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April 11, 2007

## The Forgotten War on Drugs



Luis Acosta  
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Nearly four decades after the United States declared a war on drugs, juvenile drug abuse is on the decline, but illegal narcotics remain cheap and plentiful. In a five-part series, NPR examines the progress of U.S. anti-drug policy so far, and where experts say it should focus next.

## in this Series

### [America's Forgotten War: A Series Overview](#)



April 2, 2007 · The war on drugs has been waged for 38 years, through seven White House administrations, in foreign coca fields and on America's streets, at an estimated annual cost of \$40 billion. But what has it accomplished, and where does the U.S. go from here?

### [Part 1: War on Drugs Hasn't Stemmed Flow Into U.S.](#)



April 2, 2007 · Despite decades of U.S. interdiction efforts, cocaine, heroin and other illegal drugs still stream into the country. Critics say America would improve its chances of "winning" the war on drugs if it revamped anti-drug policy to focus more on stamping out demand.

### [Part 2: In the Colombian Jungle, Coca Still Thrives](#)



April 3, 2007 · For seven years, the United States has sprayed a deadly defoliant on Colombia's coca fields. Some credit the program with a sharp drop in violence in that nation. But in remote, lawless

regions, cocaine production — and the violence it entails — remains strong. [Web Extra: Interactive Map: How Drugs Reach the U.S.](#)

### [Part 3: Winning the War on Drugs One Life at a Time](#)



April 4, 2007 · In America's war on drugs, more federal resources have gone into foreign operations and law enforcement than into demand reduction at home. But policy experts, community activists and recovering addicts say only a combination of strategies will work. [Web Extra: Reporter's Notebook](#)

### [Part 4: Release of Drug Offenders Strains Communities](#)



April 5, 2007 · In the 1980s and '90s, more than a million people in the United States were arrested each year on drug charges. Most went to prison. Now hundreds of thousands of inmates are returning to their neighborhoods, and many communities are collapsing under the burden.

### [Part 5: Drug Czar Blasted for Lack of Leadership](#)



April 6, 2007 · John Walters is the public face of the drug war, the nation's drug czar. But many activists

blame Walters for a lack of leadership, and experts are concerned that the war on terrorism has pushed the war on drugs off the nation's radar.

## Reporter's Notebook By John Burnett



### [Remembering the Forgotten War](#)

April 4, 2007 · NPR's series on the drug war began in a tiny Miskito Indian fishing village, on Nicaragua's Caribbean coast, that relies on cocaine for its livelihood. Such dependence, John Burnett writes, is a visceral reminder that nothing the U.S. does abroad will shut down the drug trade.

### [Timeline: America's War on Drugs](#)



April 2, 2007 · Four decades ago, the U.S. government declared a "war on drugs." From the rise and fall of kingpins to current efforts to interdict and stamp out drugs, follow events so far.

### [Voices: Ex-Addicts, Dealers & Others Share Their Stories](#)



April 2, 2007 · America has been waging a war on drugs for decades; the battle has affected people from

all walks of life. Hear analysis from federal drug officials, as well as the personal experiences of a former drug dealer, a recovering drug addict, a former drug prosecutor and a mother who lost her son to heroin.



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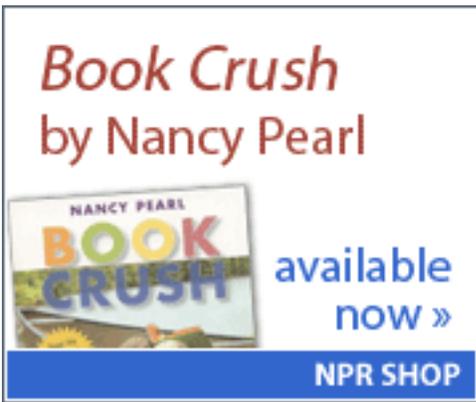
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Lindsay Mangum, NPR

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