



Thirty Years of America's Drug War a Chronology

Late 1960s • **Recreational drug use rises in U.S.**

In late 1960s recreational drug use becomes fashionable among young, white, middle class Americans. The social stigmatization previously associated with drugs lessens as their use becomes more mainstream. Drug use becomes representative of protest and social rebellion in the era's atmosphere of political unrest.

1968 **Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs is founded.**

The Johnson administration consolidates several drug agencies into the Justice Dept.'s Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD). The move is intended to diminish turf wars between the various agencies, but tensions between the BNDD and Customs continue.

1969 **Study links crime and heroin addiction.**

Psychiatrist **Dr. Robert DuPont** conducts urinalysis of everyone entering the D.C. jail system in August of 1969. He finds 44% test positive for heroin. DuPont convinces the city's Mayor Walter Washington to allow him to provide methadone to heroin addicts.

1969 **Operation Intercept essentially closes the Mexican border.**
(Sept. 21)

In an attempt to reduce marijuana smuggling from Mexico, the Customs Dept., under Commissioner **Myles Ambrose**, subjects every vehicle crossing the Mexican border to a three-minute inspection. The operation lasts two weeks and wreaks economic havoc on both sides of the border. Mexico agrees to more aggressively attack marijuana trade, but the operation didn't seriously impact the flow of marijuana into U.S.

1970 **NORML is founded.**

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) is founded by Keith Stroup. The group lobbies for decriminalization of marijuana.

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