HISTORY OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The tendency is for learners to be focused in the present when they are introduced to a topic. The subject of drugs is a major issue in the everyday life of America. But the issue of drugs is not a new concept. It has always been an influential force on our society. It is important that when learners are receiving new information about substances of abuse, they have an historical perspective. In order to treat the whole individual effectively, it is important to be aware societal influences.

The purpose for this introductory historical module is two fold. One, it gives an historical context and background for the prevention and treatment of individuals with alcohol and other drug problems. Two, it highlights the concept that our society needs help in relieving our substance abuse problems. It is not just an isolated, individual patient problem.

Drug use has been ubiquitous in every culture throughout history. This module traces the history of alcohol and other drug use since the 1700's, highlighting the fact that the use and choice of alcohol and other drugs has varied with changes in the culture. In addition, it is noted that "facts" regarding the abuse of drugs derive primarily from observations of pathological states rather than the normal population.

A physician needs to know this information because it belies an understanding of the "abuse" of a substance as a behavior--not as a disease or pathological condition.

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<th>Pre-1800's</th>
<th>Overview</th>
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<td>Prior to the 1800's, with a few exceptions, most non-alcoholic drugs were used in their natural form, and their use was mostly confined to the area where the plants grew. Alcohol was used in most societies except in those that had banned its use by this time. With the exception of alcohol, most societies used drugs for medicinal or religious purposes. Recreational drug use was the exception rather than the norm.</td>
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<td>Alcohol existed in most societies from pre-recorded history through the 1700's. There were indications that alcohol in the form of beer and berry wine was used before 1640 BC. The first recorded attempts to control alcohol in western civilization occurred around the sixth century A.D. The first national legislation occurred in 1494. These laws were not effective. American control efforts prior to the 1800's took the form of tax acts. Alcoholism was a clearly identified problem by the 1800's.</td>
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<td>It is thought that the first recorded use of opium occurred in Egypt around 1500 B.C. It was probably</td>
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one of the most effective medicines that existed due to it analgesic qualities. Opium was an important component in the Greek medicine chest, and there was some indication of occasional recreational use. There were also indications of medicinal and recreational use in the Arab world. Addiction was mentioned in Arab medical writings by 1000 A.D. There was also mention of opium in Chinese medical writings by that time. The medicinal use of opium grew steadily around the civilized from 1000 A.D. to the 1800's.

Marijuana

The earliest reference to marijuana occurred in China in 2737 B.C. Most of the uses appeared to be medicinal, but there was also reference to the euphoric effect. Use spread to Northern Africa and the Moslem world and by 1000 A.D where there were frequent references in the literature to marijuana and hashish. It is not known when Europeans discovered the intoxicating qualities of marijuana, but by the 16th century, there were references to this effect.

Cocaine

The earliest use of coca in Peru dates back to 500 A.D. Not much is known about the use of cocaine before 1800, except that it was mostly ingested by chewing the leaves. It appears that coca leaves were an integral part of Peruvian culture, and at times, the leaves were used as currency. There was not widespread use outside Peru until the 19th century.

Hallucinogens

The use of most hallucinogens was localized until the 19th century. There is evidence of psilocybin and other hallucinogenic mushroom use in Mexico and Siberia. Peyote was used by Indians in Mexico and in the southwest United States. There were other, lesser known hallucinogens being used in the Americas and probably many other parts of the world. It is likely that most civilizations were able to find some sort of hallucinogen that grew locally, but documentation is scarce.

1800's Overview

Drug use of all types changed considerably during the 19th century. As trade between nations increased and as cultures began influencing others, the more powerful drugs began to gain popularity throughout western and other societies. Another important factor in the increase of drug use and addiction was technological development. Chemists became sufficiently sophisticated to isolate the active ingredients in naturally occurring drugs, and more effective means of administering drugs, such as the hypodermic needle, were developed. Many of the drugs that are
popular today were developed in the 19th century.

Alcohol Use

In the 19th century, the seeds of prohibition were sown. In the U.S. and other western societies, problems associated with alcohol, including alcoholism, reached new levels of public awareness. In the U.S., there was a fear of Irish immigrants who brought with them heavy drinking norms. With the increasing concern about drinking among the upper and middle class, the number of groups dedicated to temperance and to prohibition of alcohol increased in the late 1800's. Anti-alcohol sentiments grew quite fashionable by the end of the century.

Opiates

Recreational use of opium and opium addiction had become more common by the start of the 19th century. The importation of opium by the British to China had become so profitable that the two countries fought two opium wars in the first half of this century. Morphine was isolated by a German chemist in 1806, and Bayer Laboratories marketed heroin in 1898. Because of its use as an analgesic in treating injuries associated with wars, morphine attracted many users in the U.S. and Europe, and addiction to morphine became known as the "soldiers disease". By the end of the century, opiates were sold without restriction in the U.S., and about 1% of the population was addicted to some form of opiate.

Marijuana

Marijuana and hashish gained great popularity in Europe by the middle of the 19th century. The French Romantics were particularly fond of hashish. There was also a strong interest in both Europe and the U.S. in potential medical uses. Recreational use in the U.S., however, was limited.

Cocaine

Cocaine became quite popular during the 19th century. Vin Mariani, a combination of coca leaf extract and wine, was quite popular in Europe. Coca-Cola at the end of the century actually contained coca leaf extract for a short time. Cocaine was isolated in 1860 and attracted many advocates. Freud recommended the use of cocaine before discovering the negative effects of long-term use. By the end of the 1800's in the U.S., cocaine was available in many patent medicines and other preparations. Although physicians were aware of the dangers of addiction, there were no nationwide controls until the 1900's.

Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens did not attract much attention during this century. They were still mostly used by less civilized societies that had not been introduced to cocaine and the opiates. They were still mostly used in connection with religious rituals.
Overview

This period in history was an era in the U.S. of increasing sanctions against the distribution and use of alcohol and other drugs. By the end of the 19th century, there was a growing anti-drug sentiment. Not only was alcohol being viewed as dangerous, but cocaine was seen by many as a drug that made blacks more dangerous, and the opiates were perceived in increasing disfavor. Opiate addiction was becoming less acceptable and the AMA and the American Pharmaceutical Association did not want to be associated with addicting drugs. This sentiment, as well as a desire to increase trade with the anti-opiate Chinese, led to a tax act, the Harrison Narcotic Act of 1914. Five years later, the Harrison Act was interpreted by the anti-drug courts as meaning that physicians could not prescribe drugs for the treatment of addiction. Opiates therefore became illegal. This interpretation led to fifty years of increasingly severe drug laws.

Alcohol

Anti-alcohol views also became increasingly stronger, leading to the Volstead Act in 1919. It took effect in 1920, beginning the U.S. experiment with prohibition. A decade of experience with prohibition led lawmakers to conclude that it was not an effective means of controlling alcohol consumption; prohibition was repealed by the Twenty-First Amendment in 1933. After 1933, individual states slowly changed their laws to allow the sale of alcohol. The last state to remain dry was Mississippi which voted to allow the sale of alcohol in 1966. In 1935, Alcoholics Anonymous was formed. AA would eventually revolutionize the perception of alcoholism and alcoholism treatment.

Opiates

The movement in the U.S. against opiate use resulted in the Harrison Narcotic Act and its subsequent interpretation. By the middle of the 1920's, other legislation had been passed that increased the penalties for distribution and use, making criminals of those that used opium, heroin, and morphine. Accordingly, society viewed users of these drugs as social deviants. As a result, heroin, the illegal drug of choice, was used during this time period by a relatively small number of individuals who led a deviant lifestyle. It has never attracted the number of users that it did before this century.

Marijuana

Marijuana, although not specified in the Harrison Act, also became socially unacceptable. It was considered to be a "narcotic" but use was not high at the turn of the century, and the drug did not receive much public attention until the middle 1920's when a series of articles were published describing marijuana's effects. In the early 1930's, Harry Anslinger, the Commissioner of Narcotics, took on marijuana use as a personal project. Despite scientific evidence to the contrary, he decided to project marijuana's image as the "Assassin of Youth". He was successful in this attempt which led to the passage of the Marijuana Tax Act of 1937. This anti-marijuana campaign affected public opinion and use of the drug until the
Cocaine

Cocaine use was also affected by the anti-drug sentiment in the early part of this century. Because it too was made illegal, it was used mostly by groups of artists, musicians and writers that felt more comfortable defying mainstream opinion. With the introduction of easily available amphetamines in the 1930's, cocaine use declined until the 1970's.

Hallucinogens

There was practically no hallucinogen use during this time period except for peyote use among some Native American tribes. The most significant event was the synthesis of LSD by Albert Hoffman of Switzerland's Sandoz Laboratories in 1938. Hoffman first described the effect of the drug in 1943, leading to experiments by the CIA and the Army to test its use as a military weapon. It failed. In the 1950's, some interest developed among a small group of writers and psychologists in the use of mescaline. Aldous Huxley's *Doors of Perception* is a description of his experiences with mescaline.

Overview

The use of drugs in the U.S. and Europe changed in the 1960's. Along with a growing sense of dissatisfaction and rebellion in the post-war generation came a renewed interest in drug use. Timothy Leary and author Ken Kesey helped introduce the concept of "mind-expanding drugs," which led to a period of experimentation with marijuana, the hallucinogens, amphetamines, and heroin. Since that time, the general use of drugs has stayed far above the pre-1960's levels. Only in the last five years has there been a decrease in overall drug use.

Alcohol

Patterns of alcohol use changed in the late 1960's. Use of distilled alcohol dropped, and the use of wine and beer increased. This pattern remains in the early 1990's. Alcohol consumption continued to rise until the mid-1980's when concerns about health, driving under the influence, and alcoholism led to a slow decline in alcohol use by youth and by the adult population. Alcoholism remains a major health problem for the U.S. and many European countries.

Opiates

Although the drug revolution in the 1960's led to an increase in heroin use, the opiates have still not been used by a large segment of the U.S. population. Only about one to two percent have even experimented with the drug. Heroin use appears restricted to small groups in mostly urban settings. There was reported heavy use by U.S. military personnel in Viet Nam, but most appeared to have switched to alcohol and marijuana when they returned to the U.S. There still appears to be a significant fear level about using the opiates among most of the population. Some experts have expressed
a fear of powerful synthetic opiate-like drugs reaching a broader group of users.

Marijuana

Marijuana use surged in the 1960's. A drug that barely received any public attention became an integral part of American culture in less than ten years. Marijuana has become by far the most widely used illegal drug with over 50% of high school students having used the drug in the mid-1980's. Its popularity has led to a change in marijuana laws in several states. Many severe penalties for marijuana use were repealed and replaced with laws that made possession for personal use a misdemeanor. Although use has declined since the mid-1980's, over 40% of high school and college students have at least experimented with the drug. Although marijuana was considered for a long time to be non-addictive, there are now strong indications that a dependence syndrome can occur.

Cocaine

Cocaine use did not surge until the 1970's. Most of the stimulant use in the 1960's and early 1970's was confined to use of various amphetamines and amphetamine derivatives such as MDA. An amphetamine derivative, MDMA or Ecstasy, made a brief appearance in the 1980's, but its use has dropped to a small percentage of youth by the 1990's. Cocaine appeared to be "discovered" in the 1970's as an alternative to what was perceived as more potent drugs. It was perceived by both users and drug experts to be relatively mild and non-addictive. As use increased these perceptions were proven to be false. By the 1980's cocaine had proven to be highly addictive and had become a major health problem. By the mid-1980's, over 15% of college students used cocaine on at least a yearly basis. Crack, the inhalable form of cocaine, has become a major concern for urban youth. Cocaine experimentation decreased significantly in the late 1980's, probably as a result of increased education about the drug. The number of heavy users, however, has remained stable during that time.

Hallucinogens

LSD was an integral part of the drug revolution in the 1960's and 1970's. Through the efforts of Timothy Leary and others, it came to symbolize the "Turn on and Drop out" lifestyle of the hippies. As the popularity of LSD spread, so did interest in other hallucinogens such as mescaline and psilocybin. Drugs that had been used for centuries as part of tribal religious rituals became mainstream drugs in the U.S. Interest in the hallucinogens appeared to peak in the early 1970's as did problems like "bad trips" and flashbacks. So far there is no indication that any of these drugs are addictive. LSD is still the most popular hallucinogen; however, psilocybin mushrooms are not uncommon on college campuses. Over 4% of college students use LSD on a yearly basis. PCP, an anesthetic with hallucinogenic properties, became a popular drug in the 1970's and 1980's because it was cheap and available. It was frequently sold as LSD or sprayed on marijuana and is considered by many to be an undesirable drug because of its unpleasant side-effects.