

Summer 2022

AP/EN 4181 6.0A (SU)	Contemporary Literature: Writers and Drugs
Course Director:	Ila Goody e-mail: igoody@yorku.ca
Time:	Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:00 – 7:00pm
Delivery Format:	REMOTE – (synchronous delivery) – There are scheduled meeting times for this course. Students should plan to be available for course-related activities during the appointed times.
Description:	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 and literary texts that establish major topics and figures in the disclosure of the drug experience. We will consider, for example, representation 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; synesthesia (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. 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. First 3 texts to be read: De Quincey, Euripides, Benjamin.
Category:	B
Historical Requirement:	N/A
Requirements:	One bibliographic assignment - 20% One major essay - 40% One seminar presentation - 20% Class Participation - 20% Total - 100%
Reading List:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walter Benjamin: <u>On Hashish</u> • 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>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hunter S. Thompson: <u>Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas</u>• Tom Wolfe: <u>The Electric Cool-Aid Acid Test</u>• Ann Marlowe: <u>How to Stop Time</u>• Edward St. Aubyn: <u>The Patrick Melrose Novels</u>• Leslie Jamison: <u>The Recovering</u>
Open To:	Yr 4 Honours