History 401: Alcohol and Other Drugs in American History
Fall 2012, Monday 9-11:40a, 532 Park Hall

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Office hours: Mondays 2-4pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

If you are like most Americans, you “do” drugs. You drink beer, wine, coffee, or tea; smoke cigarettes; take Prozac, Xanax, or their herbal relatives St. John’s Wort and Kava Kava; rely from time to time on NyQuil or Sudafed; or even use illicit substances like marijuana, “ecstasy,” heroin, cocaine, amphetamines, or hallucinogens. These drugs produce distinct effects, present varying degrees of risk, and differ greatly in medical and legal status. Some are new, others have been around for millennia. One thing they all share, however, is their welcome reception in America, a nation with a longstanding tradition of drinking and drug use. Early settlers were, by today’s standards, astonishingly heavy drinkers; tavern licenses, in fact, often served as an early Puritan form of welfare. Later in the 19th century Americans eagerly acquainted themselves with opiates through physician prescribing and popular patent medicines. Addiction may have reached its peak before the 20th century even began. Meanwhile, philosopher William James drew inspiration from experiments with nitrous oxide, penning cosmic thoughts worthy of 1960s LSD proselytizers Timothy Leary and Ken Kesey.

Something else you may share with most Americans are strong opinions about drugs, alcohol, the people who use them, and—especially—the people and businesses who sell them. These opinions, too, have a long pedigree in American history, though they have changed radically over time. One era’s “good creature of God” or “God’s own medicine” becomes another era’s “demon rum” or “controlled substance.” Even in the same era, one person’s well-earned respite from the daily grind is another person’s sinful debauch. Powered by drugs’ unique ability to affect consciousness—the very seat of the self—such narratives have played important roles in the cultural landscaping of identity, demarcating boundaries between ethnicities, races, genders, classes, religions, and nations. This cultural landscaping has taken on very real significance, as contested moralities play themselves out in the concrete realm of state police power.

In this course we will examine Americans’ long and complex romance with alcohol and other drugs. We will take several approaches, studying the lives and thoughts of drug takers and sellers, the central role of physicians, and the philosophies and practices of drug regulation and enforcement. We will also trace how Americans have “used” drugs to tell politically potent stories about each other. Beyond being interesting in their own right, these complementary approaches will afford us a fascinating perspective on the major threads of American political, legal, and medical history.

You will also have the opportunity to research a topic of your choosing, about which more later.
REQUIRED TEXTS:

The following books are available at Follett's on North Campus. Other materials will be available online through UBLearns.

Eric Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the Postwar City*
Nick Reding, *Methland: The Death and Life of an American Small Town*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

I expect you to attend all classes (on time), having read & thought about all assigned material for the week; I expect you to participate in class discussions; and I expect you to complete all assignments on time.

1. **Participation (30%)**: You will be assigned a letter grade for your preparation and participation, based on attendance and the quality and quantity of your participation in class discussions & any in-class writing assignments.

2. **Nine in-class quizzes (30%---3% each + 3% for taking at least 8 of them)**: Short-answer quizzes on the readings at the beginning of class.

3. **Research paper (40% total, broken down as follows)**:
   - **Four primary documents (5%)**: Well selected primary document due October 22 and November 5.
   - **One outside scholarly book (5%)**: Approved by me, citation due October 8.
   - **Complete draft of research paper (10-12 pages, 10%)**: A complete, coherent draft due online via UB Learns on November 21 and in hard copy on November 26.
   - **Revised final draft of research paper (10-12 pages, 20%)**: A fully revised, polished research paper, with proper footnotes and bibliography, due December 3.
   - **Oral presentation of research results (5 minutes, 5%)**: Well-organized, competently delivered analysis of your documents and research conclusions, December 3.

PLAGIARISM & EXTERNAL SOURCES POLICY:

All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's academic integrity policies, available in the Undergraduate Catalog ([http://undergradcatalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml](http://undergradcatalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml)) or the Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual ([http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/policies](http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/policies)). Plagiarism detection software will be used in this course to aid in determining the originality of student work. All written work will be submitted 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.
## LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENTS:

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<tr>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Quizzes</th>
<th>Class discussion</th>
<th>Research paper</th>
<th>Research presentation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Historical Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>- identify key events, people, and eras in the history of alcohol and drugs in America</td>
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<td>- understand the origins and legacies of anti-drug and anti-alcohol campaigns and criminalization</td>
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<td>- understand the historical development of addiction treatment</td>
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<td>- understand the commercial history of licit and illicit traffic in alcohol and drugs</td>
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<td>- understand how lines between licit and illicit substances have been created and changed over time</td>
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<td><strong>Historical Thinking</strong></td>
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<td>- compare and evaluate the experiences of using alcohol and other drugs in different places, communities, and time periods</td>
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<td>- evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different political, cultural, and medical responses to alcohol and drug abuse</td>
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<td>- understand how the history of alcohol and drugs is used to inform current debates and policies</td>
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<td><strong>Historical Skills</strong></td>
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<td>- construct convincing arguments supported by evidence from primary and secondary sources</td>
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<td>- write clear, detailed analyses about historical questions and problems</td>
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<td>- strengthen ability to read closely</td>
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<td>- develop oral communication skills</td>
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Aug 27: Introduction

Mini lecture: *The Alcoholic Republic and the campaign against Demon Rum*

Sept 3: LABOR DAY / NO CLASS

**UNIT 1: Men, women, and booze**

Sept 10: Bars and the gender wars

Powers, *Poor Man’s Friend*, 1-13 (13 pages)
Parsons, *Risky Business*, 1-13 (13 pages)
Taillon, ‘What we want is good sober men,’ 319-332 (14 pages)
Parsons, *Resolution*, 157-181 (24 pages)

Mini lecture: *Prohibition*

Sept 17: NO CLASS

Sept 24: Prohibition and the end of the Victorian gender order

“Cocktails for two” (YouTube video of 1934 song)
Murdock, *Startling changes in the public realm*, 70-87 (17 pages)
Murphy, *Bootlegging Mothers and Drinking Daughters*, 174-189 (16 pages)
Neumann, *End of Gender Solidary*, 31-45 (14 pages)
Blocker, *Did prohibition really work?*, 1-11 (11 pages)

*In-class movie:* The Thin Man (movie): (90 minutes)

Extra-mini lecture: *The origins of Alcoholics Anonymous*

Oct 1: The modern alcoholism movement

Roizen, “How does the nation’s alcohol problem change from era to era?” (10 pages)
Levine, “The Discovery of Alcoholism” (1978; 24 pages)
McClellan, “Lady Tipplers” (13 pages)
Rotskoff, *To Be Announced*

Days of Wine and Roses, 117 minutes *OR* Lost Weekend, 101 minutes

**TOPIC (i.e., DRUG OR CLASS OF DRUG CHOICE) DUE**

*Mini lecture: 19th century drug cultures & the criminalization of narcotics*

**UNIT 2: Race and the drug war**

Oct 8: Inventing the “junkie”

Acker, “Constructing the addict career” (2002), p. 98-124 (26 pages)
Marez, “LAPD, the movie” (2004), p. 146-184 (38 pages)

**CITATION FOR SECONDARY READING (BOOK) DUE**

*Mini lecture: The classic drug-scare era after WWII*

**Oct 15 Heroin in the city**
Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the Postwar City*, p. 1-115

*No lecture*

**Oct 22: Heroin in the city**
Schneider, *Smack: Heroin and the Postwar City*, p. 116-204

**PRIMARY SOURCES FROM FIRST ERA DUE**

*Mini lecture: Drugs and the making of the modern world*

| UNIT 3: Wonder drugs |

**Oct 29: The other traffickers**
Spillane, “Selling Science: The Pharmaceutical Industry and Cocaine” (22 pages)
Brandt, “Engineering Consent” (32 pages) and “Constructing Controversy” (52 pages)

*Mini lecture: Before Prozac—The psychotropic cornucopia of the 1950s*

**Nov 5: The legal drug boom of the 1960s and 1970s**
Greene, “The Abnormal and the Pathological” (27 pages)
Herzberg, “The Pill You Love Can Turn on You” (20 pages)
Meldrum, “The Prescription as Stigma” (24 pages)

**PRIMARY SOURCES FROM SECOND ERA DUE**

*Lecture: How cigarettes finally lost—and won*

**Nov 12: Licit drug epidemics**
Reding, *Methland*, 1-72; 107-119; 150-180; 192-214 (136 pages)

*No lecture*

**Nov 19: [no class]**
WRITE ROUGH DRAFTS
**ROUGH DRAFTS DUE ONLINE VIA UB LEARNS ON NOVEMBER 21**

**Nov 26: Workshop rough drafts**
NO READINGS; BRING COMPLETE DRAFT FOR GROUP WORKSHOPPING

**Dec 3: Final paper presentations**
DELIVER 5 MINUTE PRESENTATION ON YOUR PAPER