Preparing for the Film

1. How prevalent a problem do you consider drugs in your own community and how would you support this view?
2. What do you imagine is the relationship between drug sales/use and race?
3. What do you know about the legal punishments for drug sales or use if a person is convicted?
4. What does the term "War on Drugs" mean to you?

Reflecting on the Film

1. What are the major factors that contribute to drug use and sales?
2. How did Nannie Jeter's family suffer from her prosperity? What are her regrets and her discoveries about herself?
3. In what ways are both drugs and the war on drugs destructive for the individual and the community?
4. What are some major inconsistencies in the drug laws that were exposed in the film? How do experts in law enforcement and the courts perceive these inconsistencies?
5. How does the film represent multiple political perspectives?
6. What are the industries that flourish in the War on Drugs?
7. What is the incentive for a police department to make drug arrests rather than to investigate other serious crimes like murder and rape?
8. How is the Drug War "a holocaust in slow motion," according to journalist and TV producer David Simon, Jarecki's main spokesman? What are the steps in the chain of destruction common to both the Drug War and the Holocaust?
9. How does the title of the film relate to its content?

Writing about the Film

1. Write an analysis of director Eugene Jarecki's narrative perspective and his use of his personal relationship with Nannie Jeter to deepen this documentary. Include and analyze specific details from her experience that support Jarecki's main points throughout the film.

2. Using details from professionals and drug defendants interviewed in the film, write an argument essay to convince readers that the focus on drugs needs to shift from incarceration and lifetime sentences to prevention and rehabilitation.

3. Write an essay arguing that the War on Drugs is a type of Holocaust that is not based on race or religion but on economic class under the guise of a war against illegal narcotics.
Include details from the interviews with journalist and TV producer David Simon, the main spokesman throughout the film.

Works Cited


Selected Film Reviews and Critical Analyses

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http://www.thehouseilivein.org/