The war on drugs addiction

The role of misinformation in the persistence of U.S. drug policy

Rodrigo H. G. Ferreira

Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/ress/3002>

DOI: 10.4000/ress.3002

ISSN: 1663-4446

Publisher

Librairie Droz

Printed version

Date of publication: 15 May 2015

Number of pages: 265-291

ISSN: 0048-8046

Electronic reference

Rodrigo H. G. Ferreira, « The war on drugs addiction », *Revue européenne des sciences sociales* [Online], 53-1 | 2015, Online since 01 January 2019, connection on 19 April 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/ress/3002> ; DOI : 10.4000/ress.3002

THE WAR ON DRUGS ADDICTION

THE ROLE OF MISINFORMATION IN THE PERSISTENCE OF U.S. DRUG POLICY

RODRIGO H. G. FERREIRA

University of Bristol
rh12828@my.bristol.ac.uk

Abstract. Most drug policy specialists have reached the conclusion that the current approach to reducing drug use is a failure. Based on the idea that policy failure might result in governmental learning this article assesses the role of misinformation in impeding change in U.S. drug policy. It argues that state officials have applied a selective release of information in order to frame drug policy as a success. Thus, narrow-scoped tactical achievements hide broader strategic and tactical failures, which blocks governmental learning and change in the U.S. drug policy. In addition, this article makes an empirical contribution to the debate of whether or not President Obama has promoted a significant change in national security policy in general, and in the war on drugs in particular, by presenting evidence that the Democrat administration is still prioritising law enforcement and supply reduction to reduce drug use.

Keywords: bureaucratic politics, drug policy, failure, learning, Obama's administration, United States, war on drugs.

Résumé. Tous les spécialistes en matière de politique de lutte contre la drogue s'accordent à considérer l'approche actuelle des États-Unis comme un échec. Cet article soutient qu'une information biaisée est à l'origine de la réticence à changer de politique, en partant de l'idée que le gouvernement américain aurait dû faire l'apprentissage de ses erreurs et en tirer les leçons politiques qui s'imposent. Il montre que les autorités ont manipulé l'information disponible de manière à présenter la politique actuelle de lutte contre la drogue comme un succès. Une vue étroite faisant la part belle aux réussites tactiques a ainsi fait obstacle à l'apprentissage gouvernemental et au renouvellement de la politique de lutte contre la drogue. Cet article constitue par ailleurs une contribution empirique au débat sur la portée réformatrice de la politique du président Obama en matière de sécurité nationale en général, et de drogue en particulier, en démontrant que l'administration démocrate continue de donner la priorité au renforcement de l'arsenal législatif et à la lutte contre l'approvisionnement en vue de réduire la consommation de drogue.

Mots-clés: administration Obama, apprentissage, bureaucratie politique, échec, lutte contre la drogue, États-Unis.

INTRODUCTION

In June 1971, President Richard Nixon addressed Congress and announced a new strategy to fight drug consumption, which still dominates U.S. politics—the war on drugs (Nixon, 1971; Baum, 1996, p.62). Four decades later, the Global Commission on Drug Policy (GCDP, 2011) published a report evaluating the war on drugs and its effect on drug use in the world. Right at its first paragraph, the report presents a startling statement: “The global war on drugs has failed, with devastating consequences for individuals and societies around the world [...] fundamental reforms in national and global drug control policies are urgently needed” (GCDP, 2011, p.2).

Equally striking is the pre-eminence of political figures who support the diagnosis of the GCDP: former heads of state César Gaviria (Colombia), Ernesto Zedillo (Mexico), Fernando Henrique Cardoso (Brazil), Ricardo Lagos (Chile), Jorge Sampaio (Portugal), George Papandreou (Greece), Aleksander Kwasniewski (Poland) and Ruth Dreifuss (Switzerland); United Nations’ (UN) key figures, such as former Secretary General Kofi Annan, former High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour, former High Commissioner for Refugees Thorvald Stoltenberg; and U.S. leaders such as former Secretary of State George Shultz, former Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead, and former Federal Reserve Board Chairmen Paul Volker (GCDP, 2014). In addition, U.S. Presidents Carter and Clinton openly recognised the failure of the war on drugs¹.

Drug war failure has not resulted in learning

Rational policymaking expects state officials to learn from policy mistakes (Levy, 1994, p.279; Stein, 1994, p.156, p.172). As Thomas Birkland (2006, p.8-9; 1997, p.138) affirms, policy failure may lead political actors to identify flaws and create new solutions, generating new information in the political system. Facing this new data, policy-makers may learn with it and eliminate, adjust or replace a defective measure. Hence, policy failure might result in learning and change².

1 See declarations in the documentary *Breaking the Taboo* (2006), available in <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dfur-cZdgTU>>; Also, see Flock (2012).

2 See more on foreign policy learning in Stein (1994). See also Birkland's research on policy learning from disasters (1997; 2006; 2011).

It is necessary to notice, however, that learning the “right lesson” and even learning at all are only possibilities open to political judgement. Policy-makers might just as well learn the “wrong lesson” by misinterpreting data, or ignore learning for some political/bureaucratic/economic interest, or persist on failure in the hope of long-term positive results, or simply be unable to identify the failure (Knopf, 2012, p.85; Levy, 1994, p.290). Notwithstanding, as long as a policy fails to attain the desired results, the potential for learning and the need for change will always be present, making it necessary to explain why learning and change are not happening.

Bearing this in mind, if U.S. anti-drug policies are such a failure, why is it that “most policymaking bodies at the national and international level have tended to avoid open scrutiny or debate on alternatives” (GCDP, 2011, p.4)? Equally, why is the Office of National Drug Control Strategy legally prohibited of even considering any deviation from the current strategy, and why doesn’t any sitting politician in Washington openly support the termination of the war on drugs (Scherlen, 2012, p.71)? In sum, “why does the United States continue to pursue failed policies from the past decades as if U.S. policy-makers were unable to learn?” (Loveman, 2006, p.xiv).

To answer these questions, it is necessary to identify what exactly “learning” means. As Birkland (2006, p.8-9) asserts, political action is greatly motivated by beliefs. By its turn, “experiential learning” is a “change of beliefs [...] or the development of new beliefs, skills, or procedures as a result of the observation and interpretation of experience” (Levy, 1994, p.283). However, even if political actors learn and change their beliefs on a failed policy, it will not necessarily result in policy change (Knopf, 2012, p.85; Levy, 1994, p.290). For that to happen, it is necessary that policy-makers successfully institutionalise learning into organisational procedures—a process that Levy (1994, p.287) calls “organisational” or “governmental learning”.

Thus, contrary to “experiential learning”, “governmental learning” requires policy change to take place—otherwise, learning is simply ignored and eventually forgotten (Knopf, 2012, p.87; Levy, 1994, p.287-9). As Levy (1994, p.288) explains, policy-makers might try to institutionalise learning and fail due to political, economic, or bureaucratic constraints.

In sum, considering that this paper seeks to expose the role of misinformation in blocking change in U.S. drug policy, it understands learning in its “organisational” or “governmental”, rather than simply “experiential” sense. It wishes to make an empirical contribution to the understanding of why and how failure is not resulting in a debate in Washington to redesign or replace the current defective approach to control drug use.

Defining learning in drug policy

When one talks about policy success or failure, it is important to distinguish two aspects: strategy and tactics. The former refers to the final goal of a policy, and the means to achieve it. The latter refers to the intermediary goals and means of a policy, which in the long run should result in the achievement of the strategic goal³.

Having said that, it is important to emphasise that the failure of the war on drugs is both strategic and tactical: as a strategy, prohibition has failed to significantly reduce drug consumption; tactically, the focus on supply reduction and law enforcement has proved to be extremely inefficient in undermining the drug market⁴. Still, the U.S. Government remains strongly attached to these methods.

Therefore, this article assumes that governmental learning in the war on drugs would be achieved once the U.S. executive and legislative branches openly recognized the failure of these strategic and tactical methods, because that is the elementary condition to make change possible. It would thus constitute a “change of beliefs” in Washington concerning the efficiency of prohibition, law enforcement and supply reduction. This change of ideas would result in a debate on new approaches for drug control, which could lead to a reform on

3 See definition of “tactical level” and “strategic level” in DOD (2010).

4 The strategy and tactics of the war on drugs are detailed in Part I.

drug laws and the establishment of a new strategy and alternative tactics to reduce drugs' harms to society. Anything under the opening of a public debate with clearly identified alternatives would not qualify as learning.

Eliminating simple explanations

One could try to explain the absence of learning and change in the war on drugs based on apparently obvious reasons. In the first place, one could argue that U.S. drug control agencies do not recognise the failure of prohibitionist and supply reduction policies. However, the fact that the U.S. Department of Justice states in its reports that overall drug consumption and availability are rising in the Country suggests that drug agencies are aware of the shortcomings of the war on drugs, and deliberately chose to frame it as an overall success in official documents (NDIC, 2011).

Moreover, it could be argued that the prohibitionist approach persists because there are no options to replace it. However, as Duane C. McBride et al. (2009, p.74-75) describes, there are at least four—not mutually exclusive—drug control approaches alternative to prohibition: 1) the harm reduction approach, which emphasises preventive education and health treatment; 2) medicalization, which defends that drug abuse should be managed by physicians, and not law enforcement; 3) legalisation and regulation, which supports governmental control and taxation over the production and distribution of drugs; and 4) decriminalisation, which calls for the end of judicial punishment to deter individuals to consume drugs.

Then, one could argue that prohibition persists because the U.S. government evaluates other alternatives as less efficient than the current one. However, the fact that no sitting politician in Washington defends the termination of the war on drugs (Scherlen, 2012, p.71)—while others who left office openly support it, suggests that there must be political constraints for sitting decision-makers to support policy deviation. Furthermore, it demonstrates that there is not even a debate in the U.S. legislative and executive branches on the validity of the *status quo* and on the potential effects of changing it.

Furthermore, it is important to observe that the Office of National Drug Control Strategy is forbidden from even considering the end of prohibition (Scherlen, 2012, p.71) and most U.S. policymaking bodies have avoided scrutiny on the subject (GCDP, 2011, p.4). These facts suggest that official institutions are not carrying out substantial research on the harms of prohibition and the possible effects of alternative approaches.

The unexplored field of policy persistence

There is a vast literature on U.S. drug policy and the war on drugs: authors such as Musto (1999 [1973]), Baum (1996), Massing (1998) and Inciardi (2008) document the history of U.S. drug policy since the 19th century; Loveman (2006), Youngers and Rosin (2005) and Thoumi (2012) focus the international war on drugs, and how it has severely damaged societies where narcowars have been waged; Miron (2004) and Gray (1998) try to demonstrate that the war on drugs is a failure, and explain why it has not worked; lastly, Schlosser (2003), Husak (2002), Mares (2006) and Jenner (2011) emphasise the damage caused by the prohibitionist approach to U.S. citizens, and even propose alternative models to replace it.

Notwithstanding, academics have not produced significant research on the reasons for the persistence of the war on drugs in spite of its failure and social harms. As a matter of fact, not only regarding the war on drugs, little research has been carried out to explain why policies tend to be hard to terminate, independently of success or failure (Geva-May, 2004, p.311; Bauer, 2009, p.2; Adam et al., 2007, p.221; Frantz, 1992, p.175).

This research identified only one article entirely dedicated to expose the reasons for the persistence of U.S. drug policy in spite of failure: Scherlen (2012) tries to explain the war on drugs continuity based on Policy Termination Theory and Prospect Theory, giving very important insights in understanding the phenomenon. However, his article is short; it covers a wide range of factors that make drug policy change difficult, but it does not give much detail on them. Due to such constrictions, when Scherlen (2012, p.67-68) describes the results of the war on drugs he oversimplifies them, giving the impression that they constitute an absolute failure with no achievements to be claimed. Hence,

his article ignores the fact that some degree of tactical success has been achieved in the efforts to reduce drug supplies.

By overlooking these achievements, a relevant factor blocking learning and change in drug policy is missed: the manner in which policy-makers have been led to believe that the war on drugs should continue. In other words, the characterisation of the war on drugs as an absolute failure ignores the tactical achievements that officials have used as evidence to support the argument that the war on drugs is a success and should continue. This paper seeks to explore this point.

In conclusion, research on the reasons for the persistence of the war on drugs and the role of misinformation in this process are missing pieces that ought to be introduced into drug policy literature. There is no doubt about the importance of research in this area: first, it is an empirical contribution to theories of policy termination, as it would contribute to the scholarly understanding of why policies tend to persist in spite of failure, and what kind of forces make policy change hard to achieve; second, it is an empirical addition to the study of bureaucratic politics and self-serving bureaucracies, which has been largely overlooked in the U.S. drug policy literature⁵; third, it is an empirical contribution to the growing literature on whether or not the Obama administration has promoted a substantial change in the U.S. national security approach in general, and in U.S. drug policy in particular⁶; finally, it is policy relevant, as shedding light on how state officials have made it possible to continue and escalate the war on drugs through a selective release of information can help activists and policy-makers to find ways to open the debate and promote change.

Case studies

To analyse the manner in which U.S. officials frame the war on drugs as a success, this article examines the cases of anti-drug programmes sponsored by Washington in Colombia and Mexico: the Plan Colombia and the Mérida Initiative⁷. This choice is based on the fact these countries are the main recep-

5 Benson *et al.* (1995) authored one of the few articles on bureaucratic politics in the war on drugs.

6 See more on these debates in Carter (2011), Sanger (2012), Buxton (2011) and Sirin (2011).

7 See more on Plan Colombia and the Mérida Initiative in CRS (2011; 2012).

tors of U.S. aid for the drug war effort in Latin America (U.S. Department of State, 2013). The representativeness of Mexico and Colombia for overall supply reduction efforts is confirmed in the 2009 National Drug Control Strategy, in which they are the only countries cited in the introduction about international efforts to disrupt the drug market (White House, 2009, p.3). Equally, the continued relevance of these partnerships is highlighted by the 2013 National Drug Control Strategy (White House, 2013c, p.54, p.57). From these facts, this article concludes that no other international anti-drug operations are more symbolic for the war on drugs than the Mexican and Colombian ones.

Structure and arguments

The first part of this paper settles to, first, describe the strategy and tactics applied by the U.S. war against drugs. Second, it demonstrates that from the 1970s until Obama's term the war on drugs has indeed escalated, persisted and ultimately failed.

In the second part, this article analyses official reports, press releases, and state officials' declarations to find how governmental actors frame the results of the war on drugs and support its continuity. Primarily, this article assesses documents issued by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) during Bush Jr.'s and Obama's presidencies. This period of analysis was chosen, firstly, because it is in the light of the new data gathered on Bush's flawed anti-drug strategy that this article tries to find why failure is not resulting in learning in the war on drugs. Secondly, the chosen period of analysis is necessary to establish whether or not Obama has made significant reforms in drug policy. By its turn, the choice to analyse documents issued by the ONDCP stems from the fact that it is the central anti-drug agency, responsible to advise the President on drug-control matters and manage federal drug-control funds and operations. Moreover, the agency produces the National Drug Control Strategy, which is the main report of the war on drugs, containing an assessment of all anti-drugs efforts promoted by the administration (White House, 2012a). In addition, this paper analyses documents issued by the U.S. Department of State, considering its central role in coordinating international partnerships to curtail drug supplies.

Based on the examination of these agencies' documents, the article argues that bureaucracies and presidencies have manipulated data—by ignoring shortcomings in the reduction of drug consumption and availability, while emphasising the successful execution of tactical operations to interdict drug shipments, destroy production centres and persecute traffickers.

Hence, the achievements of specific police and military operations are used as evidence of the overall efficacy of the war on drugs, even though these tactical methods have not significantly helped to attain neither the strategic goal of consumption reduction, nor the tactical objectives of reduced availability and increased prices. Consequently, official reports in which information is selectively publicised do not allow decision-makers to see the strategic and tactical failures of the war on drugs, which in turn impedes governmental learning and change in U.S. drug policy.

I. LOSING THE WAR ON DRUGS BY ESCALATING PROHIBITIONIST TACTICS

First of all, the strategy and tactics of the war on drugs have to be presented. For the U.S. Government, the actual “consumption” of illicit drugs is the key problem. Correspondently, the strategic goal of the war on drugs is to reduce the consumption of all illicit drugs⁸—especially cannabis, cocaine, opiates and amphetamine-type substances⁹ (Mares, 2006, p.6; Miron, 2004, p.65). The 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which calls for the creation of a “drug-free America”, is one of the official documents that express this strategic goal (Musto, 1999 [1973], p.278). Equally, this objective can be confirmed in the 2012 National Drug Control Strategy (White House, 2012b, p.V).

8 The American strategy can be distinguished from the Portuguese strategy, for instance, which is aimed at mitigating the harms caused by drug use, rather than reducing rates of drug consumption (Mares, 2006, p.6).

9 The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime highlight these substances in their annual reports (UNODC, 2010).

In order to attain this final goal, the strategic method that guides the war on drugs is “prohibition”: an approach that emphasises judicial punishment for individuals who produce, distribute and consume illicit drugs (McBride *et al.*, 2009, p.71; Scherlen, 2012, p.67). The continual commitment to prohibition is expressed in the 2011 National Drug Control Strategy, which states that “the Administration steadfastly opposes drug legalization”, and that “controls and prohibitions help to keep prices higher, and higher prices help keep use rates relatively low” (White House, 2011a, p.22-23).

Aiming at reducing drug consumption, the tactical goals of the war against drugs are to curtail the supplies of illicit substances, reduce their availability in the U.S. market, and consequently raise their prices and make them harder to access for consumers. Therefore, the tactical objectives of U.S. drug policy are largely “supply-oriented” (Friesendorf, 2007, p.7).

Aiming at supply-reduction, the main tactical methods promoted by the U.S. Government are: 1) the incarceration of producers, traffickers, sellers and consumers of illicit drugs, 2) the eradication of drug production, 3) the interdiction of illicit drug shipments and drug-related finances, and the 4) persecution and extradition of international traffickers to be judged in U.S. courts (White House, 2013d, p.12-15; Friesendorf, 2007, p.7-9; Jenner, 2011, p.912). Thus, the tactical methods of U.S. drug policy are based on coercion through law enforcement (Friesendorf, 2007, p.7).

It is necessary to observe that some effort is put on demand reduction and non-coercive policies—such as health treatment and education¹⁰, but police and military operations against suppliers receive the highest priority. For fiscal year (FY) 2014, for instance, almost 60% of the federal funds for drug policy are directed to domestic law enforcement, interdiction of drug shipments, and programmes to eliminate international production and traffic (White House, 2013d, p.7).

10 See in White House (2013d, p.10-12); it should be noticed that non-coercive tactics such as treatment and prevention are not part of the war on drugs, but a parallel demand and harm reduction approach that Washington under-prioritises.

In sum, the strategy of the war on drugs is to reduce drug consumption through prohibition. To make this strategy attainable, the tactic is mainly to deter drug supplies through law enforcement coercion. In this way, the availability of illicit drugs in the U.S. streets would drop, making them harder to access and costlier to purchase, which would contribute to the achievement of the strategic goal of consumption reduction.

1.1.PERSISTENCE AND ESCALATION

The previously described anti-drug strategy and tactics started to be gradually enforced since Nixon's presidency (1968-1974), during which the federal drug-enforcement budget rose from US\$65 million to US\$719 million¹¹ (Baum, 1996, p.75). From Nixon to Obama, federal anti-drug laws evolved from allowing simple no-knock searches, to imposing asset seizure without notice, mandatory minimum sentences, elimination of probation and parole, increasingly longer imprisonment terms, life sentence and death penalty¹². Also, federal drug control spending escalated from US\$3.4 billion under Nixon, to about US\$14 billion in Bush Jr.'s FY 2008 budget, and to over US\$25 billion in Obama's FY 2014 budget¹³ (Baum, 1996, p.75; White House, 2013d). Finally, international operations expanded from a few agents stationed abroad, to multi-billion partnerships—such as in Mexico and Colombia—to reduce drug supplies¹⁴.

The prohibitionist approach to fight drug consumption has persisted after the turn of the 20th century. The manner in which Presidents George W. Bush and Barak Obama have dealt with medical marijuana producers indicates Washington's continual commitment to supply reduction through law enforce-

11 The author does not specify if the values were adjusted to inflation, so this article assumes they are current Dollars from 1968 and 1974. In constant Dollars from 2014, the values correspond to approximately US\$444 million and US\$3.469 billion, respectively (BLS, 2014).

12 See the evolution of drug legislation since Nixon in Musto (1999 [1973]), Mares (2006), Gray (1998), Baum (1996), Massing (1998) and Husak (2002).

13 All values adjusted to constant Dollars from 2014 (BLS, 2014).

14 For more on the escalation of international drug enforcement see Andreas and Nadelmann (2006, p.106, p.128, p.130, p.171), and Pizarro and Gaitán (2006, p.53); see Washington's expenses in Colombia and Mexico in CRS (2011, p.8; 2012, p.38).

cement. Contrary to the expectation that drug enforcement agencies would not persecute marijuana producers operating accordingly to state laws, both heads of state have supported police raids in these companies (Graves, 2012). As Obama (2012) declared, “I never made a commitment that somehow we were going to give *carte blanche* to large-scale producers and operators of marijuana—and the reason is, because it’s against federal law”.

Furthermore, although the Obama administration claims to have inaugurated a new strategy for drug control, based on a “new, balanced approach” that enhances the emphasis in drug prevention and treatment (White House, 2010, p.iii), in reality it only slightly increased the funds for education and rehabilitation programmes from US\$9.9 billion in FY 2008 to US\$10.7 billion in FY 2014. Meanwhile, the Democrat Government severely raised the budget for law enforcement and supply reduction operations from US\$8.7 billion to US\$14.7 in the same period. Therefore, the end of the war on drugs and the beginning of a new anti-drug strategy under Obama is a fallacy: enshrined in federal law, the prohibitionist approach has not only persisted, but also significantly escalated during his administration.

Considering that President Obama is in his second term, the claim that his administration has not had enough time to change drug policy does not hold. On the contrary, the argument that ending the war on drugs is not a priority is still very sound, especially as the Democrat President has no re-election concerns.

1.2.THE WAR ON DRUGS HAS FAILED

Tactical achievements do not necessarily lead to strategic success; if policy-makers promote misguided tactical methods—even if they are successfully executed—they will not help to make the tactical and strategic goals attainable in the long term. Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to observe that although some supply-oriented tactical operations have achieved a degree of success, these policies have not resulted in constricted supplies, curtailed availability, increased prices, and reduced consumption of most illicit drugs.

On the contrary, statistics show that many illegal substances in the U.S. have become more affordable. For instance, cocaine and heroin retail prices fell approximately 60 and 40%, respectively, from 1990 to 2010 (UNODC, 2012). Even though the prices of marijuana have risen, it has not impeded the increase of its consumption, which rose by 1.2% from 2007 to 2011 among people aged 12 or older (NIDA, 2011).

Equally, operations to eradicate drug production have been ineffective. In Colombia and Mexico, the combined production of heroin rose approximately by 67% from 1995 to 2009. In the same period, the potential manufacture of cocaine in Colombia rose about by 51% (U.S. Department of State, 2013; UNODC, 2010). Although cocaine production in Colombia appears to have dropped since Bush's administration, Bolivia's rose more than twofold, and Peru's increased by 17% from 2005 to 2011¹⁵ (White House, 2011a, p.3; U.S. Department of State, 2013, p.26).

The inefficiency of the war on drugs in curtailing drug supplies can also be confirmed in a report from the National Drug Intelligence Center of the U.S. Department of Justice, which provides data on the results of the Mérida Initiative: "cannabis cultivation in Mexico, combined with high levels of domestic cultivation, has resulted in high marijuana availability" in the United States, while "increased heroin production in Mexico and increased involvement of Mexican TCOs [Transnational Criminal Organisations] in the distribution of South American heroin have contributed to wider heroin availability in many U.S. markets, including some where the drug was previously unavailable" (NDIC, 2011, p.3). Consequently, "overall drug availability is increasing" in the country (NDIC, 2011, p.2, 3).

Meanwhile, the killing, persecution and extradition of traffickers promoted by Plan Colombia have not created a safe environment to the people, nor significantly affected the supply of drugs to the United States. Furthermore, new drug traffickers swiftly replace the ones captured by law enforcement agents, main-

15 Also, cocaine production might have been displaced inside the Colombian territory without the authorities noticing; specialists call this phenomenon the "balloon effect": see more in Friesendorf (2007, p.20).

taining the flow of drug supplies (Friesendorf, 2007, p.20). Hence, as Isacson (2008, p.1) affirms, “as a strategy against narcotraffic, Plan Colombia has been a great disappointment”, and “progress will only be sustainable if Plan Colombia, and the U.S. aid that maintains it, abandon their essentially military focus”¹⁶.

Finally, the global consumption of opiates, cocaine and cannabis increased by 34.5, 27 and 8.5% respectively between 1998 and 2008 (GCDP, 2011, p.4). Meanwhile, in the United States, the overall demand for drugs is rising, especially among the youngest; between 2000 and 2010, the consumption of heroin, marijuana and methamphetamine in metric tons has increased approximately by 9, 90 and 110%, respectively (NDIC, 2011, p.1; White House, 2014, p.5). In 2012, the country presented the highest consumption rate of opioids registered by the UN, and U.S. citizens sustained one the highest consumption rates of cocaine, marijuana, amphetamines and ecstasy in the world (UNODC, 2012).

It is necessary to recognise that official measures of drug production, traffic and consumption cannot be trusted as completely accurate, given the difficulty of measuring these factors with precision, and possible political manipulations of data. Nonetheless, they are still meaningful, first, because they are official data: policy-makers consider them as true when taking decisions on drug policy. Thus, they are perfectly suitable to the objective of this article, which is to assess the data used by state officials to justify the continuity of war on drugs. Second, because political manipulation in the data cited above is unlikely, since it is a declaration against interest—the U.S. Government and the UN themselves have published most of these numbers, rather harming than benefiting their political *status quo*.

Taking this data as an approximation of the reality of the drug market¹⁷, there is a clear picture: the war on drugs has fallen miserably short of its strategic objective and most of its tactical goals. Supply-oriented operations have not significantly affected the availability and consumption of psychoactive sub-

16 Author's translation.

17 If one considers that these data are not even an adequate approximation of the drug market reality, then there is no trustworthy information available to assess the results of the war on drugs, which undermines the argument that it is a failure.

tances—as drug production has risen in many regions, and drug prices have fallen in the United States. Equally, domestic law enforcement has shown little effect of consumption deterrence: in spite of living in a country dominated by one of the most punitive and costly drug enforcement policies in the world, U.S. citizens remain among the main sponsors of the global trade of illicit drugs.

2. WINNING THE WAR ON DRUGS IN OFFICIAL REPORTS

In order to evaluate the efficiency of a policy, governmental agencies are responsible for issuing reports on the performance of their operations, which serve as a feedback to policy-makers. In the case of drug policy, the ONDCP is responsible to produce the National Drug Control Strategy, which gives an outline of the programmes promoted by the same agency and the presidency (White House, 2012a). This report is, therefore, a form of self-evaluation, which already casts doubt on its impartiality.

In the 2013 National Drug Control Strategy, President Obama addresses a letter “To the Congress of the United States”, which celebrates, among other achievements, that “the rate of current cocaine use in the United States has dropped by 50 percent since 2006, and methamphetamine use has declined by one-third” (White House, 2013c, p.iii). However, the same text makes no mention of the broader picture: the overall consumption and availability of illicit drugs had increased in the same period (White House, 2014, p.5; NDIC, 2011, p.1; White House, 2011b, p.15-7).

This report exemplifies a tendency in official documents issued by agencies involved in drug policy and the Presidency: they frame the war on drugs as an overall success by emphasising narrow-scoped achievements and omitting broader failures. Mainly, governmental reports are able to frame drug policy as a success by highlighting data on the efficient execution of supply-oriented tactical operations, while ignoring information on how these tactics have not resulted in the achievement of the tactical and strategic goals of the war on drugs.

Considering that the U.S. Government is aware of the increases in drug availability and consumption in the country¹⁸, this essay argues that anti-drug agencies deliberately distort the picture of drug policy achievements in order to gather support for their own operations. Benson et al. (1995, p.26) had already observed the distortion of data in U.S. drug policy in 1995, asserting that police bureaucracies were a primary source of the “false or misleading” information used to justify the continuity of the war on drugs. Equally, research on theories of policy termination and bureaucratic politics has found that governmental agencies tend to manipulate data through selective release of information to promote their own interests (Scherlen, 2012, p.69; Halperin, 1971, p.88; Benson, 1995, p.25).

The ONDCP’s 2009 National Drug Control Strategy report is emblematic in this aspect. Being the last report issued by the W. Bush administration, it presents the results of anti-drugs policies promoted during the two mandates of the Republican President. In its conclusion, the report states: “the evidence produced by the array of data systems we use to measure progress makes it clear that our Nation is moving steadily in the right direction, both domestically and internationally, in the fight against illegal drugs” (White House, 2009, p.35).

Equally, in a section directed to the U.S. Congress and signed by President Obama, the ONDCP’s 2013 report states: “scientific research suggests that we have made real progress”. Additionally, in its conclusion, the same report shows no clue of failure in the war on drugs: “as the Administration enters a second term—and the Strategy enters its fourth year—we have reason to be optimistic about the future of our efforts to reduce drug use and its consequences in the United States” (White House, 2013c, p.iii, 79).

The ONDCP’s argument that the war on drugs is a success is mainly based on the results yielded by three tactical methods: 1) the interdiction of drugs and drug related finances, 2) the disruption of drug production, and 3) the persecution of drug traffickers. As the following sections demonstrate, the data gathered on the results of these operations is used as evidence to support the argument that the war on drugs is succeeding, and should continue to be waged.

18 See in NDIC (2011) and White House (2011b, p.15-7; 2014).

2.1. INTERDICTION OF DRUGS AND DRUG-RELATED FINANCES

Operations to seize drug shipments circulating inside the U.S. or trying to cross their borders are key tactics of drug enforcement efforts. Although most illicit drugs have become increasingly available and cheaper to U.S. consumers, drug bureaucracies are still able to frame the war on drugs as a success by emphasising the larger amounts of drug shipments and finances interdicted by law enforcement agents.

In its 2009 report, the ONDCP states: “Through mid-2008, DHE [Domestic Highway Enforcement] resulted in the seizure of over \$600 million in narcotics”; “In FY 2008, seizures in the Western Hemisphere transit zone amounted to 290.4 metric tons [...]”; “global seizures and disruptions of cocaine shipments remain dramatically higher than they were in 2001”; “U.S. Government estimates indicate that seizures of cocaine and coca base inside Colombia have grown from about 38 metric tons in 2001 to about 93 metric tons as of early December 2008.” (White House, 2009, p.24, p.29).

Equally, ONDCP’s reports call attention for the successful interdiction of drug money in the financial system. The 2009 report describes “impressive results in the interdiction of drugs and drug-related finances” and celebrates the fact that “as a direct result of OFAC’s [Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control] designations of the Victor Cazares Salazar financial network in December 2007, Mexican authorities were able to arrest five individuals on money laundering charges” (White House, 2009, p.28).

During Obama’s administration, the ONDCP has also called attention to the success of interdiction operations. In a 2013 press release, the agency reports “significant progress achieved at disrupting illegal drug trafficking and improving operations along the Southwest border” (White House, 2013b). The 2013 National Drug Control Strategy highlights that, from 2009 to 2012, “DHS [Department of Homeland Security] seized 71 percent more currency, 39 percent more drugs, and 189 percent more weapons along the Southwest border as compared to FY 2006 to 2008” (White House, 2013c, p.42).

These tactical achievements would hardly disrupt the world trade of illicit drugs, estimated by the UN to be valued in US\$400 billion (UNDCP, 1997, cited by Reuter and Greenfield, 2011, p.160). Indeed, it is true that interdiction tactics have apprehended increasingly higher amounts of drug shipments and finances. However the results of these operations are too narrow in scope. In order to hide the failure of these tactical methods to make strategic and tactical objectives attainable, the ONDCP and the Department of State do not mention the increases of overall drug availability and falling prices in the cited documents.

2.2.DISRUPTION OF DRUG PRODUCTION

The tactical achievements of international counterdrug partnerships to disrupt drug production and traffic also play a central role in framing the war on drugs as a success (White House, 2009, p.23). In the 2009 National Drug Control Strategy, for instance, the ONDCP states that the “greatest impact” of the war on drugs “may be realized through international counterdrug partnerships, such as those with the Governments of Colombia and Mexico” (White House, 2009, p.3).

The first manner in which the ONCDP seeks to demonstrate the success of international counterdrug efforts is by emphasising tactical achievements in reducing the production of cocaine, with particular attention to the Colombian case. Its 2009 report describes “historic disruptions in the cocaine and methamphetamine markets as a result of cumulative progress in Colombia, the transit zone, Mexico, and on the Southwest Border”. Equally, during Obama’s presidency the U.S. Department of State (2013, p.16-17) highlights “remarkable progress against cocaine production and associated violence”, which “have strengthened democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in Colombia”.

As evidence of such “historic” achievements, ONDCP’s 2009 report affirms that “Colombia’s maximum potential production dropped to 535 metric tons of pure cocaine in 2007”, and the “maximum potential production of pure cocaine has fallen a full 24 percent since its high point in 2001”. These accomplishments would have “contributed to the decline in cocaine purity and increase in cocaine prices in the United States” (White House, 2009, p.30).

Equally, documents issued during Obama's term celebrate that "cocaine production in Colombia has dropped by almost two-thirds since 2001" (White House, 2011a, p.3). Moreover, "there has been a 41 percent drop in potential pure cocaine production capacity in the Andes since 2001" (White House, 2013a). All these achievements would have "contributed to historic reductions in cocaine availability within the United States" (White House, 2013c, p.57)

These numbers might give the misleading impression that the war on drugs has indeed significantly disrupted the illicit drug trade, and reduced drug availability in the United States since 2001. However, they only do so for being too narrow in scope: they focus on some degree of success attained in controlling cocaine production in Colombia, while omitting broader failures, such as the rise in marijuana, heroin and cocaine productions in Mexico, Peru and Bolivia.

2.3.PERSECUTION OF DRUG TRAFFICKERS

The second manner in which the U.S. Government justifies the argument that international counterdrug programmes are a success is by calling attention to the number of drug traffickers that have been killed, arrested and extradited, especially in Colombia and Mexico.

As the 2009 National Drug Control Strategy states, "years of close cooperation with the Government of Colombia have led to a dramatic reduction in the threat posed by narcoterrorists operating there". In addition, "enhanced cooperation with the Government of Mexico already has diminished the power of drug traffickers and will be critical to a long-term solution for securing our shared border" (White House, 2009, p.3).

As evidence of the efficacy of international counterdrug operations, the ONDCP's 2009 report states: "From 2002 to 2008, a total of 110 CPOTs [Consolidated Priority Organisation Targets] have been identified, of which 81 percent have been indicted, 53 percent have been arrested, 25 percent have been extradited from other countries, and 3 percent have been killed either by other gang members or as a result of resisting arrest"; "Colombia has extradited 789 narcotics traffickers and other criminals to the United States for trial since 2002"; and "Colombian Security Forces dealt a significant blow

to the largest remaining drug trafficking organizations in Colombia, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), by killing its number two leader, Raul Reyes” (White House, 2009, p.30).

Equally, official documents issued during Obama’s term describe significant progress in international counterdrug efforts: “Mexican bilateral law enforcement cooperation with the United States continues to strengthen—in 2011, some 93 criminals were extradited from Mexico for prosecution in the United States, 31 were for narcotics-related offenses” (U.S. Department of State, 2012, p.16); and “the numbers of U.S. defendants extradited from Mexico to the United States are at their highest levels in history” (White House, 2013b). Furthermore, the U.S. Department of State (2013, p.17) reported that Mexico had achieved “notable success in dismantling and disrupting some of North America’s largest and most dangerous drug cartels in 2012, and contributed to a significant overall decrease in drug-related violence”.

In spite of all the positive results that drug enforcement agencies claim to have achieved in Mexico, a report of the U.S. Department of Justice concluded that Mexican drug cartels “will continue to dominate wholesale drug trafficking in the United States for the foreseeable future and will further solidify their positions through collaboration with U.S. gangs” (NDIC, 2011, p.3).

In sum, the ONDCP and the Department of State issue reports that emphasise tactical results yielded by anti-drug operations of interdiction, production disruption and traffickers’ persecution. Following this logic, the greater amounts of drug shipments and finances apprehended, the larger scale of drug crops and production facilities destroyed, and the increasing number of narco-traffickers killed or arrested would justify the argument that the war on drugs is a success, and that Washington should continue to support it.

However, the narrow scope of such data does not account for a broader failure: these are tactical operations of supply reduction, and as such, they should have made drugs harder to find and purchase for U.S. consumers. In order to camouflage the ultimate inefficiency of these tactics and sustain the argument of success, none of the analysed documents present data on how

overall drug availability has risen, how most prices have fallen and how overall demand has increased in the Country. As a result, some degree of success in tactical methods hides the ultimate strategic and tactical failures.

CONCLUSION

This article has sought to expose the importance of research on the reasons why policies are inclined towards continuity, and what kinds of forces can block policy change. As Bauer (2009, p.2) describes, there is an “overall disregard of the analysis of policy termination”, albeit a “rising demand for systematic knowledge about policy dismantling and retrenchment”. Thus, academia ought to dedicate more attention to the matter—given its policy relevance, and the fundamental insights it can provide on how the policy-making process takes place, and how bureaucratic and political interests can deviate it from rational choice.

Official reports issued by the ONDCP and the U.S. Department of State on the war against drugs are clear examples of how bureaucratic and political forces manipulate data in order to support the continuation of a failed policy that serves their particular interests. By omitting the fact that drugs have become increasingly cheaper and available to U.S. consumers, these reports transmit the misleading impressions that current efforts to curtail drug supplies and deter drug sale and consumption through law enforcement have yielded satisfactory results—limited tactical achievements hide broader strategic and tactical failures.

These finding are irrefutable evidence that, as Benson *et al.* (1995, p.25) point out, bureaucracies make use of selective release of data to manipulate political decisions in favour of their own interests. Considering that these reports are key sources of information, based on which policy-makers enact new drug laws and plan budget allocation, they have certainly misled political decisions towards the war on drugs, and consequently blocked organisational learning and change in U.S. drug policy.

It must be recognised, however, that not all U.S. politicians can be expected to be victims of misinformation from anti-drug agencies. Different governmental bureaucracies, such as the Department of Justice¹⁹, have published data on the shortcomings of drug policy. Also, non-official sources, such as academic publications, civil organisations and the media have campaigned to denounce the failure of the war on drugs. Hence, misinformation alone cannot account for the fact that no sitting politician supports drug policy change, and that U.S. officials have avoided scrutiny on alternative policies. Certainly, other factors such as bureaucratic barriers, public opinion, electoral constraints, partisan disputes and lobbying also play a role in blocking the governmental learning process²⁰. Nonetheless, it should be noticed that these variables transcend the scope of this article. They should definitely be explored in a more extensive research.

Still, the findings of this article suffice to demonstrate that the persistent dominance of the war on drugs has not been based on impartial data and efficiency considerations, but on reports biased towards policy continuation. Therefore, there is no excuse for the lack of debate in Washington on alternative approaches for drug control. More than four decades of law enforcement and supply-oriented drug policies have taken the U.S. Government nowhere close to a drug-free America. It is time to learn from drug policy failure, and break free from the war on drugs addiction.

19 See NDIC (2011).

20 See more in Ferreira (2013, p.45-60), Friesendorf (2007, p.13-14), and Bertram *et al.* (1996, p.134-150).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary sources:

- BLS, 2014, *Inflation Calculator: Bureau of Labor Statistics*, online: <http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm> [Accessed: 16th July 2014].
- CRS, 2011, *U.S.-Mexican Security Cooperation: The Mérida Initiative and Beyond*, report, Washington (DC): Congressional Research Service: <<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41349.pdf>> [Accessed: 3rd April 2013].
- , 2012, *Colombia: Background, U.S. Relations, and Congressional Interests*, report, Washington (DC): Congressional Research Service: <<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32250.pdf>> [Accessed: 11th November 2013].
- DOD, 2010, *DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, online: <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/> [Accessed: 28th June 2013].
- GCDP, 2011, *War on Drugs: Report of the Global Commission on Drug Policy*, report, Global Commission on Drug Policy.
- , 2014, *Global Commission on Drug Policy*, online: <<http://www.globalcommission-nondrugs.org/bios/>> [Accessed: 11th Mar 2014].
- NDIC, 2011, *National Drug Threat Assessment 2011*, report, Washington (DC), U.S. Department of Justice: <<http://www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/topics/ndtas.htm#Top>> [Accessed: 25th June 2013].
- NIDA, 2011, *Nationwide Trends*, online: <<http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/nationwide-trends>> [Accessed: 25th June 2013].
- NIXON R., 1971, “Special Message to the Congress on Drug Abuse Prevention and Control” in *The American Presidency Project*, online, 17th June: <<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3048>> [Accessed: 25th April 2013].
- OBAMA B., 2012, *Ready for the Fight: Rolling Stone Interview with Barack Obama*, interviewed by Jann S. Wenner for Rolling Stone magazine [in person], Washington (DC), 25th April: <<http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/ready-for-the-fight-rolling-stone-interview-with-barack-obama-20120425?page=2>> [Accessed: 1st June 2013].

- UNODC, 2010, *World Drug Report*, report, New York, United Nations: <<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/WDR-2010.html>> [Accessed: 17th June 2013].
- , 2012, *World Drug Report*, report, New York, United Nations: <<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/WDR-2012.html>> [Accessed: 17th June 2013].
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, 2012, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, online: <<http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/index.htm>> [Accessed: 11th June 2013].
- , 2013, *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*, online: <<http://www.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/index.htm>> [Accessed: 11th June 2013].
- WHITE HOUSE, 2009, *National Drug Control Strategy*, report, Washington (DC), The White House: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/2013-national-drug-control-strategy>> [Accessed: 17th June 2013].
- , 2010, *National Drug Control Strategy*, report, Washington (DC), The White House: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/2013-national-drug-control-strategy>> [Accessed: 17th June 2013].
- , 2011a, *National Drug Control Strategy*, report, Washington (DC), The White House: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/2013-national-drug-control-strategy>> [Accessed: 17th June 2013].
- , 2011b, *National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, report, Washington (DC), The White House: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/national-survey-on-drug-use-and-health>> [Accessed: 17th June 2013].
- , 2012a, *About ONDCP*, online: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/about>> [Accessed: 17th June 2013].
- , 2012b, *National Drug Control Strategy*, report: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/2013-national-drug-control-strategy>> [Accessed: 11th June 2013].
- , 2013a, *Survey Shows Significant Drop in Worldwide Cocaine Production*, press release, 9th July: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/news-releases/survey-shows-significant-drop-in-cocaine-production>> [Accessed: 30th July 2013].
- , 2013b, *White House Drug Policy Director, Secretary Napolitano Highlight Progress in Disrupting Drug Trafficking along Southwest Border*, press release, 5th April: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/news-releases-remarks/kerlikowske-napolitano-southwest-border-trip>> [Accessed: 30th July 2013].

- , 2013c, *National Drug Control Strategy*, report: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/national-drug-control-strategy>> [Accessed: 30th July 2013].
- , 2013d, *Budget and Performance*, online: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/annual-accounting-report>> [Accessed: 31st August 2013].
- , 2014, *What America's Users Spend on Illegal Drugs: 2000-2010*, online: <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/research-and-data/estimation-drug-expenditures-consumption-supply>> [Accessed: 1st March 2014].

Secondary sources:

- ADAM C., BAUER M., KNILL C. and STUDINGER P., 2007, "The Termination of Public Organizations: Theoretical Perspectives to Revitalize a Promising Research Area", *Public Organization Review*, 7-3, p.221-236.
- ANDREAS P. and NADELMANN E., 2006, *Policing the Globe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- BAUER M., 2009, *The Policy Termination Approach: Critique and Conceptual Perspectives*, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Research Working Paper, 1, Berlin.
- BAUM D., 1996, *Smoke and Mirrors*, Boston, Little, Brown.
- BENSON B., RASMUSSEN D. and SOLLARS D., 1995, "Police Bureaucracies, their Incentives, and the War on Drugs", *Public Choice*, 83-1/2, p.21-45.
- BERTRAM E., BLACHMAN M., SHARPE K. and ANDREAS P., 1996, *Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial*, Berkeley (CA), University of California Press.
- BIRKLAND Th., 1997, *After Disaster*, Washington (DC), Georgetown University Press.
- , 2006, *Lessons of Disaster*, Washington (DC), Georgetown University Press.
- , 2011, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*, Armonk (NY), Sharpe.
- Breaking the Taboo*, 2006, [film], Brazil, Spray Filmes.
- BUXTON J., 2011, "Forward into History: Understanding Obama's Latin American Policy", *Latin American Perspectives*, 38-4, p.29-45.
- CARTER S.L., 2011, *The Violence of Peace*, New York, Beast Books.
- FERREIRA R.H.G., 2013, *The War on Drugs Addiction: Why Does Washington Persist With a Failed Drug Policy?*, MSc. International Relations, University of Bristol.

- FLOCK E., 2012, "Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter Slam War On Drugs in New Documentary", *U.S. News*, 3rd December, online: <<http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/washington-whispers/2012/12/03/bill-clinton-jimmy-carter-slam-war-on-drugs-in-new-documentary>> [Accessed: 11th June 2013].
- FRANTZ J., 1992, "Reviving and Revising a Termination Model", *Policy Sciences*, 25-2, p.175-189.
- FRIESENDORF C., 2007, *US Foreign Policy and the War on Drugs*, London, Routledge.
- GEVA-MAY I., 2004, "Riding the Wave of Opportunity: Termination in Public Policy", *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 14-3, p.309-333.
- GRAVES L., 2012, "Obama Administration's War On Pot: Oaksterdam Founder Richard Lee's Exclusive Interview After Raid", *The Huffington Post*, 18th April, online: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/18/obama-war-on-weed-richard-lee-oaksterdam-raid_n_1427435.html> [Accessed: 12th June 2013].
- GRAY M., 1998, *Drug Crazy*, New York, Random House.
- HALPERIN M., 1971, "Why Bureaucrats Play Games", *Foreign Policy*, 2, p.70-90.
- HUSAK D., 2002, *Legalize This!*, London, Verso.
- INCIARDI J., 2008, *The War on Drugs IV*, Boston, MA, Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- ISACSON A., 2008, "El Plan Colombia: Consecuencias no deseadas", *Foreign Affairs en español*, 8-1, p.1-6.
- JENNER M., 2011, "International Drug Trafficking: A Global Problem with a Domestic Solution", *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 18-2, p.901-927.
- KNOFF J., 2012, "The Concept of Nuclear Learning", *Nonproliferation Review*, 19-1, p.79-93.
- LOVEMAN B., 2006, "Preface", in *Addicted to Failure: U.S. Security Policy in Latin America and the Andean Region*, B. Loveman ed., Plymouth, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, p.xi-xxiii.
- MARES D., 2006, *Drug Wars and Coffeehouses*, Washington (DC), CQ Press.
- MASSING M., 1998, *The Fix*, New York, Simon & Schuster.

- MCBRIDE D., TERRY-MCEL RATH Y., HARWOOD H., INCIARDI J., LEUKEFELD C., 2009, "Reflection on Drug Policy", *Journal of Drug Issues*, 39-1, p.71-88.
- MIRON J., 2004, *Drug War Crimes*, Oakland, Calif., Independent Institute.
- MUSTO D., 1999 (1973), *The American Disease*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- NISKANEN W., 1975, "Bureaucrats and Politicians", *Journal of Law and Economics*, 18-3, p. 617-643.
- PIZARRO E. and GAITÁN P., 2006, "Plan Colombia and the Andean Regional Initiative: Lights and Shadows" in *Addicted to Failure: U.S. Security Policy in Latin America and the Andean Region*, B. Loveman (ed.), Lanham, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, p.53-79.
- REUTER P. and GREENFIELD V., 2001, "Measuring Global Drug Markets: How Good Are the Numbers and Why Should We Care About Them?", *World Economics*, 2-4, p.159-173.
- SANGER D.E., 2012, *Confront and Conceal*, New York, Crown Publishers.
- SCHERLEN R., 2012, "The Never-Ending Drug War: Obstacles to Drug War Policy Termination", *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 45-1, p.67-73.
- SCHLOSSER E., 2003, *Reefer Madness*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- SIRIN C., 2011, "From Nixon's War on Drugs to Obama's Drug Policies Today: Presidential Progress in Addressing Racial Injustices and Disparities", *Race, Gender & Class*, 18-3/4, p.82-99.
- STEIN J. 1994, "Political Learning by Doing: Gorbachev as Uncommitted Thinker and Motivated Learner", *International Organization*, 48-2, p.155-183.
- THOUMI F., 2012, "Illegal Drugs, Anti-Drug Policy Failure, and the Need for Institutional Reforms in Colombia", *Substance Use & Misuse*, 47-8/9, p.972-1004.
- YOUNGERS C. and ROSIN E., 2005, *Drugs and Democracy in Latin America*, Boulder, Colo., L. Rienner.