



The World Heroin Market: Can Supply Be Cut? (Studies in Crime and Public Policy)

By Letizia Paoli, Victoria A. Greenfield, Peter Reuter

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Heroin is universally considered the world's most harmful illegal drug. This is due not only to the damaging effects of the drug itself, but also to the spread of AIDS tied to its use. Burgeoning illegal mass consumption in the 1960s and 1970s has given rise to a global market for heroin and other opiates of nearly 16 million users. The production and trafficking of opiates have caused crime, disease, and social distress throughout the world, leading many nations to invest billions of dollars trying to suppress the industry. The failure of their efforts has become a central policy concern. Can the world heroin supply actually be cut, and with what consequences?

The result of a five-year-long research project involving extensive fieldwork in six Asian countries, Colombia, and Turkey, this book is the first systematic analysis of the contemporary world heroin market, delving into its development and structure, its participants, and its socio-economic impact. It provides a sound and comprehensive empirical base for concluding that there is little opportunity to shrink the global supply of heroin in the long term, and explains why production is concentrated in a handful of countries--and is likely to remain that way. On the basis of these findings, the authors identify a key set of policy opportunities, largely local, and make suggestions for leveraging them. This book also offers new insights into market conditions in India, Tajikistan, and other countries that have been greatly harmed by the production and trafficking of illegal opiates.

A deft integration of economics, sociology, history, and policy analysis, *The World Heroin Market* provides a rigorous and vital look into the complex--and resilient--global heroin trade.

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Editorial Review

Review

"An ambitious, multi-disciplinary analysis of the global heroin market in its entirety, representing the culmination of five years of painstaking research...the book stands as an incredibly comprehensive look at the world heroin market and a remarkable contribution to scholarship in the field...quite accessible to the average reader wondering what the global heroin market looks like through the eyes of an economist."--*International Law and Politics*

"A clear-sighted and accessible reference for those trying to understand the international heroin trade and its effects on countries. The book reflects the disciplinary strengths of the author triad; this integration of criminology, economics, and public policy creates a substantial contribution to the literature that should be of strong interest to scholars and practitioners in public policy, criminal justice, economics, and public health...This is an insightful tome on the world heroin trade; one that will be immensely useful to those concerned about the continued facile flows of global heroin. I look forward to rereading and thumbing through this book for years to come."--*Asian Journal of Criminology*

"An unmatched source of information on this topic.... Highly recommended."--*CHOICE*

"Reliable studies of illicit drug markets are rare. Reliable studies of illicit drug markets on a global scale are almost nonexistent. Paoli, Greenfield, and Reuter have pulled off a small miracle of scholarship by giving us a meticulously researched overview of global opiate markets, one that combines economic and policy analysis with rich historical, political, and ethnographic insight."--David Courtwright, author of *Dark Paradise* and *Forces of Habit*

"Policymakers have long struggled with how to stem the production and international distribution of illegal drugs. The limited successes and numerous failures have not yielded many useful lessons, partly due to a paucity of carefully conducted research. *The World Heroin Market* provides a systematic, evidence-based analysis that will become essential reading for policymakers seeking to understand and address the heroin problem as well as broader political, economic, and security issues in source and trafficking countries. Afghanistan has put these issues back on the front burner for government leaders, and this work could not be more timely."--William S. Cohen, former U.S. Secretary of Defense

"Anyone who thinks nothing changes in drug markets needs to read this book. A wonderful resource, *The World Heroin Market* documents in a fresh, comprehensive way the global heroin trade to argue that historical shifts in supplies, large as they are, do not transform heroin consumption--markets are resilient

globally even if they can be crushed locally, often at a high price. The policy options on the supply side for a world with less drug abuse look limited in light of this sobering, illuminating, book."--John Braithwaite, Australian National University

"This long-needed book is based on in-depth research and is the first to give a full overview of the development and composition of, as well as the behavior related to, the illegal business of trading in heroin. The authors very ably demonstrate what a complex problem it is to reduce national and regional opium production. They lay out the crucial conclusion that cross-border cooperation between law enforcement agencies must also be supported by increased awareness within society and by long-term economic development and political institution-building."--Max-Peter Ratzel, Director of Europol

"Drugs are sold in markets and so economists ought to have something useful to say about the effects of efforts to control those prohibited substances. Alas, though they have had much to say, it has not been particularly informed by any detailed understanding of how these markets work. In this book two economists and a sociologist have teamed up to make a large contribution to fill that gap for the world heroin market. From this analysis they have deduced important insights about the inherent limits of efforts to suppress heroin production and trafficking."--Thomas Schelling, Nobel Laureate in Economics, University of Maryland

About the Author

Letizia Paoli is Professor of Criminology at the K.U. Leuven Faculty of Law, Belgium.

Victoria A. Greenfield is the Crowe Chair Professor in the Economics of the Defense Industrial Base in the Department of Economics at the U.S. Naval Academy.

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