ANTH 375: Psychoactive Substances in Ancient Societies

Instructor: Dr. Scott M. Fitzpatrick
E-mail: smfitzps@uoregon.edu
Class Time: T/H (10:00 - 11:20 AM)
Classroom: 125 MCK
Office: Rm. 272, Condon Hall
Office Hours: T/H (1:30 - 2:30 PM)

GTF: Meagan Clark
Office Hours: T/H (8:40 - 9:40 AM)

Take me, I am the drug; take me, I am hallucinogenic. (Salvador Dalí)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Mind altering substances have been used by humans for thousands of years. But what are the causes behind why ancient societies have used, and even encouraged, the consumption of psychoactive substances? This course is an introduction to the archaeological study of how various stimulants, narcotics, and depressants have been used by human groups in antiquity. Using case studies from around the world, we will examine how archaeologists study the material evidence for psychoactive substance use, the role that psychotropics have played in social organization, religious ideologies, and inter-personal relationships, the identification of alkaloids and residues found on artifacts, and the impact that these substances have had on modern society. Archaeological, paleoenvironmental, paleoanthropological, and ethnohistorical research provides a framework for understanding why humans appear to have had a social and psychological need for mind-altering substances and the technologies they developed for harvesting, producing, and consuming drugs.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course students will:

- evaluate how archaeologists study psychoactive substances chemically, culturally, and theoretically;
- calculate how remains of psychoactive substances and associated artifacts help to understand past cultural behaviors (e.g., using residue analysis from ceramics to infer alcohol production);
- identify the techniques used to analyze the alkaloids and other active agents in psychoactive substances;
- explain how humans interact with, cultivate, and manipulate plants to harness psychoactive properties;
- outline the consequences of purifying and extracting psychoactive agents and the impacts of substance abuse on modern societies.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Discussion/Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Final</td>
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<td>Research Paper (draft 1) - abstract, etc.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Research Paper (draft 2) - background</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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REQUIRED COURSE READINGS: (see assigned readings for each week below)


- Journal Articles (see list under each weekly topic – note, only three (3) articles in bold) apart from any assigned book chapters, are required. All others are optional and may prove useful as references for your research paper.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Attendance, Discussion, and Participation – Participation in class is an essential part of learning course content. A major aspect of participation is doing the assigned readings and being able to discuss them in class. This will comprise 12.5% of your grade.

Section Attendance, Discussion, and Participation – Participation in sections is mandatory and also an essential part of learning course content. The quality of class discussions and effort to contribute and complete in-class activities will comprise 12.5% of your grade.

Exams – Two (2) exams – a Midterm and Final – will test your knowledge of the topics discussed in lecture, course readings, and any films (100 points each). The final will be comprehensive, but include primarily material covered during the second half of the term.

Research Paper – A 12-14 page research paper will be due during the last week of class. The paper must consist of a pre-selected topic chosen at random (see last page of syllabus for more detailed instructions) and should include both internal and external readings. During the term, you will be required to turn in different sections of the paper to ensure that you have enough time to put together a well written and scholarly piece. The two drafts will be graded by the GTF, while the final research paper will be graded by your instructor.

Course Percentages as they relate to letter grades

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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100</td>
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<td>93-97.9</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>73-77.9</td>
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<td>68-69.9</td>
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FIELD TRIPS

During the course of the term, we will be organizing several field trips to local businesses that produce or sell various forms of psychoactive substances and/or paraphernalia. Most of these will be scheduled during the regular class period when at all possible, and organized to allow transit time to and from the university. While these are not mandatory, attendance will be taken and used as a basis for extra credit at the end of class.

POLICY ISSUES

For every day an assignment or exercise is late, 10% will be deducted from your final score. This includes weekend days. I do not accept emailed assignments -- you must provide a hard copy unless specifically stated otherwise.

Incompletes

In this course, an incomplete grade will be used in accordance with the official university grading policy, which can be found at http://registrar.uoregon.edu/incomplete_policy

Open Learning Environment

The intention and structure of university level courses are to provide open, thoughtful forums for a wide variety of topics. While discussing these topics, students shall not discriminate on the basis of “The University of Oregon affirms and actively promotes the right of all individuals to equal opportunity in education and employment at this institution without regard to race, color, sex, national origin, age, religion, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other consideration not directly and substantively related to effective performance. This policy implements all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and executive orders” as outlined in the handbook on the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/AAEO%20Booklet%20Color.pdf
Accessible Education
The University of Oregon is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunity in education and accepts diversity as an affirmation of individual identity within a welcoming community. Disability is recognized as an aspect of diversity integral to the university and to society. Please see the following link for more information: http://aec.uoregon.edu/

University Career Center
The Career Center exists to provide career and job search services and resources to UO students and alumni. Our mission is to help you develop long-term career goals and strategies, facilitate self-exploration and discovery, connect with potential employers, and empower and challenge you to fulfill your potential. We look forward to serving as your advocate as you pursue an inspired and fulfilling future. The UO Career Center is a part of the Division of Student Affairs and has offices in Hendricks Hall on the UO campus and in the White Stag Block at the University of Oregon in Portland. Please see the following link for more information: http://career.uoregon.edu/

Computer and Other Electronic Devices Policy
The use of laptops and other portable computer devices (e.g., phones, etc.) is prohibited in class. These are disruptive and prevent a favorable learning environment. Please be prepared to put these away and turn them off when class begins. If you require special accommodations relating to the use of laptops, please see me.

TOPICS and READINGS

Unit 1

(1/6 – 1/8) Psychoactive Substances with Ancient Traditions: Evolutionary and Sociocultural Perspectives
Why do humans use psychoactive substances? What role do they play in social or religious activities? Why is the study of these types of substances important biologically, evolutionarily, anthropologically, and archaeologically?

"Plants of the Gods": p. 1-30; 184-194


Unit 2

(1/13 – 1/15) Evolutionary and Sociocultural Perspectives (cont.)

"Plants of the Gods": p. 31-81


Film: Hooked: Illegal Drugs and How They Got that Way
(1/20 – 1/22) Alcohol (ethanol) and Caffeine
For how long have humans produced alcoholic and caffeinated beverages? What are the different plants (e.g., grains, potatoes, fruits) used for fermentation or caffeine production? What roles did alcohol and caffeine play in the development of social organization?


In Section: Turn in to GTF your Research Paper Title, Abstract, and Preliminary list of 7 references

Unit 4

(1/27 – 1/29) Tobacco (Nicotiana sp.) and Kava
Where did tobacco and betel nut originate and how have they been used ritually and socially? Where are these found and what effects do they have on the user that might be beneficial? Does environment play a role in the selection or potency of these substances?


Unit 5

(2/3 – 2/5) Coca (Erithroxyllum Coca) and Khat (Celastrus edulis)
Coca and khat have a long history of use in their respective regions, though the antiquity of each is only now being truly appreciated with advances in various analytical techniques which are able to identify the active compounds. How were they processed and are there any advantages to their use in particular environments?


Unit 6

(2/10 – 2/12) Opium and Iboga

These plants are sparse in the archaeological record, yet their entheogenic properties and modern uses suggest they were also known in the past much deeper in time than was once thought.

"Plants of the Gods": p. 112-114; see index for Opium


Midterm Exam (includes all previous lecture and reading material)

Unit 7

(2/17 – 2/19) Datura, Ephedra, and Ergot

What plants are included in the Solanaceae family? Are they all psychoactive? What are the effects of Ephedra and Ergot, and why are they important to understanding the role of psychoactives in ancient societies? What role does archaeology and ethnobotany play in developing theories of how societies became more complex?

"Plants of the Gods": p. 102-111


In Section: Turn in to GTF your revised Research Paper which includes Intro and Background sections

Unit 8

(2/24 – 2/26) Marijuana (Cannabis sp.)
Cannabis is one of the most commonly used substances in modern society. Where does it come from and what importance does it have in medicine and ritual in ancient times? What issues have arisen in recent years regarding the use of this substance both medicinally and socially? What are the effects of kava and how does this compare to other psychoactive agents? What does the passage of recent laws mean for the future of marijuana use?

“Plants of the Gods”: p. 92-101


Unit 9

Anadenanthera spp. were some of the most commonly used psychoactive substances in ancient South America. How were they used in conjunction with other plants? Betel nut is one of the most widely used psychoactives worldwide and still enjoys great popularity in Asia and the Pacific? What are the effects and possible medicinal uses?

“Plants of the Gods”: p. 116-139


**Unit 10**

(3/10 – 3/12) **Hallucinogens: Mushrooms and Cacti**

What are the active principles in the major hallucinogens? What roles have they played in shamanistic and other ritualistic types of activities? How are these diverse plants globally distributed?

"Plants of the Gods": p. 156-169


Rios, M. D. 1993. Twenty-Five


**Research Paper due (In section during last week of class)**

**Final Exam: 8:00 AM, Tuesday, March 17th**
RESEARCH PAPER

A major requirement for this class is to write a research paper on a topic of your choosing. This could be a review of a particular substance, a comparison of several substances, a region which includes multiple substances, a specific civilization, or anything else related to psychoactive substances in prehistory. The requirements for this paper are as follows:

I. Write a 12-14 page paper on a specified topic. The paper should be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins on all sides, in Times New Roman font (length does not include references or figures).

II. Organize your paper into the following sections:
   a. Introduction - What is your topic? Why is it interesting? What is the relevance of your topic to understanding the cultural use of psychoactive agents in the past and present?
   b. Background - Where is the agent(s)/substance(s) found? Who uses it and in what contexts?
   c. Body of Paper - Explain the significance of the research. Discuss the evidence.
   d. Discussion - Why is this research important? What are the implications for research within and outside of anthropology/archaeology?
   e. Conclusions - Reiterate why this topic is interesting and relevant. Summarize your findings.
   f. References Cited - list all of your references – be consistent!

III. You must include at least 15 references for your paper. Four (4) of these can be from readings in class. References must be from reputable sources – No Internet sources or public/mass media sources are acceptable (e.g., National Geographic, newspaper, web pages, and especially not Wikipedia). There is no set reference format, just be consistent.

IV. You must include at least three figures. One of these should be a map that shows the location(s) of your research and distribution of your particular substance(s). Other figures might include an illustration or photograph of the substance(s) and an example of it being used or produced. Make sure to reference all of your figures.

The descriptions and the quality of work for your project will be evaluated based on the following considerations:

Exceptional – The work goes well beyond the task assigned. The final project is truly impressive, complete, and well-thought out. The scientific analysis is well motivated and is clearly supported by the data presented. Extensions or provocative new ideas are included. Reference material, where used, is extensive and appropriate.

Strong – The work in the final report fully engages the major scientific principles embodied in the topic. The material is complete and presented clearly. Data are sound and are well chosen or presented to convey information. The scientific analysis makes good use of the data presented. The report demonstrates a clear understanding of the fundamental issues of the topic(s) being explored. Reference material is appropriate for the topic being discussed.

Additional Categories: Average, Weak, Poor

Your research will be graded on accuracy (30 points), detail (30 points), and clarity of presentation (20 points), with 20 points already given for title/abstract/references submissions. Points will be deducted for deviating from the assigned format, grammatical or typographical errors, and poor writing in general.