

Summer 2021

AP/EN 4181 6.0A (SU)	Contemporary Literature: Writers & Drugs
Course Director:	Professor Ila Goody Email: igoody@yorku.ca
Time:	N/A
Delivery Format:	Fully on-line
Description:	<p>This course explores the subject of writers and drugs (i.e., psychoactive substances) in Western literature and culture from several different perspectives: religious, scientific, technological, socio-cultural, and ethnographic. We shall begin by examining some foundational Classical and Romantic literary texts that establish major topics and figures in the discourse of the drug experience. We will consider, for example, representations of Dionysus, the god of intoxication, in both ancient Greece and Nietzschean philosophy. We will also examine several narratives of addiction, particularly those by Thomas De Quincey, William Burroughs, and Ann Marlowe. Other contemporary topics to be explored will include: the role of dreams; heightened perception and the sublime; synaesthesia (fusion of the senses); anthropological studies of shamanic modulations of consciousness; drugs as technologies of speed; and the breakdown of conventional symbolic systems. In addition, we shall examine the ways in which these and related topics are manifested in several modern and contemporary works of fiction, many of which are autobiographical and confessional. Primary texts will be accompanied by relevant theoretical and cultural readings. There will be a weekly discussion forum of major issues from readings and lecture material. The objectives of the course will be to enable students to engage with literary and cultural texts about the drug experience, and to acquire the skills for interpreting those texts.</p>
Category:	B
Historical Requirement:	N/A
Requirements:	Bibliographic Assignment - 25% Major Essay - 30% Essay Proposal - 25% Forum Participation - 20% Total - 100%
Reading List:	Walter Benjamin: <u>On Hashish</u> (selections and articles available online) William Burroughs: <u>Naked Lunch</u> Thomas De Quincey: <u>Confessions of an English Opium-Eater</u> Euripides: <u>The Bacchae</u> Aldous Huxley: <u>The Doors of Perception</u> Anna Kavan: "High in the Mountains" in <u>Julia and the Bazooka</u> Michael Taussig: <u>Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing</u>

	Gabor Mate: <u>In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts</u> Hunter S. Thompson: <u>Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas</u> Tom Wolfe: <u>The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test</u> Ann Marlowe: <u>How to Stop Time</u> Edward St. Aubyn: <u>The Patrick Melrose Novels</u> Marcus Boon: <u>The Road of Excess</u> First three texts to be read: Boon, Prologue to <u>Road of Excess</u> ; Benjamin, Selections; De Quincey, <u>Confessions</u> .
Open To:	Honours Year 4