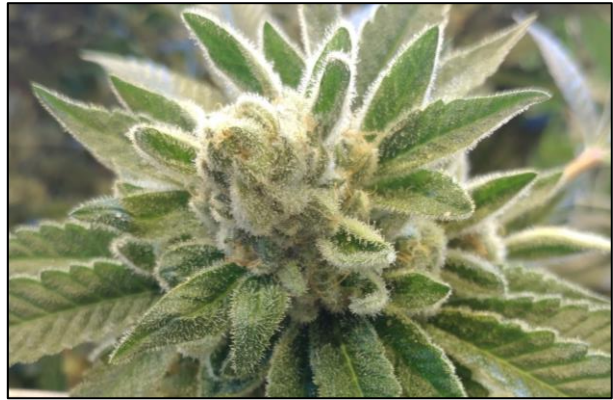


FAIR 2970: Critical Cannabis Narratives

*Spring 2019 * 4 Credits * Narrative Evaluation
Grades: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
Course Time: TR 12:00 – 1:50
Location: FX 312



Course Description

Cannabis, marijuana, weed, hemp, hashish, ganja, pot, reefer; all around the world, these words come with a smile and a wink. What does one have to know to be “in the know” about cannabis? In Washington we may find cannabis ubiquitous, but the depth of the interspecies relationship between humans and cannabis remains out of reach of public discussion. This course will conduct an interdisciplinary exploration of cannabis, rooted firmly in history and culture and growing through botany, political ecology, pharmacology, economics, social justice, sustainability, public health, somatic psychology, and other subjects of student interest. To investigate cannabis using the perspective of auto-ethnobiology, we will critically examine and create **cannabis narratives**. Part aesthetic portrait, part qualitative research, the cannabis narrative is a tool for building a **people’s history of cannabis** by documenting the subtle ecologies that form between individual humans and cannabis plants. A special element of this course will be the option to tour several cannabis producing and processing facilities licensed under Washington’s Initiative 502. Students will create **two** cannabis narrative projects during this course: one by self-reflection and self-portraiture, and one by conducting a semi-structured interview with a person in the cannabis community.

Guiding questions for this course include:

- *What has science known, and what is it learning about cannabis? How does this body of knowledge vary depending on its cultural owners?*
- *How does cannabis relate and interact with its ecosystems and neighboring species?*
- *Who participates in cannabis economies? Who benefits, who is left out, and in which situations?*
- *How, when and where has cannabis been used as a tool of oppression? As a tool of liberation?*
- *What “untold,” silenced or marginalized histories of cannabis can we investigate? How do these stories provide context for the larger narrative of cannabis?*
- *How have I encountered cannabis in culture? How has my life been socially and contextually positioned to have this kind of encounter with cannabis?*

**** Students under age 21 are welcome to join this course, however an alternative activity will be provided for cannabis facility tours. This course does not require the consumption of cannabis (or prior experience doing so) nor encourage students to use, purchase, or possess cannabis. Students will follow all applicable state and local laws and University policies.**



Learning Outcomes

Upon completion, students will be able to:

- 1. Critically evaluate sources of information about cannabis from perspectives including positionality and accessibility
- 2. Use narrative and other qualitative data to identify, problem-
pose, and analyze a variety of local and international social
justice issues surrounding cannabis
- 3. Describe biological processes and functions of the cannabis
plant, including interactions with human physiology
- 4. Discuss historical connections between cannabis and culture as well
as influences shaping the trajectory of emergent cannabis cultures
- 5. Conduct interpersonal and intrapersonal investigation with regard to
cannabis exposure and/or use patterns, including physiological, spiritual,
intergenerational, psychosocial, & political/economic predispositions and
implications of cannabis

The Goal

The goal of this class is to examine the bidirectional interactions between cannabis and humans from a primarily ethnobiological perspective. In a very **interdisciplinary** way, we will be investigating what exactly the cannabis plant is, what it means to people, and how our interspecies relationship has evolved.

The Structure

The class is structured mainly along a historical timeline, with special emphasis on influential people and events. We focus heavily on the Prohibition period of the 20th century, follow the growth of Western scientific knowledge about cannabis, and expand into contemporary and future knowledges and practices. Tours of licensed cannabis production/processing facilities and interviews with individuals in the cannabis community will inform our discovery of cannabis in the local moment (**here** and **now**). Our interdisciplinary examination draws upon phenomenological, anti-imperialist, anti-racist, biochemical, psychosocial, legal, and ecological perspectives.

Course Policy

...to help facilitate a productive learning environment



Computers and Cell Phones in Class

This is a **SCREEN FREE** class room. There is absolutely no emailing, texting or internet usage allowed in class, unless it is for a designated class activity. If I find that you are doing so, it will severely impact your participation grade. Because of the sensitive nature of the course topics, I do not allow audio &/or video recording of lectures unless specified as a DRS documented accommodation.

Attendance Policy

Evaluation will take account of regular attendance (no more than three absences), as this course relies centrally on in-class growth group participation. Students will also be assessed on evidence of critical reading, active, respectful, and thought-provoking engagement in class discussion, out of class activities and all required assignments.

THERE WILL BE NO COURSE CREDIT FOR ANYONE WHO MISSES OVER THREE (3) CLASSES IN THE QUARTER.

Documented (Dis)ability

I also welcome information about your needs in order to make accommodations based upon documented disabilities. Appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, please arrange to meet with me within the first two weeks of the term. University policies and supports for you are available at <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/drs/>. I always strive to be accommodating, and understand that it can be overwhelming to reach out. Please communicate your needs with me so that we can work together to make this the most productive and positive learning experience possible.

Course Requirements

MULTIMEDIA COURSE TEXTS

As a personal commitment to providing equitable access of learning opportunities to students with diverse learning needs, the primary course resources and texts will be integrated with audiobooks, films, book passages, graphic data, and other source documents to help students understand, interpret, and place in context academic research on Cannabis.

ALL course texts will be provided for FREE through Canvas.

Please contact me to discuss accessibility options for specific texts. I will help you find the relevant information in a form that will be most useful to you.

Primary Course Requirements

- Participation & Attendance
- Engagement with & Responses to Texts
- Reflection Journal Entries
- Cannabis Narrative Autobiology Project
- “Jigsaw” Co-Teaching Assignments (3)
- Cannabis Narrative Ethnobiology Research & Expressive Project

Ethical & Legal Requirements

when investigating a stigmatized and criminalized human experience



Cannabis use and possession remains illegal under federal law.

Although Washington State voted in 2012 to decriminalize adult (21+) use of cannabis, WWU campus remains governed by federal law. Students will abide by all applicable laws during this course. Students may, at any time, choose not to disclose potentially incriminating information in this course.

The legal and psychological consequences of Cannabis Prohibition include

widespread fear, secrecy, and stigma surrounding cannabis and its culture. Due to the sensitive nature of course topics, students will agree not to disclose personally identifying information about other students or research subjects outside of the course. Refer to the Informed Consent form for the Cannabis Narrative Project for more specific details about confidentiality.

This course will discuss trauma, stigma, chronic illness,

and the interplaying themes of health and suffering as are found in cannabis cultures. Course dialogue on these topics will not focus on personal testimonies that may or may not disclose a student's private health information. Any student seeking personal healing work will be redirected to an appropriate professional venue. Students who are concerned about cannabis dependence are encouraged to utilize ADCAS at Prevention and Wellness Services.

Licensed cannabis producers and retailers are forbidden under WAC 314-55-155 to advertise

in a manner especially appealing to minors, within view of minors, or on public property. During this course, certain licensees and products will be referenced by name. Studying these cannabis industry entities is done for educational purposes only, and in no way reflects a suggestion or endorsement by the instructor of any purchasing choice.

Course Participation & Engagement



I challenge my students to take a deeply personal and challenging same path of self-interrogation in this course. I am challenging as a teacher. As such, I cannot stress enough the importance of **engaged participation**. Drawing from hooks (1994), to fully participate in a class of this kind, requires a great deal of vulnerability. This is “easier said than done” but to develop a deeper awareness of the psychological concepts of this course, we must delve into interpersonal and intrapersonal interrogation.

*To be an active member in our class & community, we must actively participate. **Helping raise issues or responding to discussion items is expected** from every student over the course of the quarter. We will all speak & listen to one another in a respectful manner. This course is a designed as a seminar. We will spend significant time learning through **critical dialogue** & advanced critique of the learning resources. I will introduce key concepts, explicate theories, & clarify specific arguments through both lecture & discussion prompts. I believe that it is not enough for the instructor to simply “cover” the material; it is important that everyone in the class commit to “showing up” for learning.*

The quality of our time together depends on our shared commitment to prepare, dialogue, critique, & constructively challenge each other’s thinking. You should come to class ready to explain key concepts & arguments, offer analyses, or pose questions for discussion based on class learning resources.

“The unwillingness to approach teaching from a standpoint that includes awareness of race, sex, and class is often rooted in the fear that classrooms will be uncontrollable, that emotions and passions will not be contained. To some extent, we all know that whenever we address in the classroom subjects that students are passionate about there is always a possibility of confrontation, forceful expression of ideas, or even conflict. In much of my writing about pedagogy, particularly in classroom settings with great diversity, I have talked about the need to examine critically the way we as teachers conceptualize what the space for learning should be like. Many professors have conveyed to me their feeling that the classroom should be a “safe” place; that usually translates to mean that the professor lectures to a group of quiet students who respond only when they are called on. The experience of professors who educate for critical consciousness indicates that many students, especially students of color, may not feel at all “safe” in what appears to be a neutral setting.” (p. 39, Teaching to Transgress).

ACADEMIC Integrity

All students should adhere
to the following:

sources you work from and do not plagiarize. Plagiarism occurs when someone misrepresents the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgment, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as one's own. Plagiarism also happens when you summarize or paraphrase work by other authors without letting the reader know whose work you are using or use software to paraphrase others' work. Any assignment found to be plagiarized will be given a zero. For more on WWU's definitions and policies of plagiarism, please see: <http://libguides.wwu.edu/plagiarism>.

This class is a space for you and your classmates to learn and grow, individually and collectively. Central to this process is the creation of an environment of integrity, honesty and respect, toward yourselves, your fellow students and me. I take issues of **plagiarism and intellectual production** very seriously and it is critical that you turn in all your own work, cite



“Great teachers show you where to look, but not what to see.”

Instructor Information



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Teaching Philosophy

I love to teach because I love to learn. My own learning path has taken me through a number of alternative education projects, including Fairhaven College, but nowhere have I felt the thrill of learning as consistently as I do in the cannabis industry. In my work as a medical cannabis consultant, I have felt less fulfilled by people who follow my directions to the letter, and so much more fulfilled by people who come back and show me what they taught themselves. The poetic justice of teaching and learning in a (re)emergent field like cannabis is that we must accept the communal, historical, and co-constructed nature of the knowledge that exists about cannabis before we can go any further. As cannabis researchers, each of us already has a piece of the knowledge, and our task as a learning community is to discover the larger scene from its snapshots. One thing I love about the classroom as a concept is the infinite creative potential that the community has when each member allows their curiosity to be active and be shared. Toward that goal, I believe my role is to introduce you to stimuli that will set you on a path of reflection and discovery. I intend for us to engage together in what Ernest Morrell calls “critical research” of our lives and communities that positions us at the seat of knowledge production and calls us to produce it for the purpose of self-actualization.

Date	<h1>CLASSROOM SCHEDULE</h1> <p>Topic: Main discussion focus for that date; some topics such as historical periods will extend through multiple class dates. Texts: Please read the listed texts <i>before</i> coming to class on that date.</p>
4.2	Introduction to the Course & Community Building
4.4	Cannabis Origins: Cradle of Civilization to the Age of Colonialism Texts: Daily Dish. (2010). <i>The Cannabis Closet</i> . Intro & Chapter 1
4.9	Ethnobiology & Cannabis Narratives Texts: Daily Dish. (2010). <i>The Cannabis Closet</i> . Chapter 2 & Chapter 3 Society of Ethnobiology: What is Ethnobiology? (https://ethnobiology.org/about-ethnobiology/what-is-ethnobiology)
4.11	Reflection: What is <u>my</u> Cannabis Narrative? Texts: Aggarwal, S. (2018). <i>Cannabis Fear Deconditioning</i> Daily Dish. (2010). <i>The Cannabis Closet</i> . Chapter 4 & Chapter 5 JOURNAL CHECK
4.16	Hemp and Sensimilla Jigsaw Groups: Industrial Hemp; “Drug Cannabis” Guest: Jacques Decalo
4.18	1900s-50s: War, Imperialism, Racism, & Cannabis Texts: Kennedy, J., Smith, M., & Wanek, C. (2014). <i>The Art of Natural Building</i> . Chapter 32: Building with Hemp
4.23	Cannabis Narrative Research Methodology Texts: Campbell, H. (1985). <i>Rasta and Resistance</i> . Chapter 3: <u>Introduction to The Capitalist Depression in Jamaica</u> Daily Dish. (2010). <i>The Cannabis Closet</i> . Chapter 6 & Chapter 7
4.25	Crucial Moments, Figures, & Cannabis Narratives in North American Cannabis Culture: Harry Anslinger, Jack Herer, Rick Simpson, Sacred Plant Series Jigsaw Groups: One for each of the foci above
4.30	Life Cycle, Ecology, & Biochemistry of Cannabis Texts: Graf, N. et al. (2017). <i>Grow Your Own</i> . Chapter 2: What is Cannabis? Backes, M. (2017). <i>Cannabis Pharmacy</i> . Part 1 – The Cannabis Plant Backes, M. (2017). <i>Cannabis Pharmacy</i> . Part 1 – Genotypes, Phenotypes, and Chemotypes
5.2	1960s-90s: Neoliberalism, Civil Rights, World War on Drugs, & Cannabis Cultures of Resistance Texts: Backes, M. (2017). <i>Cannabis Pharmacy</i> . Part 1 – Phytocannabinoids and Terpenoids Katz, L. R. (1981, January 5). “Religion’s Marijuana Services Test What the First Amendment Stands For.” <i>The Washington Post</i> . DUE: CANNABIS NARRATIVE AUTOBIOLOGY PROJECT
5.7	FIELD TRIP: SUBDUED EXCITEMENT TOUR Texts: Backes, M. (2017). <i>Cannabis Pharmacy</i> . Part 2 – Forms of Cannabis Graf, N. et al. (2017). <i>Grow Your Own</i> . Chapter 6: Grow Mediums Backes, M. (2017). <i>Cannabis Pharmacy</i> . Part 2 – Cannabis Contaminants Graf, N. et al. (2017). <i>Grow Your Own</i> . Chapter 8: Troubleshooting

5.9	Cannabis Narrative Ethnobiology Project Focus Texts: (1988, July 14). "US To Resume Using Paraquat On Marijuana." <i>New York Times</i> . Zielinski, G. (2001, June 8). "Activist Robert C. Randall Dies." <i>The Washington Post</i> . Baum, D. (2016 April). "Legalize It All." <i>Harper's Magazine</i> . JOURNAL CHECK
5.14	1990s-2010s: The MMJ Movement, Harm Reduction, and Progress of Legalization Movements Texts: Backes, M. (2017). <i>Cannabis Pharmacy. Part 1 – The Endocannabinoid System</i> Hughes, S. & Van Natta, D. (1990, November 20). "MEDICAL NECESSITY AND MARIJUANA USE." <i>The Washington Post</i> .
5.16	FIELD TRIP: TREELINE ANALYTICS TOUR Texts: Explore the following visualized data sets: Phylos Galaxy (https://phylos.bio/galaxy/) Kannapedia Phylotree (http://www.kannapedia.net/cannabis-phyлотree/) Klein, Z. (Executive Producer). (2015). <i>The Scientist</i> [Motion Picture].
5.21	Cannabis Narrative Ethnobiology Project Focus Texts: Jarecki, E. (Director). (2012). <i>The House I Live In</i> [Motion Picture].
5.23	Examination of Existing Cannabis Legislation
5.28	FIELD TRIP: DUTCH BLOOMS TOUR Texts: Krol, L. (Executive Producer). (2015). <i>Green Medicine – Chile's Medical Cannabis Revolution</i> [Motion Picture]
5.30	Cannabis Futures: Now What? Industrial, Spiritual, Ecological, Medical, & Revolutionary Possibilities
6.4	PRESENTATIONS
6.6	PRESENTATIONS
6.10	Finals Week: Self-Evaluations Due Final Celebration?? ****All course assignments are DUE BY THE LAST DAY OF CLASS****

NOTE: Contents of the syllabus may change during the term to adjust to the learning needs of the course and course participants. Changes are made at the discretion of the Instructor.

Assignment Descriptions



“Jigsaw” Co-Teaching Assignments (3)

The purpose of this assignment is for students to analyze texts in groups and present their insights independently. The Jigsaw activity centers around a collection of related texts. One week prior to presentation date, students are divided into groups, and each group is assigned a text to investigate. Each group is responsible for producing a 1-page handout with visual and/or text information that synthesizes and expresses the main points of the group’s analysis. New groups form with one member from each of the text groups, and in these groups, students present their text analysis to each other. Evaluation is based on quality of group text analysis and participation in discussion. This assignment/activity will happen three times, using the following texts:

4/16: Industrial Hemp & “Drug Cannabis”

- Duvall, C. (2015). *Cannabis*. Chapter 3: Hemp Travels The World
- Duvall, C. (2015). *Cannabis*. Chapter 4: The Drug Goes Global

4/25: Crucial Moments, Figures, & Cannabis Narratives in North American Cannabis Culture

- Laurette, C., Simpson, R. (Producers), & Laurette, C. (Director). (2008). *Run From The Cure* [Motion Picture]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/zDJX7GqsQoA>
- Roddick, A. (Producer), & Jones, J. (Director). (1999). *Emperor of Hemp* [Motion Picture]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/YDRP7rv8ZXc>
- TSP Publishing, LLC (Executive Producer). (2017). *The Sacred Plant Secrets Exposed: Episode 1* [Motion Picture]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/gqcDfyTnYA8>
- Gasnier, L. J. (Director). (1936). *Reefer Madness* [Motion Picture]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/zhQlcMHhF3w>

5/23: Examination of Existing Cannabis Legislation

- 3 or 4 bodies of legislation, TBD by student interest

Assignment Descriptions



Cannabis Narrative Portrait

The Cannabis Narrative Portrait is a creative piece, in a medium of the student's choice, that expresses the subject's cannabis experience. A 1-page artist statement is also required if the piece is non-expository. Evaluation is based on continuity between themes expressed in the piece and themes investigated during the research phase.

Cannabis Narrative Autobiology Project – Due 5/2

The purpose of this assignment is for students to ground their ethnographic investigation of cannabis in an autobiographic experience. Dr. Sunil K. Aggarwal argues in “Cannabis Fear Deconditioning” (2018) that autobiographical memoir is one of the most reliable forms of data available with which to investigate cannabis ethnobiology, for many reasons including that “speaking from a first-person vantage point allows for bearing witness to the human-cannabis relationship.” Students will keep a journal to record data about their own cannabis experience. Prompted and spontaneous reflections in this journal will form the data from which students will create their own Cannabis Narrative Portrait. Students will have the option to present their Cannabis Narrative Autobiology to the class or submit directly to the Instructor.

Cannabis Narrative Ethnobiology Research & Expressive Project: Due Week of 6/4

The purpose of this assignment is for students to investigate the local (Bellingham and/or greater PNW) cannabis community and record and interpret ethnographic data. Students will, with Instructor's assistance, select an individual or small group and conduct a semi-structured interview about their cannabis experience. From the interview data, students will conduct further research and create a Cannabis Narrative Portrait that represents the research subject. Students will present their Cannabis Narrative Ethnobiology projects to the class during the last week of term.