In July 2014, the influential *New York Times* endorsed legalization of marijuana and pointed out that a majority of adults favor legalization and that there are considerable social costs associated with continuing to criminalize marijuana. For instance:

Arrests. From 2001 to 2010, there were 8.2 million marijuana arrests. Roughly nine out of ten were for possession. In 2010, there were 750,000 arrests involving marijuana, and in 2011, there were more arrests for marijuana than for all violent crimes.

Racial Disparity. Whites and African Americans use marijuana at comparable rates although African Americans are 3.7 times more likely to be arrested than whites.

Economics. The estimated cost of enforcing laws on marijuana possession is $3.6 billion.

Public Safety. Arresting individuals for marijuana does not remove dangerous individuals from society. Ninety percent of individuals imprisoned for marijuana possession have no history of violence. Marijuana arrests also contribute to prison overcrowding. Table 12.2 lists the punishment for federal marijuana offenses, and Table 12.3 lists the sentences for marijuana offenses in Florida.

Disabilities. Many marijuana arrests for possession are misdemeanors, and individuals are not imprisoned. A conviction, however, may result in the revocation of a professional license or suspension of a driver's license, and prevent an individual from obtaining a mortgage to buy a home or obtain a student loan.

The Obama administration responded to the *New York Times* by recognizing that there are credible concerns about "disproportionality [of sentencing] throughout our criminal justice system" and justifiable concerns about the classification of marijuana as a Schedule I offense. Marijuana, however, is "addictive and marijuana use has harmful consequences. . . . Addictive substances like alcohol and tobacco, which are legal and taxed, already result in much higher social costs than the revenue they generate." Consider, for example, the costs and public safety concerns that at present are created by drivers who are "high" on marijuana and the fact that some individuals will start with marijuana and transition to more powerful narcotics. Should marijuana be legalized? What is your view?