Key Information

Course Organiser
Dr Angus Bancroft
Email: Angus.Bancroft@ed.ac.uk
Room 4f1
18, Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9JS
Guidance & Feedback Hours: Wednesday 9-11am:

Location
Semester 2

Lecture:
Monday, 11-1pm,
Sydney Smith Lecture Theatre - Doorway 1,
Medical School

Tutorials
Tuesdays, 2-3pm, 3-4pm, 4-5pm and 5-6pm
Room 2.3, 22 Buccleuch Place

Course Secretary
Siobhán Carroll
Email: Siobhan.MacInnes@ed.ac.uk
Undergraduate Teaching Office

Assessment
Fieldwork Journal, Wednesday 7th March (deadline 12 noon)
Long Essay; Wednesday 4th April (deadline 12 noon)
Deadlines
Aims and Objectives

“The best of life is but intoxication.” Lord Byron

Political and media discourses only consider intoxication when it manifests as a social problem, treating its effects as accidental or incidental. This course aims to address two significant gaps in our thinking on this topic. First, we mostly think of the experience of intoxication – being drunk, getting high and so on – as happening largely at physiological and psychological levels. The content and construction of the experience of intoxication itself seems to be thought of as off-limits to sociological investigation and theorising, as irrelevant, or as an unfortunate and unwanted side effect. The course will explore the social factors involved in the generation of different experiences of intoxication. Second, when we do consider intoxication as worthy of study we turn it into a problem, rather than seeing it as a normal social practice, as much bounded by rules and norms as any other activity. This course draws on sociology, anthropology, history, psychology, neuroscience and other disciplines to encourage you to examine intoxication as a practice embedded in social life.

The course is hands-on. You will conduct your own research into intoxication and write it up for assessment.

Learning outcomes:
1. Students will examine the patterns and practices of drug, alcohol and tobacco use in the UK and internationally
2. Students will have the ability to evaluate different approaches to drug and alcohol control
3. Students will be able to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of various sociological, psychological, biological and anthropological approaches to and theories of substance use
4. Students will be able to produce their own research on drug and alcohol use, in the form of a fieldwork journal
5. Students will be able to apply their knowledge to emerging problems and challenges in the field

Readings

I encourage you to read across disciplines, and some of the best work on intoxication is historical, anthropological and journalistic.


Accessibility: My office is on the 4th floor of an old tenement with no lift. If this presents any problems please let me know and we can meet at a more accessible location in CMB.

Fieldwork

Each week has a fieldwork task set for it, detailed in the timetable below. These are practical or reading tasks I expect you to conduct outside of the class, which will form the basis for class discussion and also the fieldwork journal (see Assessment).

Class

At times we will be discussing potentially sensitive issues around drug, alcohol and medication use and their associated problems. You are free to discuss anything you
like but do not feel obliged to share any personal experiences you do not want to. Please treat all personal information mentioned by your peers as confidential. If you find any aspect of the course difficult or upsetting for any reason please feel free to discuss with me in confidence.
Lecture Outline

1. Introduction: How to make a drug

In this session we will ask the questions: What is a drug? Why do people use them? How do some substances become drugs and others do not? What is intoxication?

Lecture reading:


Seminar: Is coffee magic?


2. How to get Drunk without Drinking

In this session we examine the uses to which intoxicants are put and the ways their effects are shaped by material culture. We will be conducting an experiment in class so let me know if you are allergic to alcohol.

Reading:


Seminar: Are drunks people?


Tutorial Fieldwork: Read Dennis, P. A. 1975. “The Role of the Drunk in a Oaxacan Village.” American Anthropologist 77(4):856-863. Take one intoxicant - this could be tea, coffee, chocolate, cigarettes, or alcohol. Describe what roles are associated with it. Next week we will be using what you have written to examine the ways in which the effects of drugs are culturally experienced and mediated.

3. How to Eat Chocolate

This session examines the uses of drugs in rituals and in binding social groupings and affirming social bonds.

Reading:


Seminar: What interactional problems do drugs and alcohol solve?


4. How to Make a Drug Problem

Guest lecture by Anna Ross. This session explores the moral regulation of problem drugs and the discursive generation of problem people. In this seminar we will be exploring the question of whose morality underpins the regulation of intoxication and illicit drug use.

Reading:


Media:

Legalise It All: how to win the war on drugs (2016). In which Nixon’s policy advisor sets out why Nixon started the war on drugs. Available at: https://harpers.org/archive/2016/04/legalize-it-all/

Peter Hitchens on the moral argument against drugs (2012) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNnnA_ZRdgI


3 videos which show the evolution of cannabis and its moral regulation in society.

Reefer Madness (1936): a public service film about the dangers of smoking cannabis.

Short version: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbjHOBJzhb0
Long version: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esfKfTBGadg


Disjointed (2017) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ly019ZF0lsk

Seminar: What is the relationship between risk and morality?


**Tutorial fieldwork:** Do a web news search on a particular drug. Look at the risk terminology that surrounds it. Who is at risk? Where does the risk emerge? How is it expressed? Who has responsibility for avoiding or minimizing risk? Think widely about this: for instance, much of the danger involved in drug use comes at the point of production, rather than consumption.

### 5. How to become modern

Guest lecture by Malgorzata Stelmaszyk. In this session, we examine excessive drinking in post-Soviet Siberia and its enculturation within indigenous communities. Drinking practices have been equated by the Siberian Tuvsans with the phenomenon of curses which transform intoxicated people into ‘turbulent beings’. Instances of excessive drinking are an integral part of wider politics entailing humans, spirits and shamans alike. We examine how vodka has been recently incorporated in the shamanic practice and used by shamans as a means of both controlling the spirits as well as communicating with them in a process of curse infliction and deflection.

**Readings:**


**Seminar: Can alcohol be decolonised?**


### 6. How to waste time

Society is often said to be one where experiences are consumed, rather than lived. This session examines the political economy of intoxication experiences. Please note, alcohol is just one focus of this and you do not have to concentrate on that in your fieldwork task.

**Reading:**


Seminar: Are pleasures risky?

**Tutorial fieldwork:** observe and record, or write down your recollections of, intoxicant use in one of the following situations; a party, pub, nightclub, coffee house, or similar intoxication space. In the class we are going to be discussing how our experiences of intoxication are socially shaped. So that you can be ready to discuss this, after you have written your account I want you to think about the literature you have read so far and think about how your account could be a sociological one. For guidance read Cameron Duff, "The pleasure in context," International Journal of Drug Policy 19, no. 5 (October 2008): 384-392.

7. How to change reality
This is a special guest lecture by Danny Nemu. He examines psychedelics and the ontological, reality warping problems they pose.

Outline to follow.

Reading:

**Tutorial fieldwork:** Read Andy Letcher, “Mad Thoughts on Mushrooms: Discourse and Power in the Study of Psychedelic Consciousness,” *Anthropology of Consciousness* 18, no. 2 (September 1, 2007): 74-98. Consider: what boundaries do hallucinogenic drugs transgress? Is this different from other drugs and if so why?

8. How to get street smart
In this session we examine ethnographies with heroin and crack users. We discuss why heroin and crack are especially stigmatised drugs, the different subcultures that surround them, and the limits of research with users.

Reading:


**Seminar: Why Trump Won**

**Tutorial fieldwork:** Read Philippe Bourgois, “Just Another Night in a Shooting Gallery,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 15, no. 2 (May 1, 1998): 37 -66. What ethical, moral and methodological problems are there in research, especially ethnographic research, with heroin and crack users?
9. How to put the crystal in crystal meth
This session examines drug trades on the darknet cryptomarkets and the motivations people have for using them.

Reading:


Seminar: Are cryptomarkets good for drug users?

Tutorial fieldwork: look at the data we have supplied from a current research project into cryptomarkets. Come prepared to answer the question of what the interactional structure of drug dealing communities is.

10. How to fail as a drug lord without really trying
In this session we continue our study of the darknet to discuss the present and future of the drug trade.

Reading:


Seminar: Are drug dealers rational?
Bancroft A (n.d.) Cybercrime is not always rational, but it is reasonable: the role of economic rationality in cryptomarket businesses. *Criminology & Criminal Justice* pre-publication.


Tutorial fieldwork: find one artefact that relates to intoxication and prepare to discuss it in class. This can be virtual or real.
Assessment

Assessment will be by a fieldwork journal (25%) and either a long essay or a video essay (75%). The online journals and long essay are marked anonymously so do not put your name on it, just your exam number.

Course work will be submitted online using our submission system – ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy.

Marked course work, grades and feedback will be returned online – you will not receive a paper of your marked course work or feedback.

For information, help and advice on submitting coursework and accessing feedback, please see the ELMA wiki at https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/SPSITW/ELMA

Fieldwork Journal

The journal is your account of the fieldwork tasks. It is best if you use the same example for the different tasks (e.g. the same drug, the same cultural context). As this is a new form of assessment you can submit a formative journal which will not be assessed but which I will give feedback on so you can learn what is expected.

The formative journal should be 500 words long.

The journal should be 1400-1600 words long. It should contain an account of at least two of the fieldwork tasks.

You can submit a video or audio file along with the journal.

Journals above 1,600 words will be penalized using the Ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 1,601 and 1,620 words will lose one point, between 1,621 and 1,640 two points, and so on. Note that the lower 1400 figure is a guideline for students which you will not be penalized for going below. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

You can submit a video and a shorter journal of 700-800 words. Word count penalties apply as with the journal above.

Long Essay

Long essays should be 3,500-4,500 words long, excluding bibliography.

You must include a word count on the title page.

Essays above 4,500 words will be penalized using the Ordinary level criterion of 1 mark for every 20 words over length: anything between 4,501 and 4,520 words will lose one point, between 4,521 and 4,540 two points, and so on. The same penalties apply to the journal.

Note that the lower 3,500 figure is a guideline for students, which you will not be penalized for going below. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark. I advise you to use most of the word count.

So that you can get feedback before you submit the essay, submit a 2 page long essay plan by the end of week 9.

Video essay option

This will consist of a short ethnographic or documentary video made by you in place of the essay. To take this option, take video diaries and documentary material when you are doing the fieldwork task. The final video should be 10-15 minutes long, along
with a 1600-1800 word reflective review highlighting key themes and linking them to the literature.

I will have a special session to introduce students who are interested in this assessment to it.

**Suggested Long Essay Questions**

I have presented some of these essay questions as propositions and provocations for you to argue one way or another on. There is no 'right' answer to any of them – far from it. For all questions, it is up to you how you define ‘drugs’, so you can include alcohol, cigarettes, medicines etc. Just be clear about the way you are using it. I encourage you to think critically about the implications of them and put your own framing on them. This could be in terms of gender, social class, ethnicity, globalisation and other frames. We will go over these questions in an essay work session. You can come up with your own topic in discussion with me.

1. Why and how do people get intoxicated?
2. In what ways and why are alcohol and/or other drugs socially functional?
3. Is addiction rational?
4. Discuss the role of social class and deprivation in relation to drug and/or alcohol use, experiences and problems.
5. Using examples, critically examine the legal, societal and methodological distinctions made between different drugs, drug users and places where drugs are used.
6. Why is pleasure ‘missing’ in drug and/or alcohol studies?
7. Is illicit drug prohibition necessary and effective?
8. What are we talking about when we talk about drug and/or alcohol problems?
9. The UK Home Office is planning a new scheme of drug classification. What is your advice to them?
10. Is the alcohol industry responsible for alcohol problems?
11. In what ways are drugs and/or alcohol cultural solutions to social problems?
12. How does the drug trade affect politics and society in the developing world?
13. Selecting appropriate studies, compare the strengths and limits of historical, experimental, ethnographic and survey methods in drug and alcohol research. You may select and justify other methods as appropriate.
14. What are the implications of the online drug trade for understanding drug exchange and use?
15. The UK National Crime Agency has asked you how they should respond to the rise of the online drug trade. What do you tell them?
Appendix 1 – General Information

Students with Disabilities
The School welcomes disabled students with disabilities (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia) and is working to make all its courses as accessible as possible. If you have a disability special needs which means that you may require adjustments to be made to ensure access to lectures, tutorials or exams, or any other aspect of your studies, you can discuss these with your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor who will advise on the appropriate procedures.

You can also contact the Student Disability Service, based on the University of Edinburgh, Third Floor, Main Library, You can find their details as well as information on all of the support they can offer at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service

Learning Resources for Undergraduates

|The Study Development Team at the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) provides resources and workshops aimed at helping all students to enhance their learning skills and develop effective study techniques. Resources and workshops cover a range of topics, such as managing your own learning, reading, note-making, essay and report writing, exam preparation and exam techniques.

The study development resources are housed on ‘LearnBetter’ (undergraduate), part of Learn, the University’s virtual learning environment. Follow the link from the IAD Study Development web page to enrol: www.ed.ac.uk/iad/undergraduates

Workshops are interactive: they will give you the chance to take part in activities, have discussions, exchange strategies, share ideas and ask questions. They are 90 minutes long and held on Wednesday afternoons at 1.30pm or 3.30pm. The schedule is available from the IAD Undergraduate web page (see above).

Workshops are open to all undergraduates but you need to book in advance, using the MyEd booking system. Each workshop opens for booking two weeks before the date of the workshop itself. If you book and then cannot attend, please cancel in advance through MyEd so that another student can have your place. (To be fair to all students, anyone who persistently books on workshops and fails to attend may be barred from signing up for future events).

Study Development Advisors are also available for an individual consultation if you have specific questions about your own approach to studying, working more effectively, strategies for improving your learning and your academic work. Please note, however, that Study Development Advisors are not subject specialists so they cannot comment on the content of your work. They also do not check or proof read students’ work.

Students can book a study skills consultation http://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/postgraduate/taught/study/study-on-campus
Academic English support can also be accessed at http://www.ed.ac.uk/english-language-teaching/students/current-students

Discussing Sensitive Topics

The discipline of Sociology addresses a number of topics that some might find sensitive or, in some cases, distressing. You should read this Course Guide carefully and if there are any topics that you may feel distressed by you should seek advice from the course convenor and/or your Personal Tutor.

For more general issues you may consider seeking the advice of the Student Counselling Service, http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling

Honours Tutorial Sign-up

If you are taking an Honours level course with SPS that has tutorials, you will be able to self-enrol yourselves onto a group via the course learn page. Guidance on how to do this is below. Tutorials have restricted numbers and it is important to sign up as soon as possible.

Self Sign-up will open at 9am on Monday of week 1 and close at 12 noon on the Friday of week 1. After this point, any students who have not self-enrolled will be automatically assigned to a tutorial group.

For full information and guidance on how to sign up via learn, please see our webpages at http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/tutorial_requirements/tutorial_requirements_honours

External Examiner

The External Examiner for the Sociology Honours programme is: Professor Henrietta O’Connor, University of Leicester
Appendix 2 - Course Work Submission and Penalties

Penalties that can be applied to your work and how to avoid them.

There are three types of penalties that can be applied to your course work and these are listed below. Students must read the full description on each of these at: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/coursework_penalties

Make sure you are aware of each of these penalties and know how to avoid them. Students are responsible for taking the time to read guidance and for ensuring their coursework submissions comply with guidance.

- **Incorrect submission Penalty**
  When a piece of coursework is submitted to our Electronic Submission System (ELMA) that does not comply with our submission guidance (wrong format, incorrect document, no cover sheet etc.) a penalty of 5 marks will be applied to students work.

- **Lateness Penalty**
  If you miss the submission deadline for any piece of assessed work 5 marks will be deducted for each calendar day that work is late, up to a maximum of seven calendar days (35 marks). Thereafter, a mark of zero will be recorded. There is no grace period for lateness and penalties begin to apply immediately following the deadline.

- **Word Count Penalty**
  The penalty for excessive word length in coursework is one mark deducted for each additional 20 words over the limit. If the limit is 1500 words then anything between 1501 and 1520 words will lose one point, and so on.

  Word limits vary across subject areas and submissions, so check your course handbook. Make sure you know what is and what is not included in the word count. Again, check the course handbook for this information.

  You will not be penalised for submitting work below the word limit. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

**ELMA: Submission and Return of Coursework**

Coursework is submitted online using our electronic submission system, ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy of your work.

Marked coursework, grades and feedback will be returned to you via ELMA. You will not receive a paper copy of your marked course work or feedback.
For details of how to submit your course work to ELMA, please see our webpages here. Remember, there is a 5 mark incorrect submission penalty, so read the guidance carefully and follow it to avoid receiving this.

**Extensions: policy-applicable for years 1 - 4**

If you have good reason for not meeting a coursework deadline, you may request an extension. Before you request an extension, make sure you have read all the guidance on our webpages and take note of the key points below. You will also be able to access the online extension request form through our webpages.

- Extensions are granted for 7 calendar days.
- If you miss the deadline for requesting an extension for a valid reason, you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties for late submission. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.
- If you have a valid reason and require an extension of more than 7 calendar days, you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties for late submission. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.
- If you have a Learning Profile from the Disability Service allowing you potential for flexibility over deadlines, you must still make an extension request for this to be taken into account.

**Exam Feedback and Viewing Exam Scripts:**

General exam feedback will be provided for all courses with an examination. General feedback will be uploaded to the relevant course learn page within 24 hours of the overall marks for the course being returned to Students.

Students who sit the exam will also receive individual feedback. The relevant Course Secretary will contact students to let them know when this is available and how to access it.

If students wish to view their scripts for any reason, they must contact the relevant Course Secretary via email to arrange this.

**Plagiarism Guidance for Students: Avoiding Plagiarism**

Material you submit for assessment, such as your essays, must be your own work. You can, and should, draw upon published work, ideas from lectures and class discussions, and (if appropriate) even upon discussions with other students, but you must always make clear that you are doing so. **Passing off anyone else’s work** (including another student’s work or material from the Web or a published author) **as your own is plagiarism** and will be punished severely.

When you upload your work to ELMA you will be asked to check a box to confirm the work is your own. All submissions will be run through ‘Turnitin’, our plagiarism...
detection software. Turnitin compares every essay against a constantly-updated database, which highlights all plagiarised work. Assessed work that contains plagiarised material will be awarded a mark of zero, and serious cases of plagiarism will also be reported to the College Academic Misconduct officer. In either case, the actions taken will be noted permanently on the student's record. For further details on plagiarism see the Academic Services' website:

http://www.ed.ac.uk/arts-humanities-soc-sci/taught-students/student-conduct/academic-misconduct

Data Protection Guidance for Students

In most circumstances, students are responsible for ensuring that their work with information about living, identifiable individuals complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The document, Personal Data Processed by Students, provides an explanation of why this is the case. It can be found, with advice on data protection compliance and ethical best practice in the handling of information about living, identifiable individuals, on the Records Management section of the University website at:

http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/records-management-section/data-protection/guidance-policies/dpforstudents