

Bachelor's thesis

A Real Life *Breaking Bad*: How and Why the War on Drugs Has Failed in New Mexico

Kim Baeten

Under the supervision of
Dr. Maarten van Gageldonk

Department of American Studies
Radboud University Nijmegen

June 2016

Radboud Universiteit



Engelse Taal en Cultuur

Teacher who will receive this document: Dr. Maarten van Gageldonk

Title of document: A Real Life *Breaking Bad*: How and Why the War on Drugs Has Failed in New Mexico

Name of course: Bachelorwerkstuk Amerikanistiek

Date of submission: 15-06-2016

The work submitted here is the sole responsibility of the undersigned, who has neither committed plagiarism nor colluded in its production.

Signed

Name of student: Kim Baeten

Student number: s4350944

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	1
ABSTRACT.....	2
<i>Keywords</i>	2
1 INTRODUCTION	
<i>1.1 Definition of the War on Drugs</i>	2
<i>1.2 Thesis organization</i>	3
2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT	
<i>2.1 United States' involvement in the War on Drugs</i>	5
3 CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR ON DRUGS IN THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO	
<i>3.1 Drugs use in New Mexico</i>	8
<i>3.2 Incarceration rates</i>	10
<i>3.3 Increase in violence/health related problems and overdoses</i>	11
4 EXPLANATIONS FOR RESULTS – FOREIGN POLICY	
<i>4.1 Partial victories</i>	13
<i>4.2 The balloon effect</i>	14
<i>4.3 The cockroach effect</i>	15
<i>4.4 Clashes of interest and policy priorities</i>	17
<i>4.5 Corruption</i>	19
5 EXPLANATIONS FOR RESULTS – DOMESTIC POLICY	
<i>5.1 The United States' motivation for the War on Drugs</i>	20
<i>5.2 Corruption</i>	22
<i>5.3 Lack of action on demand-side</i>	23
6 CONCLUSION	
<i>6.1 Conclusion</i>	25
<i>6.2 Suggestions for reform</i>	25
<i>6.3 New Mexico's attempts at improvement</i>	27
REFERENCES.....	39

Acknowledgements

Writing this Bachelor's thesis would not have been possible without the help of some of my teachers. Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr Maarten van Gageldonk, who provided me with feedback along the way and presented me with advice on how to improve this Bachelor's thesis. In addition, I would like to thank Dr László Munteán for his general advice on the process of thesis writing that he provided during his weekly seminars.

Abstract

The United States has one of the toughest anti-drug policies in the world. For over 40 years they have been fighting a so-called “War on Drugs” but data shows that drug use in the United States is at an all-time high. In fact, the United States remains the largest consumer of illicit drugs in the world. This Bachelor’s thesis seeks to find out what effects this War on Drugs has had on American society by using the state of New Mexico as a case study. After discussing the effects of the War on Drugs, this thesis will try to discover the reasons why the War on Drugs remains a large source of social and economic problems in the United States and has not booked any of the results that it was intended to book even though the War on Drugs has been going on for decades.

Keywords: War on Drugs, New Mexico, incarceration rates, corruption, health, balloon effect, cockroach effect, legalization, decriminalization, social security doctrine

Introduction

1.1 Definition of the War on Drugs

“The United States today is both the world’s largest importer of illicit drugs and the world’s largest exporter of bad drug policy (167).” This observation was made by Moisés Naím, internationally renowned columnist and commentator on globalization, international politics and economics, and he was very right. The amount of illicit drug users in the United States has been increasing for over a decade and drugs remain the cause of a large number of social and economic problems the United States is facing. In fact, the United States is the largest consumer of illicit drugs worldwide. The United States public is believed to spend as much as \$150 billion on illicit drugs a year at street prices (Bagley “The New Hundred Years War?” 164). Not only does this large number of illicit drug users result in social problems in the United States, it also affects the health and well-being of millions of Americans.

Cardiovascular disease, lung disease, stroke, cancer, infections with HIV, and hepatitis can all be affected by drug use. Some of these effects occur when drugs are used at high doses or after prolonged use. However, other adverse effects can occur after only one or a few occasions of use (SAMHSA 4). For example, an infection with HIV can occur after just one single injection of heroin with an infected needle, while throat cancer may occur after

prolonged use of smokeable crack cocaine. Results from the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health, published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an operating division within the United States Department of Health and Human Services, conclude that in 2014 27.0 million Americans aged 12 or older used an illicit drug in the 30 days prior to the survey, which corresponds to one in 10 Americans (10.2 percent). This percentage is higher than it has ever been from 2002 to 2013. In 2002 there were 8.3 million individuals aged 12 or older who had used drugs in the month prior to the SAMSHA survey. The survey shows an increase of almost two million users between 2002 and 2014. The SAMSHA recognizes nine categories of illicit drugs: marijuana and hashish, cocaine (including crack cocaine), heroine, tranquilizers, stimulants, hallucinogens, sedatives, inhalants, and the nonmedical use of prescription-type pain relievers. The two most used types of drugs are marijuana and nonmedically used pain relievers; there were over 22.2 million American marijuana users age 12 and up in the 30 days prior to the survey and 4.3 million nonmedical users of prescription pain relievers (SAMSHA 4). The National Survey on Drug Use and Health also concludes that 7.1 million Americans aged 12 or older were suffering from a disorder related to illicit drug use in 2014, such as a substance abuse disorder (SAMSHA 32). These high statistics are remarkable, because the United States' current regime of punishment for drug offenses ranks among the harshest in the world (Brienen and Rosen 1). The United States has been involved in a self-declared “War on Drugs” since 1971. The term is defined by Renee Scherlen of the Appalachian State University as “the use of a law enforcement approach to deter or punish users, sellers, and producers of illicit drugs. The policy emphasizes incarceration rates, eradication, interdictions, extradition, and supply reduction (67)”. This is also the definition that will be used throughout this Bachelor’s thesis.

1.2 Thesis organization

The United States – and the state of New Mexico alike – are facing serious problems relating drugs. High addiction rates, health problems, high incarceration rates, and violence are common throughout the United States. The results from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health brings up one specific question. How is it possible that these drug related problems only seem to increase throughout the United States even though the United States has been fighting the War on Drugs since the Nixon administration? The purpose of this thesis is to explain the consequences of the War on Drugs in the United States. It will look at the reasons

why the United States has failed to reduce the amount of drugs being smuggled into the country and failed to reduce the majority of drug related problems in the country and look at the consequences that the War on Drugs has had in the United States. The thesis argues that a change in anti-drug policies would help the United States to better combat all drug related problems. The state of New Mexico will function as a case study. This thesis will look at which results the War on Drugs has had on New Mexico and its citizens by offering a detailed outline of the social consequences of drug prohibition in New Mexico. The fictional television show *Breaking Bad* has put a lot of emphasis on the drug trade in the state of New Mexico. New Mexico's location near the Mexican border and its high number of drug overdose deaths make New Mexico a very interesting state to study. However, it is important to note that drug related problems are prevalent throughout the entire United States.

The historical context of the War on Drugs is given in the next chapter of this Bachelor's thesis. To understand why the United States chose for prohibitionist anti-drug policies in the first place there needs to be an understanding of what was going on in American society at the time. In the third chapter consequences of the War on Drugs in the United States will be discussed. As previously stated, there will be a specific focus on the state of New Mexico in this chapter. The chapter will mainly focus on New Mexico's high incarceration rates, drug related violence, and drug related health problems. Data from previous studies and surveys will be analysed to see how New Mexico's drug related problems have changed since the War on Drugs started. The fourth and fifth chapter will try to explain how the consequences discussed in the third chapter are even possible. The United States has spent billions of dollars on anti-drug policies since President Ronald Reagan intensified the War on Drugs in the 1980s. Why is the amount of drugs being smuggled into the United States not reduced and is drug use in the United States still at an all-time high after the United States has put in so much effort to reduce the supply of drugs to the United States? The fourth chapter will try to explain the failure of the War on Drugs by focussing on the disputable mistakes that the United States has made in regards to their foreign policy. The many small victories that the United States has had in drug producing countries, such as the capture of several drug lords in Latin America, have only caused the drug trade to change and develop making it harder for the United States government to keep up and combat the issues it brings along. The fifth chapter will try to explain the unexpected results of the War on Drugs by looking at what could be perceived as mistakes in the United States' domestic policy. The main flaw in the United States' domestic anti-drug policies is that they put too little emphasis on the demand side of the problem. A concluding chapter review the previous chapters of this

thesis. It will also briefly discuss the current decriminalization and legalization debate that is currently going on in the United States and look at a few steps that New Mexico has taken to successfully reduce the drug problems in their state.

Historical context

2.1 United States' involvement in the War on Drugs

To understand why the War on Drugs has not been able to reduce drug related problems in the United States it is important to know why the War on Drugs started in the first place. As previously stated, the War on Drugs started in 1971. President Richard Nixon held a press conference at the White House on June 17 1971 where he directly addressed the Congress of the United States. About the drug abuse problem that has existed in the United States since the 1960s Nixon said in his speech: “United Narcotics addiction is a problem which afflicts both the body and the soul of America. (Nixon par. 70)” President Nixon announced the creation of the Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention (SAODAP), which signified the start of the War on Drugs as it is known today. However, the drugs that Nixon was concerned about are more readily available today and at a lower price today than when the war was launched in 1971. Not only are these drugs more affordable and more accessible than they ever were before, but there are also new drugs which have hit the market in recent years, such as crystal meth and prescription drugs like OxyContin (Brienen and Rosen 5). In fact, the United States remains the leading consumer of drugs in the world (Brienen and Rosen 6). It is obvious that the War on Drugs has not booked the results that President Nixon had hoped for when he declared the “war” in 1971 after growing enthusiasm for harsh forms of prohibition throughout the United States. Drugs remain a source of economic, social, and medical problems all throughout the country. When did drugs become such a large source of problems and why did it become such a priority for the United States government to combat the arrival of drugs to the country? The United States has a long history of anti-drug sentiment that underlies their drug policy. As early as 1914 the Harrison Narcotics Tax Act was introduced, which regulated and taxed the manufacture and sale of drugs such as cocaine. However, it was not until the 1960s that a reactionary resistance arose to the drug-induced counterculture movement of that decade. Two years after Nixon’s press conference in 1971 the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) was created (Brienen and Rosen 2). While it was the Nixon administration who escalated the United States’ anti-drug policies to the rhetorical level of warfare, it is important to note that his drug prohibition policy was different from the anti-

drug policies today. Nixon recognized the importance of both the supply and demand side of the drug trade. In his press conference Nixon concluded the following:

The threat of narcotics among our people is one which properly frightens many Americans. It comes quietly into homes and destroys children, it moves into neighborhoods and breaks the fiber of community which makes neighbors. It is a problem which demands compassion, and not simply condemnation, for those who become the victims of narcotics and dangerous drugs. We must try to better understand the confusion and disillusion and despair that bring people, particularly young people, to the use of narcotics and dangerous drugs (Nixon par. 59).

This passage shows that Nixon recognized that drugs were trafficked because market forces made it economically attractive to do so. Nixon therefore allocated more than 50 percent of the drug control budget to programs for the treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention of drug abuse. By doing this Nixon tried to reduce the demand for drugs in the United States and thus starve the market (Brienen and Rosen 3).

In the 1980s President Ronald Reagan elevated the War on Drugs to a new level and paved the way for the United States' anti-drug policies today. Reagan's administration opted for complete prohibition of the production, sale, and use of illicit drugs believing that prohibition would discourage use (Miron and Zwiebel 175). Reagan's administration signed the Anti-Drug Abuse Act into law in 1986 (Bagley "The New Hundred Years War?" 164). The Anti-Drug Abuse Act implemented harsh punishments for low-level offenders. Anti-drug policies shifted from a policy focussed on both the supply and demand side of the trade to a policy that was mostly supply-side-oriented. Anti-drug efforts became less of a domestic issue and more of an issue in foreign policy. Militarization was Reagan's main solution to the drug related problems that the United States were facing (Brienen and Rosen 4). What caused Reagan's administration to make these harsh decisions and opt for this dramatic shift in United States policy? Reagan's administration most likely made this shift because a new type of drugs had emerged. Crack cocaine, a smokeable type of cocaine, became popularized in the early 1980s. Crack cocaine is a derivative of regular powdered cocaine hydrochloride. Ethnographic reports have linked the rise of crack cocaine to an increase in murder rates, gang violence, poverty, urban unemployment, and family disruption (Grogger and Willis 519). Crack cocaine is made by dissolving cocaine powder in water, adding baking soda, and then boiling the mixture until a solid separates from the solution. This process does not change any of the mechanical compounds of the cocaine, but does change the way the cocaine can be

digested and allows the cocaine to be smoked instead of snorted (Grogger and Willis 520). When the cocaine is smoked the cocaine molecules can concentrate in the brain much more rapidly than is possible by taking powdered cocaine intranasally. The euphoric effect that cocaine gives to its users has more to do with the speed at which the chemical compounds concentrate in the brain than with the level of the drug in the bloodstream. Crack cocaine therefore is a more intoxicating form of cocaine than regular powdered cocaine on a molecule-for-molecule basis. The process of creating crack cocaine out of regular powdered cocaine therefore reduces the unit cost of cocaine intoxication, shifting the supply curve to the right and expanding the market (Grogger and Willis 520). This expansion of the market is what is believed to lead to an increase in violence and gang activity. The risks of crack cocaine received national attention in 1986 after college basketball player Leonard Kevin "Len" Bias died aged 22 from an apparent crack cocaine overdose (Hartley and Miller 67). The emerge of this new drug and the death of Len Bias caused a nationwide moral panic and media frenzy. The media began describing the explosion in crack usage an "epidemic". The media played into this moral panic and competed over sensational stories about crack cocaine-related violence and crime. However, the stories that garnered the most attention were those which described premature infants who were exposed to crack cocaine during the pregnancy. Images of small babies in incubators took the media by storm. Stories about these so-called "crack babies" only increased the nationwide panic and the next generation was feared to be a generation of severely damaged children (Okie par. 3). A *Time Magazine* article from 1991 states: "Damaged by the drugs their mothers took, crack kids will face social and educational hurdles and must count on society's compassion (Toufexis par. 1)." The emerge of crack cocaine was no longer just a public health problem, but offended a wide range of deeply rooted social and moral views in the United States (Brienen and Rosen 4). This widespread fear and anger is what caused the Reagan administration to crank up the United States' anti-drug policies. The Reagan administration focussed on the supply side of the problem and thus focussed outwards. The blame was put on the countries held responsible for the production of these deadly substances which threatened American society (Brienen and Rosen 4). A 1988 *New York Times*/CBS News poll concluded that 48 percent of the respondents believed drug trafficking was the most important foreign policy issue facing the United States compared to arms control (13 percent), terrorism (9 percent), and Palestinian unrest (4 percent) (Bagley "The New Hundred Years War?" 161). New studies have, however, concluded that the stories about "crack babies" were blown out of proportion and that the usage of crack cocaine never posed as large of a problem than many initially believed. Crack cocaine is undoubtedly bad

for a fetus, but its effects are less severe than those of alcohol and are comparable to those of tobacco – two legal substances that are consumed more often by pregnant women (Okie par. 6). Pediatrician Dr Deborah A. Frank from Boston University states that the usage of crack cocaine during pregnancy slows fetal growth, causing exposed infants tend to be born smaller than unexposed infants and have smaller heads. However, she also states that brain and body size catch up as the “crack babies” grow older (qtd. in Okie par. 10).

Consequences of the War on Drugs in the state of New Mexico

3.1 Drug use in New Mexico

The state of New Mexico is no exception to America’s extreme drug related problems. The fictional crime drama television show *Breaking Bad*, which takes place in Albuquerque, New Mexico, has brought attention to New Mexico’s social problems. The critically-acclaimed television show (the series finale hit 10.3 million viewers (Hibberd par. 2)) was broadcast between 2008 and 2013 on AMC. In the television show chemistry teacher Walter White teams up with a former student to start a business producing and selling crystallized methamphetamine. In reality, the state of New Mexico appears to be quite similar to the fictional drug Valhalla that *Breaking Bad* makes it out to be. The amount of drug users and drug related accidents in New Mexico has grown exponentially. The New Mexico Department of Health published a report on drug abuse patterns and trends in New Mexico in which they state that the rates of drug overdose deaths per 100,000 population increased dramatically from 7.31 in 1994 to 19.96 in 2003 (“Key Findings” 1). This means that 2.3 times as many people died in 2003 from a drug overdose in New Mexico than in 1994. The Drug Enforcement Administration reports that marijuana is the most widely consumed and most widely available illicit drug in New Mexico. Over 8,000 kilograms of marijuana was seized in New Mexico in 2004, compared to less than 1,500 kilograms in 2003. The DEA also reports an increase in methamphetamine production and abuse in New Mexico (“Key Findings” 4)

The official nickname of the state of New Mexico is “the State of Enchantment”. New Mexico has earned this nickname due to its rich history and beautiful nature. However, living conditions in New Mexico are not always as enchanting as its nickname tries to make it seem and New Mexico faces a number of social problems every day, such as a high poverty and unemployment rate. As of 2015 New Mexico has a population of 2,045,525. In 2014 21.3 percent of New Mexicans had an income below the poverty line. After Mississippi (21.5 percent) New Mexico is the state with the most people living in poverty. 6.5 percent of New

Mexicans were unemployed in 2014. (“New Mexico 2015”) Not only is the demand for drugs high in New Mexico because these poor social conditions in the state of New Mexico make using drugs appealing for many New Mexicans, the supply of drugs to the state is also plentiful. Due to its low population density – some counties are averaging fewer than three people per square mile – and the fact that it borders Mexico, New Mexico has proven to be an attractive entryway into the United States for traffickers of illegal drugs. New Mexico’s terrain is also favorable to drug traffickers. New Mexico has hundreds and thousands of acres of wilderness and national forest, seldom travelled, paved highways, and more than 300 abandoned or unattended airfields. These physical attributes make New Mexico an attractive place to both ground and air smugglers (Governor’s Organized Crime Prevention Commission 4). This has allowed drugs to become widespread in New Mexico. In recent years new types of drugs have appeared and polydrug abuse has become more common in New Mexico. Heroin and cocaine abuse continues to pose the greatest threat to communities in the state (Selander and Monnette 47). There has been a significant increase in the amount of cocaine seized in New Mexico. In 2003 75.07 kilograms of cocaine were seized and over 211.97 kilos in 2004 (Selander and Monnette 47). This increase in drug seizures might make it seem like the state of New Mexico is being successful in their efforts to take drugs off the streets, however, American narcotics experts believe that interdiction programs only catch around three percent of marijuana and 10 percent of cocaine imports, making it likely that more, rather than less, drugs are being smuggled into the state (Bagley, “The New Hundred Years War?” 166). Marijuana is often used in combination with other drugs such as heroin and cocaine (Selander and Monnette 48). Measures taken by the federal and state governments have not been able to reach their overall goal in New Mexico: to reduce drug use in the state. This is despite increases in resources, manpower, drug seizures, and arrests. It is important to view the War on Drugs in New Mexico in a broader perspective and also take into account what the human costs and consequences have been. The market in illegal drugs promotes crime, produces and exacerbates poverty, and erodes the moral fabric of society (Miron and Zwiebel 176). This is also the case in the state of New Mexico and the following subchapters will illuminate some of the consequences that the United States’ prohibitionist anti-drug policies have had in the state.

3.2 Incarceration rates

One of the most obvious consequences of the War on Drugs in New Mexico is the historically unprecedented number of people in prison. The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the entire world and this is mostly due to its tough anti-drug policies. Between 1980 and 1995 – when the War on Drugs intensified at a fast pace – the prison population of the United States increased almost fivefold (Bureau of Justice Statistics). Due to extensive efforts to incarcerate drug offenders and congressionally prescribed “mandatory minimums” and sentencing guidelines the criminal justice system in the United States has changed dramatically. War on Drugs measures include the infamous three-strikes laws and lengthy first-time drug offender sentences. In 2014 an estimated 1.561.500 Americans were serving time in a federal or state prison. In 1980 the estimated prison population was made up out of just 329.800 Americans. There were also an estimated 4.708.100 Americans on probation or parole in 2014, compared to just 1.338.500 in 1980 (Bureau of Justice Statistics). Over half of the new felony convictions in the United States involved young and nonviolent drug offenders (“Winning the War on Drugs” 1485). In New Mexico this trend continues. In fiscal year 2012 New Mexico counted 6,772 inmates. This number is very close to the highest count of state inmates New Mexico has ever recorded (6,873 inmates in 2007) and is only expected to rise (New Mexico Sentencing Commission 2). In New Mexico almost a quarter of all prison inmates (23,7 percent) is incarcerated for a drug-related offense (New Mexico Sentencing Commission 8).

The truth about these numbers is that the majority of the people arrested for drug offenses and sentenced to a prison sentence are mainly minor offenders. In the United States over 36 percent of all prisoners sentenced for drug offenses are “low level drug offenders with no current or prior violent offenses on their record, no involvement in sophisticated criminal activity, and no previous prison time” and they are sentenced to an average of 81.5 months (qtd. in Chambliss 105). The War on Drugs has not succeeded in diminishing the supply of drugs or affecting usage, but it has succeeded in criminalizing an extremely large amount of seemingly innocent Americans. In 2010, 853,838 people were arrested for possessing marijuana and 88 percent of these individuals were charged with a criminal offense (Brienen and Rosen 7). In New Mexico arrestees were usually men younger than 30. They often had a low family income, with more than three-quarters having a total family income of less than \$25,000 per year (Winn 41). Once these drug offenders leave prison, successful integration

into society is often difficult. Little drug treatment is offered in American prisons (even though health programs are now offered, this will be elaborated on in the conclusion) which makes it difficult for offenders to address the causes of their addiction or to develop the coping strategies necessary for a drug-free life. This significantly enlarges the change of recidivism. In addition, convicted felons in New Mexico do not get their right to vote back until they have completed their parole and probation after their term of incarceration. Offenders are often also facing difficulty with finding legitimate employment following incarceration (“Winning the War on Drugs” 1493). This increases the already extremely high poverty and unemployment rates in the state of New Mexico.

The high incarceration rate in the United States also proves to be extremely expensive. Building and maintaining a prison system large enough to support this high amount of new inmates due to the War on Drugs has proved extraordinarily costly. The number of both federal prison and state prisons has increased nearly tenfold since the War on Drugs has started (“Winning the War on Drugs” 1487). Nationwide over 1600 new prison beds are required each week to keep pace with new arrests and convictions. The fixed cost of building a prison ranges from \$60,000 to \$75,000 per inmate. The average prison’s operating cost is about \$60 per day per inmate, or an annual \$22,000 dollars per inmate (“Winning the War on Drugs” 1487). New Mexico’s prison system is exceeding capacity by an average of 133 inmates every year. In New Mexico the average cost of incarceration is \$30,000 per inmate per year and the average cost of probation and parole in New Mexico is \$1,533 per person per year (Szczepanski 1). A study conducted at the Brown University Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies concludes that the average cost for drug treatment per year is between \$1,800 and \$6,800 dollars per year. For each person that receives treatment rather than being incarcerated, New Mexico could save between \$22,000 and \$27,000 per year (Szczepanski 1). Not only will treatment save taxpayers’ money, it will also save many offenders from recidivism or unemployment. A lower unemployment rate in New Mexico will then in return reduce the number of drug abusers in the state. The money saved on prison sentences is better spent on rehabilitations programs or educational programs to prevent the use of drugs in New Mexico even further.

3.3 Increase in violence/health related problems and overdoses

Since the War on Drugs has failed to reduce the amount of drugs that are being imported into the state of New Mexico and the drug consumption is at an all-time high, New Mexico is

faced with many problems that are brought into the state along with the drugs. One of these problems is the increase in violence. Because of the disproportionately high punishments for drug offenders, participants in the illegal trade cannot use the legal and judicial system. The marginal benefits to using violence to resolve disputes increases. Additionally, participants in illegal drug trade often feel a greater need to protect themselves and create a powerful social position, making them more likely to resort to violence. The murder rate in the United States also rose to historically high levels through the 1970s and 1980s. This coincides with a drastic increase in drug law enforcement (Miron and Zwiebel 178). Not only the prohibition of drugs but also the usage of drugs can lead to violent offences. In New Mexico 45.5 percent of the total inmate population in the state penitentiary were high or has admitted illicit drug use at the time of arrest. 11.3 percent of inmates were high on heroin at the time of their arrest (Governor's Organized Crime Prevention Commission 45).

Another effect of drug prohibition in New Mexico is that it brings along several health related issues. Government quality regulation does not exist for illegal substances and buyers cannot complain to law officials about the quality of their illicit drugs without incriminating themselves. This allows for accidental poisonings and overdoses (Miron and Zwiebel 179). Accidental poisonings and overdoses also occur because the lack of demand-side oriented policies do not allow for proper education about illicit drugs. In fact, New Mexico has the highest rate of drug overdose deaths in the United States. This consequence of drug abuse is especially noticeable in northern New Mexico, where most larger cities are located such as Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe. Illicit drugs caused more than three-quarters of the deaths in those cities (Landen 7). The rate of drug-related deaths has been increasing since 1990. However, the rate in New Mexico has been at least twice the rate for the United States as a whole since 1990. In 2002 the drug-related death rate had increased to more than 16 per 100,000. This amounts to about 1,859 drug overdose deaths between 1995 and 2003 (Scharmen, Roth-Edwards, and Shah 10). White Hispanics are suffering the highest rate of drug-related deaths; in 2002 20.1 per 100,000 White Hispanics had a drug-related death (Landen 7). In north-western New Mexico the vast majority (98 percent) of drug-caused deaths occurred in persons aged 15-24 (Scharmen, Roth-Edwards, and Shah 11). Most overdoses are non-fatal. Between 1998 and 2002 New Mexico had 8,957 non-fatal hospitalizations for drug abuse. During these years drug abuse-related non-fatal hospitalizations increased 57 percent, from 77 hospitalizations per 100,000 to 121 per 100,000. Cocaine accounted for 35 percent of hospitalizations (Kumar and Shah 22).

Explanations for results – foreign policy

4.1 Partial victories

The case study on the consequences of the War on Drugs in New Mexico revealed that the United States has not yet won the “war”. The following two chapters will discuss several explanations for the results of the War on Drugs. This chapter will focus on the United States’ anti-drug efforts abroad and will show that America’s interference often indirectly enlarges the drug problem instead of making it smaller. After President Ronald Reagan signed the Anti-Drug Abuse Act into law in 1986 anti-drug policies significantly intensified. The Anti-Drug Abuse Act laid the focus on the supply side of the problem and augmented interdiction at the border and provided additional resources for eradication, crop substitution, and enforcement programs abroad (Bagley “The New Hundred Years War?” 165). From fiscal year 1981 to 1988 authorized federal spending on drug control more than tripled, rising from \$1.2 billion to \$3.9 billion. During this period government spending on overseas narcotics control efforts also more than tripled and the United States was now spending over \$200 million annually instead of \$40 million just a few years prior (Bagley “The New Hundred Years War?” 165). Most of the illicit drugs that are smuggled into the United States are produced in Latin America. Around 65 percent of marijuana that enters the United States market is produced in Mexico and Colombia alone. Virtually all cocaine that enters the United States is produced in Colombia, Peru, or Bolivia (Bagley “The New Hundred Years War?” 163). As was previously discussed in this thesis the amount of drugs available and the amount of drugs being used in the United States is at an all-time high and this has negative social consequences for many Americans. Those involved in the drug trade have numerous opportunities to smuggle their products into the United States. Each year over 290 million people cross United States borders. Additionally, 7.5 million cargo containers and 100 million pieces of mail arrived in the United States annually (Mabry 54). The total border of the United States covers around 88,633 miles. It is impressive that in 2014 the United States has managed to seize 135,943 pounds of cocaine, 2,015 pounds of heroin, 4,330,475 pounds of marijuana, and 6,135 pounds of methamphetamine (“Statistics – Drug Seizures”). It appears that the United States’ federal government has been spending billions of dollars on the War on Drugs but has only had failures in their attempts to reduce the supply of drugs. However, this is not the truth. The United States has booked many successes in drug producing countries, such as large drug

seizures or arrests of important players in the drug world. One of the most well-known victories is the death of infamous kingpin and head of the Medellín cartel Pablo Escobar in December 1993. The United States special forces assisted the Colombian Search Bloc, a special police unit founded to deal with Pablo Escobar and his cartel, in killing Escobar. However, these short-term and often heavily publicized “victories” in the War on Drugs – which sometimes also result in human rights violations - have been followed by return to business-as-usual with no long-term negative consequences for the drug cartels (Mohammad and Fulkerson 236). In reality, these successes in reducing the supply of drugs are actually just causing the drug circuit to change and develop and are actually indirectly enlarging the drug-related problems in the United States. The rest of this chapter will highlight some of the ways the United States managed to enlarge the production of drugs while they attempted to diminish it.

4.2 The balloon effect

One effect that the help from the United States has had on the production of drugs is the “balloon effect”. The balloon effect is one of the largest developments the drug world has gone through in the 21st century. The balloon effect refers to the phenomenon that new areas of drug cultivation or new smuggling routes pop up as soon as the United States’ government manages to destroy one. For example, from the middle of the nineteenth century through the mid-1980s Peru and Bolivia were the two countries that supplied both the most coca leaf, a leaf which is used in the production of cocaine and refined cocaine to the United States. In 1985 Peru produced roughly 65 percent of the world’s supply of coca leaf. Bolivia produced an approximate 25 percent. Colombia’s role in the world’s coca leaf production was still relatively small at this time (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 3). When the Reagan administration commenced with its efforts to destroy the supply of drugs in the Andean Community, a union comprising of Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, the Reagan administration started with crop eradication programs in Bolivia (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 3). One measure the United States took to eradicate coca crops is aerial fumigation. Aerial fumigation has actually proven to be extremely harmful to the environment, food crops, and health. Health complaints associated with aerial spraying include respiratory problems, skin rashes, diarrhea, eye problems, and miscarriages (Spraying 1). The United States also interrupted the “air bridge” between coca regions in Peru. While the United States’ efforts were successful in diminishing the coca leaf production in Bolivia

and Peru, their “victories” in the southern Andes only caused coca cultivation in the region to rapidly shift from Bolivia and Peru to Colombia in the mid- and late 1990s (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 3). As a result, Colombia cultivated an estimated 90 percent of the world’s coca leaf in 2000 (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 4).

The United Nations Office of Drug and Crime 2015 World Drug Report indicated that coca bush cultivation in Colombia is now at historically low levels. In 2013 89,215 ha was under cultivation. This is 34 percent less than in 2012. The potential production of pure cocaine in Colombia was estimated at 290 tons, the lowest level since 1996 (50). While coca leaf production in Colombia has not returned to pre-2000 levels, these statistics do not say a whole lot about the total extent of coca leaf production in the Andean Community.

Simultaneously, after almost two decades of decline, the coca cultivation in Bolivia and Peru has greatly expanded (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 6). Evidently, the balloon effect that allowed coca cultivation to shift from Bolivia and Peru to Colombia in the 1990s continues to operate as coca cultivation moved back from Colombia to Bolivia and Peru at the end of the first decade of the 2000s due to the focus of United States attention and resources on Colombia in those years. Various observers have speculated that the balloon effect may strike again and coca cultivation will move from its traditional growing areas in the Andean Community into Brazil and elsewhere in the Amazon basin in coming years if ongoing or renewed eradication efforts prove successful in Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 6).

United States eradication efforts have not only caused there to be a shift in areas of coca cultivation, but also in smuggling routes. United States law enforcement and military operations closed down the established Caribbean smuggling routes used by the Columbian Medellín and Cali cartels in the 1980s. These smuggling routes were quickly replaced with new routes in the early 1990s. The new smuggling routes used Panama and Central America, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Pacific Corridor to reach Mexico and then cross from Mexico into the United States (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 7). After Mexican drug cartels came to play a more prominent role in the drug trade after the fall of the Medellín and Cali cartels due to the “cockroach effect”, the Pacific Corridor became the principal smuggling route into the United States.

4.3 The cockroach effect

A second effect that the United States' supply-side oriented anti-drug strategies has had on drug production is the "cockroach effect". The cockroach effect is defined by the dispersion and fragmentation of criminal drug trafficking organizations. The trend got its name because it is reminiscent of cockroaches scurrying out of a dirty kitchen into other places to avoid detection after a light has been turned on them (Bagley "Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime" 11). The cockroach effect was most notable in Colombia in the 1990s. The Medellín cartel, run by Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria, was the largest drug cartel in Colombia at the time and, together with the Cali cartel, held a monopoly over the manufacture and trafficking of cocaine in the country. Pablo Escobar was the pioneer of Colombia's cocaine trade and his Medellín cartel was a vertically integrated, hierarchical criminal enterprise which processed coca leaves into cocaine in Colombia's jungles and then flew it to the United States in huge quantities (McDermott par. 3). Escobar was shot in 1993 by the Search Bloc, a special Colombian police unit backed by the United States special forces, and the reign of the Medellín cartel's era of drug trafficking soon came to an end after Escobar's death. The Cali cartel managed to keep the monopoly on the drug trade for two more years, but also ceased to exist after the cartel's leaders, the Rodríguez Orejuela brothers, were captured in 1995 (McDermott par. 3). The United States was highly praised for their role in ending the drug trade in Colombia, but after the fall of the Medellín and Cali cartels the drug trade in Colombia continued apace. Colombia witnessed a rapid fragmentation and dispersion of criminal networks that have proven far more difficult for law enforcement agencies to track down and dismantle than their larger and more notorious predecessors. There was no longer a figure like Escobar who controlled all the links in the chain and ruled over the cocaine industry and over 300 smaller drug trafficking organizations, known as *cartelitos*, surfaced to fill the vacuum left by the dismantling of the two major cartels in the political economy of Colombia's still highly profitable drug trade (Bagley "Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime" 4). The *cartelitos* differ from the old cartels. They focus on establishing political influence at the municipal and departmental levels rather than at the national level and expand their economic interests beyond drug trafficking to also include other activities. From the Colombian state's perspective such organizations are less threatening because they lack the capacity to threaten state security directly (Bagley "Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime" 4).

The cockroach effect also appears to occur in Mexico. Drug trafficking groups in Mexico appear to be following the same pattern of dispersion and fragmentation as their Colombian counterparts. After the two largest and most powerful cartels, the Tijuana cartel

and the Juárez cartel, were targeted by Mexican and American police forces Mexico has seen the rise of at least five new major trafficking organizations and a host of smaller, lesser known groups. Besides the Juárez and Tijuana cartels, the Sinaloa (whose leader Joaquín Guzmán Loera, better known as “El Chapo”, was captured in January of this year), Jalisco New Generation, Gulf, Familia Michocana, and Beltrán Leyva cartels are now in charge of the Mexican drug trade (Morton 1639). These Mexican drug cartels are also directly active in the United States. According to the United States National Drug Intelligence Center, these Mexican drug cartels have established operations in 195 American cities (Naím 167). The balloon effect and the cockroach effect show that many of the victories the United States has seen in the War on Drugs are insignificant. United States efforts to eradicate the production of drugs in Latin America has proven unable to disrupt seriously or permanently stop the production or trafficking of illicit drugs from drug producing countries into the United States. The trafficker’s constant adaptations to law enforcement measures designed to end their activities have led to contamination of more countries in the region by the drug trade (Bagley “Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime” 7). The United States fails to keep up with these developments in drug production.

4.5 Clashes of interests and policy priorities

Another reason why the United States’ foreign policy has not been able to put a halt to the large amounts of drugs entering the United States is because the United States has not prioritized imposing their anti-drug regulations on countries that they needed to be on their good side. For example, in 1988 the General Accounting Office of Bolivia’s government reported that Bolivia’s illicit coca trade had grown at an annual rate of 35 percent a year since 1980. They claimed this was due to “an unprecedented level of corruption which extends to virtually every level of Bolivian government and Bolivian society, including the police, military and judicial systems (qtd. in Marshall 30).” Yet United States narcotics aid continued to this corrupt regime without question. The fact that the United States does not always seem to prioritize the War on Drugs can be seen in some of President Ronald Reagan’s decisions as a president. Reagan’s 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act promised to decertify all drug producing countries which fail to fully cooperate with United States authorities. However, Reagan has never used his powers to punish a close ally. In 1988 the Reagan administration decertified only four countries – Afghanistan, Syria, Iran, and Panama – none of whom were then receiving military or economic assistance from the United States (Bagley “The New Hundred

Years War?” 169). Reagan also did not impose sanctions of several heroin producing countries in Asia, including Pakistan, because most of them share borders with Communist nations and the struggle against Communist expansion was given diplomatic priority over the War on Drugs. The biggest clashes of interests occurred in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014. Afghanistan is a big player in the world’s opium market. The United States claims that the United States and NATO were conducting a War on Drugs in Afghanistan in order to reduce drug consumption in the West and weaken the Taliban. However, looking at the fact that the United States was supporting many Afghan leaders who had significant roles in the Afghan drug trade it seems like the United States had other political priorities. The War on Drugs in Afghanistan can be described as a rhetorical device that was used by the United States to facilitate overseas military intervention and the fight against insurgents opposed to United States policies (Mercille 285). United States intervention in Afghanistan has even led to an increase in opium production in Afghanistan, which skyrocketed from 185 tons in 2001 to 6,900 tons in 2009 (Mercille 294). The United States insisted that the Taliban was the driving force behind Afghanistan’s drug industry and that therefore they had to be stopped. However, the Taliban only plays a minor role in the opium economy and drug money is only a secondary source of funding for them. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime estimates that only 10 to 15 percent of Taliban funding is drawn from drugs and 85 percent comes from “non-opium” sources such as private donations (Mercille 294). This fact causes many to raise eyebrows at the United States’ intention behind their intervention in Afghanistan. When the United States entered Afghanistan in 2001 they formed an alliance with Northern Alliance warlords and drug lords. These men were showered with weapons, money, and diplomatic support. The empowerment and enrichment of these people enabled the Northern Alliance to tax and protect opium traffickers (Mercille 296), further obelizing the United States’ motives for their involvement in Afghanistan. In 2005 the United States’ Drug Enforcement Agency found nine tons of opiates in the offices of the governor of Helmand, Sher Mohammed Akhundzada. Akhundzada was removed from the governorship but was soon appointed as a Member of Parliament in Afghanistan. Akhundzada never faced charges (Mercille 297). The *New York Times* reported that officials “had been thwarted in their attempts to stem drug corruption” by American officials and had been “blocked from taking any action against the governor, who had close ties to American and British military, intelligence and diplomatic officials (qtd. in Mercille 297).” These examples of United States involvement in Afghanistan illustrate that drug control policy is generally overridden by more important foreign policy objectives.

4.6 Corruption

Another reason why the United States' foreign policy efforts have not succeeded in reducing their drug problem is because corruption occurs in many of the drug producing countries' governments. Because the United States has not succeeded in lowering the demand for drugs at home, there has been a transfer of power from governments to criminals in a growing number of countries. In many countries narcotraffickers are a major source of economic opportunity, jobs, and money for elections (Naím 168). Mexico's attorney general has stated that America consumers buy an estimated \$10 billion worth of drugs from Mexico's cartels each year. According to the United States Department of Defense this money allows Mexico's cartels to train, equip, and pay for a highly motivated army of 100,00 that almost equals Mexico's national army and often outguns them (Naím 167). Drug cartels are known to often bribe politicians and state officials in Latin America. The phrase *plomo o plata*, meaning silver or lead, is used in Latin America and is a euphemism for accepting bribe or facing bullets. Drug cartel payments have been used to pay the military or police to, for example, not raid laboratories, make arrests, or to block investigations. Furthermore, prosecutors and judges are bribed not to prosecute or convict members of drug cartels (Thachuk 114). It is believed that in the 1980s over 80 percent of the Medellín police department was on the drug cartel's payroll (Thachuk 115). Due to the growing political influence of drug cartels and the corruption in Latin American countries diminishing the supply of drugs is a difficult task for the United States forces. The drug cartels in Latin America often resort to violence if a bribe fails. In the weeks leading up to the June 2015 national and local legislative elections in Mexico several Mexican politicians were killed by drug cartels. Enrique Hernández Salcedo, a mayoral candidate in the south of Mexico, was shot just weeks prior to the election. Salcedo reportedly was a member of a group that fought against the Knights Templar drug cartel and criticized the local government for corruption (Woody par. 2). On the same day a councilman candidate from the governing party, Héctor López Cruz, was shot outside of his home by gang members (Woody par. 3). The killings of Salcedo and Cruz came just two weeks after the beheading of another mayoral candidate (Woody par. 4). The corruption in many drug producing nations prevents the United States from reducing the supply of drugs coming from

these countries. However, it is the growing demand in the United States that has given the drug cartels this great amount of political power.

Explanations for results – domestic policy

5.1 The United States' motivation for the War on Drugs

As has been mentioned earlier, the decisions the United States has made when it comes to their foreign policy have not succeeded in reducing the drug related problems in the United States. It can, however, be argued that the failure of the anti-drug policies in the United States are also (partially) to blame on the United States' domestic policy. Several scholars, including Waltraud Queiser Morales, a political science professor at the University of Central Florida who specializes in Latin America, theorize that the main issue regarding the War on Drugs is the fact that the United States never even really "went to war" with the intention to eliminate the threat of drugs in American society. This theory argues that the War on Drugs is just a façade and functions as a national security doctrine. National security is not only defined as the protection of a nation's people and territories from a physical attack, but also as the more extensive concept of the protection of political and economic interests considered essential by those who exercise political power to the fundamental values and the vitality of the state. Often more insidious internal threats to the well-being of the United States, such as poverty, inequality, racism, and political corruption, are dismissed in preference to bogus or exaggerated external dangers. A national security doctrine almost functions as a religious dogma, subject to a higher morality whereby the end justifies the means (Morales 149). A national security doctrine is often credible, but is often more harmful to the state itself and the way of life of its citizens than the thing it is trying to save the state from. This is also the case for the United States' anti-drug policies. The devastating results of this are discussed in the New Mexico case study in chapter three. United States drug enforcement abroad simply serves an agenda of political control in the Third World rather than disrupting the supply of drugs at their source (Marshall 30). This national security doctrine theory has everything to do with the clashes of interests and policy priorities discussed in subchapter 4.5 and would give an explanation to why the United States had other priorities and interests in those drug producing countries. Jonathan Marshall, an independent writer and historian who specializes in United States foreign policy, war, and parapolitics, even believes that communism is still

the number one motivator behind the United States' narcotics enforcement policies. Marshall explains his view in his publication "Hidden Agendas in the War on Drugs":

United States drug programs have sometimes served to overcome congressional reluctance to aid foreign security forces – many of which profit on the side from the drug trade – in their war against left wing guerrilla movements. This explains why so much of United States narcotics assistance is in the form of military aid, rather than as economic support for crop substitution (30).

Morales agrees with Marshall that the War on Drugs originally serves as a national security doctrine, but believes the War on Drugs functions as a new United States security doctrine which was originally intended to take over the role of communism and replace it. Morales explains very well how the fear of communism legitimized United States' decisions on both foreign and domestic policy and even became like a form of religion:

During the twentieth century anticommunism has served effectively as the cornerstone of United States national security doctrines. Anticommunism has functioned as an ideology and a secular religion which has legitimized both legal and illegal, moral and immoral acts of foreign policy in the cause of national survival – the protection of democracy and the American way of life (147).

By the 1980s, however, anticommunism was starting to lose its 'fear' potential. More and more academics, intellectuals, and even members of the general public were starting to question the rhetoric in relation to the political reality. Several international events, such as the Vietnam War, threatened the old consensus and caused scepticism to arise. This scepticism undermined the largely unimpeded control over foreign policy that had been exerted until then. The Vietnam War – and the 'Vietnam syndrome' that plagued the United States after the War - was as a significant watershed in the way Americans thought about the United States' decisions in policy making (Morales 147). Vietnam syndrome is the name given to the malaise that struck the American psyche after the Vietnam War (Mendible par. 1). It was a public aversion to American overseas involvements, following the domestic controversy over the Vietnam War. The Vietnam syndrome was interpreted as a loss of nerve and this posed a fundamental problem for national security: credibility (Morales 148). Some scholars, such as Waltraud Queiser Morales, believe that Reagan felt a desperate need for a new national security doctrine during his presidency. This new national security doctrine needed to be more persuasive than the war on communism, and the War on Drugs proved to be a good replacement (Morales 148). A September 1988 Americans Talk Security opinion survey

revealed that 44 percent of the voters ranked international drug trafficking as an extreme serious threat to United States security, compared to only 18 percent for the threat of Soviet military strength (Morales 149). The rise of crack cocaine in the 1980s that is described in chapter two coincided with major foreign policy setbacks in Latin America and supporters of the national security doctrine theory believe that the Reagan's administration used the nationwide panic over crack cocaine as a justification to escalate the War on Drugs, while in reality Reagan's administration did this to "project United States power, train local militaries, transfer military hardware, and gather intelligence (Morales 149)." This drug war national security doctrine is used to generate public support behind a resurgent, interventionist foreign policy in the Third World, especially by the Reagan administration, according to supporters of the theory.

5.2 Corruption

While the reasons behind the harsh anti-drug policies of the United States are arguable and the drug related problems that the War on Drugs brings along might exist because the United States never really saw the War on Drugs as a priority but used it as a cover-up for other foreign policies, it is undeniable that errors were made in the United States regarding the War on Drugs. One reason why the United States' domestic policy might be to blame for the lack of good results that the anti-drug efforts have booked is because there have been many cases of corruption on the American side of the drug trade. While it is more plausible that the governments of drug producing countries (especially in Latin America) are subjected to corruption, this is also the case in the United States. The distribution of drug war benefits is extensive and drug prohibition and its mechanics are located in all 50 states. The War on Drugs influence city, county, and state law enforcements and drug war prosecution happens to be a key source of law enforcement and judicial funding. People who work in corrections as well as in law enforcement have job security issues to consider while evaluating the continuation of the War on Drugs (Scherlen 71). The huge amounts of money involved in the War on Drugs make drug enforcement police particularly vulnerable to bribes and corruption.

Professor William Joseph Chambliss, criminologist and sociologist, identifies many examples of times where local or federal law enforcement is believed to have implicated in international narcotics smuggling. For example, in 1993 the American Central Intelligence Agency cooperated with the Colombian Medellín cartel to ship one ton of cocaine into the United States – ostensibly to infiltrate the cartel. The United States Drug Enforcement Agency

publicly accused the two Central Intelligence Agency agents of engaging in criminal activities in this case, but the case has never been properly investigated and the \$20 million (the wholesale price of the cocaine in Latin America) paid by the Medellín cartel to the two Central Intelligence Agency agents for the cocaine has never been accounted for. The whole affair appears to have been swept under the rug. Immediately after the whole affair one of the two Central Intelligence Agency agents retired and the other was transferred (Chambliss 108). Another examples of corruption in United States drug enforcement was given by George Morales. Morales, one of the largest drug smugglers in Colombia, testified that he was approached by the Central Intelligence Agency in 1984 to fly weapons to Nicaragua to aid Nicaraguan rebel forces, known as *contras* (Schneider par. 3). According to Morales, the Central Intelligence Agency opened up an airstrip in Costa Rica and provided Morales' pilots with information on the location of radar traps. Gary Betzner, Morales' pilot, testified that he flew over 4,000 pounds of arms to Costa Rica and El Salvador (Schneider par. 10; Chambliss 108). In return, the Central Intelligence Agency would allow Morales to smuggle thousands of kilograms of cocaine back into the United States. Morales claims that when he expressed concern over the illegal activity being investigated by Federal agents, Marcos Aguado, one of the Central Intelligence Agents allegedly involved in the case, told Morales "he was going to take care of that (qtd. in Schneider par. 11)." William Chambliss manages to name many more examples of corruption in the United States. For example, after a 1993 Mollen Commission report on police corruption in New York several police officers came forwards and explained how they had accepted bribes from drug dealers, engaged in drug trafficking, or stole drugs that they later sold. Around 20 New York police officers were charged after the publication (Chambliss 109). The current drug policies make it inevitable that individual police officers will be tempted into corruption. Due to the fact that the United States' War on Drugs is plagued with corruption, both in drug producing countries and in the United States itself, it has become extremely difficult to combat the War on Drugs.

5.3 Lack of focus on the demand side

The most obvious reason for the failure to reduce the amount of drugs being smuggled into the United States, the amount of drugs being used in the United States, and all the consequences that come with it – it has been prevalent throughout the entire thesis and is at the basis of most other explanations for the lack of results that the War on Drugs has booked in the United States - is the fact that the War on Drugs is almost completely supply-side

oriented. This is not surprising: caught up in the anti-drug frenzy United States politicians of both political parties jumped on the anti-drug bandwagon months before the 1980 election and competed to see who could propose the “toughest” anti-drug policies. What elected president Ronald Reagan failed to do is learn from his predecessor Richard Nixon, who first initiated the War on Drugs. Nixon recognized drugs were only trafficked because market forces make it economically attractive to do so. During Nixon’s presidency over 50 percent of the drug control budget was still allocated to treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention of drug abuse (Brienen and Rosen 3). There was a focus on more and earlier education in schools and increased federal support for state prevention efforts. Joaquín “El Chapo” Guzmán, who was captured after a Rolling Stone interview with actor Sean Penn, explained the dynamic between the supply and demand side of the drug market very well. When Penn asked kingpin Guzmán, “What is the relationship between production, sale, and consumption?” Guzmán answered: “If there was no consumption, there would be no sales. It is true that consumption, day after day, becomes bigger and bigger. So it sells and sells (qtd. in Miron par. 2). “El Chapo” hits the nail on the head: as long as consumers want drugs, markets will produce and sell them. Because drugs are outlawed in the United States, the market stays underground. (Partially) legalizing drugs would allow drugs to occur as in any other industry. Prohibition might reduce drug use in drug use to some degree, but available evidence shows that countries with more modest and laxer drug laws, like the Netherlands and Portugal for example, have much lower usage rates than they do in the United States (Miron par. 3). Household surveys concluded that 10.8 percent of people between 12 and 70 in the United States have used cocaine in their lifetime, compared to just 5.3 percent in the Netherlands (Chambliss 117). The percentage of cocaine users in the United States is over double the percentage of cocaine users in the Netherlands. The difference between illicit drugs users in the Netherlands and in the United States is largest among teenagers. The differences in percentages are enormous. 43.7 percent of 17- and 18-year-olds in the United States have used marijuana in their lifetime, compared to just 17.7 percent in the Netherlands. In addition, 10.3 percent of this age group in the United States has used cocaine in their lifetime, compared to just 1.6 percent of the same age group in the Netherlands (Chambliss 117). These numbers show that American 17- and 18-year-olds are almost 6.5 times more likely to use cocaine than 17- and 18-year-olds in the Netherlands. The negative effect that the current supply-side oriented War on Drugs policies in the United States have on the drug market also allows for corruption to become prevalent. Efforts to reduce the demand for illicit drugs at home would lessen the huge production of illicit drugs. If there was less money involved in the War on Drugs law

enforcement, both in the United States and in drug producing countries, would be less vulnerable to bribes and corruption.

Conclusion

6.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, since the War on Drugs was announced in 1971 not much has happened when it comes to reducing drug use in the United States. Whether Reagan intensified the War on Drugs in the 1980s to implement a new security doctrine or it was really just because of the crack cocaine epidemic, the fact remains that to this day the United States remains the largest consumer of drugs in the world and the numbers of drug users keep increasing. Drugs in the United States remain purer, cheaper, and more readily available than they were when the War on Drugs began. While it is understandable that the United States opted for a prohibitionist regime at the time, prohibition itself causes many of the problems associated with illegal drugs. The American legislators' complete prohibition of drug use and extensive focus on the supply-side of drugs go hand in hand with harsh punishments for drug users at home. The United States' current anti-drug policies do not only result in a higher percentage of drug users in the United States, they also bring along unwanted consequences such as high incarceration rates, violence, and several health related issues.

6.2 Suggestions for reform

This Bachelor's thesis concludes that, paradoxically, the United States' tough prohibitionist narcotics enforcement designed to nip America's drug problem in the bud has actually (indirectly) caused the drug related problems to get much worse. Due to the United States' strictly prohibitionist regime, drug production abroad (especially in Latin America) has gone through many developments in recent decades and the United States has not been able to keep up with the changes they have caused. The "victories" of the United States have only lead to a shift in areas of drug production and dispersion. For example, anti-drug efforts to stop coca leaf production in the Andes has only caused coca leaf production to move to other locations (the balloon effect) and the fall of the Medellín and Cali cartels in Colombia have only allowed the establishments of many new cartels as the Medellín and Cali cartels no longer had a monopoly on the drug trade (the cockroach effect). As long as the demand for illicit drugs in

the United States is high, drugs will continue to be produced to satisfy the demand for them. The prohibitionist anti-drug policies in the United States have made drug production and trafficking in a business with extremely large amounts of money involved. This makes drug enforcement police and politicians, both in drug producing countries and in the United States, particularly vulnerable to bribes and corruption.

The War on Drugs has had several consequences at home that most likely would not be as plentiful if the United States was not follow a strict prohibitionist and supply-side oriented regime. (Partially) legalizing or decriminalizing illicit drugs – this would include prevention efforts such as education about illicit drugs, treatment programs, and rehabilitation programs – would facilitate the accurate dissemination of knowledge about illicit drugs. This would most likely result in a decrease in drug related accidents such as accidental poisonings and overdoses. Users would also be able to profit from government quality regulation and can let law enforcement know if poisoned drugs are circulating without incriminating themselves. This would also decrease the risk of aforementioned accidental poisonings and overdoses. Another consequence that the War on Drugs has in the United States is an increase in violence. A laxer regime would most likely also decrease violence, because those involved in the drug world would now be more likely to use the legal and judicial system as the risk of harsh punishments for their drug related offense would be lowered. Decriminalizing or partially legalizing drugs would also have an effect on the extremely high incarceration rates in the United States. As discussed in chapter three, the majority of people who are sentenced to prison today for a drug offense are mainly minor offenders with no further involvement in criminal activity or previous prison time. A system where treatment is preferred over incarceration is more cost-effective and decreases drug use. In addition, laxer anti-drug policies would minimize the social costs that drug offenders face after their incarceration, such as finding legitimate employment after incarceration. Weakening the harsh anti-drug measures will also decrease the chance of corruption, because less demand for illicit drugs in the United States will eliminate the need for a criminal network of drug producers and traffickers and thus also eliminate the temptation caused by the huge amounts of money involved. In conclusion, the anti-drug measures that the United States has taken abroad have allowed drug production to globalize and disperse. This has caused drugs to be more readily available at home at a more affordable price, which in turn has increased drug use in the United States. This brought along corruption and many social and economic problems. A system where drugs are (partially) legalized or decriminalized will be more cost-effective for

the United States and reduce many social problems associated with the War on Drugs, such as health related issues.

6.3 New Mexico's attempts at improvement

The negative consequences caused by the War on Drugs are also present in the state of New Mexico. In fact, as is extensively elaborated in chapter three, New Mexicans are especially vulnerable to drug use due to the state's geographical location and physical attributes. Due to the high number of drug abusers in New Mexico it has functioned as a perfect case study in this Bachelor's thesis to discuss the consequences that the War on Drugs has on the United States. Because drug consumption in New Mexico brings along several social consequences (including high incarceration rates, violence, and health related issues), New Mexico has opted for harm reduction activities. These harm reduction activities are designed to reduce the negative social consequences of the War on Drugs. One of New Mexico's harm reduction efforts is the Syringe Exchange Program. This program has contributed the reduction of health risks among New Mexico's injection drug user. It reduces needle sharing and thus reduce the change of HIV and hepatitis infections. The New Mexico's Office of Epidemiology estimates that there are 23,000 adult injection drug users in New Mexico. In June 2004, there were 214 New Mexicans living with HIV and these people identified drug use as their primary risk factor (Fiuty and Block 33). An individual case of HIV can cost as much as \$10,000-\$15,000 per year just for medications. A course of treatment for hepatitis C can cost between \$15,000 and \$30,000 annually (Fiuty and Block 33). Currently there are 26 Syringe Exchange Programs in New Mexico. Seven of these programs are located in Albuquerque, where drug abuse numbers are highest. The Syringe Exchange Programs have enrolled 8,033 injection drug users statewide, with 4,000 being active participants. The program has exchange more than 5,000 needles. A 2003 survey of 732 Syringe Exchange Program participants showed that before enrolment in the program 154 participants (21 percent) had shared a syringe with another person three or more times in the prior week. After being in the program, 64 percent indicated a decrease in syringe sharing (Fiuty and Block 33).

In addition to the Syringe Exchange Program efforts are also made to reduce the risk of negative social consequences for those incarcerated in New Mexico. The New Mexico Corrections Department offers services to their inmates called Behavioral Health Services.

Health Services Administrator Angela Martinez described these services on the Corrections Department's website:

Behavioral health Services provides diagnostic assessment, treatment, and programming utilizing a biopsychosocial model that takes into account physical, psychological, and social factors that impact on the inmate's well-being. Services are designed to assist offenders in attaining and/or maintaining their cognitive and emotional well-being in the sometimes stressful environment that is associated with incarceration. Further Behavior's series provide addictions programming designed to increase public and institutional safety, reduce recidivism, and increase the capacity of offenders to live responsible lives through aggressive treatment of substance addiction. Additionally, Behavioral Health Services facilitates the provision of volunteers for parenting programs, faith-based mentoring programs, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) programs.

While data on the effects of these Behavioral Health Services are unavailable, comparable programs have proven that these programs in prisons are effective. Independent research funded in part by the National Institute of Drug Abuse through an interagency with the Bureau of Prisons concludes that "untreated subjects had a probability of .167 of being arrested in the first 6 months, while treated subjects had a probability of .031 of being arrested in the first 6 months. Thus, treated inmates were 73 percent less likely to be re-arrested than untreated inmates (Pelissier, Wallace, et al. 13)". In addition to these harm reduction strategies a bill to legalize marijuana in the state of New Mexico (The Cannabis Revenue and Freedom Act) was approved by the Senate to replace criminal penalties for possessing up to an ounce of marijuana with a civil fine. Under the proposed legislation marijuana would be regulated and taxed by the state. The purpose of the proposed Act would be, among other things, "to eliminate problems caused by the prohibition and uncontrolled manufacture, delivery, and possession of marijuana within New Mexico" and "to protect the safety, welfare, health, and peace of the people of this state by prioritizing the state's limited law enforcement resources in the most effective, consistent, and rational way (State of New Mexico par. 2)." The bill was adjourned on February 18 of this year because the House failed to take a vote on the measure ("New Mexico Legislature Adjourned" par. 1), but it shows that New Mexico is willing to move away from the prohibitionist anti-drug policies that are currently in effect in the United States. Legalizing the use of marijuana would prevent a large amount of New Mexicans from getting incarcerated for small drug charges and facing the social costs after incarceration, such

as finding employment following incarceration. New Mexico appears to have a progressive attitude towards anti-drug policies and appears to have recognized that the current harsh prohibitionist policies of the United States are just not booking the results that they set out to do. New Mexico's baby steps towards an alternative perspective on drugs could serve as an example to the rest of the United States.

References

- Bagley, Bruce Michael. "Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in the Americas: Major Trends in the Twenty First Century." *Woodrow Wilson Center Update on the Americas*. (2012): 1-22. Print.
- Bagley, Bruce Michael. "The New Hundred Years War? US National Security and the War on Drugs in Latin America." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. 30.1 (1988): 161-182. Print.
- Bagley, Bruce Michael. "US Foreign Policy and the War on Drugs: Analysis of a Policy Failure." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. 30.2/3 (1988): 189-212. Print.
- Bonnie, Richard J. "Reforming United States Drug Control Policy: Three Suggestions." *Social Research*. 68.3 (2001): 863-865. Print.
- Brienen, Marten W. and Jonathan D. Rosen. "Introduction." *New Approaches to Drugs Policies: A Time for Change*. Ed. Brienen, Marten W. and Jonathan D. Rosen. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Print.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. "Estimated Number of Persons Supervised by U.S. Adult Correctional Systems, by Correctional Status, 1980-2014." *Bjs.gov*. U.S. Department of Justice, 12 January 2016. Web. 16 May 2016.
- Carey, Madeleine. "Abuquerque Really Is Like *Breaking Bad*." *Ideas.time.com*. Time Magazine, 27 September 2013. Web. 4 May 2016.
- Chambliss, William J. "Another Lost War: The Costs and Consequences of Drug Prohibition." *Social Justice*. 22.2 (1995): 101-124. Print.
- Dobrich, Richard. "Drug Enforcement Administration Foreign-deployed Advisory Support Team." n.d. Powerpoint presentation.
- Dolan, Chris J. "United States' Narco-Terrorism Policy: A Contingency Approach to the Convergence of the War on Drugs and Against Terrorism." *The Review of Policy Research*. 22.4 (2005): 451-471. Print.

- Fiuty, Philip and Jeanne Block. "Harm Reduction Activities in New Mexico." *Drug Abuse Patterns and Trends in New Mexico*. Ed. New Mexico State Epidemiology Work Group. Santa Fe: Office of Epidemiology, 2004. 33-34. Print.
- Gootenberg, Paul. "Talking about the Flow: Drugs, Borders, and the Discourse of Drug Control." *Cultural Critique*. 71 (2009): 13-46. Print.
- Governor's Organized Crime Prevention Commission. "Drug Abuse and Organized Crime in New Mexico: A Report on the Problem and the Resources by the Governor's Organized Crime Prevention Commission. (1978): 1-125. Print
- Grogger, Jeff and Willis, Michael. "The Emerge of Crack Cocaine and the Rise in Urban Crime Rates." *The Review of Economics and Statistics*. 82.4 (2002): 519-529. Print.
- Hartley, Richard D. and J. Mitchell Miller. "Crack-ing the Media Myth." *Criminal Justice Review*. 35.1 (2010): 67-89. Print.
- Hibberd, James. "'Breaking Bad' Series Finale Ratings Smash All Records." *Ew.com*. Entertainment Weekly, n.d. Web. 13 June 2016.
- Hobson, Christopher. "Challenging 'evil': Continuity and Change in the Drug Prohibition Regime." *International Politics*. 51.4 (2014): 525-542. Print.
- Houston, Paul. "Gave Contras \$4 Million, Drug Smuggler Testifies." *Articles.latimes.com*. Los Angeles Times, 8 April 1988. Print. 8 June 2016.
- "Key Findings." *Drug Abuse Patterns and Trends in New Mexico*. Ed. New Mexico State Epidemiology Work Group. Santa Fe: Office of Epidemiology, 2004. 1-4. Print.
- Kumar, Ajoy and Nina Shah. "Drug-Related Hospitalizations in New Mexico – Hospital Inpatient Discharge Data." *Drug Abuse Patterns and Trends in New Mexico*. Ed. New Mexico State Epidemiology Work Group. Santa Fe: Office of Epidemiology, 2004. 21-27. Print.
- Laffiteau, Charles. "The Balloon Effect: The Failuer of Supply Side Strategies in the War on Drugs." *Academia.edu*. Web. 29 May 2016.
- Landen, Michael. "Overview of Drug Overdose Deaths in New Mexico." *Drug Abuse Patterns and Trends in New Mexico*. Ed. New Mexico State Epidemiology Work Group. Santa Fe: Office of Epidemiology, 2004. 5-6. Print.
- Mabry, Donald. "The US Military and the War on Drugs in Latin America." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. 30.2/3 (1988): 53-76. Print.
- Marshall, Jonathan. "Hidden Agendas in the War on Drugs." *OAH Magazine of History*. 6.2 (1991): 30-31. Print.

- Martinez, Angela. "Health Services." *Cd.nm.gov*. New Mexico Corrections Department. N.d. Web. 13 June 2016.
- Scharmen, Thomas N., Lisa Roth-Edwards, and Nina Shah. "Drug Overdose Deaths in New Mexico's Public Health Districts: 1995-2003." *Drug Abuse Patterns and Trends in New Mexico*. Ed. New Mexico State Epidemiology Work Group. Santa Fe: Office of Epidemiology, 2004. 7-9. Print.
- State of New Mexico. HB 75. *Cannabis Revenue and Freedom Act*.
- McDermott, Jeremy. "20 Years After Pablo: The Evolution of Colombia's Drug Trade." *Insightcrime.org*. Insight Crime, 3 December 2019. Web. 29 May 2016.
- Mendible, Myra. "Post Vietnam Syndrome: National Identity, War, and the Politics of Humiliation." *Radical Psychology*. 7.1 (2008). Print.
- Mercille, Julien. "The U.S. "War on Drugs" in Afghanistan: Reality or Pretext?" *Critical Asian Studies*. 43.2 (2011): 285-309. Print
- Miron, Jeffrey. "El Chapo Shows the Folly of the War on Drugs." *Time.com*. Time Magazine, 21 January 2016. Web. 19 May 2016.
- Miron, Jeffrey A. and Jeffrey Zwiebel. "The Economic Case Against Drug Prohibition." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 9.4 (1995): 175-192. Print.
- Mohammad, Fida and Gregory Fulkerson. "The "War on Drugs": A Failed Paradigm." *New Approaches to Drugs Policies: A Time for Change*. Ed. Brienen, Marten W. and Jonathan D. Rosen. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Print.
- Morton, Adam David. "The War on Drugs in Mexico: A Failed State?" *Third World Quarterly* 33.9 (2012): 1631-1645. Print.
- Morales, Waltraud Queiser. "The War on Drugs: A New US National Security Doctrine?" *Third World Quarterly*. 11.3 (1989): 147-169. Print.
- Naim, Moises. "Wasted: The American Prohibition on Thinking Smart in the Drug War." *Foreign Policy*. 172 (2009): 168. Print.
- "New Mexico 2015." *Talkpoverty.org*. Center for American Progress, 2016. Web. 4 May 2016.
- "New Mexico Legislature Adjourned, No Marijuana Laws Adopted." *Mpp.org*. Marijuana Policy Project. 16 May 2016. Web. 13 June 2016.
- New Mexico Sentencing Commission. "New Mexico Prison Population Forecast: FY 2013-FY 2022." *Nmsc.unm.edu*. New Mexico Corrections Department, June 2012. Web. 16 May 2016.

- Nixon, Richard. "Special Message to the Congress on Drug Abuse Prevention and Control." *The American Presidency Project*. June 17 1971.
- Okie, Susan. "The Epidemic That Wasn't." *nytimes.com*. The New York Times, 26 January 2009. Web. 28 April 2016.
- Pelissier, Bernadette, Susan Wallace, et al. "Federal Prison Residential Drug Treatment Reduces Substance Use and Arrests After Release." *Bop.gov*. Federal Bureau of Prisons. N.d. Web. 13 June 2016.
- Scherlen, Renee. "The Never-Ending Drug War: Obstacles to Drug War Policy Termination." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 45.1 (2012) 67-73. Print.
- Schneider, Keith. "Iran-Contra Hearings: Smuggler Ties Contras to U.S. Drug Network." *Nytimes.com*. The New York Times, 16 July 1987. Web. 8 June 2016.
- Selander, Finn and David Monnette. "New Mexico Drug Enforcement Administration Data." *Drug Abuse Patterns and Trends in New Mexico*. Ed. New Mexico State Epidemiology Work Group. Santa Fe: Office of Epidemiology, 2004. 47-48. Print.
- Spraying, A. "Human Rights and Drug Policy: Crop Eradiction." *Ohchr.org*. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, n.d. Web. 29 May 2016.
- "Statistics -Drug Seizures." *Help.cbp.gov*. U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 13 November 2015. Web. 17 May 2016.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). "Behavioral Health Trends in the United States: Results from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health." *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*. 2015: 1-14, 22-34. Print.
- Szczepanski, Reena. "Alternatives to Incarceration for New Mexicans." *Drugpolicy.org*. Drug Policy Alliance New Mexico, n.d. Web. 18 May 2016.
- Thachuk, Kimberley Lynn. *Plomo o Plata: Politics, Corruption and Drug Policy in Colombia*. Diss, 1997. Simon Fraser University. Web. 30 May 2016.
- Toufexis, Anastasia. "Crack Kids. Innocent Victims." *Content.time.com*. Time Magazine, 13 May 1991. Web. 29 April 2016.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *World Drug Report 2015*. Vienna: United Nations publication, 2015. Print.
- Winn, Russell. "Drug Use Among Arrestees in Rio Arriba County, New Mexico." *Drug Abuse Patterns and Trends in New Mexico*. Ed. New Mexico State Epidemiology Work Group. Santa Fe: Office of Epidemiology, 2004. 41-46. Print.
- "Winning the War on Drugs: A "Second Chance" for Nonviolent Drug Offenders." *Harvard Law Review*. 113.6 (2000): 1485-1502. Print.

Welsh, Jennifer. "Poverty is Worse for Kids than Being Born to a Crack-Using Mother."

Businessinsider.com. Business Insider, 23 July 2013. Web. 28 April 2016.

Woody, Christopher. "Mexican Gangs Keep Killing Politicians on The Campaign Trail."

Uk.businessinsider.com. Business Insider, 15 May 2015. May 30 2016.