

# The Cost of the Drug War in NJ

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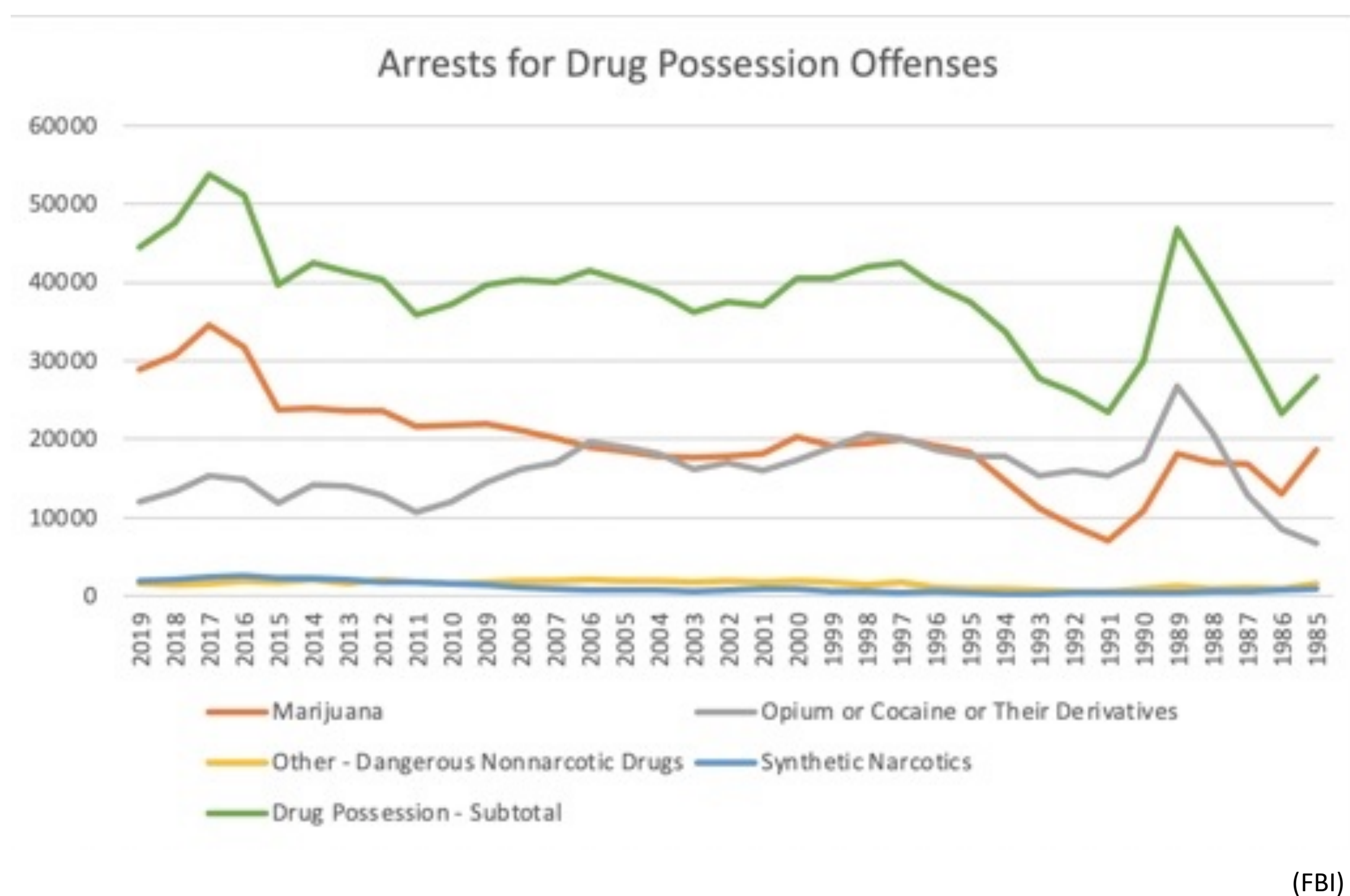
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## Introduction – Drug War

The War on Drugs is a phrase used to refer to a government-led initiative that aims to stop illegal drug use by increasing prison sentences for drug dealers and users. The War on Drugs began in June 1971 when U.S. Pres. Richard Nixon declared drug abuse to be “public enemy number one” and increased federal funding for drug-control agencies and drug-treatment efforts.

## Arrests for Drug Possession Offenses

Data acquired from Summary Reporting System (SRS) submitted to the FBI.



(FBI)

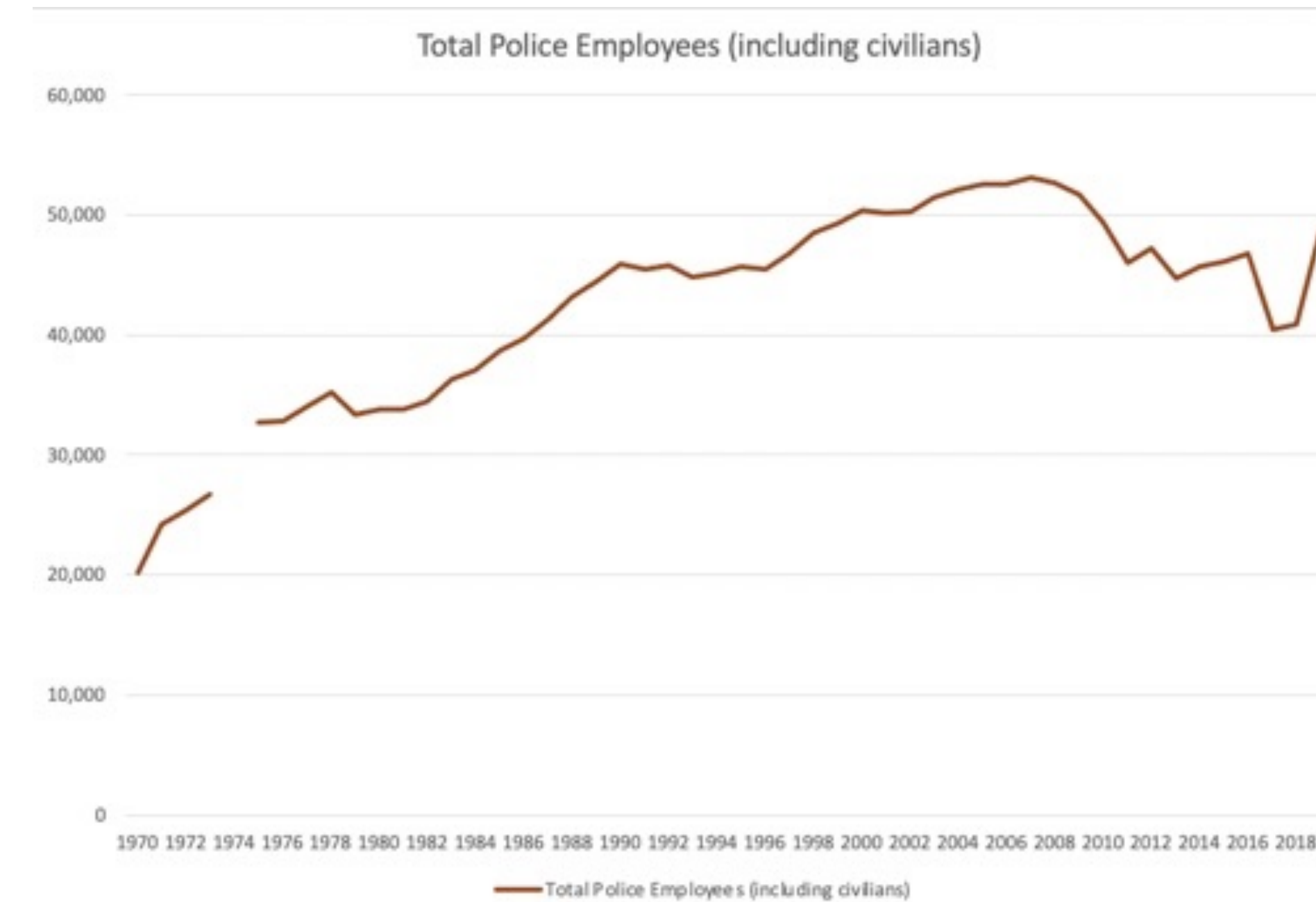
## Drug Courts

As an alternative to incarceration, drug courts reduce the burden and costs of repeatedly processing low-level, non-violent offenders through the nation's courts, jails, and prisons while providing offenders an opportunity to receive treatment and education (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).

Drug courts are pretty effective when it comes to re-arrests and re-convictions. It was reported that the rate at which NJ Drug Court graduates were re-arrested for a new offense was 16% and the rate of re-conviction was 8% (this is also in the excel sheet). In comparison, the rate of re-arrest for drug offenders released from prison was reported as 54 percent with a re-conviction rate of 43 percent. And drug courts also provide other benefits like graduates are more likely to be employed by time of their graduation and many individuals regain custody of their children. But the statewide program cumulative retention rate is about 51%.

## Police Employee Data

Data acquired from *NJ Uniform Crime Reports*. Data for 1974 is missing.



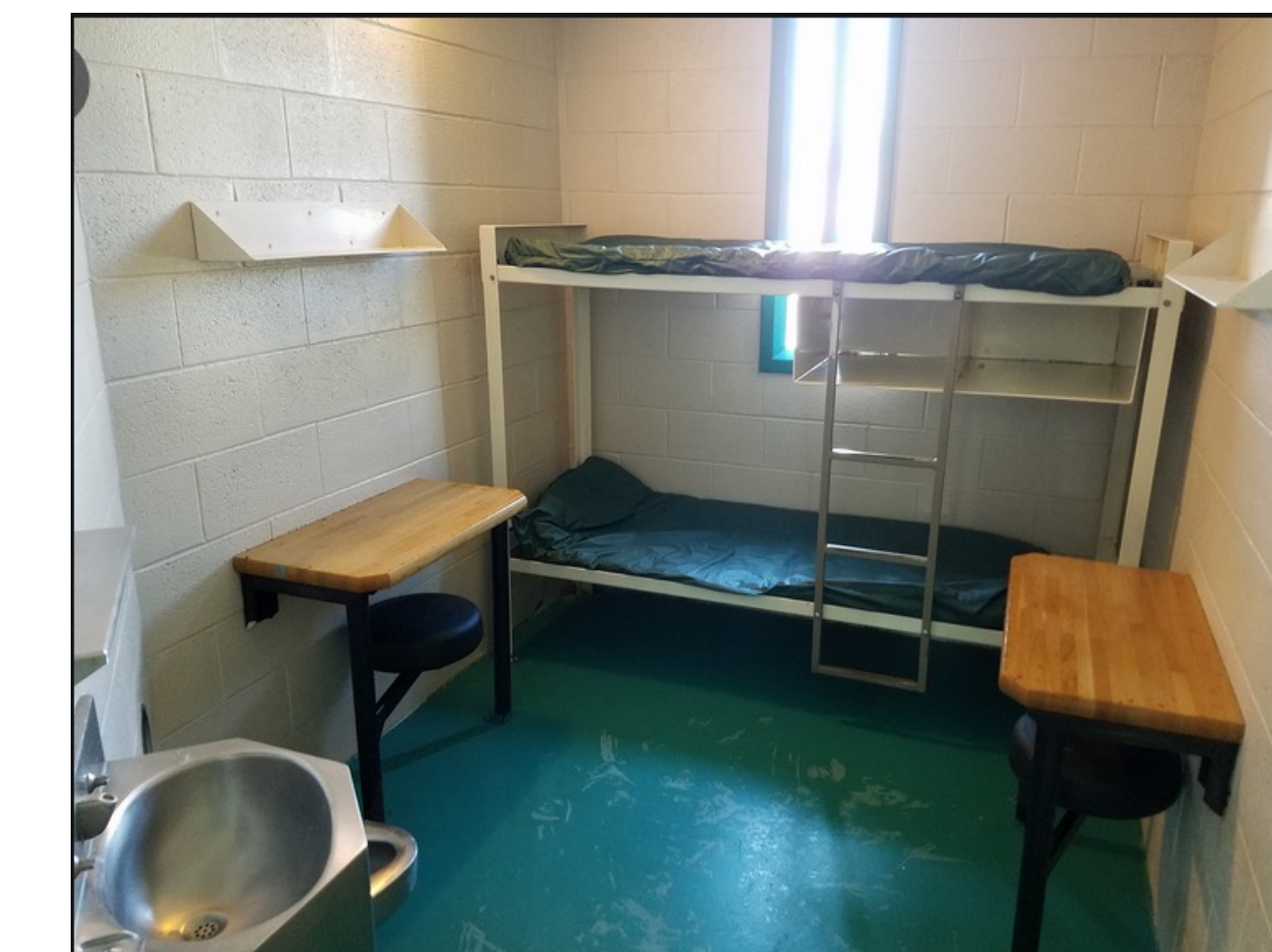
## Drug Use, Dependence, and Abuse Among State Prisoners and Jail Inmates, 2007-2009 Report

Data acquired from the U.S. Department of Justice, *Bureau of Justice Statistics*.

58.5% of state prisoners and 63.3% of sentenced jail inmates met the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) criteria for drug dependence or abuse (Berzofsky, Marcus, Jennifer Bronson, Jessica Stroop, and Stephanie Zimmer 2017).

## Committing Economic Crime for Drug Money Article

Figure 1 shows the percentage of offenders who committed crime to obtain money for drugs. For property crime, 35% of burglaries were committed to get money for drugs. For drug trafficking, those who were trafficked in heroin were most likely to be motivated to obtain drug money (44%) and those who trafficked in marijuana were least likely to have this motivation (14%) (Felson RB and Staff J. 2017).



(92.7 wobm)

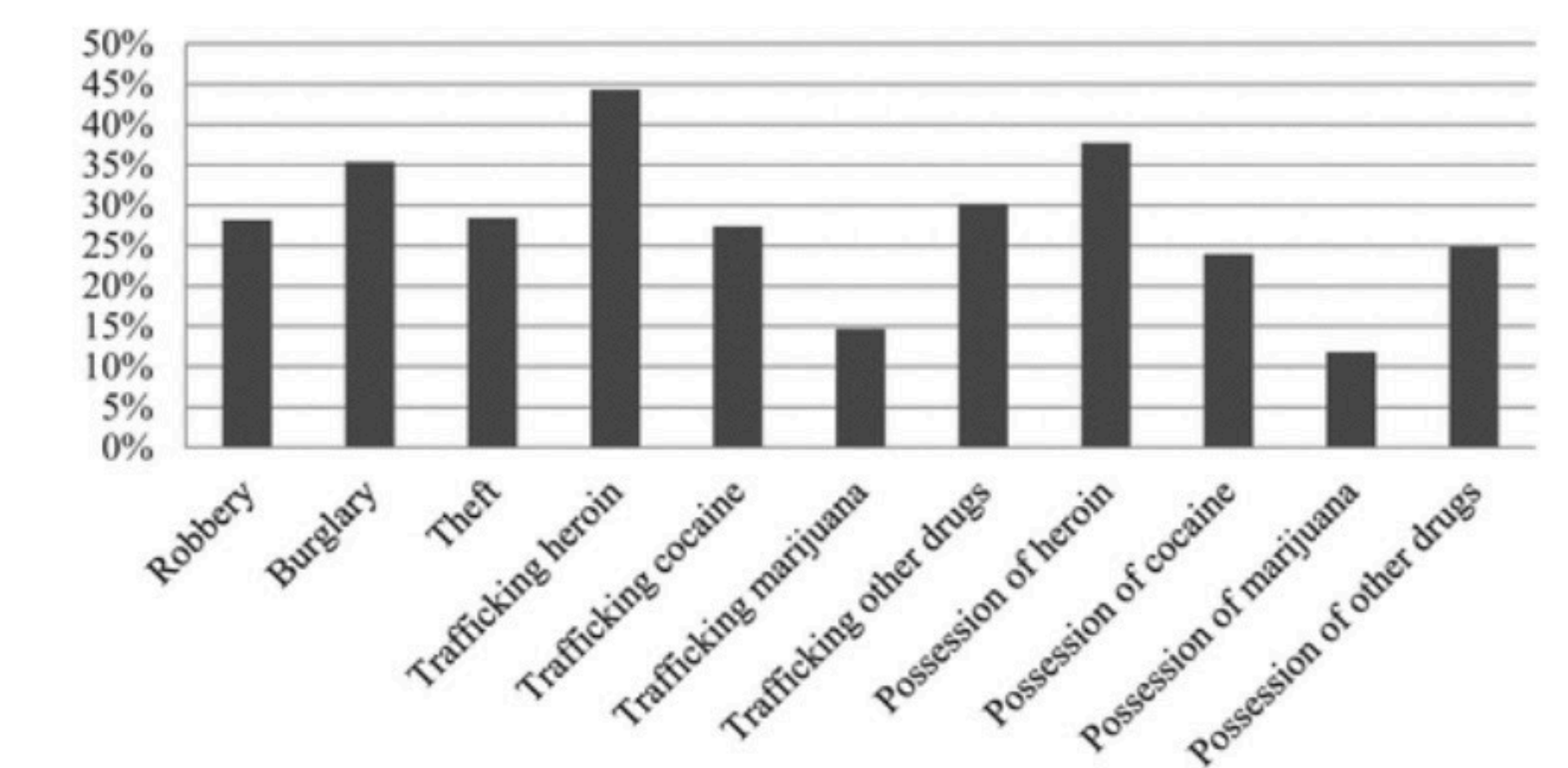


Figure 1. Percentage of offenders who committed crime to get money for drugs by offense type.

(Felson RB and Staff J. 2017)

TABLE 1

### State prisoners and sentenced jail inmates who met the criteria for drug dependence or abuse, 2007–2009

Diagnostic criteria	State prisoners	Sentenced jail inmates
Dependence or abuse	58.5%	63.3%
Dependence	41.7	47.2
Abuse	16.8	16.1
No dependence or abuse*	41.5%	36.7%
Total count	1,265,400	375,700

(Berzofsky, Marcus, Jennifer Bronson, Jessica Stroop, and Stephanie Zimmer 2017)

TABLE 4

### Drug dependence and abuse among sentenced jail inmates and general population groups, by criminal justice involvement, 2007–2009

Diagnostic criteria	Sentenced jail inmates*	Adults in the general population			
		Total	Noncriminal <sup>a</sup>	Under supervision <sup>b,c</sup>	Arrested <sup>c,d</sup>
Dependence or abuse	63.3%	5.7%**	4.4%**	14.3%**	20.9%**
Dependence	47.2	3.9**	2.9**	11.2**	15.8**
Abuse	16.1	1.8**	1.5**	3.2**	5.1**
No dependence or abuse <sup>e</sup>	36.7%	94.3%**	95.6%**	85.7%**	79.1%**

Note: General population estimates have been standardized to the jail inmate population based on sex, race, Hispanic origin, and age. See *Methodology* for definition of dependence and abuse based on the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition. See appendix table 5 for standard errors.

\*Comparison group.

\*\*Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

(Berzofsky, Marcus, Jennifer Bronson, Jessica Stroop, and Stephanie Zimmer 2017)

## References

Arrests Offense Counts in New Jersey, (FBI). (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2021, from <https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/explorer/state/new-jersey/arrest>.

Bronson, J., Stroop, J., Zimmer, S., & Berzofsky, M. (2017). Drug Use, Dependence, and Abuse Among State Prisoners and Jail Inmates, 2007-2009. *U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics*.

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New Jersey Judiciary, New Jersey Drug Courts. (n.d.). Retrieved April 25, 2021, from <https://njcourts.gov/courts/criminal/drug.html?lang=eng>.

Sawyer, W., & Wagner, P. (2020, March 24). Mass incarceration: The whole pie 2020. Retrieved April 25, 2021, from <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2020.html>

U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*, State of New Jersey, <https://www.njsp.org/ucr/uniform-crime-reports.shtml>

92.7 wobm

## Incarceration is just one piece of the much larger system of correctional control

The U.S. justice system controls almost 7 million people, more than half of whom are on probation.



PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE

(prisonpolicy.org)

