

DRUG POLICY REFORM IN LATIN AMERICA - 2018

Thomas Grisaffi

Historically, the USA has dictated the terms of the 'War on Drugs', and has used its political and economic might to crush any debate on alternatives. However, over the past ten years Latin American governments and civil society organizations have pushed back against prohibitionist drug policies. A regional debate has emerged focused on the failure of present policies to achieve their desired objectives and the high cost of implementing supply reduction efforts in terms of drug fuelled violence, corruption and institutional instability.

This essay begins by outlining the characteristics of the global cocaine market. It then examines some of the objectives, methods and consequences of the US-designed and -funded 'war on drugs' in Latin America and the Caribbean. The regional debate in Latin America is then introduced - with a focus on the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on drugs. Finally localized steps towards drug policy reform are outlined.

DRUG PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING

Latin America and the Caribbean together represent a critical zone for the production and trafficking of illicit drugs. The Andean region, including Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, is the world's foremost producer of cocaine. Mexico is the main producer of heroin in the Americas; Colombia, Mexico and Paraguay are all significant producers of cannabis; and synthetic drugs are increasingly manufactured in Central (and North) America (UNODC 2015).

For the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), cocaine remains the primary drug of concern in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNODC 2015: xi). Cocaine comprises two distinct products, powder cocaine and cocaine base products, which are commonly referred to as 'Crack' (in reference to the 'cracking' sound it produces when heated). Powder cocaine is expensive, it is normally inhaled and has subtle effects, crack meanwhile is a rocky crystal that is smoked, it is cheaper, more intense and is associated with high levels of street crime.

The UNODC (2015) estimates that the total retail value of the global cocaine trade equaled approximately \$85 billion dollars in 2009.ⁱ The largest retail markets for cocaine are North America (\$40 billion, or 47 per cent of the global market), followed by West and Central Europe (\$34 billion, or 39 percent of the global market). Brazil's estimated 900,000 users represents the single largest market in South America, and the second largest national market in the world (OAS 2013).ⁱⁱ

The main ingredient to produce cocaine is derived from coca plants, a perennial shrub native to the Andean region. Coca leaf has been used for millennia by indigenous peoples in the Andean countries and is most commonly chewed or prepared as a tea. The people who consume coca value its properties as a mild stimulant but it also serves important social, religious and cultural functions (Grisaffi 2010).

Peru, Colombia and Bolivia are the world's largest producers of coca leaf. The most recent UN coca surveys estimate that Peru has 42,900 hectares of coca, Colombia 69,000 hectares, and Bolivia 20,400 hectares. In each country coca cultivation is concentrated in marginal areas, characterized by minimal civilian state presence, limited infrastructure and high rates of poverty. In this context coca complements subsistence farming and, in the absence of other income generating activities, is one of the few pursuits that provide farmers with access to cash income (Grisaffi and Ledebur 2016).

The first stage of cocaine production is a relatively simple process that takes place in small workshops located close to the coca fields or in peri-urban areas. Drug workers labor in rudimentary operations to soak shredded coca leaf in solvents to extract the cocaine alkaloid. The lure of fast money and the chance to amass enough to escape grinding poverty or to buy a patch of land is usually what drives them. In Bolivia these workers earn about \$30 a day (agricultural labor pays less than half that) for work that is tedious, irregular, and harmful to their health. It's also very risky: if caught, they face eight years in prison (see Grisaffi 2014).

The paste still needs to be refined into pure crystalized cocaine (cocaine hydrochloride), but this is a complex process, requiring more skill, equipment, and expensive, difficult to obtain chemicals. Thus production takes place in larger more capital intensive units, with larger workforces and often counting on higher levels of manpower and security.

International traffickers occupy the next stage of the supply chain. This step has traditionally been dominated by Colombian traffickers however of late their preeminent position has been challenged by Mexican organizations (Rico 2013). The bulk of cocaine that is consumed in the United States first passes through Central America and Mexico. The drugs are shifted in a variety of ways. Colombian traffickers transport cocaine to Mexico and Central America using vessels, including boats, jerry-built submarines, as well as small planes.

Mexican drug trafficking organizations—including the Zetas and the Sinaloa organization—have established extensive operations in Central America (Honduras and Guatemala) purchasing cocaine from Colombians (or transporting it directly from South America) and smuggling it by land into Mexico. They might also sub-contract work to the Maras - gangs from Central America (Cruz 2010). Mexican trafficking organizations are the dominant wholesale drug traffickers in the United States and the only drug trafficking organizations to have a nationwide presence. Mexican drug trafficking organizations are not directly involved in street level distribution of illicit drugs, however (Keefe 2012).

The increase in European cocaine consumption as well as the higher prices paid there has led to the establishment of new global trafficking routes and the increased involvement of new criminal trafficking networks. Most consignments are smuggled in container vessels primarily from Venezuela and Brazil and to a lesser extent from Uruguay and Argentina. These shipments are dispatched directly to ports in Europe, with one of the most significant trans-shipment sites being the port of Rotterdam in Holland (Zaitch 2002).

Increasingly drugs destined for Europe first pass through West Africa including Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Ghana, Mali, and Senegal. Much of the trafficking to West Africa is carried out by large 'mother ships' that unload the drugs on to smaller, local vessels off the West African coasts. Traffickers also ship cocaine in large commercial aircraft specifically purchased for this purpose (Aning and Pokoo 2014). Drugs then either move overland and across the Mediterranean using established cannabis resin smuggling routes (from Morocco), or are shipped directly to Europe by drug mules on commercial flights. At its height in 2006 the UN estimated that up to 50 tons of cocaine were transiting through West Africa annually, with a final street value of more than \$2 billion dollars (UNODC 2011).

Given the various production and shipment costs as well as the different levels of interdiction, the value of the drug steadily increases until it arrives at the consumer. In coca growing regions of Bolivia one kilo of unrefined cocaine paste changes hands for as little \$1,700 dollars (Grisaffi 2014). Further afield the costs grow exponentially. In Mexico, one kilo fetches more than

\$10,000. Jump the border to the United States, and it could sell wholesale for \$30,000. In 2010 the US street price for one gram of cocaine was \$169 USD.ⁱⁱⁱ So break it down into grams to distribute retail, and that same kilo sells for upward of \$100,000 (Keefe 2012). This shifting value chain reflects a great deal of unevenness with rewards usually flowing to the individuals and organizations that control the movement of the product through the riskiest portions of the supply chain. Meanwhile only a tiny fraction of revenues find their way back to the poor Andean farmers.

THE ‘WAR ON DRUGS’

For over a century the prohibitionist approach has shaped policies to deal with the production, trafficking, sale and consumption of psychoactive substances - including cannabis, cocaine and heroin. Significantly these policies have been operationalized using hard-line criminal policy tools.

The US Administration’s approach to domestic drug control includes rigid legislation, enhanced law enforcement and high levels of incarceration (the nation’s prison and jail population more than quadrupled from 500,000 in 1980 to 2.2 million in 2015 – most on drugs charges).^{iv} The hit TV show ‘the Wire’ provides a vivid account of the impact of such oppressive policies on the everyday lives of young black men in the US inner city.

Abroad, the US approach has been to curb the supply of illicit narcotics reaching the USA, through the eradication of illicit crops (mostly coca leaf—which is used to produce cocaine, but also opium poppy and marijuana), law enforcement and the interdiction of drugs shipments.

The USA has ensured that its southern neighbours comply with its drugs policy goals, through what is termed ‘certification’. This is an annual process undertaken by the USA to evaluate country performance against US-imposed anti-drugs targets. Countries that do not act in accordance with US strategy are punished by decertification; sanctions include the withholding of development assistance, credit and trade benefits.

The USA has devoted vast sums to its drugs war, with some estimates as high as US \$50,000m annually (totalling more than \$1 trillion over four decades).^v These resources have been used to expand the role of both Latin American and US military forces in counter-drugs efforts, to provide local security forces with logistical support and equipment, and to train civilian police forces in military tactics.

Significant funding streams include the Andean Initiative (1989)^{vi}, Plan Colombia (2000)^{vii} and the Merida Initiative (2008).^{viii} Historically, US funding and weapons were restricted to anti-drugs operations; after 2001, however, they were also used to intervene against left-wing insurgencies in Peru and Colombia in the name of the ‘war on terror.’ In Central America the US trained troops have been used in urban policing against the threat posed by ‘gangs’ - which have also been portrayed by policy makers as potential ‘terrorists’ (Rodgers 2009).

The objective of supply-side enforcement is to reduce the amount of drugs reaching the USA, but on this score the drugs war has clearly failed; the supply of drugs remains as robust as ever. Mexico’s opium production jumped from 71 tons in 2005 to 425 tons by 2009 and cannabis cultivation increased from 5600 hectares to 17,500 hectares over the same period (Mercille 2011: 1638). The amount of cocaine reaching the U.S. borders increased from 322 metric tons in 2000 to 402 in 2006 (Mejía 2010). The failure of the drug war is reflected by the street price of illicit

drugs (including cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine) in the USA, which between the mid 1980s and the mid 2000s fell consistently (Werb, Kerr et al. 2013).

The disappointing results are a consequence of myopic policies that fail to address the underlying causes of drug production and trafficking – such as poverty, social exclusion and weak institutions. Thus drug war victories are generally only ever short lived; when coca and poppy crops are eradicated, production moves to a different region (a phenomenon referred to as the ‘balloon effect’); drugs-traffickers are arrested but they are soon replaced; and when trafficking routes are disrupted they simply shift elsewhere.

The enormous cost of the drugs war, coupled with the fact that it is not actually achieving its stated goals, has prompted some observers to suggest that US policy on drugs is not a stand-alone issue—rather; it is used as an instrument to push other political and economic agendas. It has been argued that the USA’s motivation for escalating the drugs war at the end of the 1980s was to justify the build-up of a military presence in the region to protect US corporate interests in a post-cold war world (Paley 2014). Julian Mercille writes ‘The war on drugs - just like the ‘war on terror’ - has served as one pretext to deepen bilateral military relations with Latin American countries and has proved useful to contain popular opposition to neoliberal reforms’ (Mercille 2011: 1644).

HARMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WAR ON DRUGS

The drugs trade has had a harmful impact on Latin America, but so too have US-designed and funded responses to it. The US war on drugs transfers a large proportion of the costs to producer and transit countries, and this generates a range of negative consequences including violence, environmental damage, violations of basic human rights, and the undermining of civil liberties and democratic practices. According to UN research^{ix} the negative impacts fall disproportionately on indigenous communities, ethnic minorities, women and children.

It has been argued that prohibitionist policies actually strengthen criminal organizations by handing them control of a lucrative and growing trade. The massive profits derived from illicit narcotics flow untaxed into criminal hands and have been used to equip private militias (often outgunning state enforcement) and to undermine state institutions through corruption (Campbell and Hansen 2014, Collins 2014).

The War on Drugs has also had a profound impact on civil rights. US imposed anti-drug legislation has led to a dramatic increase in sentences for drug related crimes all over Latin America. Under Bolivia’s notorious anti-drug law 1008 a small trafficker or dealer might end up with a sentence far longer than someone convicted for murder. The heavy handed response to drug use and trafficking has led to a dramatic increase in incarceration rates and contributed to prison overcrowding all over Latin America^x (Metaal and Youngers 2011). Over the past 14 years, Colombia has seen the number of people incarcerated for drug-related offenses almost quadruple, from just over 6,000 in 2000 to over 23,000 in 2014. Brazil has seen a similar trend; the number of people incarcerated for drug-related offenses there increased 320 percent between 2005 and 2012. This dynamic presents a particularly harsh fate for women, because while there are fewer women than men in prison overall, they are being incarcerated at an increasingly rapid rate^{xi} (Youngers and Pérez Correa 2014).

The focus of the US approach - which prioritizes military and police assistance over aid for socioeconomic goals or institution-building -has produced what some policy analysts refer to as militarization—that is, the ‘over-involvement of the armed forces in aspects of governance other

than external defence' (Isacson 2005: 17). Militarization has a range of damaging impacts. First, the US demands that poor countries divert funds to the military and police that might otherwise be spent on schools, hospitals and roads (things that are most often lacking in areas where the drug trade is most ingrained - including shanty towns and poor rural areas). And second - using military forces to fight internal enemies exacerbates the violence. Mexico is a case in point. In 2007 the U.S. launched the Mérida Initiative, which has provided over \$2.6 billion to Mexico in the name of combatting drug-trafficking organizations. The package strengthened military and federal police forces in Mexico through training in counterdrug operations, providing security equipment and arms, and fortifying the U.S.-Mexico border. However, since its launch the levels of violence in Mexico have shot up; over 25,000 people have been recorded as missing and over 100,000 have been killed.

It's not just non-state actors who are responsible for this violence. The US State Department reports that extrajudicial killings, torture and disappearance are commonplace within the Mexican armed forces. For example the Mexican military executed twenty-two civilians in Tlatlaya in the summer of 2014,^{xiii} and it is alleged that the disappearance of 43 students from Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers College in Iguala, the same year, involved security forces who had received training or funding from the United States (Ahmed and Villegas 2016).

In coca growing regions of Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, militarized crop eradication has pitted the security forces against local farmers (who have been criminalized for farming what for them is a traditional crop), and this has provoked violent conflicts and opened up space for the violation of human rights, including extrajudicial killings. Institutional damage has been further compounded by the impunity that US backed military and police forces frequently enjoy.

The aerial fumigation of coca crops in Colombia brings with it a specific set of problems. Since the inauguration of Plan Colombia in 2000, the government has sprayed more than half a million hectares with the herbicide 'round up'.^{xiii} The spraying has made the lives of poor farmers even more precarious by causing environmental damage (including water contamination and land degradation) and serious health problems, forcing them off their land. Given that most have no other way of supporting their families they often end up replanting coca deeper in the jungle. Thus all that spraying really achieves is to disperse coca cultivation^{xiv} (Dion and Russler 2008).

Eradicating crops is not only inefficient and dangerous but it is also counterproductive. Forced coca eradication sows distrust amongst coca grower communities and thus undermines the functioning of alternative development programs designed to encourage farmers to grow crops other than coca (Grisaffi 2016). What is more, the eradication of crops has provoked political instability in the Andean countries. In Peru and Colombia illegal armed actors (Sendero Luminoso in Peru and the FARC in Colombia) have, on occasion, sided with coca growers to resist government eradication efforts (Felbab-Brown 2005).

THE LATIN AMERICAN DEBATE

On receiving the Nobel Prize in December 2016 President Santos of Colombia used this platform to rebuke the global approach to the so-called war on drugs. "We (Colombians) have a moral authority to state that, after decades of fighting against drug trafficking, the world has still been unable to control this scourge that fuels violence and corruption throughout our global community" (Garcia-Devis 2017).

Latin American leaders have grown weary of fighting what they perceive to be an unwinnable war. Their resolve to look for alternatives has been strengthened by the heavy burden of fighting

drugs in terms of lives lost, economic cost, and institutional corruption. Thus they have called into question the legal and ethical framework underlying the international drugs control system and are actively seeking alternatives to the status quo.

The stage was set in 2009 when the Latin American Commission on Drugs and Democracy, led by former Presidents Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil, César Gaviria of Colombia and Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico, published a report calling for a public debate on alternatives to prohibitionist policies. The report received a positive response, and the Commission subsequently gained the support of former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan among dozens of other public figures.

The report opened the door for a more frank conversation about drug policy - and allowed incumbent heads of state to question the efficacy of continuing with full-scale prohibition. In the course of these discussions it has become evident that in spite of the violence associated with drugs, Latin American leaders do not view the drugs problem through the lens of 'national security.' Rather they have focused on harm reduction and reducing demand.

Leaders have proposed a range of initiatives including; decriminalizing drugs for personal consumption; reducing penalties for drugs offences; creating corridors for the transit of illicit drugs, so that they can move unhindered to the market without destabilizing the entire region; increasing expenditure on harm-reduction programmes; and pursuing collaborative approaches to control illicit crops. Latin American leaders have also called on the United States to stem the flow of money and automatic weapons from the USA (Armenta, Metaal et al. 2012).

The debate in the Americas has clearly moved far beyond the dogma of the 'war on drugs' nevertheless – progressive countries are still out-numbered by those committed to present policy (it is interesting to note that the split has nothing to do with traditional left-right distinctions). At the 2013 summit of the Organization of American States, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Panama, and El Salvador, all spoke in favor of maintaining the status quo and neither Brazil nor Argentina articulated a reform agenda. Peru has also strongly resisted any move toward drug policy reform.

As a result of pressure from some Latin American leaders in April 2016 the UN convened a special session of the general assembly (UNGASS) on the 'world drug problem.' The special session is the highest-level forum for debate on the international drug control system, and is used to guide global drug policy cooperation. Linda Farthing (2016) explains that the UNGASS meeting was supposed to be a game changer, pushing the draconian UN drug policy regime towards revision. But in the end, the UN Special Session came up short in meeting the expectations of drug policy reformers - particularly those from Latin America. The final document reiterates prohibitionist drug conventions as the foundation guiding worldwide policy. It resolves to "actively promote a society free of drug abuse' and makes no mention of harm reduction (that is policies that aim to diminish the negative consequences associated with drug use).

The Obama administration was responsive to developments in Latin America. In 2014 the US State Department developed a more tolerant attitude towards different drug policies. The so-called 'Brownfield Doctrine' is based on shifting enforcement priorities and allowing policy innovation via flexible interpretation of certain provisions of the international drugs conventions.^{xv} Domestically, the Obama administration placed greater priority on a public health approach, and dramatically expanded access to drug treatment through the Affordable Care Act of 2010. Obama launched an ambitious clemency initiative to release certain drug offenders from

prison early and in 2014 Attorney General Eric Holder told his prosecutors to stop charging low-level nonviolent drug offenders with offenses that imposed severe mandatory sentences.

The Trump administration seems committed to bringing back the harsh anti-drug rhetoric and policies of the 1980s and 1990s, however. During the campaign Trump proposed to build a wall along the USA border with Mexico with the aim to cut drug smuggling (all experts agree that it will be ineffective).^{xvi} Meanwhile in a speech before law enforcement officers in February 2017 President Trump vowed to be ‘ruthless’ in the fight against drugs that are ‘poisoning our people.’ He went on ‘We’re going to take that fight to the drug cartels and work to liberate our communities from their terrible grip of violence.’ To this end he named Jeff Sessions, a renowned conservative drug warrior as his Attorney General (Ingraham 2017). The 2018 budget called for a boost for spending on the military and security on the border, while at the same time demanding deep cuts to essential foreign aid and diplomatic initiatives^{xvii} (Gomis 2017). Colombia is currently the biggest recipient of U.S. foreign aid in the western hemisphere and experts are doubtful that Trump will carry through with giving the US\$ 450 million to Colombia promised by Obama in 2016 to support the peace process.

UNILATERAL CHANGES TO DRUG POLICY

While Latin American governments including Colombia, Guatemala and Mexico have been vocal in international forums, at home steps towards reform of domestic drug policy have been slow and halting. Mexico remains armed to the teeth and some policy analysts argue that Guatemala’s President Molina pursued a reformist agenda as leverage to get more money out of the USA, rather than from a commitment to harm reduction.

There have been some advances however. In December 2013 Uruguay became the first country in the world to legalise the production, marketing and consumption of cannabis. Beginning in July 2017 cannabis will be commercially available in registered shops (to registered buyers).^{xviii} Mexico, Argentina and Brazil (all of which are experiencing rising domestic drug consumption) are investigating the possibility to decriminalize possession of small amounts of drugs for personal use, and increase investment in harm-reduction programmes. Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto announced his support for medical marijuana at the 2016 UNGASS.

Some Latin American countries are addressing the issue of excessive sentences established in national drug laws, which in most cases fail to distinguish between traffickers and consumers. In 2010 Brazil’s supreme Federal Tribunal ruled that the application of alternatives to incarceration should be allowed for low level drug offenders, noting that judges should have the right to discretion when sentencing. Meanwhile in August 2014 a sweeping new penal code went into effect in Ecuador, which includes significant revisions to the country’s previous drug law and more lenient sentencing.

Bolivia has led the battle for the decriminalization of coca leaf. In early 2013, as a result of Bolivian pressure, the UN agreed to amend the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs,^{xix} the most important international legal frame-work for drugs control, to permit the traditional consumption of coca within Bolivian territory. Bolivia has, furthermore, advanced a radical method for controlling coca plantations, which allows voluntary crop eradication (Grisaffi and Ledebur 2016). These are bold steps that signal an important shift away from a focus on the coca farmers as the ‘enemy’ of the war on drugs.

The 2016 Peace accord between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC by its Spanish acronym) included a section that addressed the illicit

drug trade. The initial version included voluntary eradication of coca crops, a consultation process with peasant communities to jointly define with the government a substitution plan, and the decriminalization of drug use. However, the plan was rejected in a national plebiscite. The revised agreement, attempted to appease opponents by reintroducing the option of forced eradication of coca and limiting the consultation process with coca-grower communities (Garcia-Devis 2017). Immediately following UNGASS 2016 Colombia announced that, in the face of escalating coca production it would re-launch its aerial spraying program.^{xx}

There is a large body of research which argues that the kind of alternative approaches championed by Latin American governments, which aim to reduce the harmful impacts generated by drugs and drugs-trafficking, may prove to be more effective in addressing the drugs problem in the long-term than the current prohibitionist regime (Greenfield and Paoli 2012, Strang, Babor et al. 2012, Erickson, Riley et al. 2015, Csete, Kamarulzaman et al. 2016). In April 2016, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) released a report, which uses case studies from around the world (including Latin America) to highlight innovative alternatives to current policies and stresses the importance of using drug policy to advance the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (UNDP 2016).

It's not just Latin American countries where changes are taking place, but in the USA also. Since 2012 eight states have legalized the marijuana for recreational purposes and 20 more have legalized its use for medical purposes (Canada announced plans at UNGASS to legalize by 2017). Thus - even the U.S. does not comply with the UN conventions on drugs that it has championed for decades (although with Trump in power these gains could potentially be rolled back).

CONCLUSION

For decades, successive US administrations have pursued a supply-side drugs control strategy that has been harmful and that has failed to achieve its goals. Despite the billions of dollars spent and the lives lost, Latin America remains a major global exporter of illicit drugs, including cocaine, cannabis and heroin.

Some Latin American leaders have tired of the violence, corruption and disappointing results and are making ever-louder calls for 'regulation' as opposed to 'prohibition.' But while the debate has shifted dramatically the reality on the ground has not - many of the governments that are vocal in international forum continue to pursue repressive policing. Moreover, the US backed drug war is far from over, Washington might no longer call the shots, but it nevertheless maintains its influence through its aid and trade programs, and drug policy remains a core component of its foreign policy agenda for the region. With Trump in power it seems likely that the fight against drugs will become increasingly militarized.

Involvement in the drug economy is associated with social exclusion, inequality, massive urban expansion (mostly in the form of shanty towns), and weak institutions. The Policy response then cannot just focus on drugs and security, rather it has to address the deep social and economic dislocations generated by the neoliberal model. However, as Pink Tide governments fold - and are replaced by right wing governments in the region - the goal for more equal societies is receding.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, A. and P. Villegas (2016). Investigators Say Mexico Has Thwarted Efforts to Solve Students' Disappearance. New York Times. New York. 22nd April.

Aning, K. and J. Pokoo (2014). "Understanding the nature and threats of drug trafficking to national and regional security in West Africa." Stability: International Journal of Security and Development **3**(1).

Armenta, A., et al. (2012). A breakthrough in the making? Shifts in the Latin American drug policy debate. Series on Legislative Reform of Drug Policies Nr. 21, Transnational Institute.

Campbell, H. and T. Hansen (2014). "Is Narco-Violence in Mexico Terrorism?" Bulletin of Latin American Research **33**(2): 158-173.

Collins, J., Ed. (2014). Ending the Drug Wars: Report of the LSE Expert Group on the Economics of Drug Policy. London, London School of Economics.

Cruz, J. M. (2010). "Central American Maras: From Youth Street Gangs to Transnational Protection Rackets." Global Crime **11**(4): 379-398.

Csete, J., et al. (2016). "Public health and international drug policy." Lancet **387**(10026): 1427-1480.

Dion, M. and C. Russler (2008). "Eradication Efforts, the State, Displacement and Poverty: Explaining Coca Cultivation in Colombia during Plan Colombia." Journal of Latin American Studies **40**(3): 399-421.

Erickson, P., et al., Eds. (2015). Harm reduction: A new direction for drug policies and programs. Toronto, University of Toronto Press.

Farthing, L. (2016). "Lack of Progress and Transparency at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs." North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) 04/27/2016. from <http://nacla.org/news/2016/04/27/lack-progress-and-transparency-un-general-assembly-special-session-drugs>.

Felbab-Brown, V. (2005). "The Coca Connection: Conflict and Drugs in Colombia and Peru." The Journal of Conflict Studies **25**(2): 104-128.

Garcia-Devis, D. (2017). "How Santos' New Peace Deal Aggravated Colombia's Drug War." Americas Quarterly **Jan 25th**.

Gomis, B. (2017). "What Does the Trump Era Mean for Drug Policy in Latin America?" World Politics Review **Tuesday, March 28**.

Greenfield, V. and L. Paoli (2012). "If supply-oriented drug policy is broken, can harm reduction help fix it? Melding disciplines and methods to advance international drug-control policy." International Journal of Drug Policy **23**(1): 6-15.

Grisaffi, T. (2010). "We are *Originarios*... We just aren't from here: Coca leaf and Identity Politics in the Chapare, Bolivia." Bulletin of Latin American Research **29**(4): 425-439.

Grisaffi, T. (2014). "Can you get rich from the Bolivian Cocaine trade? Cocaine paste production in the Chapare." Andean Information Network Policy Memos. Retrieved 1st April, 2014, from

<http://ain-bolivia.org/2014/03/can-you-get-rich-from-the-bolivian-cocaine-trade-cocaine-paste-production-in-the-chapare/>.

Grisaffi, T. (2016). Social Control in Bolivia: A Humane Alternative to the Forced Eradication of Coca Crops. Drug Policies and the Politics of Drugs in the Americas. B. Labate, C. Cavnar and T. Rodrigues. Cham, Switzerland, Springer.

Grisaffi, T. and K. Ledebur (2016). "Citizenship or Repression? Coca, Eradication and Development in the Andes." Stability: International Journal of Security and Development 5(1).

Ingraham, C. (2017). In Trump's 'ruthless' vow, experts see a return to the days of the drug war. Washington Post. Washington DC, Feb 10th.

Isacson, A. (2005). The U.S. Military in the War on Drugs. Drugs and Democracy in Latin America: The Impact of U.S. Policy. C. Youngers and E. Rosin. Boulder, London, Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Keefe, P. (2012). Cocaine Incorporated. New York Times Magazine. New York. **June 15**.

Mejía, D. (2010). Evaluating Plan Colombia. Innocent Bystanders: Developing Countries and the War on Drugs. P. Keefer and N. Loayza. New York, The World Bank and Palgrave Macmillan.

Mercille, J. (2011). "Violent Narco-Cartels or US Hegemony? The political economy of the 'war on drugs' in Mexico." Third World Quarterly 32(9): 1637-1653.

Metaal, P. and C. Youngers (2011). Systems Overload: Drug Laws and Prisons in Latin America. Series on Legislative Reform of Drug Policies. Amsterdam/ Washington, Transnational Institute & Washington Office on Latin America.

OAS (2013). The Drug Problem in the Americas: The Economics of Drug Trafficking. Washington D.C., The Organization of American States.

Paley, D. (2014). Drug War Capitalism. Oakland, CA and Edinburgh, AK Press.

Rico, D. (2013). La Dimensión Internacional del Crimen Organizado en Colombia: Las Bacrim, sus Rutas y Refugios. Latin American Program. Washington D.C., Wilson Center.

Rodgers, D. (2009). "Slum wars of the 21st century: gangs, mano dura and the new urban geography of conflict in Central America." Development and Change 40(5): 949-976.

Strang, J., et al. (2012). "Drug policy and the public good: evidence for effective interventions." The Lancet 379(9810): 71-83.

UNDP (2016). Reflections on Drug Policy and its Impact on Human Development: Innovative Approaches. HIV, Health and Development. Vienna, United Nations Development Program.

UNODC (2011). The Transatlantic Cocaine Market: Research Paper. Vienna, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

UNODC (2015). World Drug Report. Vienna, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Werb, D., et al. (2013). "The temporal relationship between drug supply indicators: an audit of international government surveillance systems." *BMJ Open* 3(9).

Youngers, C. and C. Pérez Correa (2014). *In Search of Rights: Drug Users and State Responses in Latin America*. Aguascalientes, Mexico, □ Colectivo de Estudios Drogas y Derecho.

Zaitch, D. (2002). *Trafficking cocaine: Colombian drug entrepreneurs in the Netherlands*. The Hague, Kluwer Law International.

ⁱ The total retail value of the global illicit drug trade is estimated to be between \$300 to \$500 billion dollars annually Farthing, L. (2016). "Lack of Progress and Transparency at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs." *North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA)* 04/27/2016. from <http://nacla.org/news/2016/04/27/lack-progress-and-transparency-un-general-assembly-special-session-drugs>.

ⁱⁱ All drug estimates for global illicit drug revenues should be interpreted as broad approximations and not as precise knowledge.

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.unodc.org/unodc/secured/wdr/Cocaine_Heroin_Prices.pdf

^{iv} <http://www.drugpolicy.org/drug-war-statistics>.

^v <http://www.drugpolicy.org/drug-war-statistics>

^{vi} The Andean Initiative was a five-year, US \$2,200m. plan targeting coca and cocaine production in the Andean region; the plan was 'front-loaded' with military and police assistance

^{vii} In 2000 the US and Colombia jointly launched Plan Colombia, an US \$8,000m. dollar 'aid' package (80% of which is destined for the police and military) with the stated aim to reduce narcotics production by half within six years and to regain security in the country

^{viii} The Merida Initiative, launched in 2008 is a US \$2.600m billion package to fight organized crime in Mexico and Central America.

^{ix} https://www.unodc.org/pdf/technical_series_1998-01-01_1.pdf

^x The punitive approach contributes to a climate of stigmatization and discrimination against drug users, which negatively affects their ability to seek medical assistance.

^{xi} http://www.wola.org/commentary/women_behind_bars_the_human_cost_of_current_drug_policy_in_the_americas

^{xii} http://www.wola.org/news/in_mexico_s_tlatlaya_massacre_soldiers_were_ordered_to_take_them_out_0

^{xiii} http://www.ecoport.net/Temas_Especiales/Salud/Toxicologia_del_Glifosato_Riesgos_para_la_salud_humana

^{xiv} In Colombia guerillas and paramilitaries level a tax on the illegal coca and cocaine trade, and these revenues have fuelled the country's interminable civil conflict.

^{xv} <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2014/12/01/the-u-s-new-more-flexible-diplomatic-doctrine-on-drugs-is-a-rational-approach-to-a-difficult-question/>

^{xvi} Experts have argued that Trump's wall will not stop drugs coming into the United States. Drugs are smuggled via air, sea and through legal border crossings. Moreover much of the illegal drugs consumed in the USA are produced domestically (or sold legally - i.e. pain killers). See <https://www.wola.org/analysis/just-say-no-wasteful-wall-yes-expanding-drug-treatment-overdose-reversal/>

^{xvii} The Trump administration has not confirmed if it will honor the 450\$ million pledged by former President Obama to support Colombia's peace process.

^{xviii} It's still too early to evaluate the impacts - but so far the rollout has been mixed. Innocent home growers and cannabis club members have found their cultivations raided by police. These cases show how, more than four years after the law's passage, there is still a disconnect between the letter of the law and how it is enforced on the ground.

<http://ladiaria.com.uy/articulo/2015/12/hecha-la-ley-hecha-la-macana/>

^{xix} The justification for classifying coca as an illegal substance has its roots in a UN study published in 1950. This study has since been discredited as inaccurate and racist for its characterization of coca-chewing as a disgusting, backward and dangerous habit.

^{xx} Spraying in Colombia will continue on the ground instead of from the air however.