

THE WAR ON DRUGS



PRESS MATERIALS

WWW.WAR-ON-DRUGS.COM

After *info wars* (www.info-wars.com) (2004), *The War on Drugs* (www.war-on-drugs.com) is the second film documentary by the team of **parallel universe**.

The War on Drugs is the second installment of a trilogy, which is to be completed with the film *War on Terror* in 2010.

More than three decades have passed since Richard Nixon declared the **war on drugs**. Today, the United States spend record sums on this war.

The War on Drugs shows how the war is being waged by examining the situation in Colombia and the U.S. The film is structured in three parts.



Plan Colombia shows the effects of U.S. drug policies in Colombia. Since the years 2000, the U.S. has implemented **Plan Colombia** against the drug trade. One element of this plan is the spraying of the coca and poppy growing areas to eradicate the crops.

In *Rule of Law*, Kevin C. Waley (Chief of International Operations of DEA) outlines the mission of his globally active police force. These policies are criticized by members of the Institute for Policy Studies, the Drug Policy Alliance and Common Sense for Drug Policy.



Land of the Free deals with the effects of the drug war on U.S. society. The U.S. has built the largest prison system on the planet.

The fates of inmates Richard Paey and Sharanda Jones indicate what results this system has on individuals.

**Press materials
Contact**

www.war-on-drugs.com/press
presse@war-on-drugs.com

The film starts at cinemas and as pay-per-view download on the Internet at this same date (download at: www.war-on-drugs.com/pay-per-view).

CONTENT

Plan Colombia

In the first part of the film shows the situation in **Colombia**.

The drug trade in Colombia started the 1960s and quickly led to the constitution of the largest drug cartels the world has seen so far: the Medellín cartel lead by Pablo Escobar, and the Cali cartel. Although both cartels were eventually destroyed, the Colombian drug trade today thrives as never before. In 2000, the U.S. together with the Colombian army started Plan Colombia.



Coca farmer in Colombia

Under the U.S.-designed plan, coca and poppy plants in Colombia (the sources of cocaine and heroin) are sprayed with plant-eradicating chemicals from the air by planes. However, these tactics mostly afflict farming peasants on the ground.

More than \$6 billion and over a thousand military advisors and contractors, as well as the latest weaponry, have been provided to the Colombian army by the United States under Plan Colombia.

Jorge Enrique Botero, a well-known Colombian journalist, and **Francisco Santos Calderón**, Vice President of Colombia, as well as Colombian **Senator Jorge Enrique Robledo**, are interviewed in this segment. **Flora T.**, leading member of a Colombian mini-cartel, explains how the cartels continue their operations despite Plan Colombia.

Rule of Law

The second part of the film reports from the U.S. on the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration). The DEA currently has offices in 62 countries around the world and coordinates the worldwide war on drugs.

Kevin C. Whaley, Chief of International Operations of the DEA, explains why the war on drugs will never end – but still has to be fought.



Kevin C. Whaley, Chief of International Operations, DEA

Contrasted by **Ethan Nadelmann**, one of the most outspoken critics of U.S. drug policies, DEA vice chief Kevin C. Whaley explains, why in 2001 Afghanistan's Taliban government succeeded in its efforts to eradicate the opium poppy in Afghanistan.

Antonio Maria Costa, director of UNODC, a UN organization fighting drugs and organized crime, outlines recent progress in the war on drugs, while **Sanho Tree**, director of Drug Policy Projects at the U.S. think tank Institute for Policy Studies emphasizes the results of current drug policies:

Drugs are still available and present everywhere; the worldwide black market has reached 7% of global trade according to UN estimates. The consequences of these policies in the U.S. are that the common plant cannabis has become incredibly profitable, with a single ounce of high-quality marijuana having the same value as an ounce of gold in the U.S.

Land of the Free

The third part of *The War on Drugs* deals with the situation in the United States, and the effects of the war on U.S. society. Every year in the U.S., 1.8 million people are arrested for drug law violations – most of them for possessing marijuana.



Chain gang in a U.S. prison in Phoenix, Arizona

As Ethan Nadelmann states, "In 1980 there were half a million people behind bars in the United States ... it's now up to 2.2 million people. No democratic society in history of humankind has ever incarcerated such a high proportion of its population."



Members of Chain Gangs are chained to each other during work

The U.S. has built the largest prison system on the planet. The fates of **Richard Paey** and **Sharanda Jones** show the social, political and personal implications of these measures.

Richard Paey, whose spinal cord was critically injured in a traffic accident, suffers from chronic pain from the accident that can render him incapable of movement. When Paey and his family moved from New Jersey to Florida, he kept his physician

in New Jersey, who continued to prescribe medication for Paey and sent the prescriptions to Florida.

The DEA was alerted to Paey and interrogated his physician in New Jersey. Although a month-long observation of Paey's residence in Florida gave no indication that Paey sold his medication, law enforcement officers told his doctor during interrogation that his patient "sells his medication in Florida" and that he also faced, on conviction, a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years.



After this, the physician who had treated Paey for many years testified against him, and Richard Paey was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Twenty-five years are the minimum sentence for the possession of an established quantity of drugs or medication in Florida.

Richard Paey, inmate at Tomoka Hills

On September 20, 2007 Richard Paey was pardoned by Florida's governor Charlie Crist. Paey has spent 3 1/2 years in prison.

Sharanda Jones became the victim of a publicity stunt by actor Chuck Norris. In Terrell, Texas, Norris joined a raid in an Afro-American neighborhood as deputy sheriff, a raid to which Norris brought his own TV camera.

Among the 105 citizens arrested in the Terrell raid was a woman who had been a friend of Sharanda Jones during their days at school. This school friend entered a plea bargain with the prosecutor, agreeing to help to set up a trap for Jones: She would ask Jones to organize her drugs. Jones, who was not involved in the drug trade, referred her to a dealer she knew.



Jones was sentenced to life imprisonment for "a conspiracy to distribute drugs." Because there is no parole in the federal system, she has no chance of leaving the prison alive.

(In Sharanda Jones's case, too, her sentence was the minimum sentence required by law.)

Sharanda Jones, inmate at FMC Carswell

Quotes

"If it was my choice, I would not have chose the slogan War on Drugs. When that was started - during the Nixon administration, I believe - I was not here, obviously, but I don't think it was a good choice. The reason I say it was not a good choice: In my experience, wars have beginnings and endings, generally speaking. Our struggle with the drug problem throughout the globe will never end. It will never end. And with that being the case, to say 'war on drugs' creates a misnomer and it creates unfair expectations....

Drug trafficking and drug abuse is not going to go away"

Kevin C. Whaley, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

"Obviously there is a long way to go. Drug traffickers have dug in their heels in Colombia. They're vertically integrated. So they have a lot to fight for, and the fight from now on will be a lot harder."

Francisco Santos Calderón, Vice President, Colombia

"The police are always bought. However, it's not always clear who has bought them. We have a lot of narcotics police here. But we are up to date, because the local police work for us. They keep us up to date. About the activities of the national police, et cetera. They are financially dependent on us. And they do warn us in time."

Flora T., member of a Colombian drug cartel

"I think Europeans have some appreciation of this, but outside Europe, people don't appreciate how remarkably punitive and draconian the drug policies are in the United States ...

"In 1980, there were half a million people behind bars in the United States for all offenses; it's now up to 2.2 million people.

"No democratic society in history of humankind has ever incarcerated such a high proportion of its population, and no democratic society has ever increased its incarceration level at this rate.

"If you want to look for comparable examples, one has to look at the gulags of the Soviet Union in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s."

Ethan Nadelmann, Drug Policy Alliance

Protagonists

Kevin C. Whaley, DEA, Chief of International Operations
Sanho Tree, Institute for Policy Studies
Ethan Nadelmann, Drug Policy Alliance
Antonio Maria Costa, director of UNODC
Kevin B. Zeese, Common Sense for Drug Policy
Jorge Enrique Robledo, senator of Colombia
Francisco Santos Calderón, vice president of Colombia
Flora T., member of a drug cartel
Jorge Enrique Botero, journalist
Richard Paey, inmate in Tomoka Hills
Sharanda Jones, inmate in FMC Carswell
Dr. Linda Paey, wife of Richard Paey
John P. Flannery, attorney of Richard Paey
James M. Murphy, attorney of Sharanda Jones
Sheriff Joe Arpaio, sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona

Also short appearances by Giraldo Edilson Giraldo, farmer in Caquetá;
Raul Giraldo, farmer in Caquetá; Don Licinio, mayor of Rionegro;
Luz Doria Guzman, farmer in Caquetá; Howard Wooldridge, cofounder of L.E.A.P.;
Jack Cole, director of L.E.A.P.; Officer Denning, prison guard; Marissa Hartrife;
George; Tina Drops; James; Rhonda Paris; Catherine Paey; Elisabeth Paey;
Benjamin Paey; Helen Paey; Brian Jensen; and others.

The Makers

The **parallel universe** team brought out its first film documentary, *info wars*, in 2004 (www.info-wars.com). The film shows the first generation of Internet activists and how they deal with globalization and the increasing power of multinational corporations. At the same time, the film depicts the battle for control of the ultimate resource of the information age: public attention.

The War on Drugs is the second film documentary by **parallel universe**.

Financing

The film was partly financed with funds of the Austrian film fund (Innovative Film Austria, Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture).

Production info

Genre	Film documentary
Length	99 min.
Language (interviews)	English and Spanish
Format	HD, Color, 16:9

The film is available in three different language versions: With English, Spanish or German titles and subtitles

Production	parallel universe www.parallel-universe.com
Production company	Cronos Film www.cronos.at
Produced and directed	sebastian j. f.
Director of photography	usr13
Second camera	allo
Added camera	Doris Kittler
Editing	s&a
Sound	AnnA
Music	Dopeamin
Production manager	Jon Sinclair
Website	www.war-on-drugs.com
Press materials	www.war-on-drugs.com/press
EPK	www.war-on-drugs.com/press/epk
Contact	press@war-on-drugs.com
	parallel universe www.parallel-universe.com
	Phone: +43 - 1 - 961 06 47
	Fax: +43 - 1 - 961 06 479

Distribution

	First Hand Films Fritz Heeb Weg 5 Ch-8050 Zürich , Switzerland
Contact	www.firsthandfilms.com
	Phone: +41 - 44 - 312 20 60
	Fax: +41 - 44 - 312 20 80

Filmfestivals

Diagonale Film Festival (Austria 2007)
24th Kassel Dokfest (Germany 2007)
31st Mostra São Paulo International Film Festival (Brazil 2007),
48th International Film Festival Cartagena (Colombia 2008)
2nd Latinamerican Film Festival Oaxaca (Mexico 2008)
4th International Documentary Film Festival Mexico City (Mexico 2009)
10th Bergen International Film Festival (Norway 2009)

as well as the IDFA film market in Amsterdam (The Netherlands 2007).

Theatrical release

Austria
Spain

October 12, 2007
January 17, 2008

The movie started simultaneously in cinemas and as pay-per-view download on the Internet site www.doc-air.com which later merged into www.docalliancefilms.com where the film is still available in all three versions:

English version:	www.docalliancefilms.com/film/7111/
German version:	www.docalliancefilms.com/film/2101/
Spanish version:	www.docalliancefilms.com/film/2132/