

**THIS IS WHO WE ARE.**



# **FACES & VOICES OF RECOVERY**

**ADVOCATE. ACT. ADVANCE.**

# Legal Action Center

@LACNEWS

## **Mission**

The Legal Action Center is the only non-profit law and policy organization in the United States whose sole mission is to fight discrimination against people with histories of addiction, HIV/AIDS, or criminal records, and to advocate for sound public policies in these areas.

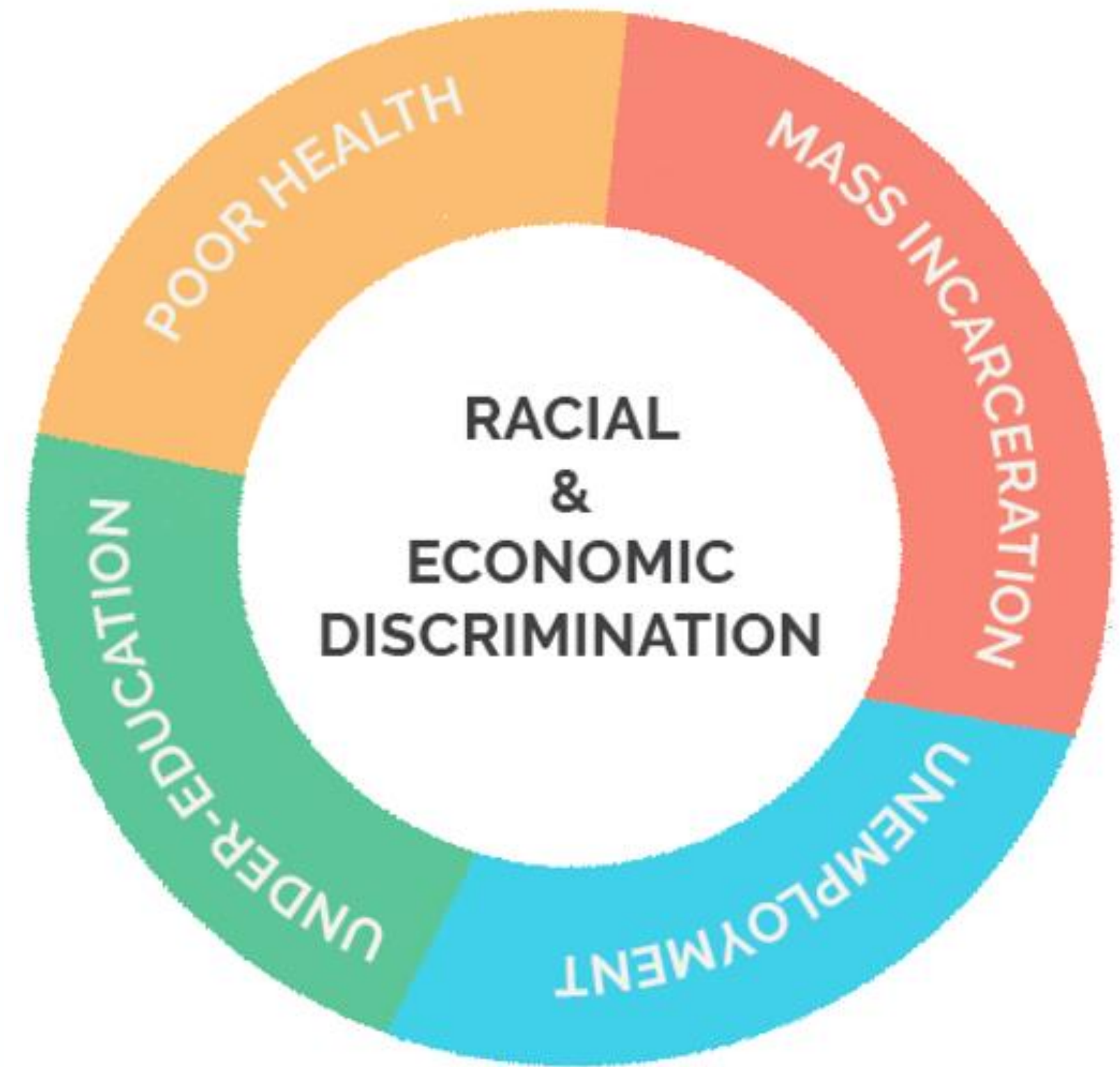
## **No Health = No Justice**

LAC's "No Health = No Justice" campaign is a multi-state advocacy and organizing strategy to support decarceration efforts to ensure that people are no longer criminalized for conditions related to their health.

# Campaign Lens

A multi-state initiative envisioning a system of **mass decarceration where health care is provided to all** and people are no longer criminalized for conditions related to their health.

Reforms must address **pervasive biases, institutional racism, and systemic discrimination** or risk tackling consequences rather than root causes of inequity.







# History of American Drug Policy

It has always been about Race



"You want to know what this was really all about?" Ehrlichman asked, referring to the war on drugs.

"The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I'm saying? We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news."

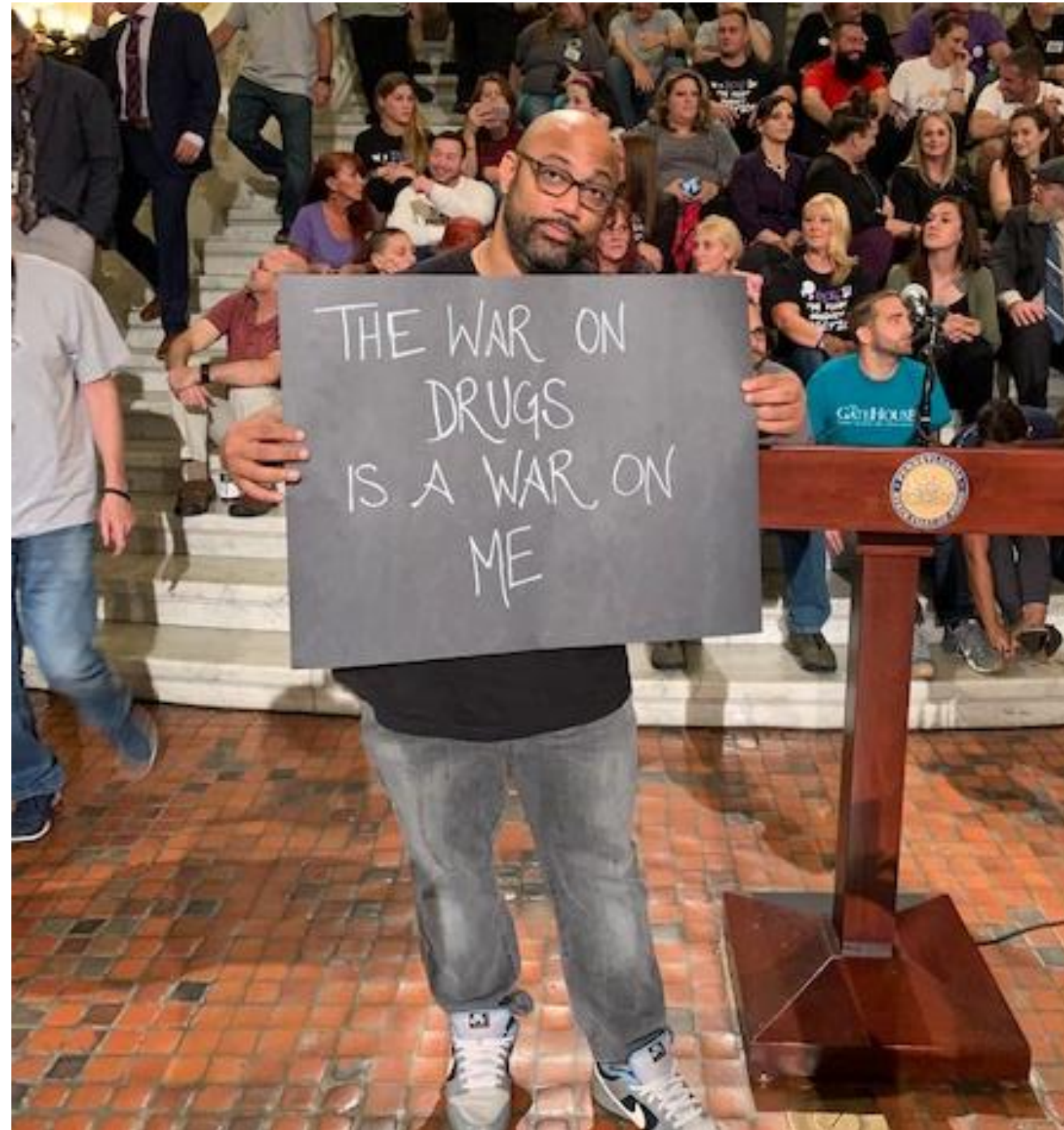
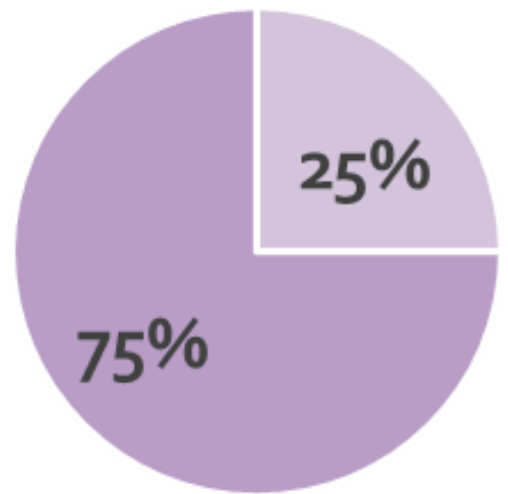
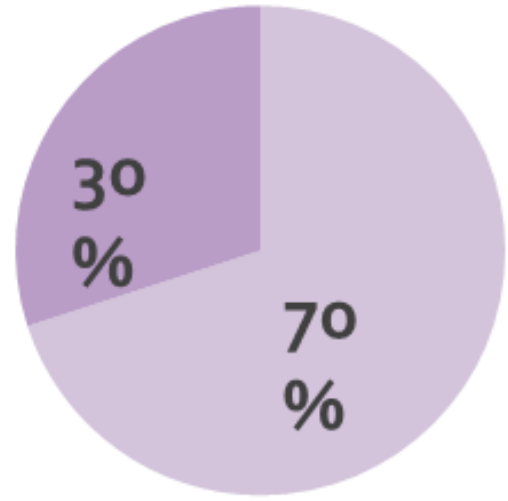
"Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did," he concluded.

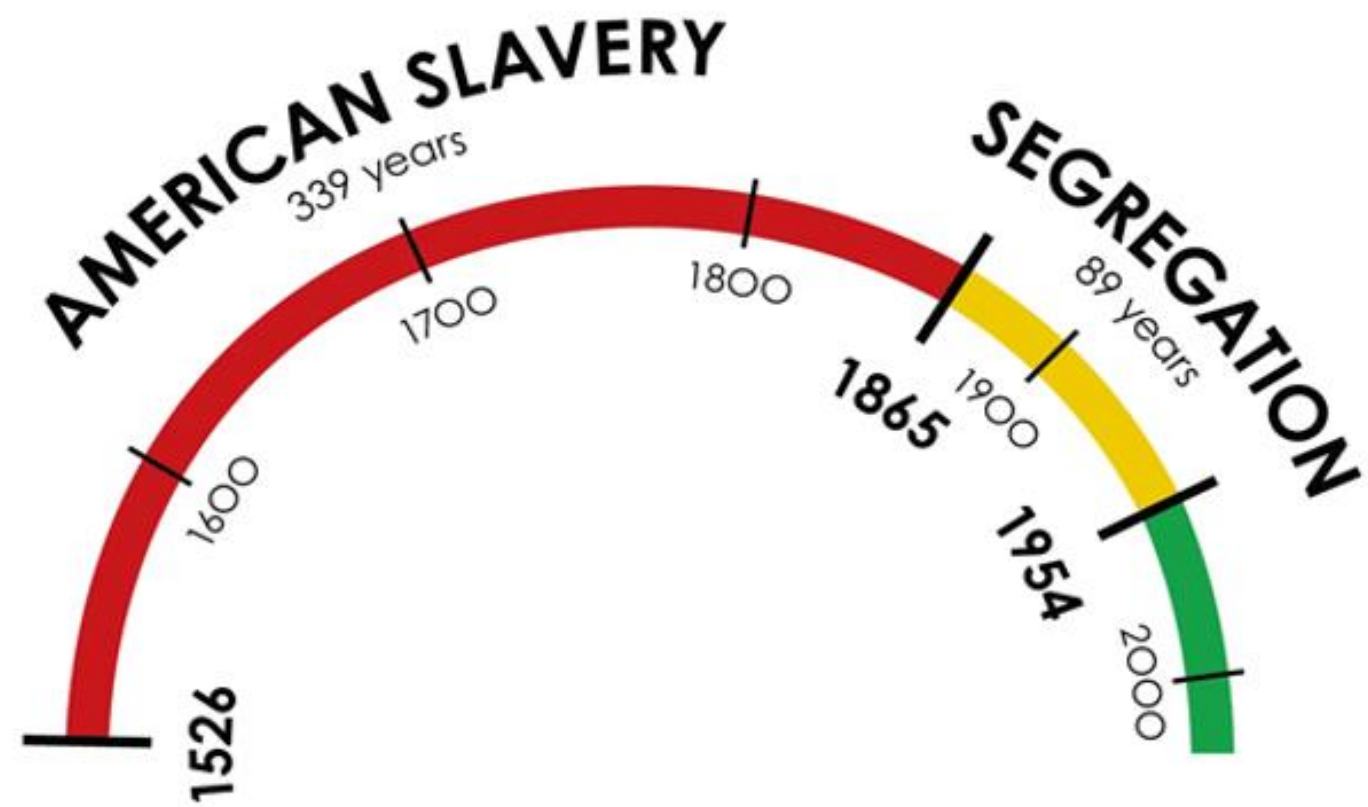
# The War on Drugs

**In 1974:** nearly 70% of all federal drug policy funding went to demand-reduction efforts (prevention and treatment).

**By 1983:** the ratio flipped - only 25% to demand reduction and 75% to attacks on supply.

Predictably, the number of drug-offense arrests since the 1980s has also risen: from less than 600,000 to nearly **1.7 million in 2017**.





How did we  
get here?

- Slavery
- Fugitive Slave Laws
- Black Codes
- Convict Lease
- Jim Crow
- Penitentiary
- Prison Labor - Chain Gang, Industry
- Prison Industrial Complex
- Prison Nation
- Drug Laws and War on Crime



# SECRET SERVICE

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.

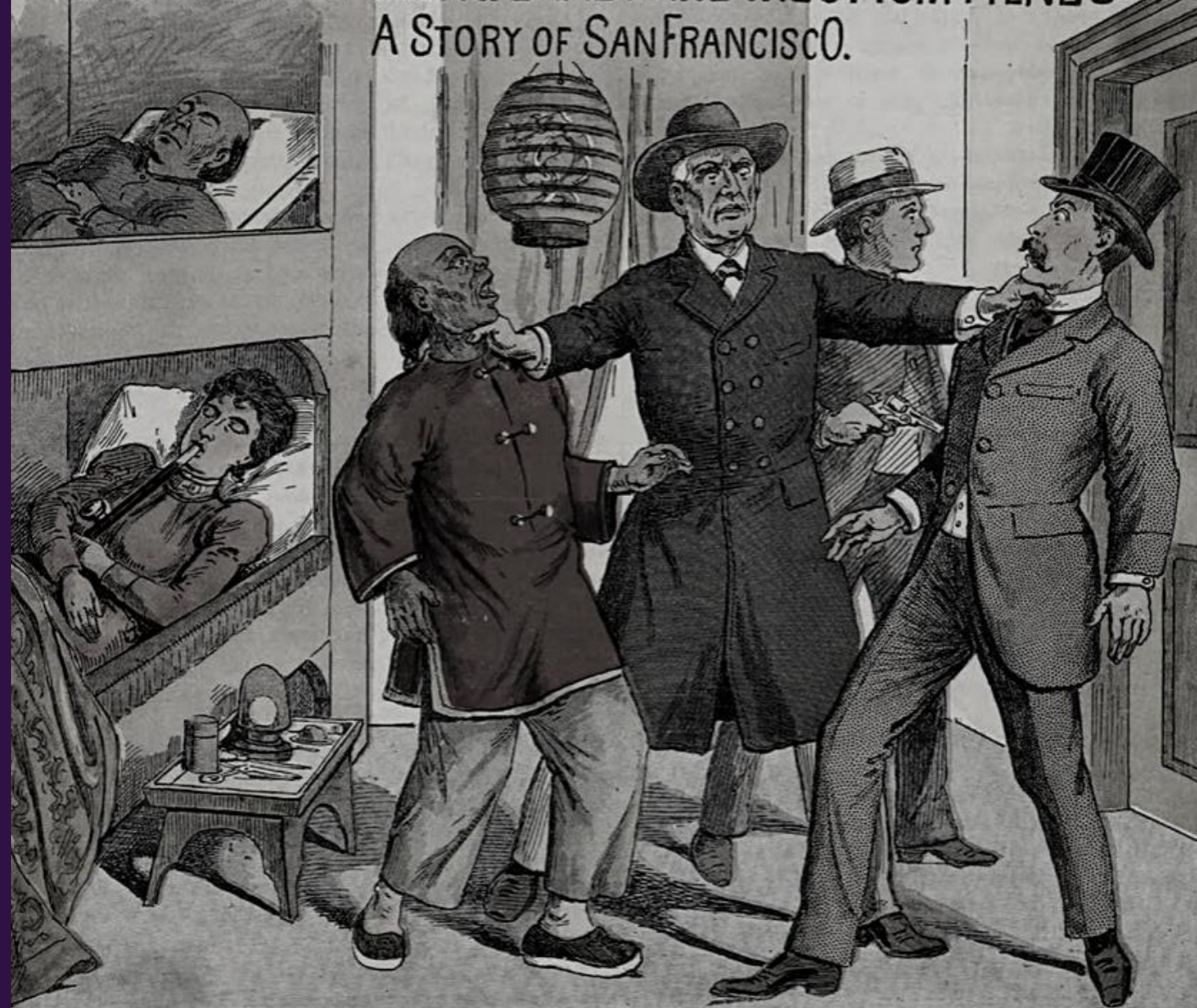
No. 13.

NEW YORK, APRIL 21, 1899.

Price 5 Cents.

## HOP LEE, THE CHINESE SLAVE DEALER; OR

OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY AND THE OPIUM FIENDS.  
A STORY OF SAN FRANCISCO.



"I'm going to rescue that poor girl from this den if I have to choke the life out of you two!" hissed Old King Brady.

### THE MARIJUANA SMOKER



## NEGRO COCAINE "FIENDS" ARE A NEW SOUTHERN MENACE

By Edward Hopkins Wilson,  
N. Y.

For some years there have been rumors about the increase in drug taking in the South—rumors that always faded away when the addition of each drug was made and another was found to be a suitable substitute for the other.

Murder and Insanity Increasing Among Lower Class Blacks Because They Have Taken to "Sniffing" Since Deprived of Whisky by Prohibition.

in Georgia, North Carolina, West Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, and other States where the negro population is still the major and long established element of the population. These negroes do not, and were not intended to, possess the ability to resist the well-to-do negro getting the so-called "heroin" through legal channels.



# How did we get here?

- Deinstitutionalization and the growth of use of carceral settings happened while the drug war was in full effect.
- Many of our perceptions of what is substance “abuse” comes from the residues of the “war on drugs” that remains in the way of honest conversations about substance use and drugs.
- These policies have driven mass incarceration.
- Addiction, itself, requires reexamination.

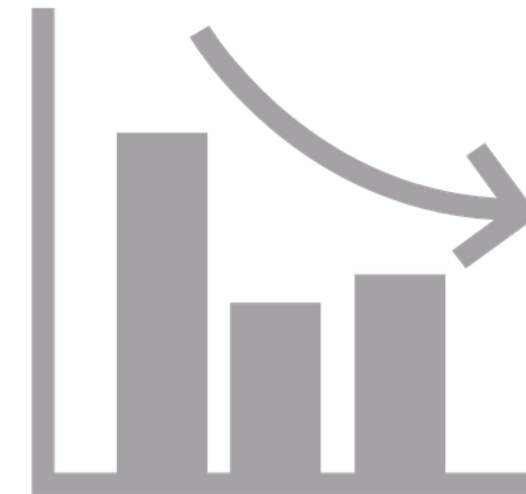
# Criminalization of Substance Use and Mental Disorders has



**Overcrowded jails  
and prisons**



**Weakened  
communities**



**Perpetuated cycles of  
persistent economic and  
social instability**



**Social determinants = racism and poverty**

## Social Determinants of Health

Economic Stability	Neighborhood and Physical Environment	Education	Food	Community and Social Context	Health Care System
Employment	Housing	Literacy	Hunger	Social Integration	Health Coverage
Income	Transportation	Language	Access to Healthy Options	Support Systems	Provider Availability
Expenses	Safety	Early Childhood Education		Community Engagement	Provide Linguistic and Cultural Competency
Debt	Parks	Vocational Training		Discrimination	
Medical Bills	Playgrounds	Higher Education		Stress	
Support	Walkability				
	Zip Code/ Geography				Quality of Care

**Health Outcomes**  
 Mortality, Morbidity, Life Expectancy, Health Care Expenditures, Health Status, Functional Limitations

# National Health Disparities,

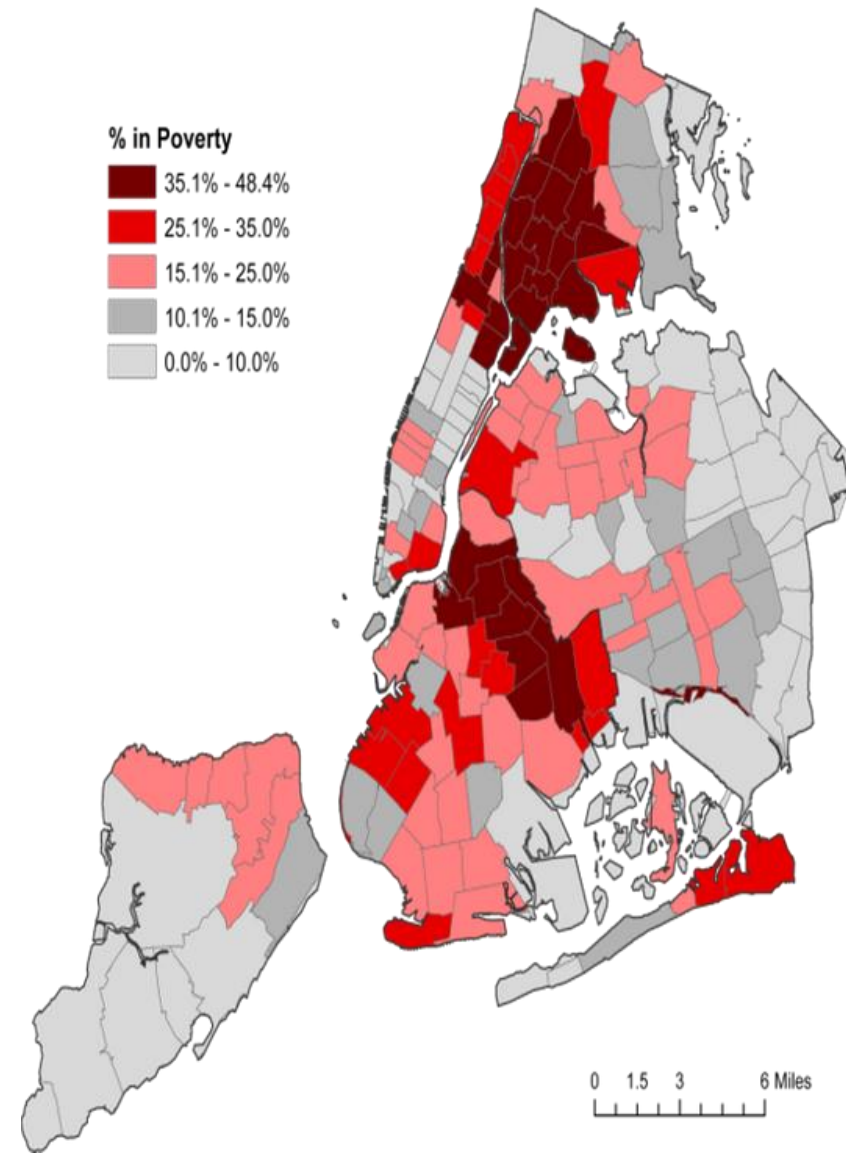
Systemic & Institutional Racism

WHAT THE HEALTH?!

- African Americans (11.7) have higher uninsured rates than whites (7.5 percent).
- Black women are at high risk for heart disease and stroke, and experience reproductive health inequities.
- Uninsured Black Americans are more likely than white individuals to fall in the coverage gap in states that have not expanded Medicaid.
- Health disparities and mass incarceration are inextricably linked.
- Discriminatory health care and criminal justice systems in poor communities have also been largely siloed from each other.

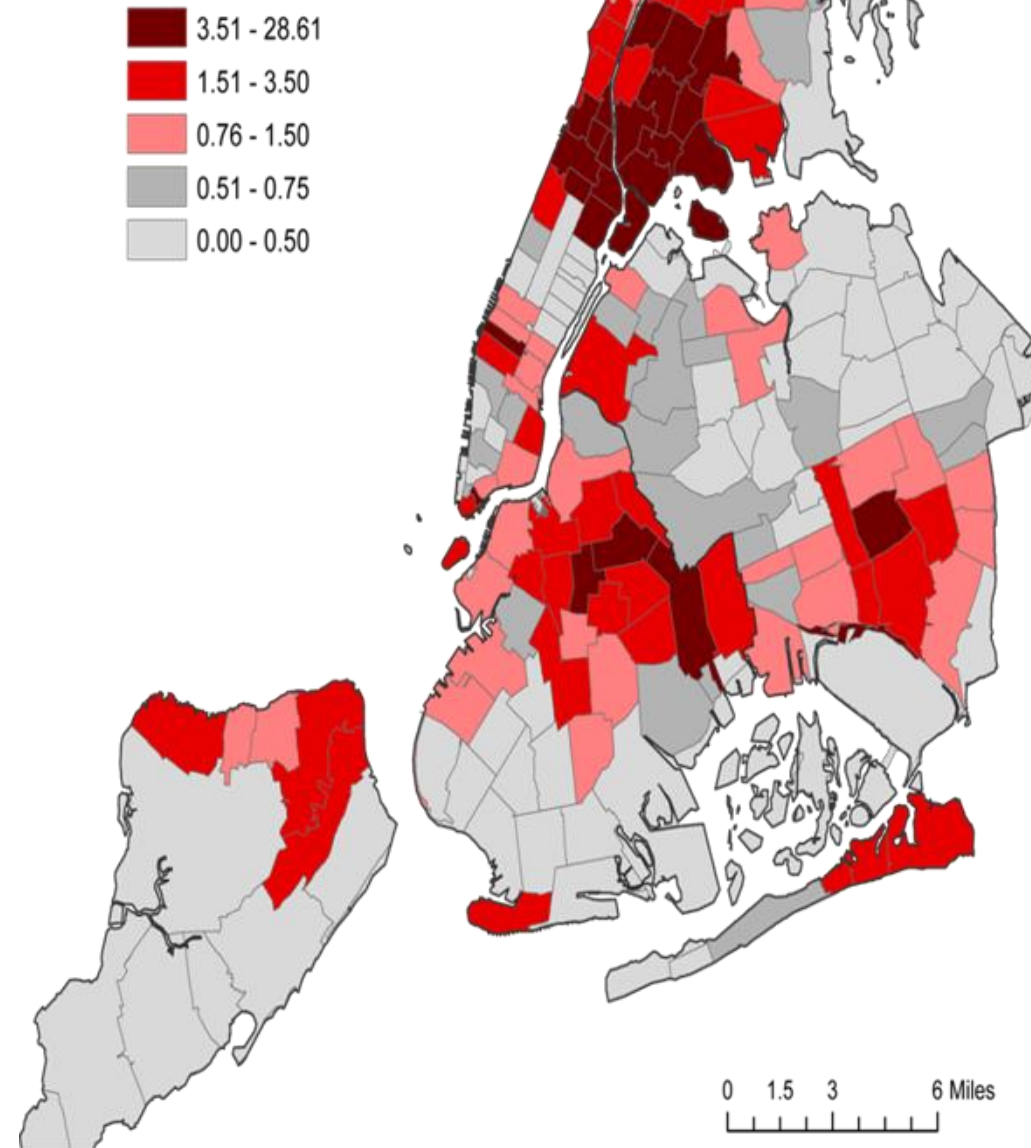


Percent Living in Poverty  
by ZIP Code of Residence

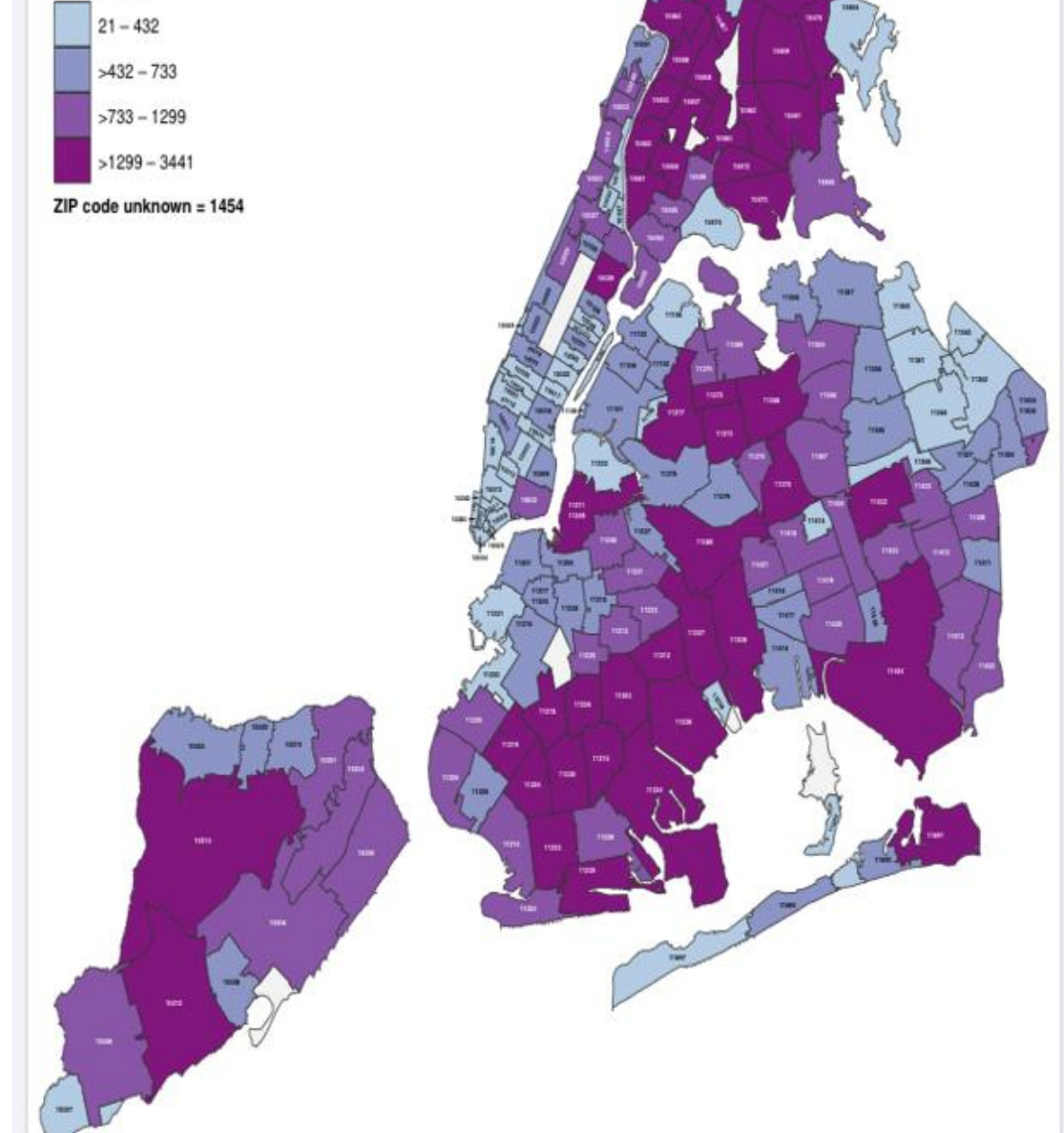


**2006**

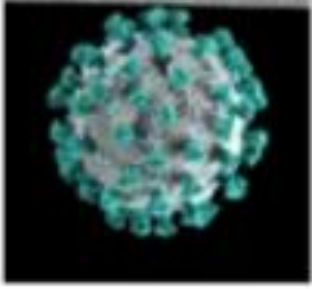
Prison Adm per 1000



Total count of COVID-19 cases  
based on patient address  
by ZIP code



**2020**



SPECIAL SERIES

## The Coronavirus Crisis



# Drug Overdose Deaths Surge Among Black Americans During Pandemic

March 3, 2021 - 5:00 AM ET

Heard on [Morning Edition](#)

BRIAN MANN



5-Minute Listen

+ PLAYLIST





# Next Up!

- At 2:20pm EST, we will gather for a **Race Equity in Recovery North Star Panel Discussion**
- Following that, we will have a brief transition and then go into our **breakout sessions from 3:15pm to 4:15pm EST**

# Thank You to Our Sponsors!

## PRESENTING SPONSORS

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Foundation



Hazelden Betty Ford  
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