

HIST 2423
DAZED AND CONFUSED:
THE POLITICS OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL IN US HISTORY

Class Meetings: Monday and Wednesday, 2:55-4:10
White Hall 104

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Office hours: 318 McGraw Hall
Monday and Wednesday, 4:15-5:15 (appointments recommended)

DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES:

How did some intoxicating substances come to be illegal, while others are socially accepted? What is the role and responsibility of the state in managing the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol? This seminar examines the history of the nation's efforts to control and regulate intoxicants, with special attention given to why specific substances are criminalized and decriminalized at various points in history. It will focus on the relationship between social, economic, and political upheaval and campaigns to crack down on drugs. The course also investigates the growing trend to approach some drug and alcohol abuse as a medical problem and the rise of self-help societies and substance abuse rehabilitation. For example, we will examine state responses to opium use by middle class white women and Chinese immigrants during the 19th century, the passage and repeal of Prohibition, and the contemporary "War on Drugs."

Course assignments are designed to develop students' ability to:

1. Identify the historical dynamics that have shaped social and political responses to the use of drugs and alcohol in U.S. history
2. Recognize how perspective and different types of evidence shapes historical knowledge
3. Use evidence to formulate and defend unique arguments about who and what drives historical change
4. Identify, analyze, and evaluate historical arguments and recognize their significance or stakes

GRADING:

Journal: 40%

Class Participation: 25%

Cornell Plans: 15%

Final Paper: 20%

REQUIRED BOOKS:

McGirr, Lisa. *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*. 1 edition. W. W. Norton & Company, 2016.

Brandt, Allan M, *The Cigarette Century the Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product That Defined America*. New York: Basic Books, 2007.

Courtwright, David T. *Forces of Habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002.

BLACKBOARD

Many of the class readings will be available on Blackboard [**BB** on syllabus] approximately one week before class. Check the site frequently as I will also post assignments and announcements. I will also make changes to the course syllabus by adding, subtracting, or shifting the reading assignments. In these cases, follow my instructions on Blackboard and disregard this printed syllabus. Please bring all reading assignments and books to class (if you have printed them).

JOURNAL AND IN-CLASS WRITINGS

In addition to the reading, there is either a journal entry (or an in-class writing assignment) due every class. *The journal posts are due on the day of class by 11am and must be posted on Blackboard*. Late entries are not accepted.

I will provide a prompt, assignment, or question for in-class or journal assignments. It will usually require students to synopsise and respond to the reading in a paragraph or two and display understanding of the reading's main argument. Although journals are private and not open to other students, there may be class periods devoted to workshopping posts with other students. Since the aim is to prepare students for class discussion, late entries are typically not accepted.

I will provide a prompt for in-class or journal assignments. It will usually require students to synopsise and respond to the reading in two or three paragraphs (approximately 200-500 words) and display understanding of the main argument. Also include any questions that the reading generated for you. Is there a theme, concept or historical development that is unclear or confusing? Is there a topic that is interesting and you'd like to know more about?

While I do not grade each individual entry, I monitor the journals consistently throughout the semester and may post questions or comments. To provide clear direction and feedback, I will randomly select a few posts for more detailed comments. I will issue one midterm grade and a final grade at the end of the semester. These entries are a significant part of your grade and must be polished and proofread.

POLICIES

I respect and uphold University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the physically handicapped, visually and/or hearing impaired student; plagiarism; sexual harassment; and racial or ethnic discrimination. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to my attention.

Disabilities: In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except in unusual circumstances, so that arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

Academic integrity: All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course and not another and must originate with you in form and content with all contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Make yourself familiar with Cornell's Academic Integrity Code, which is distributed to students in the *Policy Notebook*. The code, together with a guide to *Acknowledging the Work of Others*, can be downloaded at <http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/pdfs/AIAckWorkRev90620.pdf>. In this course, the normal penalty for a violation of the code is an "F" for the term.

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Communication: Please come and talk with me during my office hours. You do not need to have a specific question. I am happy to discuss ideas or just chat. While I am also available over email for quick questions or to set up a meeting, do not rely on email communication. I endeavor to respond to all emails within 48 hours during the school week. However, I am usually unable to respond to email at night, on weekends, and over holidays. *I check email irregularly and am occasionally away from the computer for days at a time.* Office hours are the most reliable way to talk to me so plan accordingly.

No Screen Policy: Please do not use phones, computers, tablets, iPads or laptops during class. If you have a condition or disability requiring that you take notes on a computer, please speak to me at the beginning of the semester and I will be happy to make appropriate accommodations.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Students are responsible for finding out what they missed when absent. In cases of religious holidays, athletic events, and other school-related activities, you must notify me within one week, bring the appropriate documentation, and complete the reading and assigned journal post. *Two unexcused absences will result in the loss of*

5 % of final grade. Please arrive in class on time. Multiple tardies add up to an absence and will therefore affect your grade.

Paper Due Dates: *Papers turned in late will lose 5 points.* The grade will go down another 5 points for every additional day the assignment is late.

You are allowed to miss one journal entry without any penalty or need to explain. Post on your journal that you are taking your one “free pass.” After the first missing entry, no credit will be given for late journal entries.