

**University of Montana**  
**ScholarWorks at University of Montana**

---

Syllabi

Course Syllabi

---

Fall 9-1-2013

# HSTA 377.01: Intoxication Nation - Alcohol in American History

Kyle G. Volk

*University of Montana - Missoula*, [kyle.volk@umontana.edu](mailto:kyle.volk@umontana.edu)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

---

## Recommended Citation

Volk, Kyle G., "HSTA 377.01: Intoxication Nation - Alcohol in American History" (2013). *Syllabi*. 8870.  
<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/8870>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Course Syllabi at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

## *Intoxication Nation: Alcohol in American History*

University of Montana, Fall

TR 2:10-3:30PM / GBB 225

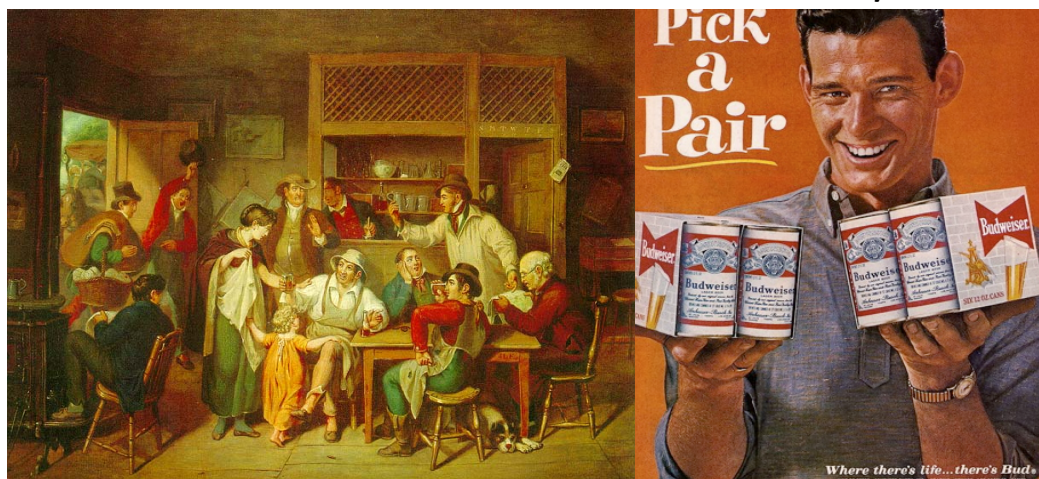
**Professor Kyle G. Volk**

Office: LA 260

Office Hours: M 10:30-12

Phone: (406) 243-2989

[kyle.volk@umontana.edu](mailto:kyle.volk@umontana.edu)



I'm medicine and I am poison, I can help you up or make you fall, You had some of the best times, you'll never remember with me, Alcohol.

- Brad Paisley (2005)

**Course Description:** Beverage alcohol has played a central role in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the United States since the colonial period. Its consumption has constituted one of the most major ethical dilemmas in American public life, prompting repeated anti-alcohol reform crusades, multiple attempts at legal prohibition, and key moments of pro-alcohol backlash. In large part because of the work of the temperance movement, alcohol rivaled slavery as the most divisive moral question of the nineteenth century. As some scholars describe, alcohol was the “abortion issue” of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The United States Constitution has only been amended 27 times, and amazingly, two of those amendments deal with booze. This course explores the controversial history of alcohol beginning in the colonial period and ending in the recent past. It blends varied historical approaches, including political, legal, business, social, and cultural history, to interrogate the manifold ways that alcohol has shaped the American nation and the everyday lives of its citizens.

**Level:** This is an advanced elective taught in the History department. It is intended for advanced sophomores, juniors, and seniors, particularly those with experience in history courses and a basic grasp of the key themes in American history.

**Goals:** *Intoxication Nation* is designed to provide students with a thematic survey of U.S. history. Even more importantly, it seeks to impart skills fundamental to the study of history. This includes basic historical thinking, critical assessment of both primary and secondary sources, primary-source research and analytical writing, and discussions of a variety of texts. In addition to developing students' analytical, written, and verbal skills, this course aims to grow students' awareness of the place of alcohol in their own lives and in the wider modern-day culture.

**Outcomes:** Students completing this course should gain an understanding of the complicated and divisive place of beverage alcohol in American history. They should gain a familiarity with key questions in the historiography of the history of alcohol as well as broader American history. Their critical thinking, reading, and analytical writing skills should be enhanced.

## Course Requirements:

### 1. Class Attendance & Participation:

This is a discussion class—active, informed, and respectful participation is imperative! This means:

- A.) Attendance is mandatory. Repeated absences or arriving late will lower your grade. Diligent note taking in class (both during mini-lectures and discussions) and while preparing for class is imperative to your success.
- B.) Careful preparation for class. The thorough completion of assigned readings prior to class is a must. Take time to think critically about each text in its specifics, in its entirety, and as it relates to other course readings, lectures, and class discussions. Please think about and sketch answers to discussion questions before class. Find passages in the text that support your conclusions and be prepared to bring them to the attention of the class during discussion. Come to class with the readings in hard copy.
  - Note that we will not always discuss every assigned reading or every part of an assigned reading. Nonetheless, students are responsible to read all assigned material.
- C.) Thoughtful, constructive, and consistent participation in class discussions! This means both talking with *and* listening to your classmates.
- D.) It should go without saying that respectful and courteous behavior (to your classmates and the instructor) is required at all times. To that end, be sure to turn off all cell phones that might distract you and others. Unless you have special circumstances, laptop computers, tablets, and other electronic devices are not permitted in the classroom. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior will be reflected in your grade.

\*\*\*Please take note of an evening session (6-9PM) on Wednesday, 11/6. Please make arrangements to ensure that you can attend the full session. See me early in the semester with any problems.

### 2. Written Assignments:

- A.) Participation, Quizzes & Response Papers (20%) Simple quizzes will be given to ensure that students are keeping up with the reading. Students can use any notes they have taken for these quizzes but cannot refer to the original document or book.
- B.) 4-5 page essay based on research from the *Journal of the American Temperance Union* (20%)
- C.) 4-5 page essay on an alcohol-related film. (20%)
- D.) Mid-Term Exam (20%)
- E.) Final Exam (20%)

GENERAL PAPER GUIDELINES: Late papers will be down-graded (1/2 letter grade per day) and must be turned in within one week of the due date (at the very latest). *No paper will be accepted later than one week after it was originally due. No exceptions. You MUST turn in every writing assignment to pass this course.*

### BOOKS required for purchase:

Vivienne Sosnowski, *When the Rivers Ran Red: An Amazing Story of Courage and Triumph in America's Wine Country* (Palgrave, 2010) [ISBN: 978-0230103375]

Pete Hamill, *A Drinking Life—A Memoir* (Back Bay, 1994) [ISBN: 9780316341080]

\*\*\*Other course readings will be available on the course's MOODLE site. Students are expected to print these primary and secondary sources and bring them to class in hard copy on the day we are discussing them.

ACADEMIC HONESTY – It should go without saying that all the work you do in this course should be your own. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other instances of academic misconduct will result in a failing grade in this course. The academic dean will also be notified and offenses could result in expulsion. Please consult University of Montana policies in this area. If you have questions, please ask the instructor or teaching assistants BEFORE turning in an assignment.

DSS: If you have a documented learning disability, contact me so we can arrange suitable accommodation.

Add/Drop Deadlines: The last day to add/drop by Cyberbear is September 16. The last day to add/drop with instructor and advisor signature is October 28. A WP or WF will appear on your transcript for courses dropped after this date. December 2 is the last day to drop by petition.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>WEEK 1</b>	<p>T (8/27)—Introductions</p> <p>R (8/29)—Distilling the Atlantic World</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss</u>: Cotton Mather, <i>A Monitory, and Hortatory Letter</i> (1700) [MOODLE]</p>
<b>WEEK 2</b>	<p>T (9/3)—Taste &amp; Production in Early America</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss</u>: Sarah Hand Meacham, “They Will Be Adjudged by Their Drink, What Kinde of Housewives They Are”: Gender, Technology, and Household Cidering in England and the Chesapeake, 1690 to 1760,” <i>Virginia Mag. of History and Biography</i> (2003), 117-150. [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (9/5)—Spirits of '76 &amp; Whiskey Rebels</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss</u>: Hamilton to Washington, <i>Report on Opposition to Internal Duties</i> (1794) [MOODLE] George Washington, <i>Whiskey Rebellion Proclamation</i> (1794) [MOODLE]</p> <p><b>Academic Enrichment: Tour Montgomery Distillery w/owner, Ryan Montgomery, @ 5pm.</b></p>
<b>WEEK 3</b>	<p>T (9/10)—A Nation of Drunkards; or The Alcoholic Republic</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss</u>: W.J. Rorabaugh, <i>The Alcoholic Republic</i>, Ch. 5 [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (9/12)—Temperance Crusaders in America’s First Age of Reform</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss</u>: Lyman Beecher, <i>Six Sermons on Intemperance</i> (selections) [MOODLE] Abraham Lincoln, <i>Address to the Washingtonian Temperance Society</i> (1842) [MOODLE]</p>
<b>WEEK 4</b>	<p>T (9/17)—Prohibition, Act 1—The Maine Law in the 1850s</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss</u>: <i>A Rational Appeal to American Citizens</i> (New York, 1852) [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (9/19)—<u>Research Findings Day</u>—<i>Journal of the American Temperance Union (JATU)</i></p> <p>Come to class having looked at 4-6 months of the <i>JATU</i>. Construct and print out 1.) a list of subtopics that you encountered and thought about in your reading; and 2.) several ideas for the potential direction of your paper. Also, bring at least 5 pages from the <i>JATU</i> that you’ve printed to class.</p>

<b>WEEK 5</b>	<p>T (9/24)—The German Invasion &amp; the Rise of Beer</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> Maureen Ogle, “German Beer, American Dreams,” in <i>Ambitious Brew: The Story of American Beer</i> (2006) [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (9/26)—<b><u>Trip to Bayern Brewery: Meet There at 2:15PM [Torstein]</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>PAPER DUE:</u> JATU paper: Turn in through MOODLE</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	<p>T (10/1)—Saloons in Industrializing America</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> Jeff Wiltse, “‘I Like to Get Around’: City Girls in Chicago Music Saloons, 1858-1906,” <i>Journal of Urban History</i> (2013) [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (10/3)—Western Saloons &amp; Historical Archaeology—<u>Guest:</u> Kelly Dixon, UM Anthropology</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> Elliot West, <i>The Saloon on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier</i>(1979), Ch. 1 [MOODLE] Kelly Dixon, <i>Boomtown Saloons</i> (2005), Conclusion [MOODLE]</p>
<b>WEEK 7</b>	<p>T (10/8)—Mid-Term Exam</p> <p>R (10/10)—Temperance Revival: The W.C.T.U. and Beyond</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> Late-19<sup>th</sup> Century Temperance Documents [MOODLE]</p>
<b>WEEK 8</b>	<p>T (10/15)—Anti-Saloons: Pressure Politics, Progressivism, &amp; the Making of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment</p> <p>R (10/17)—The “Noble Experiment” in Wine Country, Part I</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> Vivienne Sosnowski, <i>When the Rivers Ran Red</i>, xvii-82</p>
<b>WEEK 9</b>	<p>T (10/22)—Documenting Prohibition: Ken Burns, <i>Prohibition</i>, selections</p> <p>R (10/24)—The “Noble Experiment” in Wine Country, Part II</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> Vivienne Sosnowski, <i>When the Rivers Ran Red</i>, 83-200</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Turn In:</u> 1-page response paper</li> </ul>

WEEK 10	<p>T (10/29)—The Prohibition Hangover</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> <i>Amy Vanderbilt's Etiquette</i> (1952) (selections) [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (10/31)— Disease Theory of Alcoholism &amp; the Rise of AA</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> "Alcoholics Anonymous: Freed Slaves of Drink, Now They Free Others," <i>Saturday Evening Post</i>, March 1, 1941. [MOODLE] "Alcoholics Anonymous Readings" [MOODLE]</p>
WEEK 11	<p>T (11/5)— Cultures of Drink in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America, Pt. 1</p> <p><u>Read &amp; Discuss:</u> Pete Hamill, <i>A Drinking Life</i>, 1-149</p> <p>W (11/6)—<b>Special Evening Viewing Session:</b> 6-9 PM—<i>Days of Wine &amp; Roses</i></p> <p>Location To Be Determined</p> <p>R (11/7)—NO CLASS</p>
WEEK 12	<p>T (11/12)— Cultures of Drink in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America, Pt. 2</p> <p><u>Read and Discuss:</u> Pete Hamill, <i>A Drinking Life</i>, 149-265</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Turn In:</u> 1-page response paper</li> </ul> <p>R (11/14)— Advertising the American Drink: Temperance &amp; Regulation in the Late-20<sup>th</sup> Century</p> <p>Extra Credit Opportunity: Attend the History Department's Hampton Lecture (info. forthcoming)</p>
WEEK 13	<p>T (11/19)—Neo-Temperance &amp; the Clamor Over Fetal Alcohol Syndrome</p> <p><u>Read and Discuss:</u> Janet Golden, "A Tempest in a Cocktail Glass': Mothers, Alcohol, and Television, 1977-1996," <i>Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law</i> 25 (June 2000), 473-498. [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (11/21)—Beer and Circus: Alcohol on Campus in the Late-20<sup>th</sup> Century</p> <p><u>Read:</u> "44% of College Students Are Binge Drinkers, Poll Says," <i>NYTimes</i>, Dec. 7, 1994. [MOODLE] <u>Watch:</u> C-SPAN Booknotes: Murray Sperber, <i>Beer &amp; Circus: Big-Time College Sports</i>, Nov. 26, 2000. <a href="http://www.booknotes.org/Watch/160240-1/Murray+Sperber.aspx">http://www.booknotes.org/Watch/160240-1/Murray+Sperber.aspx</a></p> <p><u>Read:</u> Larry S. Platt, "In Defense of College Athletics," <i>Salon.com</i>, Oct. 5, 2000 [MOODLE] <a href="http://www1.salon.com/books/feature/2000/10/05/sperber/index.html">http://www1.salon.com/books/feature/2000/10/05/sperber/index.html</a> Jeffrey A. Miron &amp; Elina Tetelbaum, "Does the Minimum Legal Drinking Age Save Lives?," <i>NBER Working Paper Series</i> (July 2007).</p>

WEEK 14	<p>T (11/26)—Of Drinking Ages &amp; DUIs</p> <p><u>PAPER DUE</u>: Alcohol &amp; Film Paper (Turn in through MOODLE)</p> <p>R (11/28)—NO CLASS—Thanksgiving Holiday</p>
WEEK 15	<p>T (12/3)—Globalization &amp; The Wine Revolution</p> <p><u>Read and Discuss</u>: “The Golden Age of Wine” (selections) [MOODLE]</p> <p>R (12/5)—Of Microbrews and All Things Local</p> <p><u>Read and Discuss</u>: Bertsch, “Making Distinctions: The Politics of the Microbrewery Revolution” <i>Bad Subjects</i> (1994) [MOODLE]          Kesmodel, “In Lean Times, a Stout Dream,” <i>Wall Street Jrnl</i>, Mar. 18, 2009[MOODLE]  <i>Montana Taverns v. Montana Brewers—2013</i> [MOODLE]</p>
FINALS	<p>FINAL EXAM— Tuesday, December 10, 2013 – 3:20-5:20pm</p>



**Discussion of Research Findings: Thursday,**

**Final Paper Due: Thursday,** [uploaded to the course's MOODLE site]

General Assignment:

Choose a six-month period between 1837 and 1860, read the *Journal of the American Temperance Union (JATU)* for that period, and based on that reading, craft a 4-5-page analytical and interpretive essay that draws conclusions about alcohol and the temperance movement in antebellum America. Use materials from the *JATU* as primary evidence and cite your sources in footnotes using proper footnote form.

Come to class on Thursday, having looked at the 6 months of the *JATU*. Construct and print out 1.) a list of subtopics that you encountered and thought about in your reading; and 2.) several ideas for the potential direction of your paper.

Finding the *JATU*:

You will find the microfilm version of the *JATU* on reserve at Mansfield Library. You might also be able to find the journal through GoogleBooks or other online resources, but I cannot guarantee the online availability of the specific issues at which you'll be required to look. As most of you will be using the microfilm version, know that you will be able to scan the microfilm in a PDF format and then read it on a computer (or print it if you prefer). As the entire class will be using the same 4 reels of microfilm, I encourage each of you to get to the microfilm reader as soon as possible. Please share the materials and respect the two-hour reserve limit.

Approaching the Paper Assignment:

There are many ways to approach the paper, but you will all be answering the same general question: What interpretive conclusion can you come to about alcohol and/or the temperance movement in the antebellum period based on your reading of the journal? Put another way, what do the articles, editorials, letters, images, and/or advertisements reveal about alcohol and the temperance movement at the time?

You will not be able to analyze everything contained in six months of the journal in four to five pages. Rather, as all historians must, you will need to make choices. If there was a major topic or issue that received considerable coverage, you might write about it and what it reveals. Perhaps the *JATU* took a position that interests or surprises you: if so, write about it in the context of the times. Perhaps there is a controversy or particular goal of the temperance movement that generates repeated articles or even letters to the editor, try to make sense of that particular issue. You may also come to conclusions about the period based on articles covering multiple subjects. What the *Journal of the American Temperance Union* chooses to cover and to write about may also offer insight to the movement.

This needs to be an analytical paper, not merely descriptive. It must have a thesis—an argumentative claim—that clearly states your conclusion/insight about alcohol and/or the temperance movement in antebellum America. Then, in the body of the paper, you must substantiate and corroborate your argument by analyzing evidence from the newspaper. In other words, you must explain to the reader how evidence from the paper proves the validity of your claim.

See me ASAP with questions and concerns about the assignment. I am also eager to discuss paper ideas with you in a one-on-one capacity, so please come to my office hours or make an appointment to see me.