

History 331: Drugs and Global Capitalism

Spring 2021 Mon/Wed/Fri 12:40p to 1:30p REMOTE

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Office hours: Wednesdays 10a to noon & by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Drugs have been crucial objects in the development of the modern world. Drug profits drove European empires and transnational capitalism, even as “drug wars” built and expanded an unequal infrastructure for global governance. This course examines major episodes in global drug history, including (but not limited to) opium and the British empire; cigarettes and the origins of multinational corporations; cocaine and global drug control; and pharmaceuticals and the global biopolitics of health. We will see how drugs have served as instruments of control, but also vehicles for resistance, in the contested development of global capitalism.

REQUIRED BOOKS

The following books are on digital reserve at UB Library and are available for digital rental from Amazon.com (at the prices listed below). All other readings are posted on UB Learns.

Carl Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy: A Study of the Asian Opium Trade, 1750-1950* (Routledge, 1999)

- online reserve at UB Library at https://search.lib.buffalo.edu/permalink/01SUNY_BUF/lmti3i/alma9939057096804803
- digital rental from Amazon.com for \$16.44

Nan Enstad, *Cigarettes, Inc.: An Intimate History of Corporate Imperialism* (University of Chicago Press, 2018)

- online reserve at UB Library at https://search.lib.buffalo.edu/permalink/01SUNY_BUF/127vv6u/alma9938845969504803
- digital rental from Amazon.com for \$14.75

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- This class will combine asynchronous lectures and synchronous Zoom discussions. Students should have their video on for discussions.
- Participation in discussion sessions are central to this course; students unable to attend should contact me as soon as possible to work out an accommodation.

- Please complete all lecture videos and reading assignments before Zoom discussions, and come prepared to discuss.
- Assignments should be turned in when they are due as per the syllabus; students unable to hand in an assignment on time should contact me as soon as possible to work out an accommodation. Unauthorized late assignments will be penalized half a grade per day.
- Academic dishonesty is not tolerated. Students having trouble with an assignment should contact me so that we can work out an accommodation.

GRADING

There are 1,040 total possible points

1. **Attendance and discussion participation (200 points or approximately 19.2%):** Students are required to attend synchronous Zoom discussions and participate fully. Attendance will be taken every session; more than one unexcused absence will be penalized. **Please do not hesitate to contact me to arrange a needed absence. Students will be graded on quality and consistency of their engagement with class material and participation in class discussions.
2. **Weekly assignments (20 points each, total of 220 or approximately 21.2%):** Short, informal writing or other assignments in response to prompt questions about the week’s readings, due no later than midnight each Wednesday.
3. **Panopto lecture quizzes (10 points each week, total of 120 points or approximately 11.6%):** Recorded lectures will have multiple choice quizzes embedded in the video.
4. **Two five (5) page historical analysis papers (250 points or 24% each):** Analytical papers synthesizing and taking a position on (making an argument about) bigger themes in the first and second half of the course. Due March 24th and May 14th at 5pm.

A = 93-100%	B+ = 88-89	B- = 80-82	C = 73-77	D+ = 68-69	F = <59
A- = 90-92	B = 83-87	C+ = 78-79	C- = 70-72	D = 60-67	

Grading rubric for papers (not reading journal):

	Missing/needs work	developing	excellent
<u>Argument/Thesis:</u> coherent, central point (answer to the essay question) stated clearly at the beginning of essay	-----		
<u>Sequence of logic:</u> body supports main contention through clear logical steps in comprehensible order	-----		
<u>Use of evidence:</u> claims supported by the most important and persuasive examples from course materials	-----		
<u>Writing:</u> use of proper grammar at the sentence level; appropriate use of paragraphs (e.g., topic sentences)	-----		

COURSE OUTLINE

Schedule is subject to change. Please check UBLearns & your UB email account regularly.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

Week 1: Feb 1, 3, 5

Course Introduction:

READING: NONE

WRITING: NONE

UNIT 1: OPIUM, EMPIRE, AND THE ORIGINS OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM

Week 2: February 8, 10, 12

FOUNDATIONS: How did drugs compare to other commodities in empire?

READING (37 pages):

- Wolfgang Shivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise: A Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants* (Vintage Books, 1993), “Spices, or the dawn of the modern age,” 3-14
- Carl Trocki, *Opium, Empire and the Global Political Economy* (Routledge, 1999)
 - “Introduction” [all] xi-xiv;
 - “The Dream of Empire” 1-12;
 - “All the drowsy syrups of the world” [begin at “Opium and long-distance trade”], 21-32.

ASSIGNMENT: Reading journal

Write 1-2 pages in response to these questions: What is the role of a commodity in an empire, or, what makes the circulation of certain goods “imperial”? Was opium a distinctive imperial commodity according to Trocki? Why? Do you agree?

Week 3: February 15, 17, 19

HISTORY: What role did opium play in the British empire in Asia?

READING (49 pages):

- Trocki, *Empire and the Global Political Economy*
 - Chapter 3, “Cleverer than alchemists” (begin at “The problem of silver), 42-57;
 - Chapter 4, “In compassion to mankind” (begin at “Cultivation and production in British India”), 61-87;
 - Chapter 5 (read ONLY “The Opium War and the opium trade”), 93-101

ASSIGNMENT: First person monologue

Write 1-2 pages, *or* record and upload a short video of yourself speaking in response to this prompt: You are a British trader who recently received a commission to participate in the Asian opium trade. Write a letter home explaining your new job and how it will benefit England.

Week 4: February 22, 24, 26

DEBATE: Which was more harmful, the opium trade or the anti-opium campaign?

READING (51 pages):

- Frank Dikotter, Lars Laamann, Zhou Xun, *Narcotic Culture: A History of Drugs in China* (University of Chicago Press, 2004)
 - Chapter 4, “Opium for the People,” 46-73
 - Chapter 6, “War on Drugs,” 93-117

ASSIGNMENT: Video debate

With another student, stage a short, recorded Zoom debate between Dikotter et al. and Trocki on the Asian opium trade. Each student starts by summarizing the argument of their side’s reading. Then debate each other. End by stepping out of role and discussing, informally, which argument you personally find more persuasive, and why.

UNIT 2: CIGARETTES AND THE ORIGINS OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Week 5: March 1, 3, 5

FOUNDATIONS: What is a corporation?

READING (85 pages):

- Nan Enstad, *Cigarettes, Inc.*, 1-86

ASSIGNMENT: Reading journal

Write 1-2 pages in response to these questions: Why was the cigarette an important icon of capitalist “innovation”? What story does Enstad tell instead, and what are its implications for understanding the role of “innovation” in capitalism?

Week 6: March 8, 10, 12

HISTORY: How did Big Tobacco build an empire in China?

READING (68 pages):

- Enstad, *Cigarettes, Inc.*, 86-154

ASSIGNMENT: First person monologue

Write 1-2 pages, *or* record and upload a short video of yourself speaking in response to this prompt: You are either a U.S. tobacco company manager working overseas in China, *or* a Chinese person hired to work for the U.S. tobacco company. Write a letter home about your experience, focusing particularly on those aspects of domestic U.S. society that American tobacco companies reproduced in China.

Week 7: March 15, 17, 19

DEBATE: What agency did Chinese people have in the transnational corporate tobacco empire?

READING (79 pages):

- Enstad, *Cigarettes, Inc.*, 154-186, 221-268

ASSIGNMENT: Reading journal

Write 1-2 pages in response to these questions: What role did Chinese people play in making cigarettes popular in China, and why were Americans unable to recognize their contribution? What are the implications for how we think about power and control in “imperialism”?

NOT SPRING BREAK

Week 8: March 22, 24, 26

READING: NONE

ASSIGNMENT: First five page paper, due by 5pm Wednesday, March 24

Using the examples of the Asian opium trade and multinational tobacco companies, clearly identify and explain the most important elements of the relationship between drugs and the development of global capitalism. Be sure to draw on what you see as the most instructive examples from history to illustrate and provide evidence for your argument.

UNIT 3: PHARMACEUTICAL COMMODITIES AND EXTRACTIVE CAPITALISM

Week 9: March 29, 31, April 2

FOUNDATIONS: What makes something a “medicine”?

READING (51 pages):

- Benjamin Breen, *The Age of Intoxication: Origins of the Global Drug Trade* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019),
 - “Searching for drugs,” 15-39
 - “Fetishizing Drugs: *Feiticaria*, Healing, and Intoxication in West Central Africa,” 65-92

ASSIGNMENT: Reading journal

Write 1-2 pages in response to these questions: What role did imperialism play in building a distinction between plant remedies and “drugs”? Do you think this distinction has any practical value, or was it entirely political?

Week 10: April 5, 7, 9

HISTORY: Who should profit when a “traditional” plant remedy becomes a “medicine”?

READING (48 pages):

- Abena Dove Osseo-Asare, *Bitter Roots: The Search for Healing Plants in Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 2014)
 - “Take Bitter Roots for Malaria,” 131-163
 - “Towards Bioprosperity,” 199-214

ASSIGNMENT: Video explanation

Record and upload a short video in which you explain to a family member (1) why it is so difficult to determine who deserves to profit from a drug that has been developed from a “traditional” plant remedy; (2) what Osseo-Asare proposes as a solution to this problem; and (3) your evaluation of her proposal.

Week 11: April 12, 14, 16

HISTORY: Whose labor creates “medicines”?

READING (53 pages):

- Gabriela Soto Laveaga, “Uncommon Trajectories: Steroid Hormones, Mexican Peasants, and the Search for a Wild Yam, in Sergio Sismondo and Jeremy A Greene, eds., *The Pharmaceutical Studies Reader* (John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 181-194
- Carl Elliott, “Guinea-Pigging,” *New Yorker*, January 7, 2008
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/01/07/guinea-pigging>
- Adriana Petryna, “Globalizing Human Subjects Research,” in Adriana Petryna, Andrew Lakoff, Arthur Kleinman, eds., *Global Pharmaceuticals: Ethics, Markets, Practices* (Duke University Press, 2006), 33-55

ASSIGNMENT: Imagined conversation.

Write 1-2 pages *or* record a Zoom conversation with two other students (three total) in response to this prompt: A harvester of wild yams, a professional guinea pig, and a non-U.S. human subject of pharmaceutical research have a conversation about the “work” of creating drug value. We are accustomed to thinking of (Western) researchers and pharmacologists as doing this “work” and thus reaping the rewards. In this conversation, other laborers imagine how or if their work should be recognized and rewarded.

UNIT 4: DRUG WAR CAPITALISM

Week 12: April 19, 21, 23

DEBATE, PART ONE: How did the U.S. drug war contribute to an unequal global capitalism?

READING (45 pages):

- Suzanna Reiss, “Policing development: Andean drug control & the expansion of U.S. capitalism,” *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 23(2), Spring 2009
- Horace Bartilow, “U.S. Drug Enforcement Aid, Transnational Corporate Expansion, and Human Rights Repression,” in *Drug War Pathologies: Embedded Corporatism and U.S. Drug Enforcement in the Americas* (University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 109-136

ASSIGNMENT: Two memes

Using an image and a small number of words, create and post to Twitter (or upload to UBL) two memes that illustrate how Reiss and Bartilow believe the global war on drugs served the interests of U.S. corporate capitalism. You will not be graded on how clever or beautiful your meme is. You will be graded on how well you have understood and conveyed the arguments. If you post to Twitter, use #UBHistory331.

Week 13: April 26, 28, 20

DEBATE, PART TWO: Who controlled global drug capitalism and the global drug war?

READING (54 pages):

- Isaac Campos, “Mexico, Shanghai, and Drug History’s Global Turn,” *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs*, Spring 2020, 3-14
- Paul Gootenberg, “Cocaine’s Long March North, 1900-2010,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 54(1), 2012, 159-178
- Lina Britto, “The drug wars in Colombia,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia on Latin American History* (September 28, 2020), stop at “Primary Sources” (i.e. do not read “Primary Sources”)
<https://oxfordre.com/latinamericanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199366439.001.0001/acrefore-9780199366439-e-504>

ASSIGNMENT: Reading journal

Write 1-2 pages in response to the following prompt: How does “cocaine’s long march north” illustrate the role of non-U.S. actors (governments, companies, elites, people, etc.) in shaping global drug capitalism (including the anti-drug “war”)?

Week 14: May 3, 5, 7

DEBATE: Are drug wars & pharmaceutical patenting harmful?

READING (36 pages):

- Naina Bajekal, “Want to win the war on drugs? Portugal might have the answer,” *Time*, August 1, 2018, <https://time.com/longform/portugal-drug-use-decriminalization/>.
- Maurice Cassier, “Pharmaceutical Patent Law In-the-Making: Opposition and Legal Action by States, Citizens, and Generics Laboratories in Brazil and India,” in Jean-Paul Gaudillière and Volker Hess, eds., *Ways of Regulating Drugs in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Palgrave, 2013), 287-317.

ASSIGNMENT: Second five-page paper, due by 5pm Friday, May 14th.

We have seen how global drug policies (both “drug war” and pharmaceutical) contribute to the profound inequalities of capitalism. Drawing from what you consider to be the most relevant histories explored in Units 3 and 4, do you think the alternative strategies being pursued by Portugal, India, and Brazil could be effective in limiting those inequalities? Why or why not? What policies would you implement, and why?

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & EXTERNAL SOURCES POLICY:

All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's academic integrity policies (<https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/integrity.html>). I use plagiarism detection software to aid in determining the originality of student work—all papers will be handed in digitally through UB Learns as well as in hard copy.

What is plagiarism? Briefly, it is using the work and words of another writer (whether from print sources, from the Web, or from another student) without giving clear credit to her/him. Plagiarism is unacceptable in any course assignment, big or small, and will result in an “F” grade for the entire course. If you have any questions or doubts, ASK.

No use of ANY source not assigned for the class—NO INTERNET—for formal written work.

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES:

If you have any disability which requires reasonable accommodations to enable you to participate in this course, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources in 60 Capen Hall, 716-645-2608 and also the instructor of this course during the first week of class. The office will provide you with information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable accommodations, which can be found on the web at: <http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/accessibility.html>.

OTHER UNIVERSITY RESOURCES:

The university understands that your life is more than simply your classwork and often factors outside class can intrude on your ability to complete your work and continue your education. There is a wide range of support systems in place to help you, including emergency and crisis support. If you are experiencing financial hardship, have difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or do not have a safe and stable place to live, the university can help. Likewise, there is confidential support in place to help if you are experiencing mental distress, suicidal thoughts, substance abuse problems, unwanted sexual experience, violence, or crime. Many of these can be found at <https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/help.html>.

Sexual Violence

UB is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and stalking. If you have experienced gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), UB has resources to help. This includes academic accommodations, health and counseling services, housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and assistance with reporting the incident to police or other UB officials if you so choose. Please contact UB’s Title IX Coordinator at 716-645-2266 for more information. For confidential assistance, you may also contact a Crisis Services Campus Advocate at 716-796-4399.

Counseling Services

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, health concerns, or unwanted sexual experiences. Counseling, Health Services, and Health Promotion are here to help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn more about these programs and services by contacting Counseling Services (120 Richmond Quad (North Campus), 716-645-2720; 202 Michael Hall (South Campus), 716-829-5800); Health Services (Michael Hall (South Campus), 716-829-3316); and Health Promotion (114 Student Union (North Campus), 716-645-2837)

LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENTS:

Learning Outcomes	Weekly Assignment	Lecture	Class discussion	Analytical essays
<u>Historical Knowledge</u> -identify key events, people, and eras in the history of drugs and global capitalism -understand the origins and legacies of anti-drug campaigns and criminalization, domestically and transnationally -understand the commercial history of licit and illicit drug traffic -understand how lines between licit and illicit substances have been created and changed over time	X X X X	X X X X	X X X X	X X X X
<u>Historical Thinking</u> -compare and evaluate drug commerce in different places, communities, and time periods -evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different ways to configure and govern drug markets and drug commodities -understand how drug history can inform current debates and policies	X X	X X	X X X	X X X
<u>Historical Skills</u> -construct convincing arguments supported by evidence from primary and secondary sources -write clear, detailed analyses about historical questions and problems -strengthen ability to read closely -develop oral communication skills	X X X X	X X X	X X X X	X X X X