

Lecture: Thursday 11:30 – 13:15

Lecturer: Wai-Man TANG

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### Course Description

Many drugs have mind-altering effects but some are defined as legal and some as illegal. The War on Drugs have been launched in many societies but none of them has successfully become a drug-free society. This course provides students an understanding of drug-related issues from a perspective of medical anthropology. Through close readings of ethnographies, viewing of videos, and fieldtrips, the class explores drug use, prevention, and treatment in both scientific and cultural perspectives and re-examines the linkages between legal and illegal behaviors, healthy and unhealthy bodily conditions, as well as science and culture.

### What you will learn:

Student taking this course will:

- acquire basic knowledge in medical anthropology;
- learn the skills to comprehend the drug history in Hong Kong, China, and other parts of the world;
- develop the ability to apply the learned knowledge to analyze the complex relationship between science and culture; and
- acquire a critical mind to evaluate any social issues.

### Course Requirements:

Response Papers*:	50% (25% x 2)
Final Exam:	50%

#### 1) Response Papers (50%)

Choose two weekly topics and write two 3-4 page response papers. Response papers should discuss the topic with reference to the assigned reading and/or lecture. Instead of merely summarizing the readings/lecture, you should raise critical points of views, for example, what new insights you have got, what limitations you have identified, what follow-up questions have come to your mind, etc. Ideally, a central theme should be raised to link up your arguments. Submit your first response paper on or before **7 April** and second response paper on or before **28 April**.

#### 2) Final Exam (50%):

Four open-ended questions will be given on **29 April** and choose two to answer. Write each answer of 2-3 pages. This is a take-home exam and the questions cover all the topics in the lecture. You will have one week's time to complete the exam.

After finishing your written assignments, please submit soft copies to both VeriGuide and the course website (Blackboard). Hard copies are not required.

The paper should be written in the following format: Double line spacing, Times New Roman, and font 12 (either Chinese or English).

Please submit your assignment on time. Marks will be deducted (i.e. one point per day) for late submission.

\*If the situation allows, fieldtrip will be arranged. You can choose to write a 3-4 page ethnographic paper to substitute one response paper. The ethnographic paper should include your field observations and discussion with reference to the assigned readings. Instead of merely describing your field observations or summarizing the readings, you should raise critical points of views.

## Course Schedule:

- 1) Introduction (13 Jan.)

### Section I: Drug Ethnographies

- 2) Theories and Methods in Drug Research (20 Jan.)  
Page, J. Bryan, and Merrill Singer. 2010. "Systematic Modernist Ethnography and Ethnopharmacology." In *Comprehending Drug Use: Ethnographic Research at the Social Margins*, pp.50-69. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.  
Tang, Wai-man. 2020. "You are (Hong Kong) Chinese! You should Understand our Culture!': Reflections of a Chinese Male Ethnographer on Researching Nepali Drug Users in Hong Kong." In Shirlena Huang and Kanchana N. Ruwanpura, eds., *Handbook on Gender in Asia*, pp.28-44. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

### Section II: Drug Scene in Hong Kong

- 3) An Overview of Drug Use History in Hong Kong (27 Jan.)  
Cheung, Yuet W. 2015. "Macro Social Flaws and Intervention's Unfinished Business: A Personal Note on Young People's Drug Use in Hong Kong." *Substance Use & Misuse* 50(8-9):1044-1050.  
Laidler, Karen A. Joe. 2005. "The Rise of Club Drugs in a Heroin Society: The Case of Hong Kong." *Substance Use & Misuse* 40:1257-1278
- 4) Holiday (3 Feb.)
- 5) Drug Use by Gender and Ethnicity (10 Feb.)  
Tang, Wai-man. 2015. "Effects of Transnational Migration on Drug Use: An Ethnographic Study of Nepali Female Heroin Users in Hong Kong." *International Journal of Drug Policy* 26:8-14.  
Tang, Wai-man. 2017. "Migration, Marginalization and Metropolitanity: Negotiation of Masculinities of Nepali Drug Users in Hong Kong." *Gender, Place & Culture* 24(2):213-224.

### Section III: Drug Treatment and Prevention

- 6) War on Drugs (17 Feb.)  
Garcia, Angela, and Brian Anderson. 2016. "Violence, Addiction, Recovery: An Anthropological Study of Mexico's *Anexos*." *Transcultural Psychiatry* 53(4):445-64.  
Warburg, Anna Bræmerm and Steffen Jensen. 2020. "Ambiguous Fear in the War on Drugs: A Reconfiguration of Social and Moral Objects in the Philippines." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 51(1-2):5-24.
- 7) Fieldtrip: Visit Drug Rehabilitation Center in Hong Kong (19 or 26 Feb.)  
Tang, Wai-man. 2014. "Examining the Relationship between Ethnicity and the Use of Drug-related Services: An Ethnographic Study of Nepali Drug Users in Hong Kong." *Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation* 5:53-62.
- 8) No lesson (24 Feb.) Replaced by Fieldtrip
- 9) Harm Reduction (3 Mar.)  
Zigon, Jarrett. 2019. "Disclosive Freedom." In *A War on People: Drug User Politics and a New Ethics of Community*, pp.100-131. California: University of California Press.  
Bourgois, Philippe. 2000. "Disciplining Addictions: The Bio-politics of Methadone and Heroin in the United States." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 24:165-195.
- 10) Drug-related Services in Macau (10 Mar.) (Guest Speaker)  
Li, Spencer D. 2016. "Substance Abuse and its Prevention and Treatment in Macao." In Nazrul Islam, ed. *Public Health Challenges in Contemporary China: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, pp.89-104. Berlin: Springer Berlin Heidelberg.

#### Section IV: Drug Use by Specific Topics

##### 11) Sexualized Drug Use: Chemsex (17 Mar.)

Kong, Travis S. K., and Karen Joe Laidler. 2019. "The Paradox for Chem-Fun and Gay Men: A Neoliberal Analysis of Drugs and HIV/AIDS Policies in Hong Kong." *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 52(1):77-85.

Guadamuz, Thomas E., and Pimpawun Boonmongkon. 2018. "Ice Parties among Young Men who have Sex with Men in Thailand: Pleasures, Secrecy and Risks." *International Journal of Drug Policy* 55:249-255.

##### 12) Doping in Sport (24 Mar.)

Gilley, Brian Joseph. 2006. "Cyclist Subjectivity: Corporeal Management and the Inscription of Suffering." *Anthropological Notebooks* 12(2):53-64.

Henne, Kathryn. 2016. "Defending Doping: Performances and Trials of an Anti-Doping Program." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 40(3):175-196.

##### 13) Smart Drug: Adderall (31 Mar.)

Petersen, Margit Anne, Lotte Stig Nørgaard, and Janine Marie Traulsen. 2015. "Going to the Doctor with Enhancement in Mind – An Ethnographic Study of University Students' Use of Prescription Stimulants and their Moral Ambivalence." *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy* 22(3):201-207.

Vuckovic, Nancy. 1999. "Fast Relief: Buying Time with Medications." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 13(1):51-68.

##### 14) Reading Week (7 Apr.)

##### 15) Therapeutic Use of Psychedelic Drugs (14 Apr.)

Pollan, Michael. 2018. "The Trip Treatment: Psychedelics in Psychotherapy." In *How to Change your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches us about Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence*, pp.331-395. New York: Penguin Press.

Dyck, Erika. 2010. "Keeping Tabs on Science and Spirituality." In *Psychedelic Psychiatry: LSD from Clinic to Campus*, pp.79-100. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

##### 16) Plant Teachers – Cannabis (21 Apr.)

Waldsten, Anna. 2019. "Smoking as Communication in Rastafari: Reasonings with 'Professional' Smokers and 'Plant Teachers'." *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 85(5):900-919.

Klein, Axel, and Gary R. Potter. 2018. "The Three Betrayals of the Medical Cannabis Growing Activist: From Multiple Victimhood to Reconstruction, Redemption and Activism." *International Journal of Drug Policy* 53:65-72.

Grade descriptors are as follows for the assessment of this course:

Grade	Overall course
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
B	Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
C	Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.