

Did pablo escobar
deserve the title of
robin hood?



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Abstract

My report will be covering the honourable and wicked activities of Pablo Escobar and his influence on the West (Colombia in particular) politically, environmentally and socially. My secondary research will provide me with this information and allow me to question it, the sources will include magazines, books, internet research, interviews, documentaries, pamphlets, government files and podcasts. My methodology also includes a survey for my primary research questioning people's opinions on him before and after receiving explicit information on him and an interview with Sebastian Marroquin (Escobar's son, therefore an expert on him) by email. My conclusion will delve into the ratio of good to bad and look at the extremity of them and my own judgement of people's views on him and understand why people have those opinions on him. My conclusion will not have a single answer to my title as it is personal however it will be biased as a result of my findings.

Introduction

Pablo Escobar was a Colombian drug lord who had conducted the Medellin Cartel whilst controlling 80% of cocaine in the USA (Rockfeller 2012). Understandably, he had confrontations with government officials, however, his run-ins had escalated to hostilities with the government within a in a short time as he could no longer bribe officials as they were adamant on extraditing him to the United States of America as a result of Colombia's extradition treaty with America(the amazing stories one). Escobar felt strongly against this and had executed actions to prevent it,, which had led to the death of: presidents, candidates running for presidency, government

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officials, police officers and the Colombian magistrates in the Supreme Court and many more with the order of assassinations (Dupler 1998). On the other hand, he had provided large sums of charitable contributions to Colombia especially Medellin, which is a densely populated deprived urban city estranged from helpful welfare from the government, with the construction of houses and leisure facilities and schools as well as simply handing cash earned from his drug cartel (Bowden 2011). Because of this he was given the name Robin Hood, a figure that steals from the rich and gives to the poor, as well as being glorified in north-western culture because of his venerated portrayal in successful Hollywood films and TV shows. Nevertheless many (mainly officials and those affected by his endeavours indirectly and directly) view him less enthusiastically and have portrayed him as a terrorist and have even compared him to dictators like Adolf Hitler by the DEA officer Stephan Murphy (Dupler 1998). He had also threatened Colombia's political and justice stability, which had made him a target for America. People claim to understand and believe they know right from wrong but they tend to be biased and let experiences shadow their judgement, whilst understanding different regions version of right and wrong.

Being interested in history and how politics works differently around the world I wanted to explore one of the most controversial publicised and misjudged topics of this area. This topic manages to touch on/ allows me to use skills from all 3 of the subjects I perform at A level, which are Politics, History and media

Literature Review

The topic of Pablo Escobar and his impact in Colombia is a very sensitive topic as the same amount of people have been affected differently from his direct and indirect deeds creating conflict that is difficult to overcome because of this. His impact on Colombia has remained an important topic in the country as residents of the country are uncertain whether their views are acceptable especially those favouring Escobar are afraid to express their opinion on Escobar as they are afraid of backlash from those that think otherwise, who view his behaviour morally wrong and believe those favouring him are doing so for materialistic reasons, nothing else. My dissertation will cover Escobar's background, his impacts on Colombia, and reactions to them, which will uncover the debate on whether Pablo Escobar is the Robin Hood supporters named him or the villain opposes label him as.

The super majority of my research came from online articles/newspaper articles and general internet research from credible organisations and the majority from interviews/broad-spectrum of videos on YouTube and documentaries and a minority from books in Nottingham Trent University's library and a minority of it from television programmes. My initial aim was to gather information on Pablo Escobar's behaviour and develop and understanding of his persona, along with this I intended on uncovering different opinions on him from dissimilar individuals who have had different experiences with Escobar.

My first footstep of research had the objective of gaining an understanding on how opinions on Escobar had varied from a viewer's perspective by watching *Narcos* . It had noticeably dramatized situations included in the

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storyline and the directing and explicit use of effective technical codes display how the glorification of him is developed. To receive an accurate timeline of Escobar's life I watched Pablo *Escobar: King of Coke* both of these sources had provided me with information to assemble the timeline of his conducts. Despite the documentary being a secondary source it had exhibited explicit opinions and daily endeavours of Escobar's from DEA officers that had been observing him for over 37 years, thus having credible opinions. In addition to this, the documentary had contained FBI files, which are also primary resources, further described Escobar's daily actions, for example his encounters and his daily activities suggesting peculiar behaviour, as well as this interviews with other officials unveiling scenarios they were involved in/ had observed/ had researched, whilst including their verdict on how they perceived his behaviour. The dissection of his behaviour was very rational and had exhibited that they understood Escobar's true motives, which they demonstrated as being manipulative illuminating the reasoning behind his claims of humble acts by linking it to how it can benefit him personally by avoiding extradition to the US and defend his cartel from exposure. This source had shown me a strong link on how it was mainly elites, who hadn't felt the strong benefits the deprived in Colombia, despised him more than the deprived worshipped him, however there was more deprived than elites, which had created friction between them and Escobar had noted this so he had used it to his benefit. However there's a lack of evidence to suggest that Escobar used the deprived to his advantage as he would always deny it and it was mainly assumptions, on the other hand, the assumption appears frequently by different people in different ways.

To understand how the figures in the documentary distinguished these statements, I had read *FBI records: the fault, Pablo Escobar part 1 of 8* to discover any anomalies of usual behaviour that could be linked to Escobar and behaviour the figures had been indirectly referring to. The majority of the files' findings were covered with blocks denying me of credible and valuable primary sources. Nonetheless, I had discovered from them unusual meetings with figures e. g. workers of the Cali Cartel for negotiations and workers of his Medellin Cartel that had travelled to him in unauthorised aeroplanes from Miami, which contains the greatest consumers and distributors (to the rest of America) of Cocaine, despite these persistent links no acceptable action (that could wrong-foot him) with regards to investigation had been executed. This had suggested that Escobar had managed to bribe Colombian officers with his philosophy 'plata o plomo' which translates to lead or silver; meaning accept death or accept Escobar's bribe of money if not this he would've intercepted run-ins any other way with his calculating methods to avoid charges. This further suggests that officers had turned a blind eye and accepted Escobar's authority, which had allowed him to increase his supremacy by expanding his influence, as the police officers had implied he was able to do this. On the other hand there couldn't have been enough evidence to involve higher ranking officers and officials to prevent this because of Escobar's ability to cover up evidence sufficient enough. This had led me to one of my overall conclusion that Escobar had managed to prosper because of procedures and corruption in Colombia.

Escobar viewing his harmful behaviour as being acceptable from situations allowing it has proved to be an occurring, therefore significant, factor. This

acceptance and enforcement of his behaviour isn't something that can be taken so lightly and easily as sudden as it was bought to Escobar, the secondary research sources *La Violencia in Colombia* and *Growing Up Amid War Affects Children's Moral Development* display that Escobar's dysfunctional morals were a result of trauma and discussed how they had been altered and the extremity of the impact of La Violencia would've amplified the effects. This had displayed and highlighted how experience, although not apparent from Escobar's attentive presentation of himself to the world, had blurred Escobar's understanding from right and wrong and that there's many perspectives that need to be observed and understood in order to distinguish if perspectives towards him are capable of being empathised with. Furthermore, it'd shown me how La Violencia had created a perfect atmosphere for a Robin Hood-like figure to appear, which had displayed why Escobar had many supporters and why officials remained in the shadow to his glorification.

References

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