Drugs and Society (SYP4550)  
Tentative Syllabus  
Professor Jennifer Friedman  
Spring 2014  
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Office Hours:  
Tues. 1:45-2:30 by appointment  
Wed. and Friday by appointment  

Course Description  
This course will explore the social construction of substance use in the United States. By engaging in a historical analysis of substance use, students will take a look at the numerous dynamics which work to define the legality status of particular drugs. In particular, we will utilize the theoretical perspectives of labeling and moral panics to show how certain racial/ethnic, class, and immigrant groups were targeted by powerful whistle blowers as a mechanism to create anti-drug hysteria and hence legislation. Within analyzing the current war on drugs, students will move beyond the U.S. borders to explore drug trafficking and global politics. After highlighting large macro dynamics, we will move to individual users and the popular perspectives on the causes of substance use and abuse such as the medical, psychoanalytic, and sociological models. Once students analyze and critique these popular perspectives, it is essential to take a close look at the various solutions proposed by medical practitioners, legislators, and the criminal justice system. Finally, students will synthesize all that they have learned in this course by analyzing popular culture and media’s role in maintaining particular images of and perspectives on substance use and abuse. I will run this course as a large seminar and will only bring general notes and questions to class for discussion. I will expect students to do the readings and contribute comments, examples and critiques. Your active participation is essential and will make the class an exciting experience.

Course Objectives  
1. Gain a critical understanding of the construction of substance abuse in the United States.  
2. Develop analytical skills to synthesize media and popular culture material presented to the public daily which informs our perspectives on substance use, abuse, trafficking etc.  
3. Learn the traditional theoretical perspectives for understanding motivations behind substance use and critique their treatment implications.

Student Learning Outcomes  
1. Exercise critical thinking skills in classroom discussion  
2. Develop analytical and creative thinking skills through the completion of a group project,
cooperating with several classmates
3. Use analytical and critical thinking skills in essays as required by the two exams

Grades, responsibilities and due dates:
Final grades are as follows: ninety percent and above will be an A, eighty percent to 89 percent will be a B, seventy percent to seventy nine percent will be a C, sixty percent to sixty nine percent will be a D and fifty nine percent and below will be an F. There will be no pluses or minuses. Incompletes will not be given unless you have completed half of the course requirements with a passing grade. No extra credit will be offered. If you are struggling with the class material, it is your responsibility to seek out my help prior to the end of the semester. Students have 3 exams and 6 class assignments in this course which are weighted in the following manner:

25% Test 1
This will be a one class period test to assess how well students have understood the first several weeks of course material. Expect some multiple choice questions as well as short essays. Test 1 is scheduled for February 6.

25% Test 2
This will be a one class period test to assess how well students have understood the class material in the middle section of the course. Expect some multiple choice questions as well as short essays. Test 2 is scheduled for March 20.

35% Test 3
This will be a one class period test to assess how well students have understood the material presented during the latter part of the course. Expect some multiple choice questions as well as short essays. Test Three is scheduled for April 24.

15% Class Assignments – In Class Exercises and In the News
There will be 6 graded exercises or assignments and each one is worth 2 points. Students can earn a maximum of 10 points. Your lowest assignment grade will be dropped. There will be no make ups for in class assignments or exercises. The assignments and due dates are as follows:

Due January 23 – Students can look at various websites, some of which were highlighted in class, and share in a paragraph something new that s/he learned about the drug war. The websites shown in class are Alternet Drugs, LEAP, November Coalition, articles found on the Drug War Clock site, The Sentencing Project. Write 1-2 paragraphs. Please cite your sources.

Due February 25 - Students can look at programs and or sites that discuss the role of race in the war on drugs. Explore the argument that the war on drugs is a war on people of color in 1-2 paragraphs. (Look up “drugs” on Democracy Now, Alternet Drugs, LEAP, Michelle Alexander author of The New Jim Crow, Criticisms of “Stop and Frisk” policies). Write 1-2 paragraphs.
Please cite your sources.

Due March 18 – Students can look at programs or sites (beyond the documentary that is assigned for class) that discuss the exportation of our drug policies and its consequences in Colombia, Mexico, Central and South America (Check programs titled Merida Initiative and Plan Colombia). Pay attention to how U.S. dollars are allocated. Write 1-2 paragraphs. Please cite your sources.

Or, students can explore the global drug connection, war, and the role of the CIA. Check either on line or read a selection from a book by Peter Dale Scott American War Machine e-book at USF library. Check Alfred McCoy who wrote a book titled The Politics of Heroin at USF library or on the internet. Write 1-2 paragraphs about what you have learned. Please cite your sources.

Due April 3 - Locate and analyze, using a sociological perspective, a popular cultural depiction of a drug user. This can be found in music, magazines, the newspaper, movies, television shows etc. Write 1-2 paragraphs. Please cite your sources.

Due April 17 – Check news and sites that speak to treatment programs for drug users in countries other than the U.S. Are there programs that are more successful than what we do here in the U.S.? (for eg. Check Canada, Holland, Switzerland, Portugal). Write 1-2 paragraphs about what you have learned. Please cite your sources.

Important Odds and Ends:
   Students who anticipate being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious holiday must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the second class meeting.

   Students must turn off their cell phones and refrain from text messaging while class is in session. Lap top computers are allowed, but only for purposes of taking notes during class discussion/lectures. They can also be used to locate information that will enhance class discussions. All electronic devices must be turned off during the exams and when I return and discuss the exams.

Exam Policies and Procedures:

   The “10 minute” rule will apply to exam day. If you are more than 10 minutes late on exam day, you will be not allowed to take the exam. If you are unable to take an exam, you must notify me in writing prior to the exam in order to be considered for a make up exam. Students who are given permission by me to take a make up exam, must do so within one week of the exam date.

   If you need special accommodations for tests or for regular class meetings, please let me know by the second day of class so that arrangements can be made. Each student must bring a
current “Memorandum of Accommodation” from the Office of Student Disability Services which is a prerequisite for receiving accommodations. Accommodated examinations through the Office of Student Disability Services require two weeks notices. All course documents are available in alternative format if requested in the student’s Memorandum of Accommodations.

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism, cheating, and academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Anyone caught plagiarizing or cheating may receive an “FF” for their final grade in this course. For details on this policy, see USF’s Undergraduate Catalog, or www.usf.edu/catalogs/0405/adapad.htm#plagiarism. See also “Procedures for Alleged Academic Dishonesty or Disruption” http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs/0708/adapad.htm.

Required Books:


Required Readings:
(These are found in Canvas in “Files.”)

“Drug Use In America: An Overview.”


January 7 Tuesday
Introduction to Drugs and Society
Discuss Syllabus and Course Requirements

January 9 Thursday
Discuss Population of Users
Discuss Different Classification of Drugs
Provide Context for Study of Substance Use

Read Goode Pp. 1-12

We will talk about some of the myths and assumptions surrounding drug use. We also explore the complexity around constructing categories for substances.

Show statistics of drug using population by age, race, types of drugs (National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health)

January 14 Tuesday
Begin Discussion of the Social Construction of Substance Use
Explore Characteristics which Differentiate Legal from Illegal Substance Use
Discuss What is Abuse Versus What is Use?

Creating Legal Drug Users – Debate surrounding the use of psychotropic medication
Creating Diseases/Medicalization of the masses
What is going on that so many people need medicine?

Read Goode Pp. 13-39

View and discuss Big Bucks Big Pharma

January 16 Thursday
Social Construction of Substance Use
Moral Panics


Show Drug War Clock, November Coalition, Sentencing Reform Act, Federal Budget, Prison Privatization

January 21 Tuesday
The Role of Moral Entrepreneurs
Construction of a Drug "Problem"

Read Jenkins Synthetic Panics Pp.1-28

In Class Exercise: Students will choose 3-4 partners and choose an idea for a moral panic out of a hat (some examples might be a toothbrush, a pillow, or the color red). Students will then work together to create and draw an advertisement to sell the panic to the public (or class). Each group will choose a representative to share their advertisement to the class. What students will learn from this exercise is that we can create a panic out of most activities and objects. The kinds of mechanisms that we often use to sell a panic are similar regardless of the action or object.

January 23 Thursday
Creating a Panic over Synthetic Drugs
Population of Users and the Importance of Race-Class Dynamics
Providing a Historical Context for the Construction of a Panic

ASSIGNMENT ONE IS DUE

Read Jenkins Synthetic Panics “Speed Kills” and “Monsters” Pp. 29-75
Finish Exercise on Moral Panics

January 28 Tuesday
The Role of the Media and Political Figures
The Scientific Community and Scientific Experimentation
Problems with Regulation

Read Jenkins Synthetic Panics “Suppressing Ecstasy” Pp. 76-94 and “Redneck Cocaine” Pp. 132-159

January 30 Thursday
Importance of Social Meanings Attached to Drugs (Race, Class, Sex, Youth)
What Does Studying Drug Panics Tell Us About Culture?
Transition in Definition of Drugs as Victimless Crime
Selling the Drug Problem

Read Jenkins Synthetic Panics "Rave Drugs and Rape Drugs" and "The Next Panic" Pp.160-197

In Class Exercise: Analyze Newspaper Articles (For Assignment 2 Credit)

February 4 Tuesday
Finish in class exercise
Prepare for Test One

February 6 Thursday
TEST ONE

February 11 Tuesday
Early History of Substance Use in the United States
Drug Legislation and Creation of Fear

Read Inciardi "From Dover's Powder to the Evil Weed of the Fields."
The Early History of Drug Use in the United States."

Video: History of Cocaine

February 13 Thursday
The War on Drugs
Fueling Racism
Corruption
Justice for Whom?

Read Mike Gray Drug Crazy Pp. 3-38

February 18 Tuesday
The Role of Race/Ethnicity, Class and Immigrant Status and Drug Legislation

Read John Helmer. "Mexicans and Marijuana."

February 20 Thursday
Discuss Test One (as long as all students have completed the exam by this date)
The Role of Politics in the Construction of Drug Legislation

Read Mike Gray *Drug Crazy* Pp. 39-64

**February 25 Tuesday**
The Role of Politics in the Construction of Drug Legislation
The Construction of the War on Drugs

**ASSIGNMENT 3 is DUE**

Read Gray *Drug Crazy* Pp. 65-110

Watch: “The House I Live In”

**February 27 Thursday**
Macro Perspective
Drug Trafficking and the Role of the United States
Efforts to Control our Borders and Drug Use in the U.S.

Read Gray *Drug Crazy* Pp. 111-152

Finish and discuss “The House I Live in”

**March 4 Tuesday**
Drug Trafficking and the Role of the United States (South America, Mexico)
Efforts to Control our Borders
Lessons Learned?

Finish Gray *Drug Crazy*

**Listen to CD: Gary Webb Dark Alliances: The CIA - Crack Cocaine Connection**

**March 6 Thursday**
Global Perspective of Substance Use
Drug Trafficking and the Role of the CIA and United States Government

Critical Examination of U.S. International Drug Policy
The Linkage Between U.S. Economic Aid and Drug Policies
Effects of Policies on Women, Indigent People, and The Environment


**Watch on your Own - Plan Colombia**
Spring Break March 10-14

March 18 Tuesday

Finish and Discuss Video
Discuss/Compare Merida Initiative (U.S. "Aid" to Mexico)
Discuss Operation Fast and Furious
Prepare for Test Two

ASSIGNMENT 4 is DUE

March 20 Thursday

TEST TWO

March 25 Tuesday
Discuss different causative models
psychoanalytic, medical, sociological models of substance use/abuse
Explore implications of models
What is an Addiction?


March 27 Thursday
The Socio-Cultural Model
Providing a Context for Understanding Heroin Use
Challenging the Deviance Paradigm of Substance Use/Abuse

Read Friedman and Alicea Surviving Heroin Pp. 1-37 (Introduction)

March 31 Tuesday
Exploring a larger socio-cultural understanding of substance use
Connecting Racism, Sexism, and Classism to Heroin use
Discuss Value of Life Stories

Read Friedman and Alicea Surviving Heroin Pp. 38-66 (Millie’s Story)

In Class Exercise: Two students will be selected to act out a segment of the Geraldo Rivera
show on Women Heroin Users. In this exercise the class will see how the quick and
uncomplicated media sound bytes of women heroin users’ stories support gender-race and class
stereotypes of women as bad mothers and bad women. By cross referencing the life story shared
of Gypsy (a poor women of color) on the Rivera show with the life history of Millie (shared in
the book *Surviving Heroin*, students will develop a more complicated understanding of the socio-cultural processes of becoming and being a substance user.

**April 3 Thursday**

**Discuss Exam Two (contingent on all students completing the exam)**
Connecting Substance Use to Resistance
Providing Historical Context with Understandings of Substance Use (1950's and 1960's)

**ASSIGNMENT 5 IS DUE**

Read Friedman and Alicea *Surviving Heroin* Pp. 66-102 (Life on Heroin)

**April 8 Tuesday**
The Stigma of Being a Female Heroin User
Oppressiveness of the Heroin Lifestyle
Connect oppression to drug use
Discuss Nico’s Life and Compare to Current Historical Era
Discuss Complexity Around What it Means to be a Parent Substance User

Read Friedman and Alicea *Surviving Heroin* Pp. 103-129 (Life on Rock Bottom)

**Video: Nico Icon**

**April 10 Thursday**
Discuss Book
Compare historical eras of the 1960s to today and connection to substance use
Discuss Nico’s Life and Compare to Current Historical Era
Discuss Complexity Around What it Means to be a Parent Substance User

Begin reading Friedman and Alicea *Surviving Heroin* Pp. 130-169 (Life on the Clinic)

**Finish and discuss Nico Icon**

**April 15 Tuesday**

Methadone Maintenance
Implications of Using Drug Treatment for Drug Abuse
Revisiting Medical Models of Addiction
Creating Docile Bodies

Finish reading Friedman and Alicea *Surviving Heroin* Pp. 130-169 (Life on the Clinic)
April 17 Thursday

Caught between Competing and Cooperating Systems - Medical Treatment and/or Criminal Justice Systems
A Close Examination of our Society and Oppression
Are there any Solutions?
Drug Legalization Debate
Review for Exam 3

Finish Friedman and Alicea Surviving Heroin

Assignment 6 is Due

April 22 Tuesday

Catch Up and Review

April 24 Thursday

EXAM 3