



## Arrests of the Rich and Famous

The US government, primarily law enforcement agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Administration (and its predecessor, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs) since the 1930s have championed the arrests of famous citizens as a show of force, resolve, and, as a supposed deterrent to marijuana use.

NORML looks to the arrests, and in some cases prosecutions, of notable citizens as both a social barometer and an affirmation that respectable and responsible citizens choose to use marijuana despite massive government propaganda and innumerable criminal and civil sanctions.

America is a celebrity driven culture. Both sides of the contentious debate over marijuana law reform realize this and often try to exploit America's fascination with 'celebrity culture'. Example: Listen to NORML's PSA featuring country music recording legend Willie Nelson.

NORML encourages adults to think for themselves and make educated life choices. The following list is comprised of celebrities from the world of theater, music, sports and pop culture (see Political Arrests for politicians and their family members who've been busted for marijuana) who made the choice to smoke marijuana and, unfortunately, became another statistic in the nearly seventy year war against marijuana smokers by getting arrested.

A marijuana arrest occurs every 45 seconds in the United States and even celebrities are negatively effected by marijuana's long prohibition.

## Famous People Arrested on Marijuana Charges

### Movie and TV Stars:

Robert Mitchum - Famous actor and one of the first celebrity victims of marijuana prohibition. Mitchum was arrested in a 1948 stakeout in Laurel Canyon, CA.

Source: *High Times*

Bob Denver - Played lovable character 'Gilligan' on popular 60's television show *Gilligan's Island*. Arrested in 1998 after a package containing two ounces of marijuana was delivered to his West Virginia house.

Source: *Associated Press, Princeton, WV*

Oliver Stone - Filmmaker of renowned movies *JFK*, *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*, pulled over by police officers for driving erratically and subsequently arrested when hash and painkillers were found in his car.

Source: *San Francisco Chronicle, August 25, 1999*

Matthew McConaughey - Actor in such popular movies as *Dazed and Confused* and *Amistad* busted in his Texas home after numerous noise complaints from neighbors. Officers saw him

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dancing naked and playing bongos. He was arrested and booked on suspicion of possession of marijuana and paraphernalia.

Source: *Houston Chronicle*, October 26, 1999

Brad Renfro - Actor in 1994 movie *The Client* arrested on marijuana (and cocaine charges).

Source: *The Associated Press*, April 6, 1999

### **Musicians, Singers and Performers:**

Whitney Houston - Grammy winning pop diva was busted boarding an airplane in Hawaii. Officers found 15.2 grams in her bag.

Source: *Boston Globe*, January 17, 2000

Ray Price - 73 year old country music singer was arrested in his Texas home for possession of marijuana.

Source: *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 26, 1999

Snoop Doggy Dog - Famous rapper and protégé of Dr. Dre arrested at a Los Angeles comedy club for possession of less than an ounce of marijuana.

Source: *San Francisco Examiner*, May 3, 1998

Savion Glover - Tony-winning tap dancer was charged with disorderly conduct after police pulled his car over in New York City. He was smoking a "blunt" in his car and police charged him with possession of marijuana.

Source: *Washington Post*, June 12, 1996

James Brown - Godfather of Soul busted on marijuana and other charges.

Source: *Reuters*, Aiken, SC, January 29, 1998

The Rolling Stones - Band members were busted several times in 1967.

Source: *High Times*

Willie Nelson - Busted in Texas in 1995 with pot in his car. Charges were dropped later when search was determined to be illegal.

Source: *High Times*

David Lee Roth - Former Van Halen front man busted in 1993 in New York City after buying a "dime" bag from an informant.

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Source: *High Times*

Louis Armstrong - Legendary trumpeter busted in 1931 outside of an LA jazz club.

Source: *High Times*

The Grateful Dead - Their infamous house at 710 Ashbury was raided in 1967. Band members Bob Weir and Pigpen were arrested. Amazingly the police didn't find the pot hidden in a kitchen pantry.

Source: *High Times*

Gene Krupa - Jazz drummer arrested in 1943 in San Francisco after LA narcotic officers followed him. They seized the pot and he spent 84 days in jail.

Source: *High Times*

Carlos Santana - Legendary Grammy award winning guitar player busted at Houston Airport in 1991 for transporting five grams of marijuana from Mexico.

Source: *High Times*

Freddy Fender - Tex-Mex pop star busted in Louisiana in 1960 for less than six grams of pot.

Source: *High Times*

Flavor Flav - Sidekick to Chuck D. in Public Enemy busted in 1996 while riding his bike in the Bronx. New York Police officers noticed a bulge in his jacket and stopped him. They found a kilo-sized brick of marijuana on him.

Source: *High Times*

## **A.) The Beatles**

John Lennon - Famed front man of The Beatles busted for hash in London in 1968. 5 years later almost deported from America because of the charges.

Source: *High Times*

Paul McCartney - Beatle and long time pro-pot advocate was busted several times throughout the 70's and 80's.

Source: *High Times*

George Harrison - Beatle arrested in London in 1969 after they raided his home and found 570 "grains" of pot.

Source: *High Times*

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**OTHER NOTABLES:** Ray Charles 1961, Bunny Wailer 1967, David Bowie & Iggy Pop 1976, Neil Diamond 1976, Notorious BIG 1996, and Queen Latifah 1996.

Source: *Wire service, news articles and High Times*

## **Athletes:**

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar - Former Lakers star busted at Pearson International Airport in Toronto Canada with six grams of marijuana by U.S. Customs officials. Paid \$500 fine. Jabbar claims to have used marijuana for years to successfully treat severe migraine headaches.

Source: *Associated Press Toronto March 20, 1998*

Robert Parish - Boston Celtics star arrested in 1991 when police intercepted two ounces of pot being shipped Federal Express to his Massachusetts house. He paid a \$37 fine.

Source: *High Times*

Ferguson Jenkins - Pitcher and Cy Young award winner busted in 1980 for possessing hash.

Source: *High Times*

Orlando Cepeda - Former San Francisco Giant and MVP award winner in 1967, charged with smuggling 160 pounds of marijuana from Puerto Rico to Miami in 1976.

Source: *High Times*

Vernon Maxwell - Former Houston Rocket busted in Texas in 1995 after running a red light. Police found a gram of pot in a baggie on the floor of his car.

Source: *High Times*

Ross Rebagliati - 1998 gold-medalist snow boarder from Canada who almost had his medal taken away when traces of THC were found in his system.

Source: *High Times*

Isiah Rider - Former Portland Trail Blazer's guard arrested in 1996 when officers observed him in a car attempting to smoke marijuana from a soda can. He was charged with possession of less than one ounce of marijuana.

Source: *The Register-Guard, December 10, 1998*

Allen Iverson - 76ers franchise player busted in 1997 on marijuana charges.

Source: *Wire reports and High Times*

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Mookie Blaylock - Atlanta Hawks star busted in 1997 when drug sniffing dogs uncovered marijuana on him in a Vancouver Canada airport.

Source: *Wire reports*

Marcus Camby - New York Knick busted for marijuana in 1997, performed community service and the charges were eventually dropped.

Source: *Wire reports*

Chris Webber - Sacramento Kings player charged with marijuana possession and assaulting a police officer in 1998. He was pulled over and he resisted the police officer. The vehicle was impounded and traces of marijuana were found inside.

Source: *CannabisNews.com*

Khalid El-Amin - Point guard for University of Connecticut during their championship season, busted a month after championship game against Duke. During a stop for a traffic violation a small amount of marijuana was found on him.

Source: *Middletown Press, April 16, 1999*

Todd Marinovich - Former USC and Raiders quarterback arrested for growing one pot plant in his house in 1996.

Source: *High Times*

## **Cultural Icons:**

Timothy Leary, MD - LSD guru arrested after a small amount of marijuana was planted on him in 1968. He received a 10-year sentence but would escape and be re-captured in Afghanistan. He was in jail until 1976.

Source: *High Times*

Ken Kesey - Author of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and chief Merry Prankster arrested twice for marijuana in 1966. He fled to Mexico, turned himself in, and spent 5 months in jail.

Source: *High Times*

Neal Cassidy - Famous 'Beat' and road partner of Jack Kerouac arrested in 1958 after selling two joints to undercover agents.

Source: *High Times*

John Sinclair - Founder of White Panther Party and manager of rock band MC5 busted after being set up by undercover agents in 1967. He served two years of a ten-year sentence for possessing two joints.

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The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws ([www.norml.org](http://www.norml.org))

Source: *High Times*

## **You Can Help**

\*Please forward to NORML for webpage posting any verifiable news accounts and clippings about pop stars, cultural celebrities and athletes relating to marijuana. Especially their marijuana use, possible encounters with law enforcement, or, more hopefully, reform-oriented statements and positions.