

## Just Scratching the Surface

What the the past 20 Years of Addiction Research and Treatment Have Taught Us

Joel S. Porter, BS, MA, PsyD  
Pacific Centre for Motivation & Change  
Hamilton, New Zealand

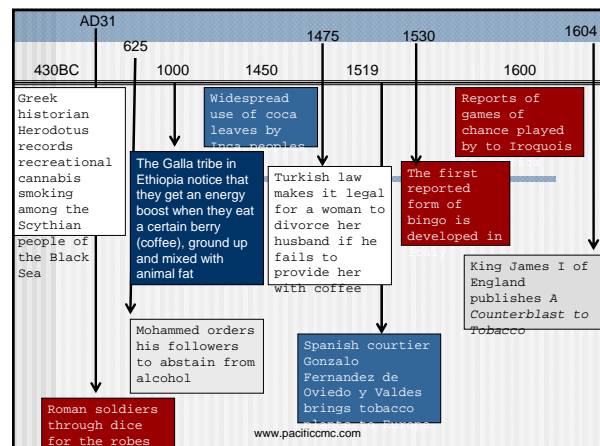
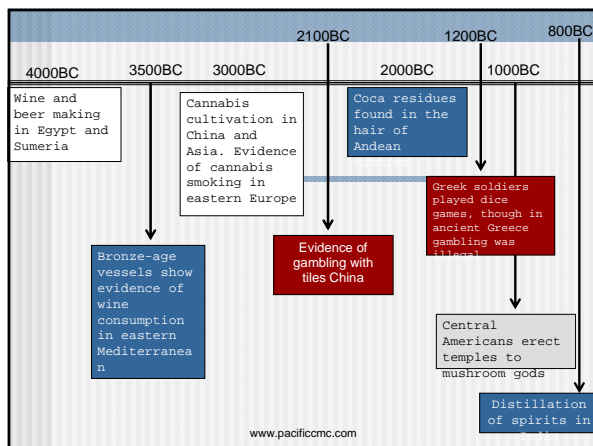
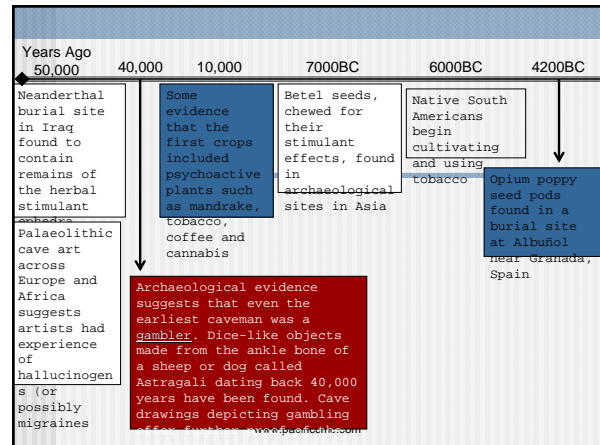
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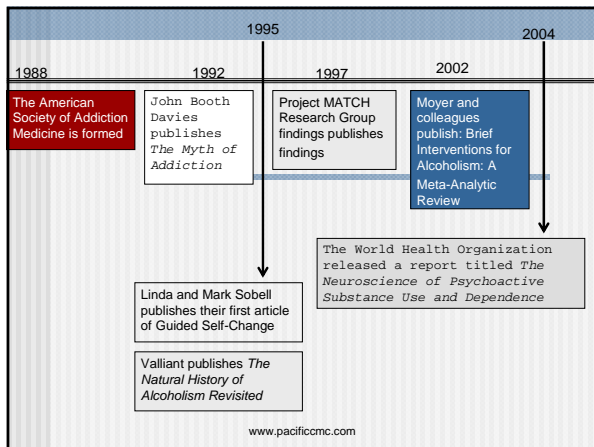
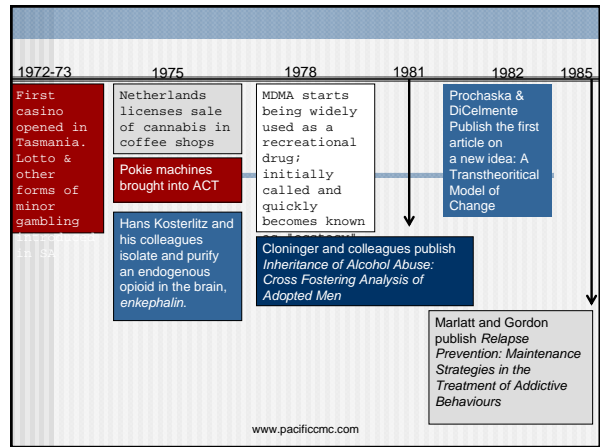
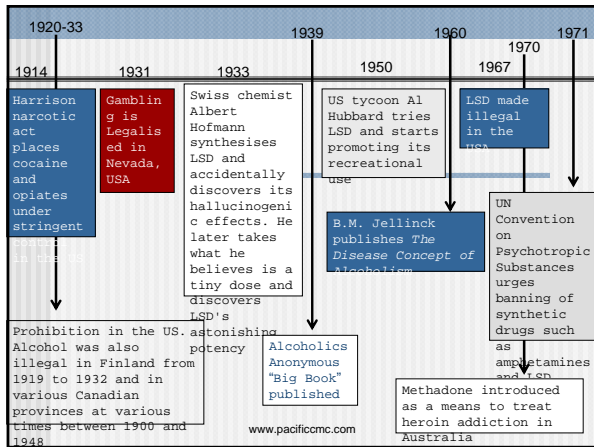
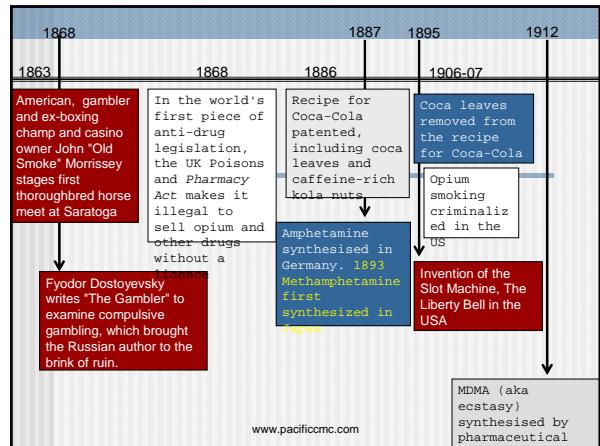
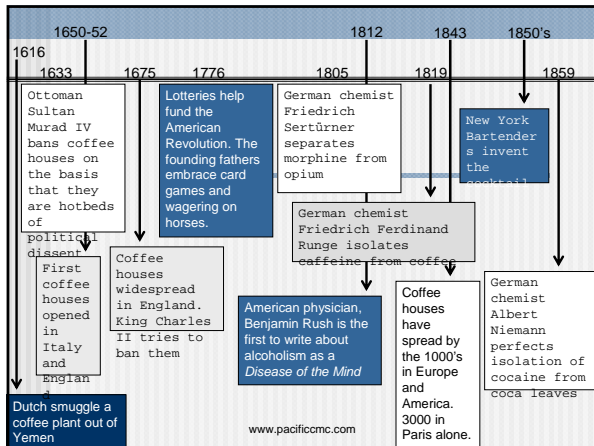
## And what we have yet to learn...



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"History never repeats. I tell myself before I go to sleep" - Split Enz (1981)





## Other notable events

- Disulfiram
- Naltraxone
- SSRI's
- Atypical antipsychotics
- Second generation drugs for opioid replacement therapy
  - Bupronorphine
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy
- Gambling Treatment Research
  - David Hodgins
  - Nancy Petry

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Australia 1987

**“The things which are most important don't always scream the loudest.”**

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### Hot topics in 1987 the area of addiction

- Controlled Drinking Debate
- The North American Divide
  - Is addiction a disease?
- Abstinence vs. Moderation
- Harm Reduction
- The emergence of Motivational Interviewing
  - First randomised controlled trial published in 1988
  - Miller, W. R., Sovereign, R. G., & Kreege, B. (1988). *Motivational interviewing with problem drinkers: II. The Drinker's Check-up as a preventive intervention.* Behavioural Psychotherapy, 16, 251-268.

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### Hot Topics in 2007

- Controlled Drinking Debate
- The North American Divide
  - Is Addiction a disease or a volitional behaviour?
- Abstinence vs. Moderation
- Harm Reduction
- Motivational Interviewing
  - 300+ publications since 1988
  - *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People to Change* (2002) 2nd Edition
    - Translated into 6 languages
- Psychopharmacology

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### What is Addiction?

- –noun
- the state of being enslaved to a habit or practice or to something that is psychologically or physically habit-forming, as narcotics, to such an extent that its cessation causes severe trauma.
- *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*, © Random House, Inc. 2006.

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### www.Google.com

- Addiction is an uncontrollable compulsion to repeat a behavior regardless of its consequences. A person who is addicted is sometimes called an addict.
- *Uncontrollable craving, seeking, and use of a substance such as a drug or alcohol.*
- A chronic, relapsing disease characterized by compulsive drug-seeking and abuse and by long-lasting chemical changes in the brain.
- *A strong need for food, drink, people, or other things, which is extremely hard to resist*

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### National Institute of Drug Abuse - USA

- “Addiction is defined as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences. *It is considered a brain disease because drugs change the brain - they change its structure and how it works.* These brain changes can be long lasting, and can lead to the harmful behaviors seen in people who abuse drugs.”
  - *Drugs, Brains and Behaviors: The Science of Addiction* (2007). NIDA

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## DSM IV Substance Dependence

- A maladaptive pattern of substance use, leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by three (or more) of the following, occurring at any time in the same 12 month period:
  - (1) tolerance
  - (2) withdrawal

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- (3) the substance is often taken in larger amounts or over a longer period than was intended
- (4) there is a persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down or control substance use
- (5) a great deal of time is spent in activities necessary to obtain the substance (e.g. visiting multiple doctors or driving long distances), use the substance, or recover from its

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- (6) important social, occupational, or recreational activities are given up or reduced because of substance use
- (7) the substance use is continued despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem that is likely to have been caused or exacerbated by the substance (e.g. continued drinking despite recognition that an ulcer was made worse by alcohol consumption)

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## So what has the research taught us?



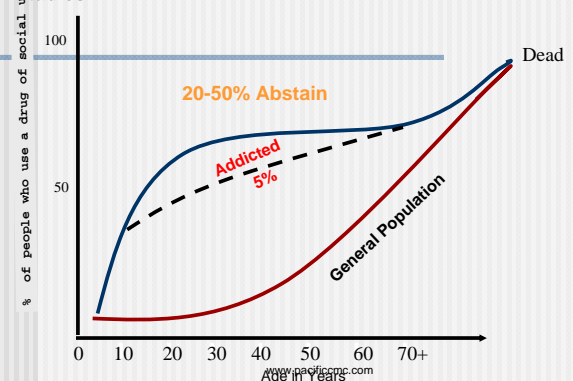
- The Nature vs. Nurture debate is dead
- 60-70% of people experiencing problems with addictive behaviours and get better without professional help
  - Natural Recovery
- Some people can control their drinking
  - Others are better off stopping
- Brief Intervention can be as helpful as longer term treatment
- Time is an important factor

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## Continuum of Addiction



## Valliant (1988) & Edwards (1985) 10 Year Longitudinal Studies



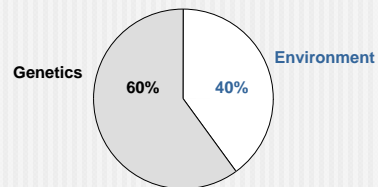
## Nature vs. Nurture

- Dr Mark Schuckit
  - Published 2006
  - University of San Diego, USA



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## Variance of Risk



(Heterogenous and Polygenic)

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RSA/NIAAA/AMSP

## Key Findings

### Genetic Influences Explain 60% of Risk

There are Several Different Genetic Influences

Relevant Characteristics Relate to:

- Alcohol Metabolism*
- Disinhibition / Impulsivity*
- Level of Reaction*
- Independent Psychiatric Disorders*

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## Implications for PREVENTION

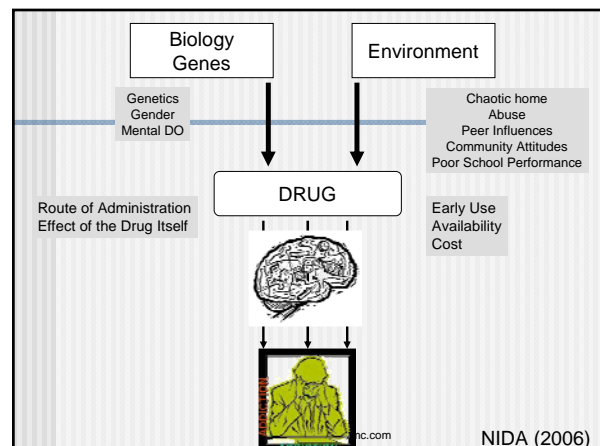
- Enhance education of vulnerabilities
- Find environmental / psychosocial protective factors specific to risk

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## Implications for Treatment

- Develop treatments for specific risk factors
- Evaluate treatments separately in subgroups

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## Traditionally

- We have looked at addictions as needing long-term treatment
  - 28+ Days
- We have considered addiction a disease
- We have followed the cucumber theory
- We have utilized the hammer approach to treatment
- We have looked at gambling as *addiction-light*
- Co-existing disorders have been the exception not the rule

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## Today we know

- Brief intervention is effective
- There are different ways of thinking about addiction
- The body is an amazing thing
- There are four evidenced based treatments
  - With more on the way
- Gambling is a serious addiction that can be treated
- Co-existing disorders are the rule and not the exception

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## Where to from here...

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## My thoughts

- Evidence-based and Best practice paradigm
- Alternative ways of understanding and treating addiction
  - The role of motivation
  - Attachment theory
  - Mind-body connections
    - The interconnectedness of the brain, behavior and the environment
  - The role of family therapy
    - and the need for more evidence
  - Are we off track in our thinking....

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## What the Bleep Do We Know (2005)

