and wanted to not only meet him, but to help Nixon spread the anti-drug message. Nixon could not have asked for a better teammate: Elvis was not considered an enemy by the youth nor the musicians. Therefore, because of his status within the music industry and with youth, Presley was the most likely candidate to change their deviant and immoral

behavior. Presley's only request was that he be deputized a federal agent, for he felt that with federal credentials he could do more good. Nixon agreed and deputized Elvis as a special assistant in the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. However, Elvis Presley did not make much of an impact on society's concerns about drug abuse.

Nixon also recruited the media to join in the fight against what he considered negative drug messages such as those in songs, television, and movies (Johnson et al., 1996). He began his moral crusade by inviting television producers and radio owners to the White House. He told them that it was important to remind people about the alleged drug menace: A fearsome junkie who had needle tracks on their arms and larceny in their heart; the junkie who would do just about anything to get their next fix (Kleiman, 1993). Nixon began his mission by addressing the air waves first. After meeting with many radio owners, Nixon persuaded them to comply with his plan and requested that radio owners advise their disc jockeys to quit playing certain music for the good of the community. The disc jockeys responded by stating that they did not believe that eliminating such songs would stop young people from listening to this music. More important, the radio world felt that the financial consequences of such an act could be catastrophic because, "Young people . . . did have an enormous impact on popular culture, [and] their influence came more from sheer numbers and purchasing power than from any particular values or tastes" (Farber, 1994, p. 207). A spectacular leap in sales in the late sixties and early seventies showed that popular music was a lucrative business (Farber, 1994), and rock music accounted for almost 80 percent of recorded music by the early seventies. From a business point of view, the youth were too important to the success of sales, because of a dynamic interaction between the young and popular music. Therefore, those people profiting from this relationship were not about to do anything to upset the cycle, and consequently, the music industry did not join Nixon's crusade.

Outraged, Nixon commissioned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to help him enforce his plan. The FCC helped by informing radio stations that if they wanted to renew their license for air time, they needed to screen songs and not play those containing drug messages. Surprisingly, after much resistance, certain popular music labels (e.g., MGM) followed the request and initiated their own war on drugs by dropping alleged drug-oriented bands, and eventually many other music labels

followed suit.

To maintain his newly-founded influence upon the music world, sustain the anti-drug campaign, and justify the need for stronger drug enforcement, Nixon again enlisted the help of various celebrities. One star that President Nixon recruited was Sammy Davis, Jr. Nixon felt that Davis could influence the black community and inspire the youth to not use drugs without alienating them. By appealing to Davis's interest, such as providing additional federal funds for predominantly black colleges, Nixon convinced Davis to represent and support his anti-drug campaign (Epstein, 1977).

President Nixon persuaded Davis to go to Vietnam and perform an anti-drug concert. While Sammy's trip to Vietnam was being planned, Nixon proceeded with the second part of his plan: To convince television producers to help spread the anti-drug message. To start this part of the campaign, Nixon negotiated a deal with the television media to produce an anti-drug show featuring Davis (Epstein, 1977). Jeffrey Donfeld, head of Drug Abuse Policy, stated that "The government has a difficult time changing the attitudes of people. . . . Television, however. . . . helps to mold the attitudes, thinking and motivations of a vast number of Americans " (Epstein, 1977, pp. 168-169) through subliminal messages. In other words, they thought that creating programs that contained hidden messages would convince society to fear the drug addict, thus changing their laissez-faire attitude toward drug abuse.

To further convince television producers of the necessity for air time, Nixon told them that "the scourge of narcotics has swept the young generation like an epidemic . . . There is no community today that can claim immunity from it" (Epstein, 1977, p. 169) And because children watch a number of hours of television, their life is affected by what they watch. To assure their commitment to his cause, Nixon ended his speech by warning the television producers that "if this nation is going to survive, it will have to depend to the great extent on how you gentlemen help raise our children" (Epstein, 1977, p. 169). The producers were cooperative but they made it clear that this production would not be free. Nixon was unable to raise enough money for the project, even with the big Hollywood names attached, so the idea of using celebrities to promote an anti-drug campaign never fully materialized (Epstein, 1977). However, even though the program was not successful, Nixon did accomplish what he set out to do:

Create a threat and inevitably a fear among members of society. By 1971, private polls conducted by the White House showed that citizens were concerned over the drug menace and considered them to be “one of the two main threats to their safety” (Epstein, 1977, p. 172). One unexpected outcome of their failed program was a upsurge in shows produced that promoted an anti-drug message, such as *Dragnet*, *Hawaii Five-O*, *I Spy*, *The Mod Squad*, and *Felony Squad* to name just a few (King, 1974).

Nixon also recruited the news media to help solidify the connection between drug use, listening to rock music, and immoral behavior. One such example was the circulation of a pamphlet that contained an anti-rock theme, which stated, “Help save the youth of America! . . . Don’t let your children buy or listen to these Negro records. The screaming, idiotic words and savage music are undermining the morals of our white American youth” (Martin & Segrave, 1988, p. 42). Once again, moral entrepreneurs were successful in creating a division between different members of society based upon their rhetorical claims and not on empirical evidence.

In 1972, Nixon decided that he needed empirical evidence to maintain his drug war’s presence, so he appointed a National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse. Through this study, Nixon hoped to provide empirical data that showed marijuana to be dangerous. He hoped that this would support his theory that current legislation should be reevaluated and amended accordingly. The Commission reported that more than twenty-four million Americans over the age of eleven tried marijuana at least once. Only 6 percent of both twelve to thirteen year olds and those over age fifty reported to have used illicit drugs (Ferguson, 1975). The incidence of use was approximately 27 percent of sixteen to seventeen year old kids, 40 percent of the eighteen to twenty year old population, and 38 percent of those aged twenty-two to twenty-five had used marijuana (Ferguson, 1975). However, it was not disclosed that 45 percent of those people under the age of eighteen, and 41 percent of those aged eighteen and older, reported to have terminated their use of marijuana (Ferguson, 1975). Nixon used these numbers to show a need for stronger drug laws hoping to convince the public that their support was imperative to maintain their safety. Fearing the results of increased drug use, and possibly an increase in crime in middle-class neighborhoods, society welcomed harsher drug enforcement, even though the research team’s report called for the decriminalization of the private use

of marijuana, and stated that drug policies be based upon the medical needs of abusers.

#### Contradictory Evidence to Nixon's Rhetoric

Although Nixon claimed that the early seventies were experiencing a drug crisis and increased levels of crime, in 1968, The Advisory Committee on Drug Dependence determined that there was “no evidence that. . . Cannabis use leads to . . . addiction” ( 1968, p. 4) or violent crime, and even though these well respected committees thoroughly researched and reported their findings, certain individuals continued to fight against drug use.

Additionally, in 1969, Lloyd Johnston, a graduate student at the University of Michigan's Institute of Social Research, provided some interesting findings during the course of a study that analyzed the causes and effects of high school dropouts. He found that using drugs was not a major reason as to why certain youths quit school. For example, although newspapers and magazines reported that almost 70 percent of all high school kids were using drugs, he found that nearly 80 percent of his population never tried marijuana. And those who had tried it, less than one percent smoked it daily. Moreover, about ninety percent of the sample population never tried heroin or cocaine (Baum, 1996). He concluded that the alleged drug abuse epidemic among high school students was not as prevalent as suggested by the media and moral entrepreneurs (Baum, 1996). Seemingly, other reasons existed for the continued attack on those who used and abused illicit drugs. Perhaps the most logical reason behind the anti-drug crusade factor was not the actual harm associated with drugs, but with those people who used or promoted the use of drugs.

#### Contributions From Nixon's Anti-Drug Crusade

Under President Nixon's tenure, in 1973, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs merged with the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement, to become what is now known as the Drug Enforcement Agency (Shapiro, 1999). This agency was not only more cost efficient, but also more powerful in combating the international and national drug trade than previous institutions.

Although Nixon's anti-drug campaign ended in 1973 with the onset of the Watergate scandal, Nixon was the first to confirm that “aggressive use of the police authority can be used to construct and enforce a political majority coalition” (Baggins, 1998, p. 91). He was also the first to acknowledge that

the “politically savvy response to counter-culture mischief and mayhem was to politicize and popularize the cultural role of the police as guardians of the orthodox order” (Baggins, 1998, p. 88). Nixon played upon society’s moral and religious convictions by portraying certain individuals as criminals if they used drugs. Nixon’s rhetoric created fear and resentment of drug users among conforming members of society. This helped to establish the support Nixon needed to successfully continue his crusade against those deemed deviant.

Nixon paved the way for future leaders to continue his work. The drug war continued to escalate in its intensity and harshness through the eighties.



## CHAPTER 5

### THE REAGAN AND BUSH ADMINISTRATION: ARE THEY PART OF THE CYCLICAL PROCESS

It is clear that Chapters 3 and 4 establish a cycle of moral entrepreneurship: One or more influential persons convince an audience that a problem exists, that it is troublesome, and that unchecked, it could cause great devastation to society and to our established value system. Moral entrepreneurs, and those people who helped in anti-drug crusades, attempt to manipulate society's emotions by creating an enemy. The enemy is usually those who are already viewed as deviant by society. However, in some instances particular individuals are regarded as easy targets, and therefore used as scapegoats. Consequently, if the social problem is deemed bad enough, the probability of influencing change in societal attitudes, and possibly legislation, is more likely. As Harry Anslinger, Richard Nixon, and their many supporters demonstrated, this process was successful with regard to illicit drug sales and drug use.

This chapter examines a more recent time period, 1980 through 1992, to determine if the same trend emerges: A cyclical pattern of moral entrepreneurship during the Reagan Administration and the Bush Administration. Although there are a large variety of factors that impact the level of concern over drug use, Presidents Reagan and Bush played integral roles. This researcher selected public opinion polls; self-reported use of illicit drugs; and articles that made reference to illicit drugs in their title, as listed in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, to examine possible trends relating to moral entrepreneurship.

#### Creating the Drug Problem

During their Presidential tenures, both Reagan and Bush recognized that they must create a feeling of drug hate among the national community to cultivate support in their anti-drug campaign. To accomplish this task, they recognized the necessity of appealing to the middleclass. Knowing that their largest audience was parents, they focused their crusade to one that was dedicated to saving the children. For example, on September 14, 1986, President Reagan addressed the nation stating that:

Today there's a drug and alcohol abuse epidemic in this country and no one is safe from it, not you, not me, and certainly not our children, because this epidemic has their names written on it. . . . It concerns all of us because of the way it tears at our lives and because it's aimed at destroying the brightness and life of the sons and daughters of the United States. (Elwood, 1994, p. 29)

In other words, Reagan wanted the public to be aware that the American child's future was in jeopardy because of illicit drugs. He declared that "Drugs are menacing to society. They're threatening our values and undercutting our institutions. They're killing our children" (Elwood, 1993, p. 28). He wanted parents to believe that if their child was involved in drugs, they would not have a future. Reagan's and Bush's rhetoric, in combination with the media reporting that drug use was increasing among juveniles (Baggins, 1998), established a fear among society regarding the future of the children. This statement convinced the American public that their attitude toward drugs and drug use must change. As figure 2 demonstrates, the level of public concern increased and by 1986, it was apparent (according to the Gallup Poll) that the American public now considered that there was a drug problem.

Moreover, because the American public believed that they were in the midst of a crisis, they also feared the possible loss of their established value system, their children's future, and, more important, their lives. As a result, Reagan and Bush received the much needed support from those around them, including the mass media. Whether or not the media promoted drug-related stories because of their concern over a perceived threat, or because it helped them financially, is still questionable. However, due to their support, Reagan and Bush were able to declare a war on drugs, and in effect, a war on particular groups of individuals.

It is apparent that both President Reagan and President Bush used their rhetoric to promote their crusade in the elimination of drug use and drug trafficking. Like Harry Anslinger and Richard Nixon, Reagan and Bush were eloquent speakers in influential positions, which helped to establish their integrity and sincerity. In sum, both Reagan and Bush were successful in recruiting people to promote an anti-drug crusade because they convinced society that they should fear the drug menace. They promoted this image through powerful speeches that played on people's fears and moral values.

Interestingly, during the first five years of President Reagan's tenure, drug use increased.

However, by 1988 drug abuse decreased, and many people attributed this decrease to several anti-drug programs instituted by the Reagan Administration. For example, the “Just Say No” campaign was created to decrease drug use among the youth population. Furthermore, some of these slogans were so effective and so compelling in minds of the public, that no amount of empirical information could break through the assumption that the United States was in the midst of a crisis, and therefore any decrease in drug use was attributed to anti-drug campaigns.

### Identifying a Menace and Engineering a Crisis

Most twentieth century presidents were groomed to appear trustworthy as part of their public relations skills, for it was important to possess the ability to use their rhetoric to “extend their perspective on issues to citizens and legislators in order to influence public opinion and policy making” (Elwood, 1994, p. 19). Hence, former Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush recognized that their condemnation of illegal drugs looked good not only in the headlines, but it also enhanced their approval ratings among the American public.

Just as many moral entrepreneurs before them, Reagan’s and Bush’s war on drugs was waged against many enemies, specifically drug users and drug dealers. Recognizing that many people feared particular deviant groups, such as drug dealers and drug addicts, Reagan and Bush took advantage of that fear by creating a drug menace. Furthermore, they initiated a war on drugs and drug dealers to gain political and economic support from the American people.

During his tenure, President Reagan stated to the public that he needed their help to win the war on drugs and drug users. Reagan declared that the government could not accomplish this feat by itself because millions of people abused drugs on a regular basis. He claimed that approximately five million people were abusing cocaine, and 1 in 12 people were regularly smoking pot (Reagan, 1986). More important, however, was a new epidemic on the horizon, crack cocaine. He said, “Today, there’s a new epidemic: Smokable cocaine, otherwise known as crack. It is an explosively destructive and often lethal substance” (Reagan, 1986, p. 2). Simultaneously, the drug czar, William Bennett, in conjunction with the news media, concocted stories of crack babies to appeal to public sentiment. They told society that these babies were born with low intelligence quotients and that this handicap would confine them to

a life of hardship.

Later, President Bush reinforced the public's fear of crack and declared that these "drugs are a real and terribly dangerous threat to our neighborhoods, our friends, and our families" (Elwood, 1994, p. 34).

Their crusade was successful because they played on people's fears and prejudices. For example, by emphasizing the fact that most drug crime happens in urban areas, Reagan and Bush were able to form "a politics and a strategy of governing that attacked policies targeted toward blacks and minorities without reference to race" (Edsall & Edsall, 1991, p. 138). Moreover, by pointing out that the children and their future were in jeopardy because of illicit drugs, they gained support from one of the largest populations in the United States: Parents. Middle-class parents played an important role in the anti-drug crusade and this was one reason that both Reagan and Bush were successful in maintaining the momentum of their campaign.

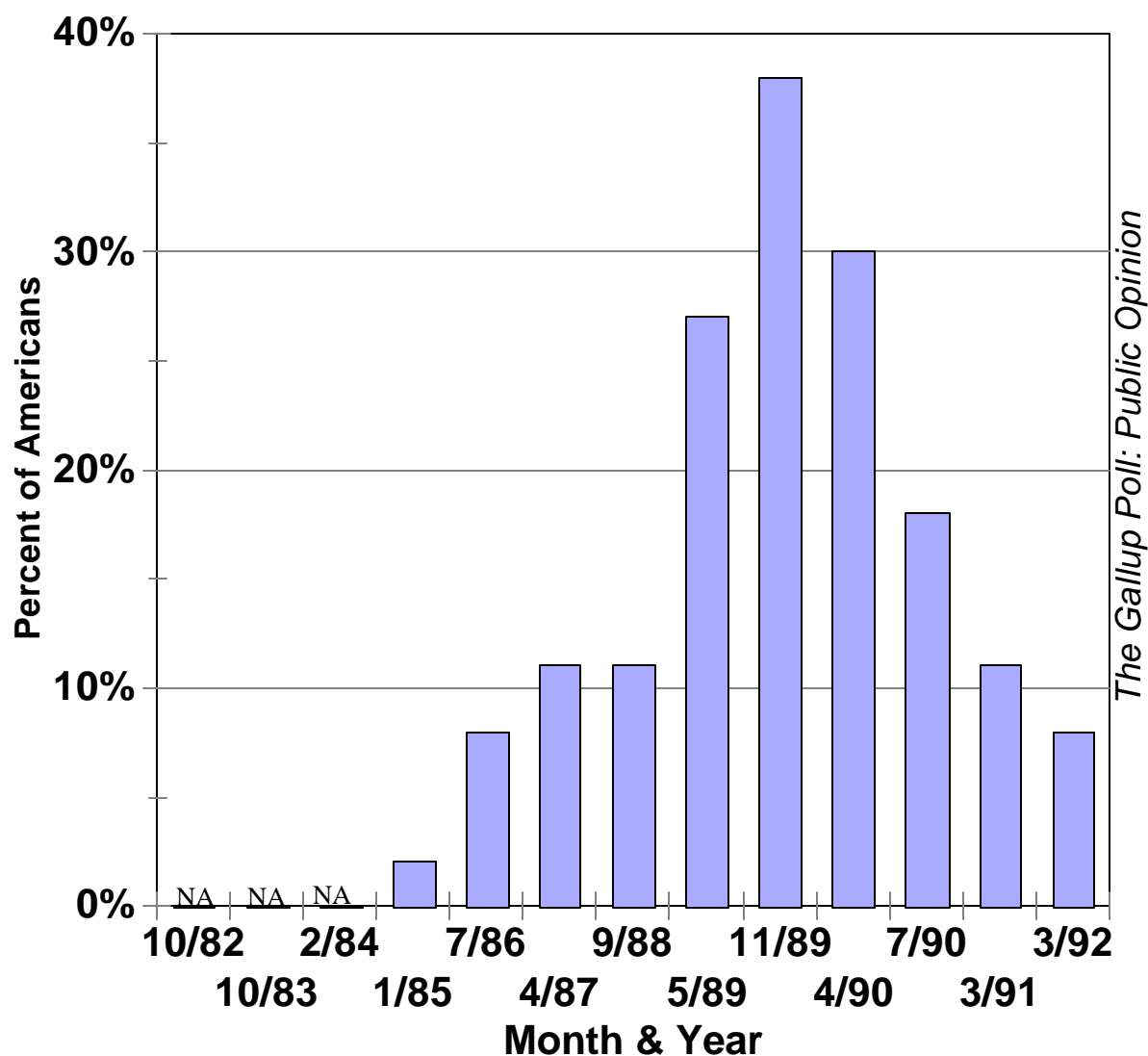
Another reason that Reagan and Bush both shared success was due to the cooperation of the mass media. The media, through various drug stories, some theatrical, others supposedly based on empirical evidence, were instrumental in aiding these crusaders in their mission.

### Cultivating Support

One group instrumental in the drug war crusade was the mass media. Reagan and Bush knew that the war on drugs featured well in the headlines of newspapers, magazines, and on the television. Hence, they could use the mass media to not only promote the drug war, but also to foster a public intolerance to illicit drugs and drug use. They understood that "The media knew well that drugs made much better theater and gave this issue so much attention as to preclude coverage of less sensational but more substantive news" (Baggins, 1998, p. 128). For example, in 1986, Time and Newsweek each ran "5 cover stories on drugs" (Baggins, 1998, p. 128), and in July 1989, three major networks featured "74 segments on drugs" (Baggins, 1998, p. 128).

During Reagan's and Bush's tenure, it is apparent that the media was very instrumental in cultivating public support. Figure 2 reflects the results from Gallup Poll surveys conducted over various time periods. This particular survey shows the percentage of Americans who felt that drugs and drug

use was the most important problem facing the United States during the years 1982 through 1992. There were no statistics available for the years 1982 through 1984, but during the first year that these data were available, January 1985, the number of Americans surveyed expressed some concern over illicit drugs, approximately two percent. By July 1986 that percentage increased to 8 percent. The next two years reflected an increase of three percent; however, by May 1989 and November 1989, the percentage of Americans who rated drugs as their number one concern increased dramatically to 27 percent and 38 percent respectively. By July 1990, the number decreased to 18 percent. Within the next two years, public concern over drugs and drug use decreased significantly, to 8 percent.

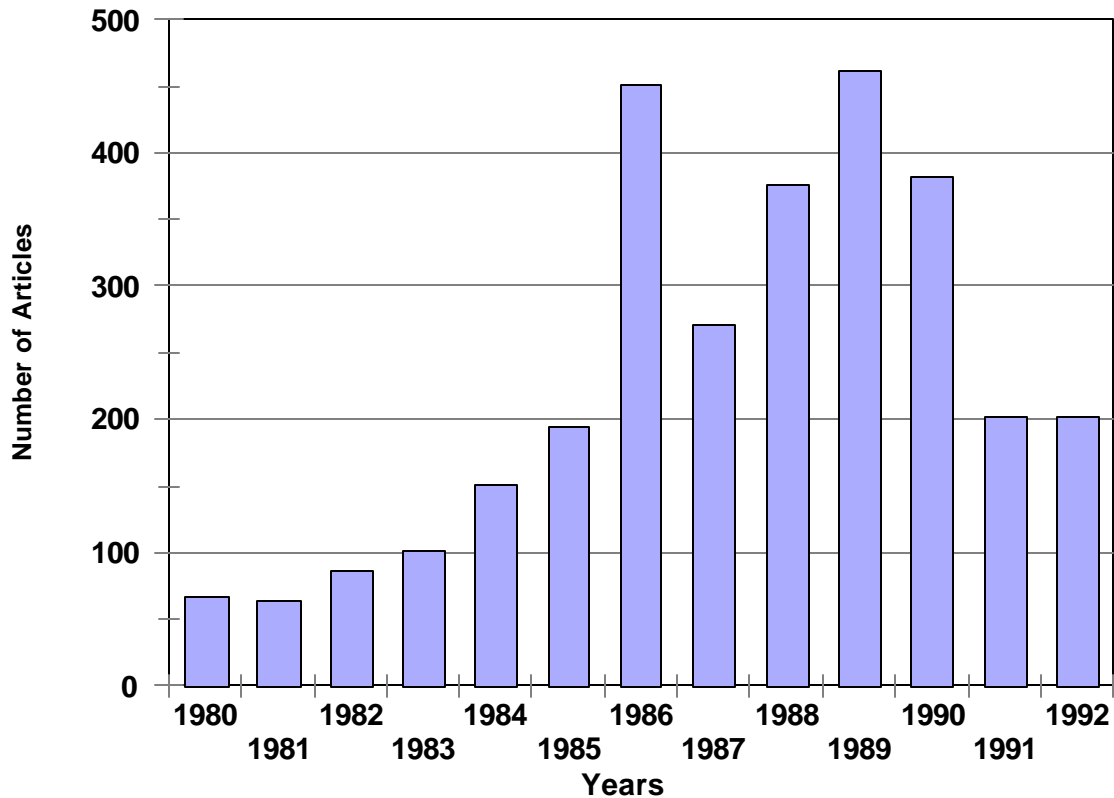


**Figure 2.** Drugs & drug use identified as the most important problem facing the U.S.

Source: Adapted from several Gallup Reports as prepared by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy for the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Information may be found in Drug and Crime Facts; June 1995; NCJ-154043.

Note. See Appendix B.

One indication showed that Reagan's and Bush's message was supported by the media and possibly earned public support was through print media. As listed in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, from 1980 to 1989, the number of articles that made a general reference to illicit drugs increased dramatically. For example, in 1980, approximately 66 articles were written about illicit drugs. By 1986, the number of articles written about illicit drugs increased to 450, and by 1989, the number of articles written that year topped out at 462. Apparently, the mass media fully endorsed Reagan's and Bush's war on drugs. They made that clear by producing the ever increasing number of articles written about illicit drugs. (See Figure 3.)



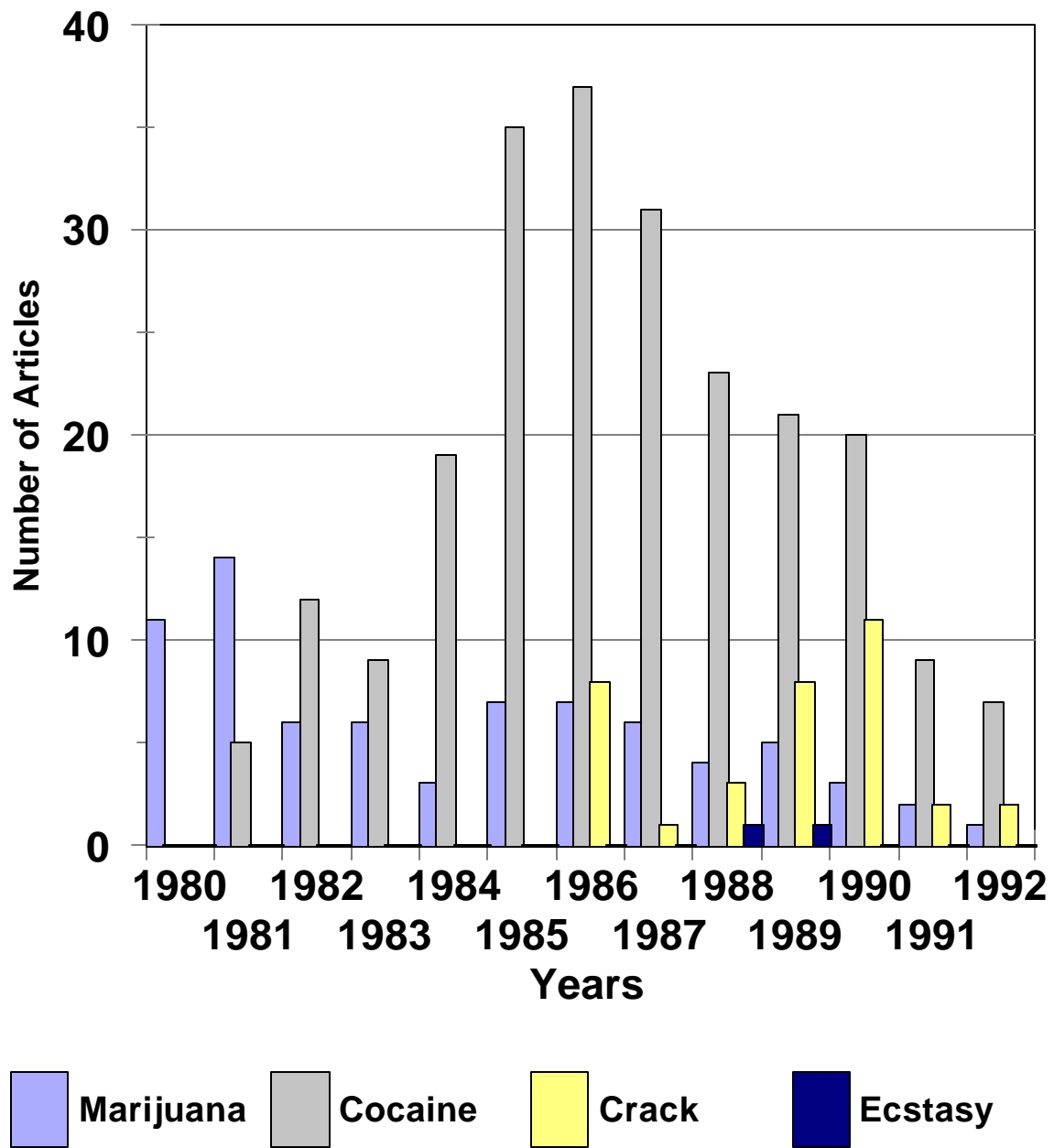
**Figure 3.** Articles referencing all illicit drugs, 1980-1992

Source: *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*; Volumes 39-52; 1980-1992.

Note. See Appendix C.

According to the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, in 1986, the number of articles that made reference to crack or crack cocaine in a title totaled eight. In 1987, the number of articles with crack in a title decreased to a total of one. By 1988, that number increased to three articles. In 1989, there was an increase in the number of articles that made reference to crack in the title, for a total of eight. In 1990 the number topped out at eleven articles that made reference to crack in the title. In 1991 and 1992, the number of articles that made reference to crack decreased dramatically: Each year showed two titles. Interestingly, although neither Reagan or Bush attacked cocaine with the same ferocity as crack, according to the *Reader's Guide*, the number of articles that made reference to cocaine in its title far outnumbered the articles written about crack, marijuana, and ecstasy. (See Figure 4.)





**Figure 4.** Articles referencing specific drugs, 1980-1992.

Note. The researcher counted the number of articles that referenced a specific drug as listed by the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. See Appendix D.

It is possible that instead of focusing their attention on the crack epidemic as Presidents Reagan and Bush intended, the media pursued their own agenda of highlighting cocaine to attract readers and viewers (that is, to make money). Although the media helped to spread anti-drug messages, they recognized that people were more interested in reading about the rich and famous who had problems with drugs. During the eighties, a large number of newsworthy individuals either got into legal trouble or died from using illicit substances. These stories appealed to the American public more so than stories about lower-class crack head who died of a drug overdose.

However, recognizing that because Reagan and Bush were emphasizing crack's evilness so intently, thus possessing the potential of developing the public's interest, in 1986 several networks and a well-known reporter ran news segments on this new "horrendous" drug: CBS news aired a docu-drama (1986) called "48 hours on Crack Street" (Baggins, 1998, p. 132); several days after that program aired, NBC replied with "Cocaine Country" (Baggins, 1998, p. 132); and Geraldo Rivera ended the week with a television special titled, "Doping of a Nation" (Baggins, 1998, p. 132). Recruiting television and news journalists was imperative in promoting an anti-drug crusade, because they helped convert the war on drugs into a "political spectacle that depicted social problems . . . as individual moral or behavioral problems that could be remedied by simply embracing family values, policing mean streets, and incarcerating all the fiendish enemies within" (Baggins, 1998, p. 133).

A second example of the media amplifying the seriousness of the drug epidemic was when Newsweek came out with a cover story (this story was released immediately following President Bush's speech regarding how the children's future was threatened by the drug scourge) titled, "Can the Children Be Saved? One Block's Battle against Drugs and Despair" (Elwood, 1994, p. 53). Again, this type of rhetoric established a specific enemy, thus affording politicians "to abridge societal focus on social, political, and economic woes and to redeem themselves as defenders of the people and the country" (Elwood, 1994, p. 58).

#### Contradictory Evidence to Reagan's and Bush's Claims

Most Americans did not question the validity of the research or the statistics provided by those promoting the legitimacy of President Reagan's and later President Bush's drug war. Furthermore, most

people did not closely examine available empirical evidence, such as the effects of the drug war. If they had remained open-minded, they would have seen that claims of a crisis, especially among the youth, did not match up with the self-reported drug use by those individuals aged twelve and older.

For example, a study conducted by the University of Michigan (Monitoring the Future Study), indicated that most twelfth grade students generally reported a decrease in illicit drug use during the years 1980 through 1992. Reagan's and Bush's contention that drug use among the youth was continually reaching a national crisis seemed doubtful.

Data from the Monitoring the Future Study showed that the class of 1980 reported that 37.2% (n=15,900) of those surveyed used illicit substances in the past thirty days and among those who reported daily use, only 9.1% used marijuana/hashish and 0.2% used cocaine. There was no report of ecstasy or crack use during this period. Thereafter, the percentage of those students surveyed who reported use of illicit drugs over the past thirty days steadily decreased, with the exception of the class of 1985 (n=16,000). (See Figures 5 & 6.)

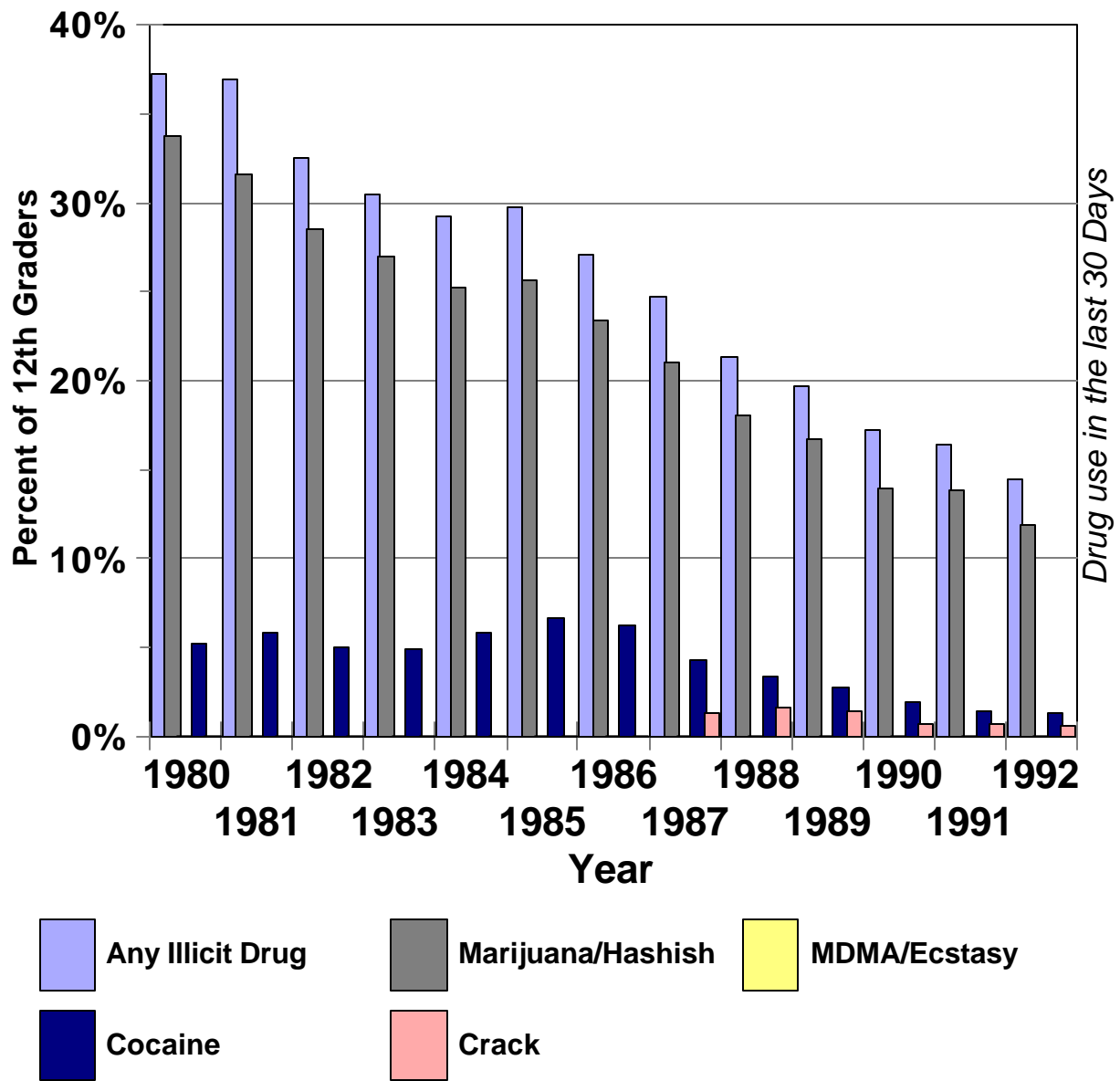
For those students who used marijuana and hashish during the last thirty days, use steadily decreased until 1985, when the class of 1985 reported a slight increase of 0.5 %. Thereafter, the percentage of those who reported use of these substances steadily decreased through 1992. Those students surveyed who reported daily use of marijuana/hashish steadily decreased from 1980 through 1992.

The Class of 1980 reported that 5.2 % of those surveyed used cocaine during the past thirty days. However, unlike marijuana, cocaine use among those students surveyed increased by 0.6% in 1981. The classes of 1982 and 1983 reported a decrease of cocaine use, but starting in 1984 the number of those who used cocaine within the past 30 days increased to 5.8% as reported by the class of 1984, and 6.7% as reported by the class of 1985. Thereafter, the number of students reporting cocaine use during the past 30 days steadily decreased through 1992.

Similar findings were reported by those who reported daily use of cocaine. The class of 1980 reported a daily usage rate of 0.2%, and this increased by 0.1% as reported by the class of 1981. The classes of 1982, 1983, and 1984 all reported that 0.2% of those surveyed used cocaine on a daily

basis. The classes of 1985 and 1986 reported a slight increase, 0.4%. The senior classes 1987 (0.3%) and 1988 (0.2%) reported slight decreases; however, in 1989, the senior class reported a slight increase over the previous year. Thereafter, the number of seniors reporting daily use of cocaine decreased to 0.1% respectively.

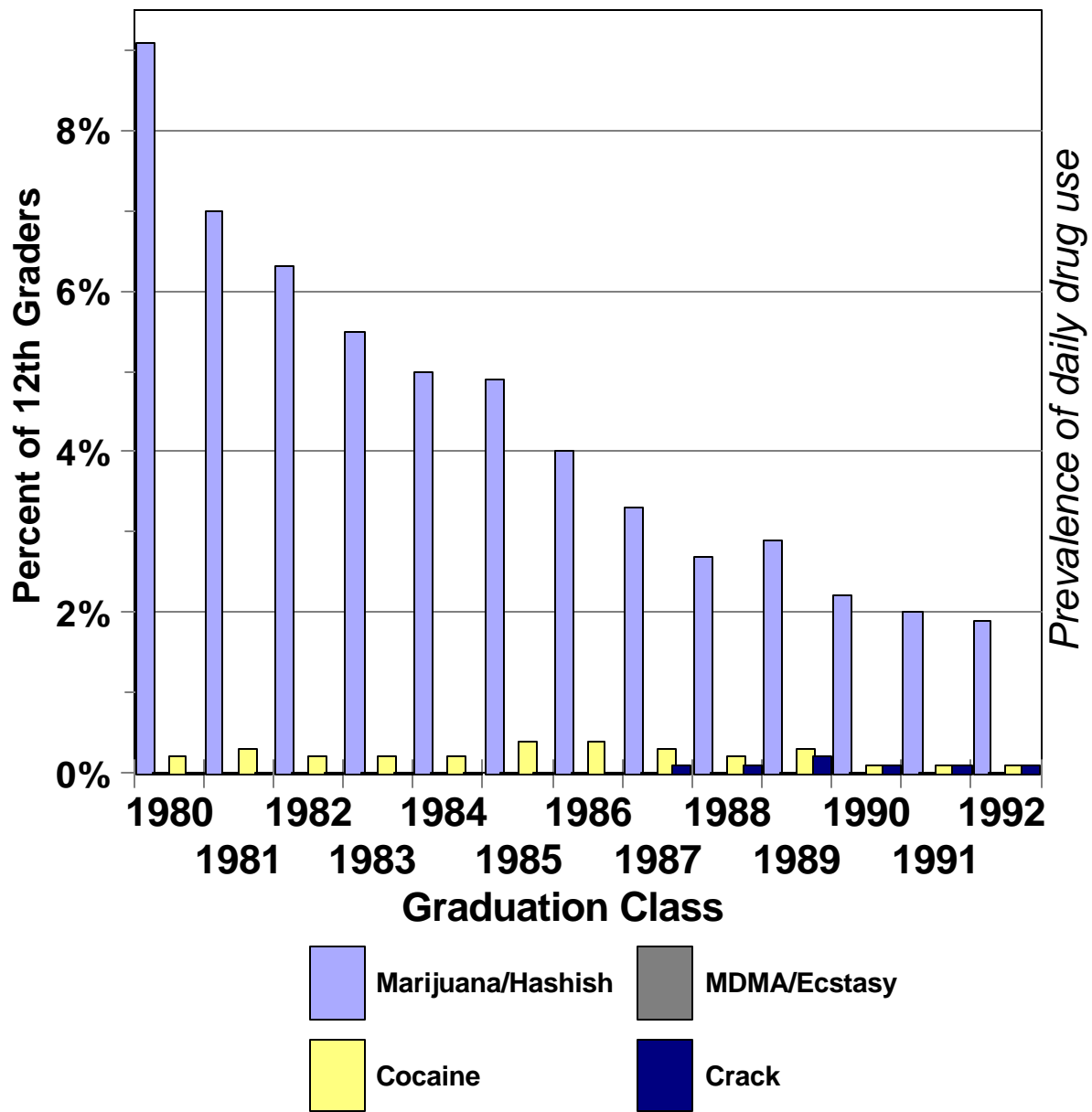
Interestingly, there was no reported use of crack until the class of 1987. Approximately 1.3% of those seniors surveyed (n=16,300) reported using crack during the last 30 days, and only 0.1% reported daily use of crack. The following year, the class of 1988 (n=16,300), reported a slight increase, 1.6%, for those students who used crack during the last 30 days. The number of students who reported daily use of crack remained static at 0.1%. The classes of 1989, 1990, 1991, and 1992 reported a steady decrease in the number of students experimenting with crack during the past 30 days. For those students reporting daily use of crack, the class of 1989 demonstrated a slight increase of 0.1% of those abusing crack daily, however, the classes of 1990, 1991, 1992, all reported 0.1% of those students surveyed used crack daily. (See Figures 5 & 6.)



**Figure 5.** Thirty-day prevalence of use of various drugs for twelfth graders.

Source: Adapted from the National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1997; Study conducted by The University of Michigan Institute for Social Research.

Note. See Appendix E.

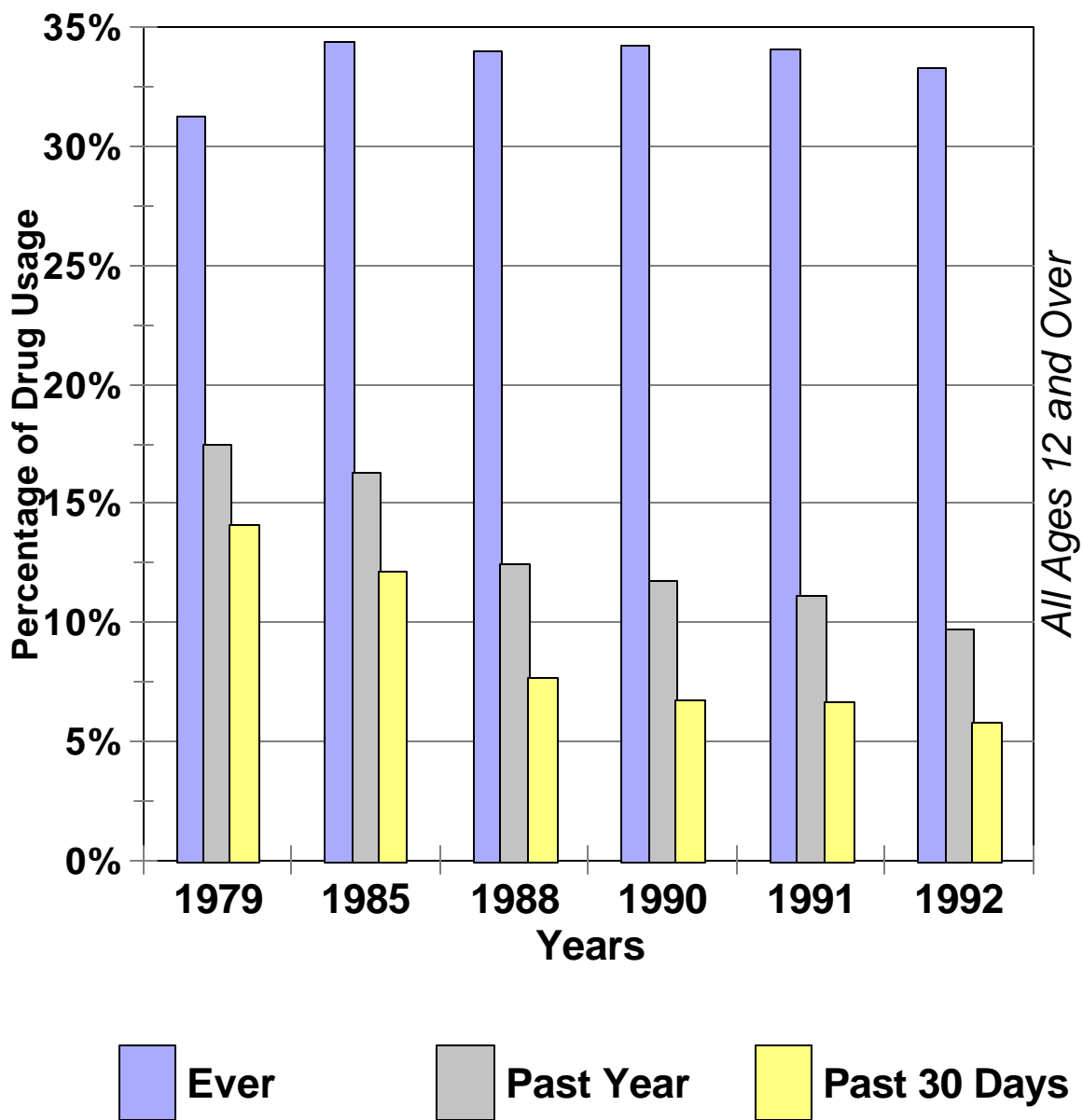


**Figure 6.** Prevalence of daily use of various drugs for twelfth graders.

Source: Adapted from the National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1997; Study conducted by The University of Michigan Institute for Social Research.

Note. See Appendix F.

Even though there were many declarations of a drug epidemic by seemingly credible sources, several studies indicated the opposite. For example, according to Office of National Drug Control Policy, the percentage of Americans aged 12 and older who used drugs in the last year steadily decreased from 1979 to 1992. They also reported that the number of Americans who used drugs within the last 30 days, prior to the survey, also decreased from 1979 to 1992. However, the percentage of persons surveyed who ever used drugs showed a somewhat different trend. For example, prior to President Reagan's taking office, 31.3 percent (in 1979) of those surveyed experimented with drugs. By 1985, the percentage of those who used drugs increased to 34.4 percent. In 1988, there was a slight decrease in reported usage, 34.0 percent. 1990 and 1991 showed a slight increase in reported usage; however, by 1992, the percentage of those who ever used drugs decreased to 33.3 percent. (See Figure 7.)



**Figure 7.** Persons aged 12 and over reporting any illicit drug use, 1979-1992.

Source: Adapted from the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Fact sheet: Drug use trends; April 1997; NCJ-164272.

Note. See Appendix G.



The Office of National Drug Control Policy and The Monitoring the Future Study both showed that illicit drug use among both adults and the youth were gradually decreasing, with a few exceptions, during the supposed epidemic. By the last year observed, 1992, the trend was that of a decrease in the use of all illicit drugs.

From the information provided (the Reader's Guide, the Gallup Poll, the Monitoring the Future Survey and The Office of National Drug Control Policy), we can see that moral entrepreneurs' work does not have to accurately reflect reality to succeed. Moreover, it also shows that the public often ignores empirical evidence that refutes moral entrepreneur's rhetoric. Therefore, a moral entrepreneur's success lies in their ability to convey to the public that a drug crisis exist. Once they have accomplished this, they usually gain the public's support for an anti-drug crusade.

#### Contributions From Ronald Reagan's and George Bush's Anti-Drug Crusade

The findings suggest that there is a cyclical pattern of moral entrepreneurship. However, although public opinion polls and the number of articles written about illicit drugs corresponded with the moral entrepreneurs' rhetoric, self-reported drug use (with a few exceptions) did not. This indicates that an epidemic need not be present for a crisis to be established. It is apparent that all that is needed is the appearance of a crisis in order to get the American public to accept the moral entrepreneurs' argument without question.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

After a thorough review of qualitative data in the form of books, government documents, personal documents, periodicals, and descriptive statistics from previous studies conducted, it is clear that a cycle of moral entrepreneurship exists, at least in the realm of illicit drugs and drug use.

For decades, many individuals (moral entrepreneurs) and their supporters demonstrated that by playing on society's emotions and values, they put themselves in the position to change not only attitudes toward a specific concern, but also to change the rules surrounding the declared concern.

Fortunately, for many moral entrepreneurs, concern about drugs proved to be successful in "distracting political attention from real issues and focusing attention instead on a moralism" (Baggins, 1998, p. 109). In most instances, moral entrepreneurs created a social problem to steer attention away from more critical issues, and as a means to control those individuals considered deviant, or on the periphery. For example, Harry Anslinger initially started his drug war as a way to discredit Mexicans and to gain control of jazz musicians. Anslinger felt that jazz musicians, through their music and personal use of drugs, inspired the White community to abuse drugs. As The Federal Drug Commissioner, he felt that it was his responsibility to stop those deviants from selling and using drugs.

A second reason that Anslinger perpetuated an anti-drug crusade may have been due to the poor economy of the times, which led the federal government to make budget cuts that compensated for the loss of revenue. Anslinger feared that his division would be the first to be cut, so he devised a plan to keep his position. He created a drug problem, developed a drug menace that established fear in many individuals, identified the situation as a crisis, initiated a crusade against the enemy (in this case the drug culture), and encouraged many people to support his crusade. He was successful in this crusade and managed to save his department from being eliminated.

Former President Richard Nixon followed in Anslinger's footsteps. He, too, stated that the United States was in the midst of a drug crisis and encouraged society to support him and other government officials in eliminating the drug scourge. Nixon was successful in playing on people's fears

and prejudices. Through his attacks on certain groups of people, for example addicts, rock musicians and youths, he influenced many Americans to develop a lack of tolerance for those particular groups. Additionally, Nixon managed to gain power by using celebrities to influence public opinion of the drug problem. He knew that most people would believe a celebrity who spoke out against drugs.

During this period, Richard Nixon was quite powerful and one can only speculate as to where he would have taken his drug war. However, the Watergate fiasco prohibited Nixon from continuing his anti-drug crusade.

Former President Reagan and President Bush managed to reinstate a cycle of moral entrepreneurship, after several years of society moving away from attacking those actually or allegedly involved in the drug culture. Just as their predecessors did, they identified a social problem, in this case illicit drug use and sales, and told the American public that they were in the midst of a social cataclysm by declaring that the situation was much worse than in actuality.

Even though statistical data did not support Reagan's and Bush's claims, they were still successful in convincing society that they needed their help to fight drugs. They accomplished this by singling out particular groups and claiming that they were the culprits, or enemies, of not only the government, but also of the American public. By reinforcing this enemy status, Reagan and Bush did much to maintain the public's alliance.

### Moral Entrepreneurs' Succeed?

Moral entrepreneurs' success is based upon several factors: First, they have the ability to understand what is important to their audience and use this to promote their declared crusade. Whether or not they are interested or concerned about the subject at hand is at times irrelevant, for many moral entrepreneurs initiate a crusade in order to put themselves in the position of power, so that at a later date, they are able to use that power to persuade the public to support a larger political agenda. Second, moral entrepreneurs have the ability to create a widespread concern through their words, and knowing how to disperse this information is vital to their success. Third, moral entrepreneurs succeed when they explain with sincerity that their mission is to serve the American public's interests. Fourth, the moral entrepreneur's success does not hinge on empirical evidence of a crisis, but simply rhetorical

“proof.” Finally, moral entrepreneurs succeed and maintain control by keeping the crisis in the headlines through whatever means are deemed appropriate to the situation.

It is apparent that mastering these factors help moral entrepreneurs in their declared crusade. Obviously, the position or title they hold influences and determines the level of power they are able to assert. Moreover, if moral entrepreneurs choose to focus on a topic that appeals to the public, either emotionally or morally, and articulate their argument in a convincing manner, it is not hard for them to sell their idea. When one reviews the historical data provided, it is apparent that each of the moral entrepreneurs listed in this research followed a similar pattern: Stating that there is a drug problem; convincing others that this drug problem is at epidemic proportions through their rhetoric; maintaining this crisis by gaining support from the mass media, who in turn, convince the American public that they too must support the crusader in order to alleviate and eliminate the problem; maintaining support by creating an enemy; telling the public that there is an enemy in their midst and the enemy is out to destroy their value system, their children’s future, and their lives.

#### Limitations of the Study

A primary limitation of this study is the threat of an invalid interpretation of a moral entrepreneur’s rhetoric, by this researcher. When examining different time periods, I became enlightened to the fact that particular terminology can mean one thing to one generation, and quite another to a different generation. Additionally, I came across unfamiliar words, possibly slang terminology, that had to be defined by the content of the sentence. I attempted to avoid applying my own personal definition or interpretation of statements made by moral entrepreneurs. I attempted to disregard preconceived notions and any possible bias during the course of the research and analysis of data presented. By doing so, I was enlightened about the reasons behind certain moral entrepreneurs’ crusades. Realizing that not all crusades were personally motivated afforded the opportunity to look further into the mind-set and intentions of the people studied.

A second limitation to this research project was the necessity of relying on mostly secondary resources. Clearly, author bias can influence and lead the reader to make assumptions, thus persuading the reader to join their point of view. To minimize this bias, I attempted to obtain all information that

encompassed the perspectives of both liberals and conservatives in regard to the topic. Furthermore, I attempted to find data that could enrich, rather than constrain, explanations for the work moral entrepreneurs carried out.

A third limitation was the limited amount of statistical data to support or refute statements about drug use in the early twentieth century. Luckily, I located Harry Anslinger's private papers at Pennsylvania State University. His collection of documents provided drug abuse, drug arrest, and drug seizure data. However, I was aware that these data may lack validity due to the fact that they were collected by a moral entrepreneur who held great prejudice against drugs and drug users.

A fourth limitation concerns the researcher's identification of particular moral entrepreneurs. Obviously there are many other people who acted as anti-drug crusaders; however, I chose those people who were powerful in their professional capacity, and convincing in their rhetoric. Additionally, I chose those moral entrepreneurs who came into their political position and started a crusade against drugs after a period of relaxed attitudes toward drug use. It must be noted that although many factors played a part in the drug war, campaigns were successful due to the moral entrepreneurs' persuasive rhetoric, which ultimately gained the support of the American public, who played an integral part in their anti-drug crusade.

### Implications of the Study

There are several reasons as to why it is important to identify and understand the concept of the cyclical nature of moral entrepreneurship. I will discuss three reasons that stand out the most: First, if we allow particular individuals or groups of people to impose their moral beliefs and values upon us and hold us to tough new laws and stiff penalties, then, we allow our civil rights to be violated and relinquished. Consequently, we forfeit our rights to think and make decisions and lose our rights as individuals. A second reason that it is important to identify and understand the consequences of moral entrepreneurship is the possibility of the promotion of unfair and unjust treatment toward specific individuals or groups of people, especially those who are considered to live on the periphery. The process of moral entrepreneurship has the ability to suppress the rights of those deemed as deviant or different. It also may lead to unfair treatment in the administration and distribution of punishment. It is

imperative to analyze and question the motives of those promoting particular crusades and the actual effects of such, and not to take everything we hear at face value. Third, we must also acknowledge that moral entrepreneurs may have reasons other than the good of the public for promoting a crusade. For example, Harry Anslinger may have been more concerned about saving the Federal Bureau of Narcotics and his job from being eliminated due to budget constraints during the depression. Richard Nixon, knowing that the American public was angry about being involved in the Vietnam War, may have been trying to deflect attention away from that crisis, to a crisis that would improve his self-image and strengthen his administration. And lastly, both Ronald Reagan and George Bush had to deal with a poor economy that was affecting many social issues at the time (for example, homelessness was not only on the rise, but was changing in its dynamics). Knowing that these and many other issues were creating a feeling of resentment among the American public, Reagan and Bush may have been trying to deflect attention away from politically damaging issues.

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## APPENDIX A

### INCIDENCE OF ILLEGAL DRUG USE, 1972

<b>Incidence of illegal drug use, 1972</b>		
<b>Drug</b>	<b>Youth (n=880)</b>	<b>Adults (n=2411)</b>
Marijuana	14%	16%
LSD/ Hallucinogen	4.8%	4.6%
Cocaine	1.5%	3.2%
Heroin	.6%	1.3%

Source: Adapted from the Second Report of the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse, 1974.

Note. This is a household survey so it does not include the transient population. Total youth (ages 12-17) surveyed = 880; Total adults (ages 18 and over) = 2,411.

## APPENDIX B

### THE GALLUP PUBLIC OPINION POLL: DRUGS & DRUG USE IDENTIFIED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM FACING THE UNITED STATES

<b>Attitude Toward the Most Important Problem Facing the United States, 1982-1992</b>	
October 1982	NA
October 1983	NA
February 1984	NA
January 1985	2%
July 1986	8%
April 1987	11%
September 1988	11%
May 1989	27%
November 1989	38%
April 1990	30%
July 1990	18%
March 1991	11%
March 1992	8%

Source: Adapted from several Gallup Reports as prepared by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy for the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Information may be found in Drug and Crime Facts; June 1995; NCJ- 154043.

APPENDIX C

ARTICLES REFERENCING ALL ILLICIT DRUGS, 1980-1992

<b>Total Number of Articles that make Reference to Illicit Drugs, 1980-1992</b>	
Year	Articles
1980	66
1981	64
1982	86
1983	101
1984	151
1985	195
1986	450
1987	270
1988	376
1989	462
1990	381
1991	201
1992	202

Source: *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, Volumes 39-52; 1980-1992

APPENDIX D

ARTICLES REFERENCING SPECIFIC DRUGS, 1980-1992

<b>Articles Referencing Specific Drugs, 1980-1992</b>				
Year	Marijuana	Cocaine	Crack	Ecstasy
1980	11	0	0	0
1981	14	5	0	0
1982	6	12	0	0
1983	6	9	0	0
1984	3	19	0	0
1985	7	35	0	0
1986	7	37	8	0
1987	6	31	1	0
1988	4	23	3	1
1989	5	21	8	1
1990	3	20	11	0
1991	2	9	2	0
1992	1	7	2	0

Note. The researcher counted the number of articles that referenced a specific drug as listed by the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*.

APPENDIX E

THIRTY-DAY PREVALENCE OF USE OF VARIOUS DRUGS FOR TWELFTH GRADERS

<b>Long Term Trends in Twelfth Grade Drug Use over a Thirty-Day Period</b>					
Senior Class (Twelfth Grade)	Any Illicit Drug	Marijuana/ Hashish	MDMA/ Ecstasy	Cocaine	Crack
Class 1980 (n=15,900)	37.2%	33.7%	–	5.2%	–
Class 1981 (n=17,500)	36.9%	31.6%	–	5.8%	–
Class 1982 (n=17,700)	32.5%	28.5%	–	5.0%	–
Class 1983 (n=16,300)	30.5%	27.0%	–	4.9%	–
Class 1984 (n=15,900)	29.2%	25.2%	–	5.8%	–
Class 1985 (n=16,000)	29.7%	25.7%	–	6.7%	–
Class 1986 (n=15,200)	27.1%	23.4%	–	6.2%	–
Class 1987 (n=16,300)	24.7%	21.0%	–	4.3%	1.3%
Class 1988 (n=16,300)	21.3%	18.0%	–	3.4%	1.6%
Class 1989 (n=16,700)	19.7%	16.7%	–	2.8%	1.4%
Class 1990 (n=15,200)	17.2%	14.0%	–	1.9%	.7%
Class 1991 (n=15,000)	16.4%	13.8%	–	1.4%	.7%
Class 1992 (n=15,800)	14.4%	11.9%	–	1.3%	.6%

Source: Adapted from the National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1997; Study conducted by The University of Michigan Institute of Social Research.

## APPENDIX F

### PREVALENCE OF DAILY USE OF VARIOUS DRUGS FOR TWELFTH GRADERS

<b>Long Term Trends in Twelfth Grade Daily Drug Use over a Thirty-Day Period</b>				
Senior Class (Twelfth Grade)	Marijuana/ Hashish	MDMA/ Ecstasy	Cocaine	Crack
Class 1980 (n=15,900)	9.1%	–	.2%	–
Class 1981 (n=17,500)	7.0%	–	.3%	–
Class 1982 (n=17,700)	6.3%	–	.2%	–
Class 1983 (n=16,300)	5.5%	–	.2%	–
Class 1984 (n=15,900)	5.0%	–	.2%	–
Class 1985 (n=16,000)	4.9%	–	.4%	–
Class 1986 (n=15,200)	4.0%	–	.4%	–
Class 1987 (n=16,300)	3.3%	–	.3%	.1%
Class 1988 (n=16,300)	2.7%	–	.2%	.1%
Class 1989 (n=16,700)	2.9%	–	.3%	.2%
Class 1990 (n=15,200)	2.2%	–	.1%	.1%
Class 1991 (n=15,000)	2.0%	–	.1%	.1%
Class 1992 (n=15,800)	1.9%	–	.1%	.1%

Source: Adapted from the National Survey Results on Drug Use from The Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1997; Study conducted by The University of Michigan Institute of Social Research.



## APPENDIX G

### PERSONS AGED 12 AND OVER REPORTING ANY ILLICIT DRUG USE, 1979-1992

<b>Percentage of Drug Use for All Ages 12 and Over</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Ever</b>	<b>Past Year</b>	<b>Past 30 Days</b>
1979	31.3%	17.5%	14.1%
1985	34.4%	16.3%	12.1%
1988	34.0%	12.4%	7.7%
1990	34.2%	11.7%	6.7%
1991	34.1%	11.1%	6.6%
1992	33.3%	9.7%	5.8%

Source: Adapted from The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Fact sheet:

Drug use trends, April 1997; NCJ-164272.

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