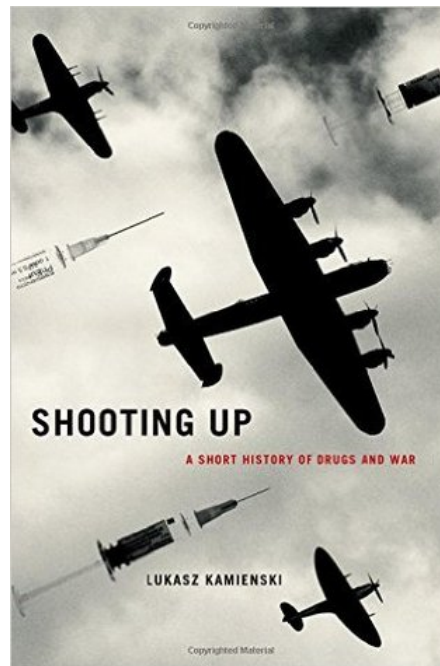




# Shooting Up: A Short History of Drugs and War

*Lukasz Kamienski*

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## Shooting Up: A Short History of Drugs and War Łukasz Kamiński

Shooting Up: A Short History of Drugs and War examines how intoxicants have been put to the service of states, empires and their armies throughout history. Since the beginning of organized combat, armed forces have prescribed drugs to their members for two general purposes: to enhance performance during combat and to counter the trauma of killing and witnessing violence after it is over. Stimulants (e.g. alcohol, cocaine, and amphetamines) have been used to temporarily create better soldiers by that improving stamina, overcoming sleeplessness, eliminating fatigue, and increasing fighting spirit. Downers (e.g. alcohol, opiates, morphine, heroin, marijuana, barbiturates) have also been useful in dealing with the soldier's greatest enemy - shattered nerves. Kamiński's focuses on drugs "prescribed" by military authorities, but also documents the widespread unauthorised consumption by soldiers themselves. Combatants have always treated with various drugs and alcohol, mainly for recreational use and as a reward to themselves for enduring the constant tension of preparing for. Although not officially approved, such "self-medication" is often been quietly tolerated by commanders in so far as it did not affect combat effectiveness. This volume spans the history of combat from the use of opium, coca, and mushrooms in pre-modern warfare to the efforts of modern militaries, during the Cold War in particular, to design psychochemical offensive weapons that can be used to incapacitate rather than to kill the enemy. Along the way, Kamiński provides fascinating coverage of on the European adoption of hashish during Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, opium use during the American Civil War, amphetamines in the Third Reich, and the use of narcotics to control child soldiers in the rebel militias of contemporary Africa.

## Shooting Up: A Short History of Drugs and War Details

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# From Reader Review Shooting Up: A Short History of Drugs and War for online ebook

## Christine Brooks says

Firstly, read the London Review of Books review if you'd like something lengthier and, you know, much better, as I'm still recovering from so much information so new to me. It's almost difficult to fairly rate this one, because this isn't a topic that's been explored in great detail outside of sporadic medical and political journal articles and the like. Indeed, a number of Kamienski's sources are not from authors writing in English and therefore probably haven't been introduced to most English speakers' proverbial radar (note: Kamienski himself translated this book, which was originally published in his native Polish). Hence the contents of "Shooting Up" appear as doubly new, and as a consequence, doubly intriguing. Read it, and feel equal parts horrified and fascinated as you delve into the Janus faces of healing and harm in the literal and figurative fields of combat.

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## Eduardo Dávila says

Colocados. Drogados. Prestos. Relajados. Descansando. En batalla. Con “Las drogas en la guerra: una historia global”, Kamienski escribe su tesis para dar a conocer las diferentes drogas que han estado en las guerras.

Desde la antigüedad - por el tiempo de los poemas homéricos - hasta los pilotos que sobrevuelan el Medio Este. Pasando, claro está por la época medieval, los bárbaros, romanos, japoneses, las guerras de conquista, la I y II Guerra Mundial, Vietnam, Irak, Rusia, y un largo etc.

También nos explica la relación entre el estado, los militares, las drogas, lo prohibido, lo que puede hacerse por defensa del país.

Entre las drogas están el opio, hachis, marihuana, coca, etc. Pasamos no solo a las conocidas y fuertes, pero también a las nuevas, sintéticas, de creación. En cuanto a las drogas, es innegable su relación con la sociedad, lo soldados. Kamienski le da forma en cuánto a su modo de uso, de dónde provienen y qué hacen en los momentos específicos en los que se centra.

Un libro interesante para conocer más sobre el atractivo de la guerra, sus consecuencias, su forma de vida y el papel que tienen las drogas en ella.

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## Mark says

COCC

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## Sean says

Written at a PhD thesis level. Very dense but incredibly comprehensive

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## James says

This is a fascinating book, a history of the approved use of drugs amongst militaries. There have been numerous studies of the illicit use of intoxicants by soldiers - it was well documented in the Vietnam War for example - but this is quite possibly the first study of drug use approved, to at least ignored, by the higher command.

From antiquity to today's wars, the author details in exhaustive detail how intoxicants of various kinds have been used for 'Dutch courage', to combat fatigue and stress, to treat PTSD, to name but a few. The book starts with Ancient Greece, Greek soldiers apparently used Opium before going into battle, and follows through to the present day. Some of this will be familiar to readers, such as Hitler's abuse of Amphetamines, but there are many aspects which come as a real surprise, not least recent use of narcolepsy drugs such Modafinil by the US military to heighten performance. The author also touches upon how illicit substances have caused wars, the Opium Wars in China, and Cocaine in Latin America.

For me the most fascinating parts of this study were the small details he brought to the fore from other works. For example he reminds the reader of the passage in Homer's Odyssey where we're told how the grief and sorrow Greek soldiers felt for those who died during the siege of Troy was relieved by "Nepenthe" the "drink of oblivion". This, in fact, is one of the earliest descriptions of Opium as used to treat the effects of war, which they dissolved in alcohol to create an early version of what the Victorians' termed laudanum. Similarly, in the early stages of the Second World War, we learn that "Blitzkrieg was powered by amphetamines as much as by machine."

This is a fascinating study of an important and neglected aspect of the history of warfare, a hidden history if you will, and I would advise anyone to read it.

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## Roberto Hortal says

Surprisingly informative. I didn't know modern armies were so drug-fuelled, and that some of this may not be a terrible thing.

Makes me think about whether sport should review some of their doping rules.

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## Olethros says

-De menos a... casi suficiente, pero entretenido en realidad.-

Género. Historia.

Lo que nos cuenta. El libro Las drogas en la guerra (publicación original: Shooting Up. A Short History of

Drugs and War, 2016), con el subtítulo Una historia global, se aproxima al consumo de drogas en la guerra, tanto las suministradas por el estamento militar a sus hombres como las que ellos toman por su cuenta pero también las usadas como armas o fuente de financiación, a lo largo de la historia.

¿Quiere saber más de este libro, sin spoilers? Visite:

<http://librosdeolethros.blogspot.com/...>

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### **Marcos says**

Estudio pormenorizado del indisoluble matrimonio entre la guerra y el uso de drogas a lo largo de la historia. Muy destacable el desarrollo del libro, que atiende al esquema propio de una tesis doctoral y en el que se tiene muy en cuenta el uso de referencias con rigor académico y científico de la miríada de datos que inundan sus páginas. Un libro escrito con pasión por el conocimiento, la autoexigencia y la meticulosidad, pues pocas veces el autor escribe sin aportar datos contrastados.

Bastante interesante me ha parecido la conclusión sociológica a la que llega ?ukasz Kamie?ski, que si bien se me queda corta al plantearse únicamente como colofón y con un gran número de preconcepciones ideológicas no discutidas por parte del autor, me parece un buen broche al germen del libro: el uso de drogas como instrumento racional de potenciación técnica del individuo en la guerra y no como sustancia de desarrollo espiritual, quedando patente en este hecho la desmagificación del mundo racional posterior a la revolución agrícola (aludiendo aquí a Max Weber y su teoría de la racionalización); y la aplicación de las características psicoactivas de las drogas como elemento de sometimiento del cuerpo del soldado al poder de los estados (basándose en el concepto de Biopoder desarrollado por Michel Foucault).

En definitiva, un gran libro, fundamentalmente en lo referido a su parte de Historia (el núcleo de la obra), que trata de entrar también en la esfera sociológica y política del uso de drogas, desde mi punto de vista con menor atino, sobre todo si el posicionamiento ideológico del lector no es de tendencia prohibicionista y espera una discusión ideológica bien fundamentada en los casos en los que el autor expone sus opiniones y no simplemente hechos históricos.

Nota: 4'5 / 5

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### **Dkettmann says**

Excellent book, learned a lot.

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### **Al Spencer says**

Very interesting how intoxicants have been used throughout history to enhance soldiers effectiveness, relieve stress and ease fear. The use of psychotropic substances by various cultures is shocking. The use of various types of speed, opiates has been widespread through recent conflicts.

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## **Margaret Sankey says**

Convincingly, Kamienski argues that drugs and warfare have always gone hand in hand--from ancient Americans using pulque in rituals to rev up for battle to Nazi pilots on amphetamines. His classification of instances in which soldiers use to enhance their willingness to engage (Dutch courage, wine and cigarette rations), deal with the experience afterwards (Civil War morphine addictions, possible PTSD druge therapies) and cases where production or use of a drug has provoked warfare (opium in Afghanistan, cocaine in Latin America) is useful and compelling, with well-documented sources and a sound argument. Once seen, the big ribbon of pharmacology (which he points out is Greek from "scapegoat,") is impossible to unsee.

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## **Bl1nd says**

The amount of interesting facts in this book definately made it a worthy read but the author aproaches the historical investigation carrying some preconceptions about how damaging many substances are and the morality of drug use.

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