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Carlos Lehder's base of operations, for his illicit cocaine drug business, was Norman's Cay in the Bahamas. The small island had an excellent runway, as we can see in this photo by Mark Sellers, which Lehder put to good use.

When he met Carlos at the Danbury prison, George knew nothing about cocaine. It didn't take him long to learn he could make a lot of money smuggling it, however.

Carlos (who'd used the drug himself) painted a very convincing picture. And ... he had a very elaborate plan which included a base of operations in the Bahamas (on Norman's Cay).

Although they worked together for awhile, Carlos really didn't want to share his growing wealth and power. In an act that eventually cost him their friendship, Carlos cut his Danbury cell mate out of his Norman's Cay base.

George, with other pilots he hired, continued to fly Colombian "coke" into the States. Bruce Porter describes the operation in his *New York Times* "Notable Book" Blow:

Hank did six trips for George in rapid succession, carrying three hundred kilos each time, for a total of nearly two tons. George charged the Colombians the usual \$10,000 a kilo, split it down the middle with Hank, and in about four months they were each better off by some \$9 million. (Blow, page 205)

Before long George had so much money he ran out of places to store it all. He bought a house that served as his "bank." But something else happened after George met cocaine. As he told Frontline's reporter:

It [cocaine] just made you feel really good. Then after you get done feeling really good then you start to get a Superman ego and that's the beginning of the end.

The "beginning of the end" comes in all sorts of packages. For George, paranoia was the start.

Paranoia was followed by a heart attack in his mid-30s; a car-bomb attack engineered by his erstwhile friend Carlos; arrests; bail-jumping; prison. (Click on these links, in the order they appear, to watch an interview with George and Ted Demme, the late director of *Blow*.)

George could probably relate to this anonymous poem:

My Name is Cocaine

*My name is Cocaine - call me Coke for short
I entered this country without a passport
Ever since then I've made lots of scum rich
Some have been murdered and found in a ditch.
I'm more valued than diamonds, more treasured than gold
Use me just once and you too will be sold.
I'll make a schoolboy forget his books
I'll make a beauty queen forget her looks.
I'll take renowned speakers and make them a bore
I'll take a mother and make her a whore.
I'll make a teacher forget how to teach
I'll make a preacher not want to preach.
I'll take all your rent money and you'll get evicted
I'll murder your babies or they'll be born addicted.
I'll make you rob and steal and kill
When you're under my power you have no will.
Remember my friend my name is "Big C"
If you try me just once you may never be free.
I've destroyed actors, politicians and many a hero
I've decreased bank accounts from millions to zero.
I make shooting and stabbing a common affair
Once I take charge you won't have a prayer.
Now that you know me what will you do?
You'll have to decide - it's all up to you.
The day you agree to sit in my saddle
The decision is one that no one can straddle.
Listen to me, and please listen well
When you ride with cocaine you are headed for hell!!*

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/GEORGE-MEETS-COCAINE-Blow>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/GEORGE-MEETS-COCAINE-Blow>

Media Stream



Landing at the Norman Cay's Runway

Carlos Lehder needed a place to run his illicit drug business of buying and selling cocaine. He selected Norman's Cay, a small island in the Bahamas, as a safe place to do his work.

This photo, by Mark Sellers, shows an incoming plane approaching the excellent runway at Norman's Cay.

Photo, by Mark Sellers, depicting a plane approaching the runway at Norman's Cay, in the Bahamas.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Landing-at-the-Norman-Cay-s-Runway0>



Carlos Lehder and Cocaine Use

Image online, courtesy U.S. Department of Justice.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Carlos-Lehder-and-Cocaine-Use>



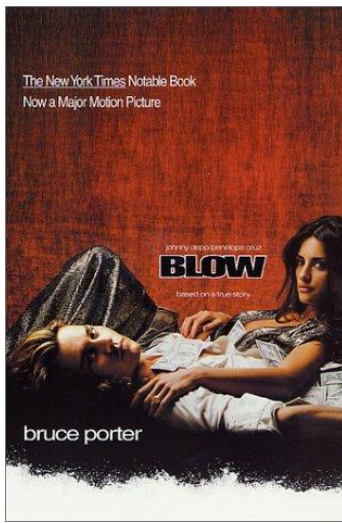
Cocaine Operations on Norman's Cay in the Bahamas

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Department of Justice.

PD

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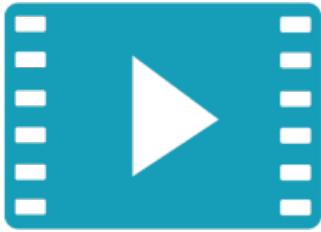
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Blow - by Bruce Porter

Book-cover image, online courtesy Macmillan and Google Books.

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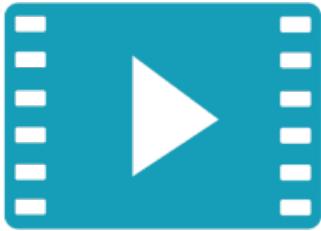


George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 1

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/George-Jung-Interview-with-Ted-Demme-Part-1>

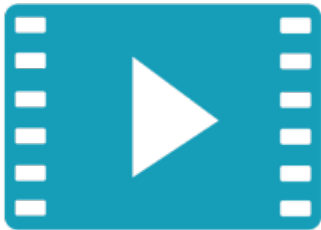


George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 2

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

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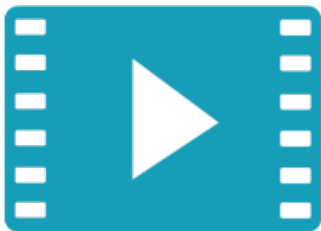


George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 3

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/George-Jung-Interview-with-Ted-Demme-Part-3>



George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 4

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

View this asset at:

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George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 5

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/George-Jung-Interview-with-Ted-Demme-Part-5>



George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 6

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/George-Jung-Interview-with-Ted-Demme-Part-6>



George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 7

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/George-Jung-Interview-with-Ted-Demme-Part-7>



George Jung - Interview with Ted Demme, Part 8

Clip from promotional video, by *Blow* film director, Ted Demme.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/George-Jung-Interview-with-Ted-Demme-Part-8>