

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
Department of Sociology

SOCI 3113: Drug Culture
Fall 2019
Friday 2:30-5:30pm
OA1022

Course Director: Dr. Arthur McLuhan
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a course about drugs—the people that use drugs, the people that sell drugs, the worlds that develop around drugs, and the attempts to regulate drugs. Using the symbolic interactionist approach to deviance as a theoretical and methodological lens, drug subcultures will be examined as realms of social activity and meaning making. Therefore, the emphasis will not be on specific types of drugs per se but on the sociological implications of involvement in drug worlds. The course will be organized around central sociological questions for understanding people's involvements in drug subcultures: What are drugs? What are the theoretical explanations for drug use? What are drug subcultures? How do people become involved in and experience drug subcultures? How do people exit (or become entangled in) drug careers? When and how do drugs become defined as social problems? How does society attempt to regulate drug subcultures?

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will overview a variety of historical, theoretical, and methodological approaches to drugs and society
- Students will examine the symbolic interactionist and social constructionist approaches to crime, deviance, and social problems
- Students will be able to identify and illustrate some the core concepts and debates in the sociology of drugs using examples from everyday life and popular culture
- Students will use symbolic interactionist theory and methods in an original research project on drug culture

REQUIRED TEXTS

Note: Additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course

Hathaway, Andrew D. (2015). *Drugs & Society*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Various journal articles assigned weekly. Available online through the Lakehead Library.

EVALUATION

Final Paper Proposal: Drugs and Me (10%)

This proposal will involve developing a detailed outline for your final paper analyzing your experiences with drugs and/or participation in a drug subculture from a symbolic interactionist perspective. Assignment instructions will be provided on Desire2Learn. A four-page proposal for your final paper is due in class on **October 4**.

Mid-term Examination (30%)

The mid-term examination will cover lectures, required readings, films, and guest speakers. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. It will be held in class on **October 11**.

Final Paper: Drugs and Me (30%)

In your paper you will be analyzing your experiences with drugs and/or experiences in a drug subculture using the symbolic interactionist approach, applying the related concepts discussed in lectures and noted in readings. Assignment instructions will be provided on Desire2Learn. A fifteen-page paper is due in class on **November 22**.

Final Examination (30%)

The format for the final exam will be the same as that for the mid-term. You will be responsible for the material covered since the mid-term exam. The final exam will be scheduled during the formal examination period, **December 5 to 15**.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING POINTS CAREFULLY:

Assignments and Exams

Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment. All assignments and exams must be completed in order to pass the course.

Please submit your assignments at the beginning of class on the day that they are due. Do not bring assignments to the main office. The staff do not date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

Assignments will be returned to you in class.

There will be no extra assignments for extra credit in this course.

Students are expected to take responsibility for their performance in the course. If you are not meeting your grade expectations, consult with your instructor before the deadline to drop courses about developing strategies to improve your performance and reassessing your grade expectations.

The Course Instructor reserves the right to subject assignments to electronic submission and screening by commercial plagiarism software (e.g., Turnitin). These papers will remain in the database for future comparisons.

Late Penalty

The due dates are fixed and non-negotiable. There will be a deduction of 5% per day for all late assignments. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., **may** be entertained by the Course Instructor, but will **require supporting documentation** (e.g., attending physician's statement). If you and the instructor arrange an extended deadline, the late penalties apply if you miss the new deadline. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

Missed Tests

If you miss a test, a make-up test will not be automatically granted. Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. A single time and date will be set for all students writing the make-up midterm examination.

If you are unable to write the midterm examination for a valid reason (e.g., illness), adhere to the following procedure:

1. **Contact the course instructor by email at least 24 hours prior to the test** if you are physically unable to write it.
2. **Obtain and submit formal documentation for a valid absence.** In the case of illness, the only acceptable documentation is an attending physician's statement dated prior to the test date. A regular doctor's note is insufficient.
3. **Request by email to meet with the course instructor to review your absence and documentation.** If the course instructor judges your absence and supporting documentation to be valid, then you will be able to write the make-up test. If the course instructor judges your absence and supporting documentation invalid, you will receive a zero (0) grade for the missed test and you will not be able to write the make-up test.

Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

Additional Information

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given. It is the responsibility of students to check their Lakehead email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

It is the policy of Lakehead University that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own Lakehead University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a Lakehead account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Lakehead University takes academic integrity seriously and believes that any form of academic dishonesty is destructive to the values of the University. Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on student behaviour policies, disciplinary procedures, and academic integrity:

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/provost-vice-president-academic/academic-integrity-plans-policies>

TOPIC AND READING SCHEDULE

PLEASE NOTE: The following schedule is meant to provide a sense of order and direction. We may modify it slightly as we move through the material. Announcements about any such change will be made in class.

Sept. 6 Introduction

Sept. 13 Drugs and Society: An Overview

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 1 (pp. 1-11)

Sept. 20 Theories of Drug Use

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 1 (pp. 11-23)

Leshner, A.I. (1997). "Addiction is a Brain disease and it Matters." *Science* 278: 45-47. ONLINE

Tomkins, D.M. and Sellers, E.M. (2001). "Addiction and the Brain: The Role of Neurotransmitters in the Cause and Treatment of Drug Dependence."

Canadian Medical Association Journal 164(6): 817-821. ONLINE

Levine, H. (1978). "The Discovery of Addiction: Changing Conceptions of

Habitual Drunkenness in America.” *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 39(1): 143-174. ONLINE

Becker, H.S. (1953). “Becoming a Marihuana User.” *American Journal of Sociology* 59(3): 235-242. ONLINE

Sept. 27 Drug Subcultures and Drug Careers

Readings

Becker, H.S. (1955). Marihuana Use and Social Control. *Social Problems* 3(1): 35-44. ONLINE

Murphy, Sheigla, Waldorf, Dan and Craig Reinerman. (1990). “Drifting into Dealing: Becoming a Cocaine Seller.” *Qualitative Sociology* 13(4): 321-343. ONLINE

Adler, Patricia A. and Peter Adler. (1983). “Shifts and Oscillations in Deviant Careers: The Case of Upper-level Drug Dealers and Smugglers.” *Social Problems* 31(2): 195-207. ONLINE

Oct. 4 **FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

Acquiring Perspectives on Drugs

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 5

Becker, H.S. (1963). “History, Culture, and Subjective Experience: An Exploration of the Social Bases of Drug Induced Experiences.” *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 8:163-176. ONLINE

Weisheit, Ralph A. (1991) “The Intangible Rewards from Crime: The Case of Marijuana Cultivators.” *Crime & Delinquency* 37(4): 506-527. ONLINE

Oct. 11 **MID-TERM EXAMINATION**

Oct. 18 NO CLASS – READING WEEK

Oct. 25 Performing Activities in the Drug Subculture

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 8

Prus, Robert. (1983). “Drinking as Activity: An Interactionist Analysis.” *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 44 (3): 460-475. ONLINE

Jacobs, Bruce A., Topalli, Volkan, and Richard Wright. (2000). “Managing Retaliation: Drug Robbery and Informal Sanction Threats.” *Criminology* 38 (1): 171-97. ONLINE

Nov. 1 Achieving Identity and the Drug Subculture

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 6

Weinstein, Raymond M. (1980). “Vocabularies of Motive for Illicit Drug Use: An Application of the Accounts Framework.” *The Sociological Quarterly* 21(4): 577-593. ONLINE

Jacinto, Camille, Duterte, Micheline, Sales, Paloma, and Sheigla Murphy. (2008). "I'm Not a Real Dealer': The Identity Process of Ecstasy Sellers." *Journal of Drug Issues* 38(2): 419-444. (READ pages 428-435) ONLINE
Finestone, Harold. (1957). "Cats, Kicks, and Color." *Social Problems* 5(1): 3-13. ONLINE

Nov. 8 Becoming Disinvolved and Experiencing Treatment

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 7

Ray, Marsh B. (1961). "The Cycle of Abstinence and Relapse among Heroin Addicts." *Social Problems* 9: 132-140. ONLINE

Brown, J. David. (1991). "The Professional Ex: An Alternative for Exiting the Deviant Career." *The Sociological Quarterly* 32(2): 219-230. ONLINE

Nov. 15 Drugs as a Social Problem

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 2

Reinarman, C. (1988). "The Social Construction of an Alcohol Problem: The Case of Mothers Against Drunk Drivers and Social Control in the 1980s." *Theory and Society* 17 (1): 91-119. ONLINE

Jensen, E.L. and Gerber, J. (1993). "State Efforts to Construct a Social Problem: The 1986 War on Drugs in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 18(4): 453-462. ONLINE

Nov. 22 **FINAL PAPER DUE**

Regulating Drug Subcultures

Readings

Drugs & Society – Chapter 3

Drugs & Society – Chapter 4

Nov. 29 Final Review