

HIS 240: Alcohol and Other Drugs in U.S. History
Fall 2021, online & 10:20-11:10a Wed/Fri, 101 Baldy Hall

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Office hours: Fri 11:30a-1:30p and by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the 21st century, Americans are debating whether to legalize marijuana. But how did marijuana get to be illegal in the first place? Who decided that some drugs are so dangerous we should fight a “war” against them, while others are so beneficial that entire industries should be devoted to encouraging their use? Why are American debates over drugs so intense and so complex, and why have they produced such a contradictory legal and cultural landscape? This course answers such questions by exploring the rich history of alcohol and other drugs in America: from the Pilgrims’ beer riots to Prohibition, from cocaine Coca-Cola to “crack” cocaine, from Bayer’s Heroin to Purdue Pharma’s OxyContin, from the Marlboro Man to vape lounges, from vipers to hippies to ravers. We will track the changing worlds of drug discovery and commerce; drug use and drug-using subcultures; drug regulation and policing (domestic and global); drug treatment and addiction science; and the shifting, racialized cultural politics of drugs.

General Education: Because study of these topics involves an intensive focus on American institutions (e.g., political, medical, commercial, etc.) and on diverse racial, economic, and gender groups in American history, this course meets the requirements for the General Education Knowledge and Skill Area of **American History**. Because it provides knowledge of the conventions and methods of the discipline of history, it also meets the requirements for the Knowledge and Skill Area of **Humanities**. It is also part of the **Health, Medicine and Societies Pathway**.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

There are no required books to purchase for this course. All readings are available through UB Learns.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

I expect you to watch all video lectures, complete all assignments on time, and to participate in class discussions. With advance notice of excused absence, or in case of documented emergency, makeup exams and/or makeup discussion sessions may be arranged with the

instructor. A grade of Incomplete (<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/grading/explanation.shtml#incomplete>) will not be given except for exceptional circumstances.

History 240 is a hybrid (online and in person) course with the format detailed below. If public health developments, guidelines, or mandates warrant, it will be switched to all online.

- 1-4 video lectures with embedded quizzes available through UB Learns each week
- most but not all weeks, in-person discussion of the week's materials on Wed/Fri (half of students present for each session--i.e., each student will be in person for ONE session per week)
- each week also has up to 30 pages of reading (average ~15p) and a small written or recorded assignment

1. **In-lecture Panopto video quizzes (25%):** Multiple choice quizzes embedded within video lectures.
2. **In-class discussion (20%):** Attendance and participation
3. **Weekly response assignments (40%):** Short, weekly assignments due by midnight Monday after the week has ended, that respond to and take a position on the week's readings and major ideas, including: 5 brief response papers; 2 imagined first-person monologues (written or video); 2 artifact analyses; 2 video debates; and 2 memes. Students missing more than 2 assignments will have an additional 10% deducted from their overall response assignment grade.
4. **One 3-4 page persuasive paper (15%):** An assertive, persuasive blog post drawing from history to evaluate and take a position on a news report on the opioid crisis. Due no later than midnight on Friday, December 17, 2021.

Grading: 93+=A; 90-92=A-; 88-89=B+; 83-87=B; 80-82=B-; 78-79=C+; 73-77=C; 70-72=C-; etc.

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| UNIT 1: Drug Wars & Wonder Drugs |
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Week 1 (Aug 30 – Sept 3): DRUGS AND HISTORY (no reading)

LECTURE: Course introduction
READING: NONE
WRITING: NONE

Week 2 (Sept 6-10): BATTLING DEMON RUM (23 pages of reading)

LECTURES: From Temperance, to Prohibition, to Repeal (*N.B.: extra lectures this week*)
READING: Lisa McGirr, "Citizen Warriors," (2015), pages 132-155 only
Anti-alcohol posters (1900-1920)
WRITING: Response paper #1

Week 3 (Sept 13-17) INVENTING THE “JUNKIE” (19 pages of reading)

LECTURES: Launching the first war on narcotics

READING: Acker, “Heroin addiction and urban vice reform” from *Creating the American Junkie* (2006), pages 13-32

WRITING: Imagined first-person monologue #1

Week 4 (Sept 20-24) HEROIN & PROHIBITION MARKETS (16p of comic book reading)

LECTURES: Heroin and race in the post-World War II city

READING: “Trapped”! (comic book)

WRITING: Meme #1

Week 5 (Sept 27 - Oct 1): CIGARETTES, INC. (25p reading + 30min looking at ads)

LECTURES: Big business and the “little white slaver”

READING: Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, pages 257-274, 289-292, 299-304
Yale and Stanford online archives of cigarette advertisements

WRITING: Video debate #1

Week 6 (Oct 4-8): BIG PHARMA (2p reading + 15min looking at advertisements)

LECTURES: Origins & triumph of Big Pharma

READING: Cooley, “The New Nerve Pills and Your Health” (1956)
Pharmaceutical advertisements (1950s-1960s)

WRITING: Present-day artifact analysis #1

Week 7 (Oct 11-15): DRUGS AND EMPIRE (14 pages of reading)

LECTURES: The global anti-drug wars

READING: Reiss, “Raw materialism” (2014), pages 99-106, 113-116, 127-131 only

WRITING: Response paper #2

UNIT 2: CHALLENGING PUNISHMENT

Week 8 (Oct 18-22): ADDICTION AS AN ILLNESS? (4p reading + 2hrs podcasts)

LECTURES: The origins and evolution of medical approaches to addiction

READING: “American Rehab,” Reveal podcast, episodes 1 & 2 (2020)
Vincent Dole and Marie Nyswander, “A medical treatment for diacetylmorphine (heroin) addiction,” *JAMA* (1965)

WRITING: Video debate #2

Week 9 (Oct 25-29): DECRIMINALIZATION (30 pages of reading)

LECTURES: Drugs in an era of decriminalization

READING: Oram, Efficacy and enlightenment: LSD psychotherapy (2014)
WRITING: Response paper #3

Week 10 (Nov 1-5) WHITE MARKET DRUGS (25 pages of reading)

LECTURE: Triumph and crises of America's legal drugs
READING: Herzberg, "Between The Free Market and The Drug War," in David Farber, Ed.,
The War on Drugs: A History (2021)
WRITING: Present-day artifact analysis #2

UNIT 3: DRUG WARS AND WONDER DRUGS—THE SEQUEL

Week 11 (Nov 8-12) DRUG WAR MACHO (6 pages of reading)

LECTURE: Rockefeller and the punitive turn of the 1970s
READING: "Rockefeller cites need of 'decisive' steps to end lawlessness"; "Harlem response mixed"; and "New drug laws scored in Harlem," all *New York Times* (1973)
WRITING: Imagined first-person monologue #2

Week 12 (Nov 15-19) CRACK WAS WACK (26 pages of reading)

LECTURE: Crack was wack: Drugs, disinvestment, and the origins of mass incarceration
READING: Michelle Alexander, "Introduction" and "The Lockdown" in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*
WRITING: Response paper #4

Week 13 (Nov 22-26) THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

Week 14 (Nov 29-Dec 3) WHITE MARKET CATASTROPHE (one media article)

LECTURE: The opioid crisis
READING: Mainstream news media article on opioid crisis, 2000-2005
WRITING: Response paper #5

Week 15 (Dec 6-10) LOOKING FOR THE EXIT (5 pages of reading)

LECTURE: Harm reduction
READING: Harm Reduction Coalition website (see specific URLs)
Sam Roberts, Harm reduction of color
WRITING: Meme #2

Friday, December 17th: PERSUASIVE ESSAY DUE by MIDNIGHT

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:

SUNY “American History” General Education Requirements (GER):

- **SUNY GER 1:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of a basic narrative of American history: political, economic, social, and cultural, including knowledge of unity and diversity in American society
- **SUNY GER 2:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of common institutions in American society and how they have affected different groups
- **SUNY GER 3:** Students will demonstrate understanding of America's evolving relationship with the rest of the world

SUNY “Humanities” General Education Requirements (GER):

- **SUNY GER 4:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of at least one of the humanities in addition to those encompassed by other knowledge areas required by the General Education program

| Learning Outcomes | Weekly writing | Class discussion | Exams | Persuasive essay |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <p><u>Historical Knowledge</u> -identify key events, people, and eras in the history of alcohol and drugs in America *SUNY GER 1 -understand the origins and legacies of anti-drug and anti-alcohol campaigns and criminalization, domestically and transnationally *SUNY GER 1, 2, 3 -understand the historical development of addiction treatment *SUNY GER 1, 2 -understand the commercial history of licit and illicit traffic in alcohol and drugs, domestically and transnationally *SUNY GER 1, 2, 3 -understand how lines between licit and illicit substances have been created and changed over time *SUNY GER 1, 2</p> | X X X X X | X X X X X | X X X X X | X X X X X |
| <p><u>Historical Thinking</u> -compare and evaluate the experiences of using alcohol and other drugs in different places, communities, and time periods *SUNY GER 1, 2 -evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different political, cultural, and medical responses to alcohol and drug abuse *SUNY GER 2 -understand how the history of alcohol and drugs is used to inform current debates and policies *SUNY GER 1, 2</p> | X X X | X X X | X X X | X X X |
| <p><u>Historical Skills</u> -construct convincing arguments supported by evidence from primary and secondary sources *SUNY GER 4 -write clear, detailed analyses about historical questions and problems *SUNY GER 4 -strengthen ability to read closely *SUNY GER 4 -develop oral communication skills *SUNY GER 4</p> | X X X X | X X X X | X X X X | X X X X |
| <p><u>Diversity in the United States</u> -Understand the challenges and possibilities inherent in a diverse society</p> | X | X | X | X |

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| -Think critically and with an open mind about controversial contemporary and historical topics stemming from issues such as gender, race, class, ethnicity, religion and disability in American society | X | X | | X |
| -Understand that categories of diversity develop and change over time | | | | |
| -Describe how categories of diversity intersect or connect with each other, creating complex identities and perspectives | X | X | X | X |
| -Recognize that categories of difference create both institutional inequalities and advantages | X | X | | X |
| -Explain how historical contexts relevant to alcohol and drugs (including Western global expansion, slavery, capitalism, gender inequality, immigration, and social movements) have shaped contemporary realities of drug markets, drug use, and drug policy | X | X | X | X |
| | X | X | X | X |