Social Problem Analysis: *The House I live In*

Instructions: In 3 pages minimum (please do not exceed 5 pages), answer the following questions in an essay format using APA citation format. Your **paper must include a title page, body (with in-text citations) and reference/works cited page.** **You must include at least 3 outside resources (scholarly article, book, newspaper, etc. other than your book) and some specific examples/moments from the film to highlight your answers and support your arguments.** I **DO NOT** want you to summarize the film! The main purpose of this assignment is for you to apply sociological concepts/ideologies/theory in critically analyzing the film’s content using your sociological imagination and personal insight. Your paper will be graded on the following:

* Proper formatting and grammar/sentence structure (12 point font, Times New Roman, and 1 inch margins, double spacing should all be used).
* The proper application of sociological concepts, ideas and theory along with specific examples/moments from the film to highlight arguments.
* Answering all the questions in an insightful/analytical manner properly applying the sociological imagination.

**\*\*\*The film is available on Netflix, Hulu and on YouTube (Link also available on Canvas)\*\*\***

There is a war taking place in the US that is costing countless lives, destroying families and inflicting untold damage on future generations of Americans. For over forty years, the ‘War on Drugs’ has accounted for more than 45 million arrest, has helped make the US the world’s largest imprisoner and damaged poor communities around the world. Yet for all that, drugs are cheaper, purer and more available today than ever before. *The House I Live In* captures the hearth-wrenching realities that individuals at all levels of the War on Drugs must endure. From the dealer to the grieving mother, the narcotics officers to the Senator, the inmate to the federal judge, the film offers an eye-opening look inside America’s longest war.

Questions:

1. Have you ever broken a rule, regulation, or a law (whether or not you were caught)?
   1. How did you rationalize what you did? How does your answer fit into one of theoretical approaches discussed in class and in your textbook?
2. Imagine that a friend of yours has just told you that he or she believes that mass incarceration stems from bad people making bad choices. Drawing from the evidence portrayed in the film, make a sociological argument that mass incarceration is the product of changes to our social institutions and social policies.
   1. When substance users are stigmatized by society and blamed for their own addicted state, how are broader institutions (e.g., government, education, health care) alleviated from responsibility? Explain your answer using race/ethnicity, gender, class, etc.
3. Explain how police discretion is exemplified in the film. What biases are at play here? Do you feel these discretions lead to inequalities, discrimination and/or violence between police and the public? How does this influence our perceptions of police officers?
4. What public policy and law changes do you think should be made to reduce the U.S. incarceration rate? Or do you believe that a system that promotes retribution (punishment) rather than rehabilitation (restorative) is a better deterrent of drug use or crime in general?