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Record Nr.	UNINA9910449883203321
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Titolo	Drug war heresies : learning from other vices, times, and places / / Robert J. MacCoun, Peter Reuter [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2001
ISBN	1-107-11348-2
	1-280-15315-6
	0-511-11653-5
	0-511-01792-8
	0-511-15485-2
	0-511-32345-X
	0-511-75427-2
	0-511-05371-1
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xvi, 479 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	RAND studies in policy analysis
Disciplina	364.1/77/0973
Soggetti	Drug legalization - United States
	Drug control - United States
	Drug control
	Drug abuse - Government policy - United States
	Drug abuse - Government policy
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 410-455) and index.
Nota di contenuto	; 1. Preface and overview -- ; 2. Drug prohibition : American style -- ; 3. The debate -- ; 4. Philosophical underpinnings -- ; 5. How does prohibition affect drug use -- ; 6. How does prohibition affect drug harms -- ; 7. Other vices : prostitution and gambling -- ; 8. Other substances : alcohol and cigarettes -- ; 9. U.S. experience with legal cocaine and heroin -- ; 10. Learning from European experiences -- ; 11. Cannabis policies in The Netherlands -- ; 12. Harm reduction in Europe -- ; 13. Summary of the evidence and a framework for assessment -- ; 14. Projecting the consequences of alternative regimes -- ; 15. Obstacles to moving beyond the drug war.
Sommario/riassunto	This book provides the first multidisciplinary and nonpartisan analysis

of how the United States should decide on the legal status of cocaine, heroin and marijuana. It draws on data about the experiences of Western European nations with less punitive drug policies as well as new analyses of America's experience with legal cocaine and heroin a century ago, and of America's efforts to regulate gambling, prostitution, alcohol and cigarettes. It offers projections on the likely consequences of a number of different legalization regimes and shows that the choice about how to regulate drugs involves complicated tradeoffs among goals and conflict among social groups. The book presents a sophisticated discussion of how society should deal with the uncertainty about the consequences of legal change. Finally, it explains, in terms of individual attitudes toward risk, why it is so difficult to accomplish substantial reform of drug policy in America.