Psychoactive substances have played an outsized role in the modern history of the Americas. As marijuana is being decriminalized, our class will ask how the Americas have been embroiled in a war on the habits of its peoples. In our first unit, we will consider how the coca leaf, one of the defining symbols of indigenous culture in the Andes, has been transformed into cocaine, an international villain. In the second unit, we will look at the ways in which traffickers adapted to the growing appetites of American consumers in the 1980s and 1990s. Using *Bandits*, a book by the great 20th century historian, Eric Hobsbawm, we will analyze the social role that drug traffickers have played in their societies. In our final unit, we will ask how the “War on Drugs” has changed the U.S. and Latin America, and consider whether we are currently at a historical watershed in the world’s relationship with drugs. As we refine our analytical and writing skills, we will also spend some time on meditation, with the goal of better understanding our own minds, and cultivating concentration and equanimity.
Required Books

   (All other readings will be available on Canvas)

Assignments

1. In each unit, you will submit two short (one-page) response papers. Each of these papers is designed to help you build one skill, which you will need in order to write your essays.
2. You will submit a draft of each of the three larger essays. On each draft, you'll receive detailed comments from me (in writing and in 1-1 conferences).
3. You will include a cover letter with each essay draft. In this short letter, state your research question and your thesis; mention what you are still trying to figure out; what aspect of your research is not yet completed; and what parts of the essay you think you need help with.
4. We will have an in-class draft workshop after you submit each draft. For this workshop, I will choose two students’ drafts, and we will look at them closely. In preparation for the workshops, you will submit written comments on the students’ work. The comments you will provide will help you become better editors of your own work.
5. We will meet for a 15-25 minute conference after each draft you submit, and talk about strategies for revising your essay. Missed conferences may not be rescheduled.
6. The key to good writing is revision. Thus, you will revise each of your drafts before submitting a final version of the essay for a grade.
7. You will submit three academic papers in this class:

   Essay 1 is a four-page discussion of the criminalization of cocaine.

   In Essay 2, you will use the analytical framework that Eric Hobsbawm developed in *Bandits* to explore the lives of the criminals we will look at. (This is essay will be no longer than 7 pages).

   In Essay 3, you will examine any subject related to the War on Drugs. In this 8-12 page essay, you will develop your own argument, using primary and secondary sources of your choice. Descriptions of these assignments will be found on our Canvas site (under Assignments), and we will discuss each of them in class.

Other Policies

- *Grading:* I will grade only the last version of your essays, not the drafts. The overall course grade will be determined as follows:

  Attendance and Participation: 12.5%
  Paper 1: 20%
  Paper 2: 30%
  Paper 3: 37.5%

- *Attendance and participation:* The policy of the Harvard College Writing Program is as follows. If you miss more than one class without the excuse of a religious holiday or illness, you will receive a formal warning letter, copied to your Freshman Dean. If you
then miss another class without a legitimate excuse, you are eligible to be officially excluded from the course and failed. Please note that absences to participate in athletic or other extracurricular activities are not excusable. If you have to be absent for a religious holiday or other important event, please speak to me before the date you will be away. Participation is the key to our class’ success. I expect you to come to class having done the readings, and having submitted the response papers.

- **Deadlines:** Our class will move very quickly, so you must submit work on time. I will only accept late work if the student contacts me to request an extension well in advance of the deadline, and has a compelling reason. Otherwise late work will receive a significant grade penalty.

- **Completion of Work:** The policy of the Harvard College Writing Program is as follows: You must complete all three of the required courses essays (including drafts) in order to pass the course. All work must be completed by the relevant deadline unless you have made prior arrangements with me for an extension. If you then miss the extended deadline, you may be excluded from the course.

- **Collaboration Among Students:** Developing or refining ideas in conversation with other students, and through peer review of written work (including feedback from Writing Center tutors) is recommended. If you would like to acknowledge the impact someone had on your essay, it is customary to do this in a footnote at the beginning of the paper. As stated in the Student Handbook, “You do not need to acknowledge discussion with others of general approaches to the assignment or assistance with proofreading.” However, all work submitted for this course must be your own: in other words, writing response papers, drafts, or revisions with other students is expressly forbidden.

- **Academic Honesty:** All work submitted for this course must be your own work. Any outside sources you use must be cited properly. Any student submitting plagiarized work is eligible to fail the course and will be referred to the college’s Administrative Board for further disciplinary action, including expulsion from the university. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, consult the relevant sections of *Harvard Guide to Using Sources* and/or speak with the instructor. We will be using the Chicago Manual of Style Notes and Bibliography system of citation. For your convenience, you may access the manual either online (in this link) or at Harvard libraries.

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**Unit 1 – Prohibition**

**Tues, Jan 31**

Watch: [Prohibition Episode 1](online streaming through Hollis link. Make sure to disable Ghostery or the link will not work. Alternatively, try opening the link in a different browser.)

Read Freud, “Uber Coca” (1884).

* Fill in a student introduction form. Upload the form on Canvas (Assignments >> Student Introductions).

** Having uploaded your introduction form, come meet me for a 5-min chat.
Thurs, Feb 1

Tues, Feb 6
Kebler, Habit-Forming Agents (1910)
Read the Elements of Academic Argument handout. Then underline the different elements as they appear in Gootenberg’s chapter.

* Response Paper 1: “Outline,” due Wednesday, Feb 7, 5pm. (Upload it to Assignments >> Response Paper 1.)

Thurs, Feb 8
No reading. Please bring three printed copies of your outline to class.

*** Draft of Essay 1 Due Sunday, Feb 11, 5pm. (Upload it to Assignments >> Essay 1 Draft.)***

Tues, Feb 13
Watch: Prohibition, Episode 2.
Read “Working with Evidence” handout.

Tues, Feb 15
Essay 1 Workshop:
Read and comment on students’ drafts. Download and read the “Workshop Nuts and Bolts” handout. The last page of the handout is a form that will help you organize your comments on the students’ essays you’re commenting on. Bring two hard copies of your comments on each student’s draft to class, as well as a printed copy of the students’ essays (with your marginal comments and line-edits).

* Optional: watch Prohibition, Episode 3

*** 1-1 conferences with me will be held between Tuesday and Friday. To get a better choice of time, sign up early on Calendly.

Tues, Feb 20
Read “What’s at Stake” handout.
Print your introduction and bring it to class (whatever shape it’s at).

**Tues, Feb 21**
* **Response Paper 2:** “Primary and Secondary Sources” due Wednesday, Feb 21, 5pm. (Upload it to Assignments >> Response Paper 2.)

*** Revised **Essay 1** Due Friday, Feb 23, 5pm. (Upload it to Assignments >> Essay 1 Revised.)***

**Unit 2 – Social Narcos?**

**Tues, Feb 27**
1. Read: Mezz Mezzrow, excerpt from *Really the Blues*
2. Watch: *NYTimes RetroReport: LSD's Long, Strange Trip*

**Thurs, March 1**
Watch: *News From a Personal War (Noticias de una guerra particular)*. Kátia Lund, Dir. (Brazil, 1999). The film is available at the Language Resource Center (or the LRC, in Lamont Library).

**Tues, March 6**

*** Response Paper 3: “What’s a Social Bandit?” Due Monday, March 5, 5pm.***

**Thurs, March 8**
Read: *Bandits*, Ch. 4-6 and 9.

*** March 10-18 – Spring Break – No Classes ***

*** Response Paper 4: “They Say, I say.” Due Monday, March 19, 5pm.***
Tues, March 20

Thurs, March 22
Watch: The Two Escobars (Documentary). Jeff and Michael Zimbalist, dirs. (USA, 2010). The film is on reserve at Lamont.

*** Essay 2 Draft due Friday, March 23, 5pm. ***

Tues, March 27
Draft workshop (bring two hard copies of your critiques of other students' essays).

*** 1-1 conferences with me will be held Tues, March 27 through Fri, March 30. Please sign up on Calendly. ***

Thurs, March 29
No reading – work on your essays.
Class will meet at Lamont Library.

Unit 3: War

Tues, April 3

Tues, April 5
Cocaine Cowboys. Billy Corben, Dir. (Documentary: USA, 2006). The film is on reserve at Lamont. (It is also on Netflix and Amazon.)

***Revised Essay 2 is due on Friday, April 6, at 5pm ***

*** Response Paper 6: Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due Monday, April 9, 5pm ***
Tues, April 10

Thurs, April 12

Tues, April 17
Brewer, *The Craving Mind*, Ch. 1

Thur, April 19
No reading. Please bring your laptops and any material you need to class. We will be working on our draft in class.

*** A draft of Essay 3 is due **Thursday, April 20, at 5pm.***

Tues, April 24
Last class!
Please bring a laptop to this class.

*** Instead of 1-1 conferences, we will hold small workshops with three students each, between Monday, April 30 and Friday, April 27. Please sign up for these workshops early. Come prepared to the workshop as you would to previous workshops.***

*** Revised final essay due May 4, at 5pm ***