

# Addiction Science meets Addiction History - A Necessary Conversation

Dr. Iain D. Smith , Gartnavel Royal  
Hospital ,Glasgow

[Iain@smith.net](mailto:Iain@smith.net)

# I heard there was a secret chord.....

“

*How can I begin anything  
new with all of yesterday  
in me?*

~ Leonard Cohen ~

”

*Motivational Quotes About.com*

I fought against the bottle, but I  
had to do it drunk. Took my  
diamond to the pawn shop, but  
that don't make it junk.

Leonard Cohen

LIKESUCCESS.com

# Usefulness of historical studies to the field of addiction

- As an adjunct to medical, psychological and sociological education :e.g. Tomorrow's Doctors and the growth of the disciplines of medical humanities and narrative-based medicine.
- To foster an awareness of how addicts' explanatory stories about their condition vary in different eras and cultures.
- Lessons from history for policymakers-addiction and drug-taking often portrayed as a new phenomenon and the past is suppressed.
- To explore changing terminology and theoretical perspectives over time and to explore continuities and discontinuities..

# ADHS@SSA

- Hopefully the conference has been an exemplar of how fruitful the conversation can be.
- Website, journal, blog of ADHS highly useful to me personally.
- Conference in Utrecht next june

Possibility of conducting research on the past is there for researchers.

SSA very historically aware, but...

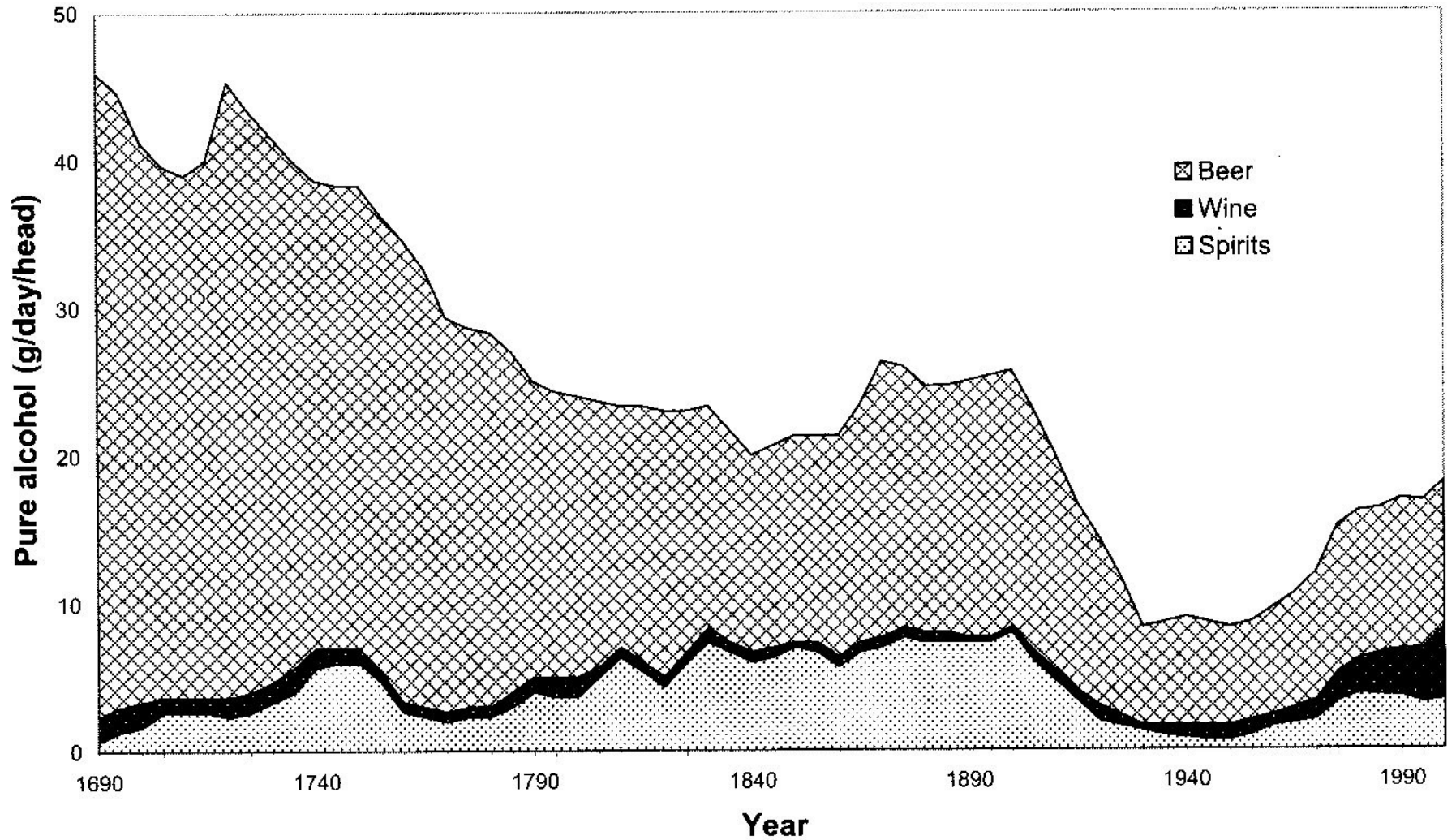
# History, science and methodology

- Some words to learn:-
  - Historiography
  - Presentism
  - Anachronism
  - Whiggism

# The Most Drunken Nation on Earth?



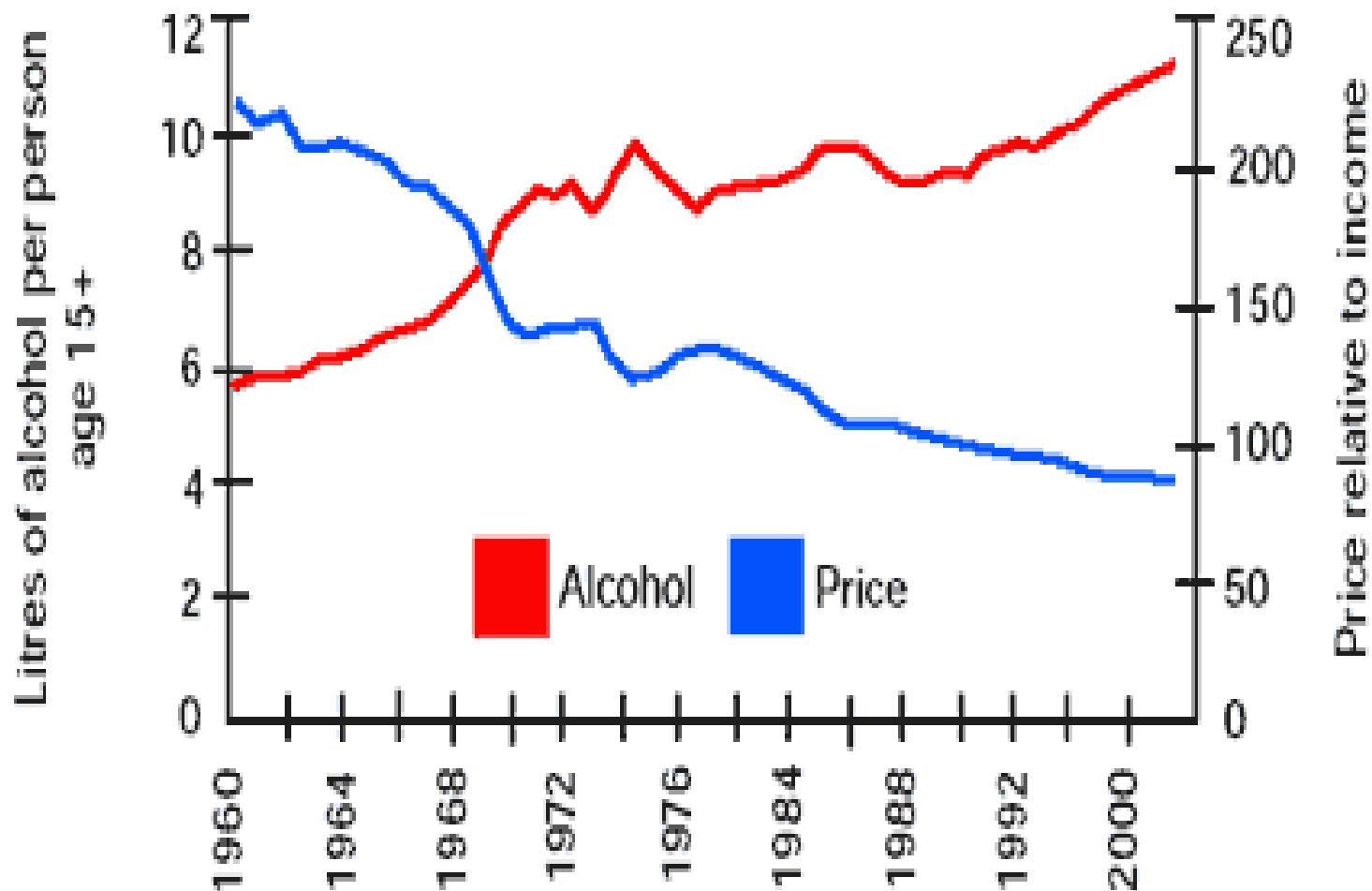
## Alcohol consumption in Britain since 1690



# Cyclical Patterns of Alcohol Use in History?

- It has been suggested that alcohol consumption and associated problems rise and fall in “long waves” throughout history (Skog, 1986)
- If problems pass a certain threshold government intervention becomes unavoidable.
- If problems decline laws eventually relaxed leading to start of further rise
- Medical involvement and interest has also waxed and waned in parallel with changing levels of alcohol consumption in the example of Scotland/UK with psychiatry at the forefront of innovation in treatment.





Source: Tjøtta, 2003

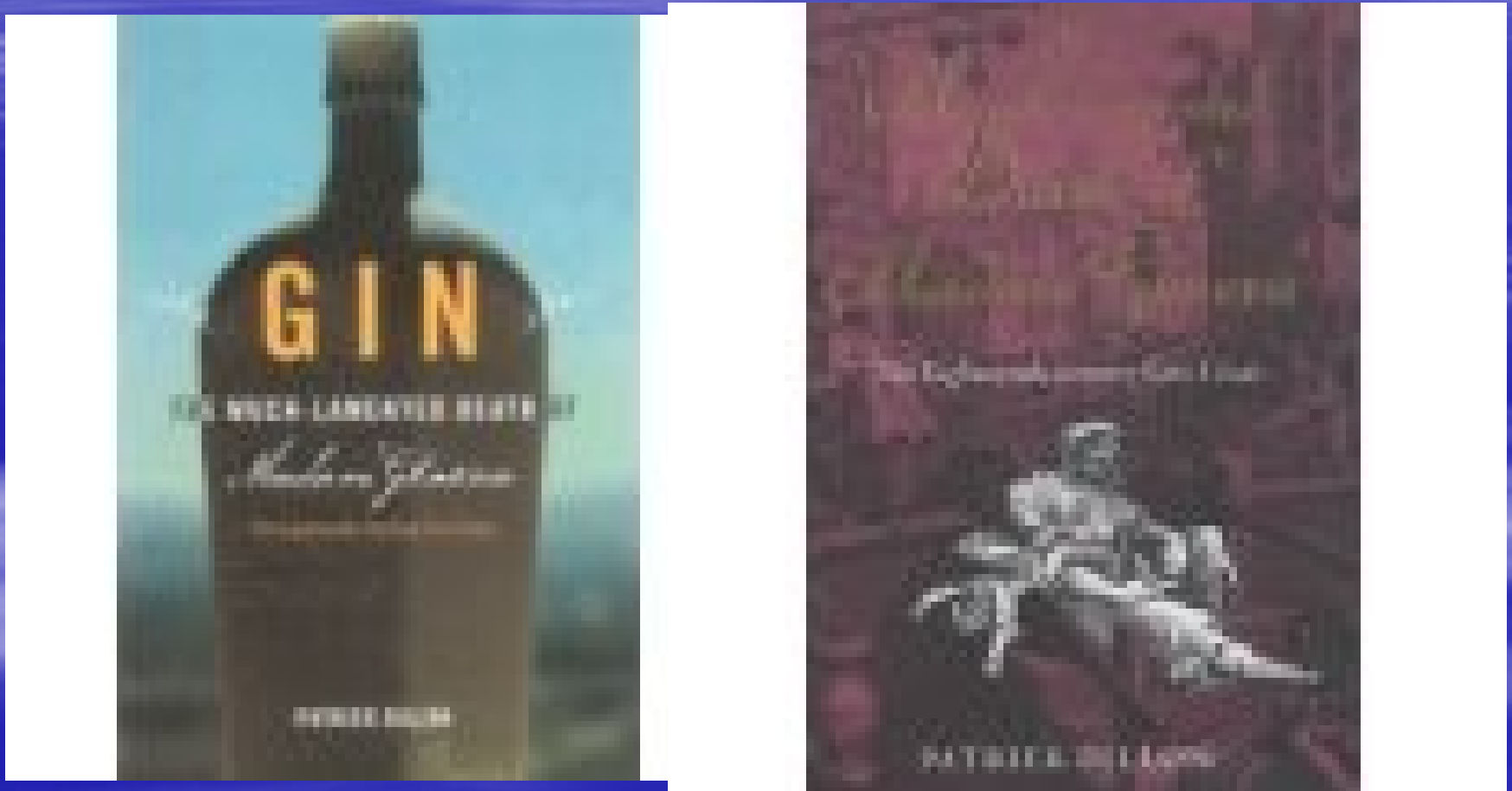
# Hogarth's Beer Street



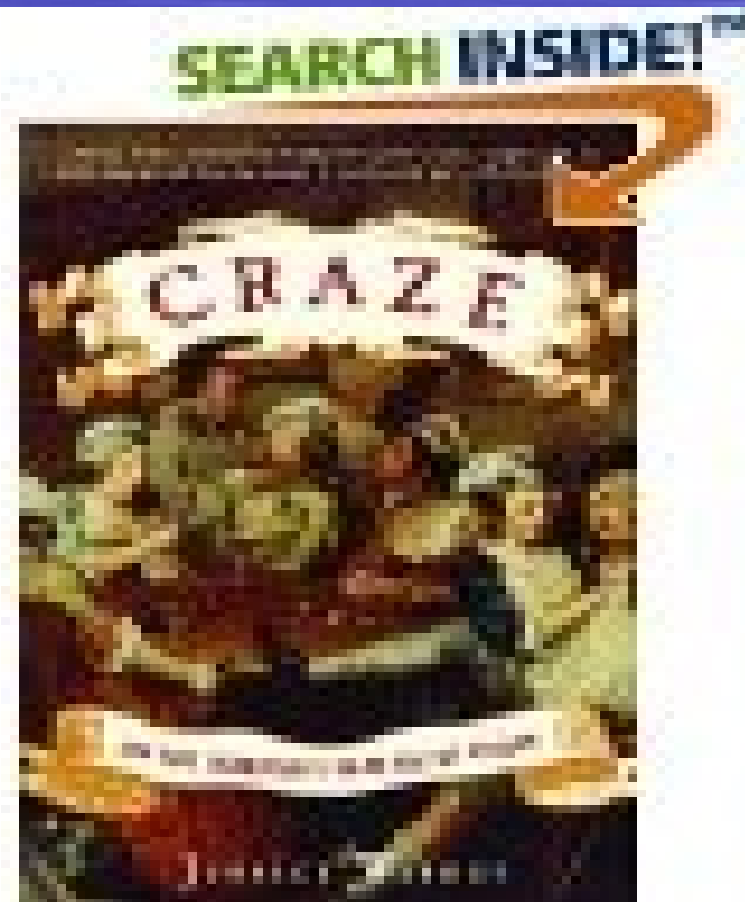
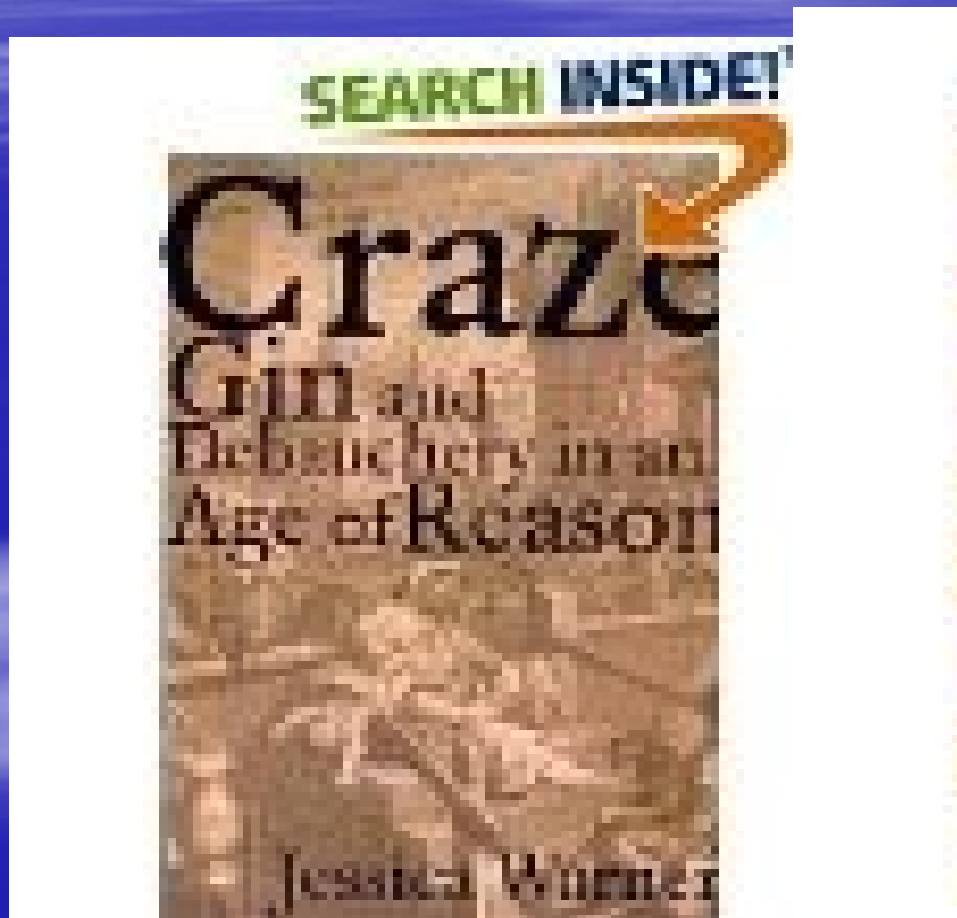
# Hogarth's Gin Lane



# Gin-The Much Lamented Death Of Madame Geneva-Patrick Dillon, 2002



# Craze-Gin and Debauchery in an Age of Reason-Jessica Warner,2003



# Causes of Gin Epidemic

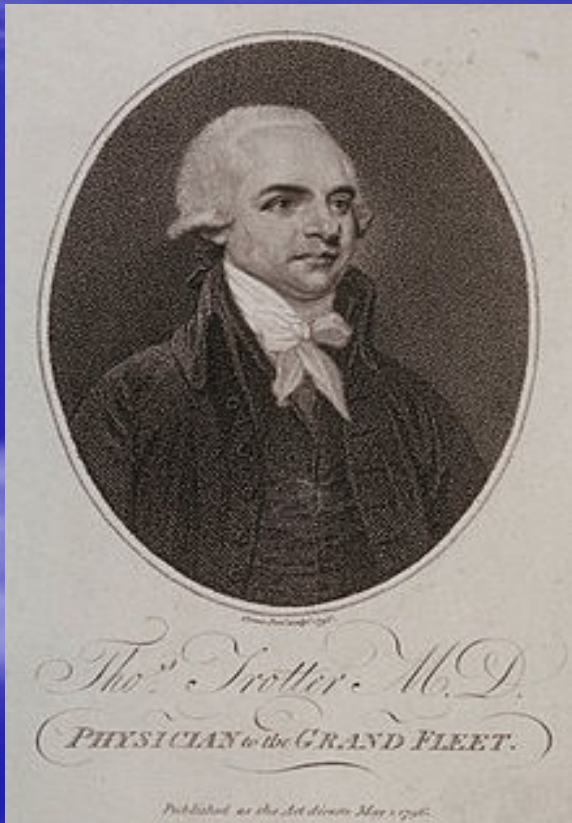
- During the late seventeenth century taxes on gin were reduced in order to increase demand of this drink
- Drinking gin signified loyalty to the new Protestant monarch, William of Orange
- Distilling Act, 1690 to fill the vacuum left by the ban on French brandy and create a market for home-grown corn
- Unforeseen and rapid consequence of “gin epidemic” of eighteenth century

# Response to Gin Epidemic

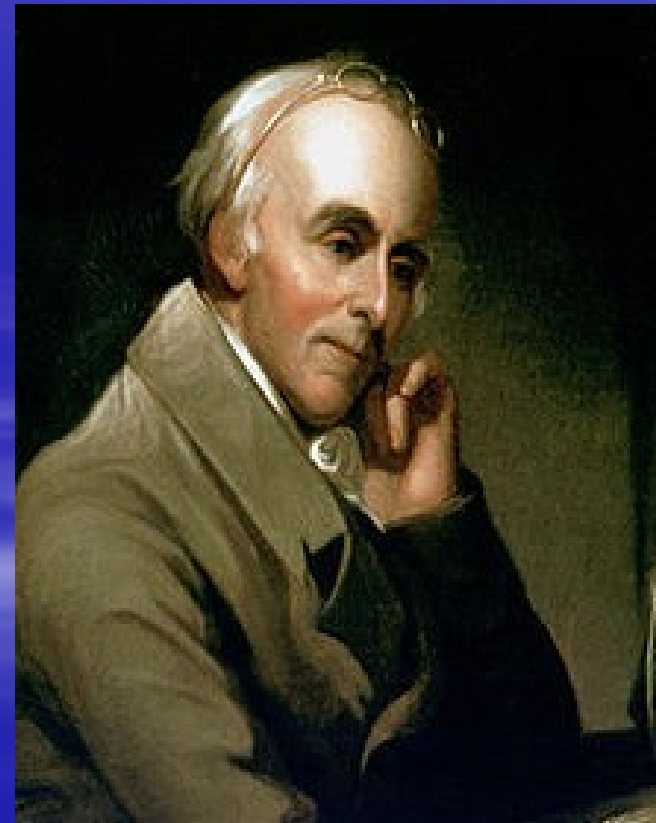
- Increasing public concern over consequences-James Boswell described “spree drinking” in early 18C.
- Gin consumption doubled 1707-1727
- By 1742 the British population of less than 7million were consuming 19 million gallons of gin annually.
- Initial legislation and taxation ineffective as ignored and not enforced
- 1743 Act(Tippling Act) with more modest taxation strongly enforced and subsequent legislation limiting outlets etc eventually had desired effect
- “Due to the fine tuning of taxation and the success of the anti-spirits campaign after decades of experience with high consumption , the gin epidemic faded”-Musto,1997

# Edinburgh, Alcohol and Medicine

**Thomas Trotter**  
**(1760 – 1832)**



**Benjamin Rush**  
**(1746-1813)**





# Thomas Trotter



## Physician to the Fleet

The Life and Times of Thomas Trotter  
1760–1832

BRIAN VALE & GRIFFITH EDWARDS

# An Essay, Medical, Philosophical, and Chemical, on Drunkenness and Its Effects on the Human Body

- 1804 Thomas Trotter, an Edinburgh trained physician, publishes revised and expanded 1788 M.D. thesis:-
- "In medical language, I consider drunkenness, strictly speaking, to be a disease, produced by a remote cause, and giving birth to actions and movements in the living body that disorder the functions of health . . . The habit of drunkenness is a disease of the mind."

# The Delirium Ward

The Royal Infirmary of  
Edinburgh

Thomas Laycock  
(1812–1876)



# Analysis of Admissions to the Delirium Ward -1856-1867

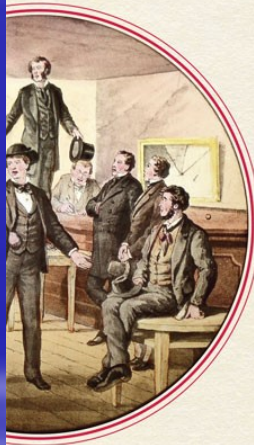
INDEX to JOURNAL of				WARD, No.			
No.	PATIENTS' NAMES.	ADMITTED.	PAGES OF JOURNAL.	DISEASES.	DISMISSED.	EVENT.	
I	William Gilbert	May 30 <sup>th</sup>	1	Delirium Tremens	June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Cured	
II	John Macrae	31 <sup>st</sup>	3	Delirium Tremens		Cured	
III	John More		7	Melancholia: Hypochondriac.		Gone to Stormingford	
IV	Janet Baine	—	26 <sup>th</sup> 9	Hysteria		Cured	
V	Archibald Kay	June 7 <sup>th</sup>	11	Delirium Tremens	June 17 <sup>th</sup>	Cured	
VI	James McDonald	June 3 <sup>rd</sup>	15	Hemiplegia			
VII	Ann Campbell	June 7 <sup>th</sup>	18	Delirium Tremens	June 9 <sup>th</sup>	By Decid	
VIII	William Auld	June 12	14	Epilepsy		Cured	
IX	Alexander Fairlayson	June 14 <sup>th</sup>	21	Intoxication	June 18 <sup>th</sup>	Cured	
X	Charles Watson	July 22 <sup>nd</sup>	27	Delirium Tremens	July 24 <sup>th</sup>	Dead	
XI	David Brew	July 10 <sup>th</sup>	23	Epilepsy	July 12 <sup>th</sup>	Dead	

1856

Shorburn

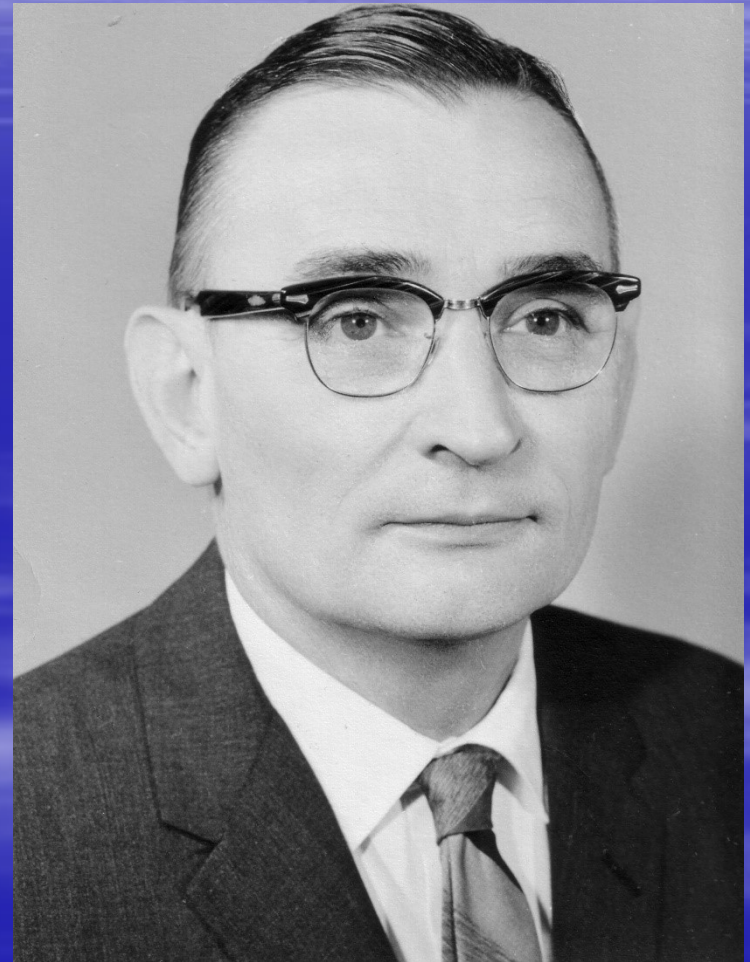
# **RUM MANIACS**

Alcoholic Insanity *in the* Early American Republic



*Matthew Warner*  
**OSBORN**

# Harris Isbell and the ARC



# An Experimental Study of the Etiology of "Rum Fits" and Delirium Tremens-1

PATIENT	INITIAL WEIGHT KG.	TOTAL DAYS OF DRINKING	AVERAGE AMOUNT 95% ETOH (ML/DAY) FOR ENTIRE PERIOD	NO. DAYS AT "MAXIMUM" * INTAKE	AVERAGE AMOUNT 95% ETOH AT "MAXIMUM INTAKE" (ML/DAY)	AVERAGE DEGREE OF DRUNKENNESS ON "MAXIMUM INTAKE "
MAURICE	73	7	286	4	379	1.1
RED	78	16	266	7	411	1.0
BOB	94	16	293	6	379	1.6
TOM	80	34	346	24	418	1.8
CHARLEY	79	78	388	68	420	2.4
JACK	76	78	383	70	405	2.4
AL	76	87	448	79	475	1.5
JUNIOR	76	48	472	30	482	1.3
SLIM	76	55	489	37	520	1.5
TONY	80	48	458	30	488	1.3

# An Experimental Study of the Etiology of "Rum Fits" and Delirium Tremens-2

PATIENT	T	W	P	H	N	V	D	A	I	HR	F	VHL	AHL	DO	C	DURATION * DAYS
MAURICE	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
RED	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
BOB	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
TOM	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
CHARLEY	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	??*	4	4	??*	??*	4	7	??*
JACK	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	2	4	3	3	4	4	1	0	8
AL	3	3	3	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	2	0	0	8
JUNIOR	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	2	0	1	5
SLIM	4	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	5
TONY	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	4	3	3	4	4	4	0	??*

NUMERAL INDICATES THE ESTIMATED SEVERITY OF THE SIGN OR SYMPTOM ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 4; 1, BEING THE MILDEST GRADE, 4, THE MOST SEVERE

\* TIME TO DISAPPEARANCE OF OBJECTIVE MANIFESTATIONS

\*\* WITHDRAWAL TERMINATED, AND ESTIMATE NOT POSSIBLE

T- TREMOR

A- ANOREXIA

W- WEAKNESS

I- INSOMNIA

P- PERSPIRATION

HR- HYPERREFLEXIA

H- ELEVATION OF BLOOD PRESSURE

F- FEVER

N- NAUSEA

VHL- VISUAL HALLUCINATIONS

V- VOMITING

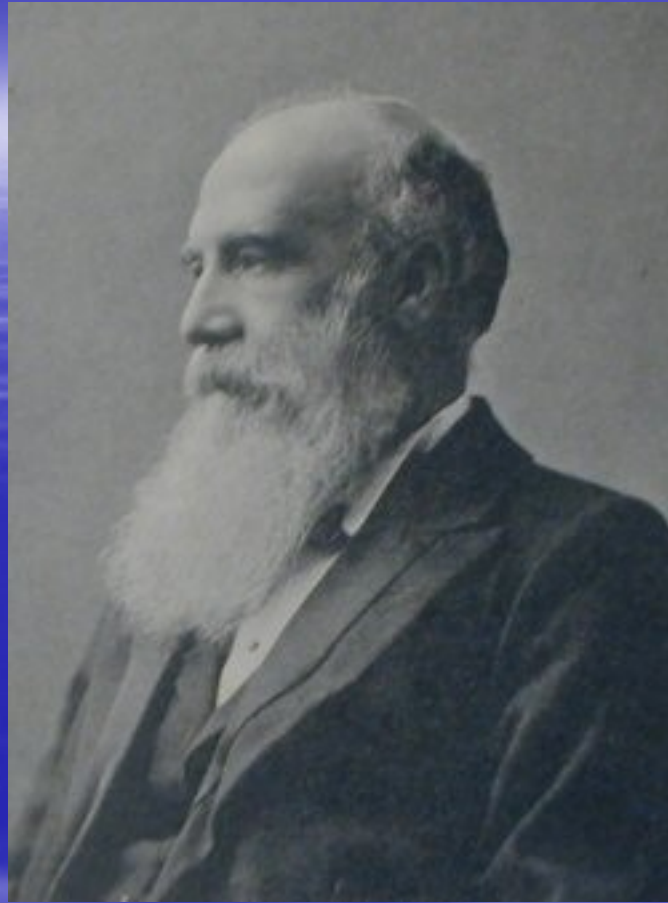
AHL- AUDITORY HALLUCINATIONS

D- DIARRHEA

DO- DISORIENTATION

C- NUMBER OF CONVULSIONS





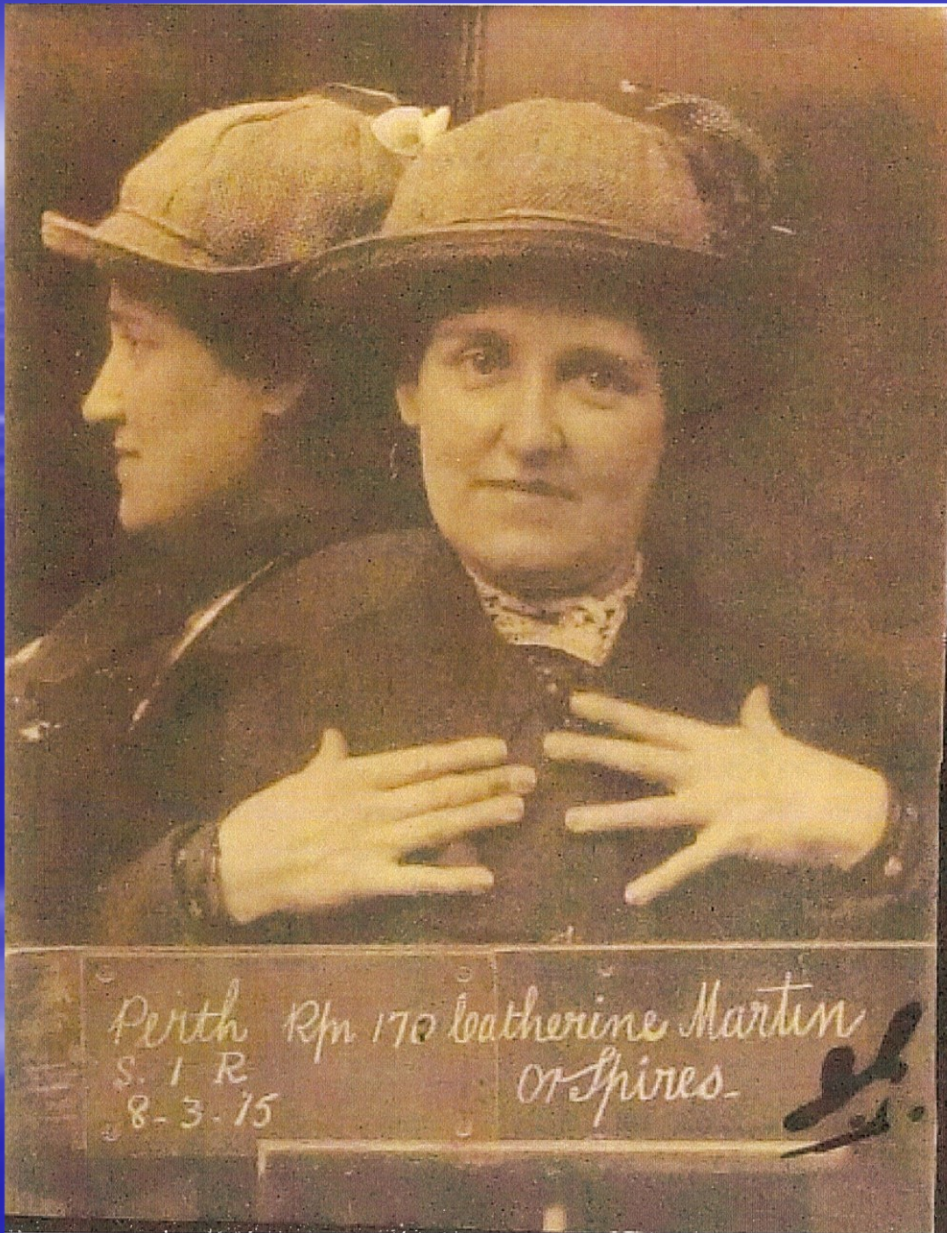
**Dr. David Yellowlees, M.D.**

# Insanity and Intemperance- Yellowlees, 1872

- “It is surely within the truth to assert that half the existing cases of insanity are due directly or indirectly to this social curse”
- Yellowlees noted the “decreased production of insanity in men” during strikes in Glamorgan and commented that “ignorance and self-indulgence can make prosperity a curse instead of a blessing”
- “Intemperance has a threefold relation to insanity : it may be a cause ,an early symptom or a result. These relations are often associated and often confounded”.



Taking the Pledge – Glasgow Green 1900



Perth Rfn 170 Catherine Martin  
S. I. R.  
8-3-15

O'Spires



## “Before and After”

-from a Tent Hall Lantern Slide

# SCOTLAND AND PROHIBITION

Scotch Whisky exports to Bahamas

1918 – 944 gallons

1922 – 386,000 gallons

“Prohibition was the best thing that ever happened to Scotch”

Maclean (2003) Scotch Whisky – A Liquid History.





Dundee - 1922 General Election

Edwin Scrymgeour -  
Prohibition Party  
32, 578 votes

Winston Churchill -  
Liberal Party  
20,466 votes

# Not just an area of esoteric interest ?

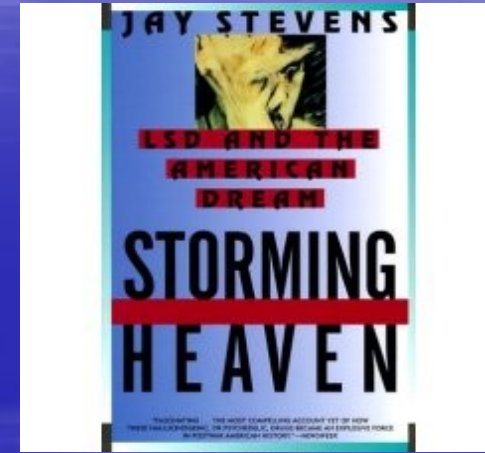
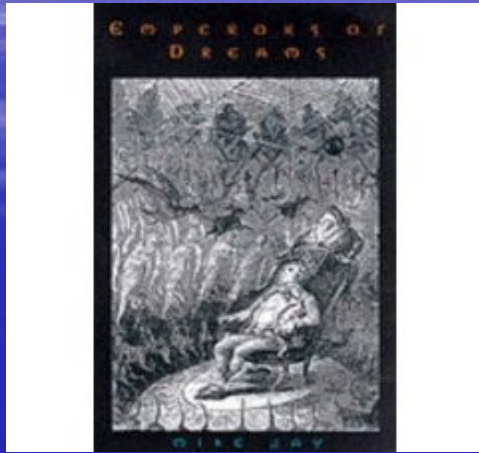
- The challenge of “Romancing Opiates :Pharmacological Lies and the Addiction Bureaucracy” by Theodore Dalrymple (Encounter Books,2006)
- Have we bought into a concept of heroin dependence that was produced by a literary tradition that has influenced public opinion and in turn the medical response to it?



# Thomas de Quincey

- “.....upon all that has been hitherto written on the subject of opium...I have but one emphatic criticism to pronounce-Lies! lies! lies!”-Confessions of an English Opium-Eater (1822)
- For De Quincey opium was a technique for parting the veils “between our present consciousness and the secret inscriptions on the mind”
- Does his account of the detail of his drug use-both good and bad-have resonance with the phenomenology of our current opiate-addicted patients?

# Drug exploration and the medical profession



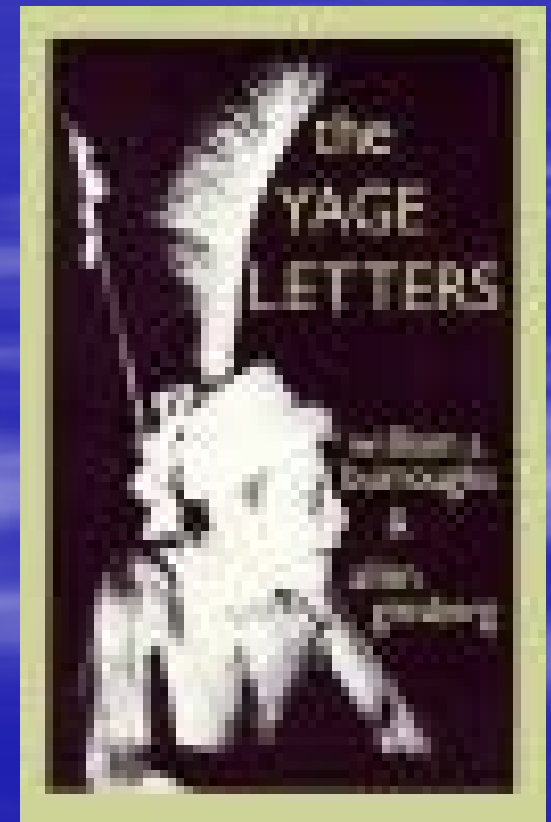
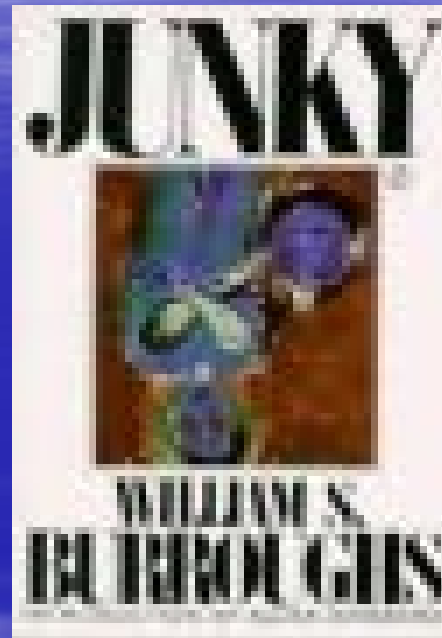
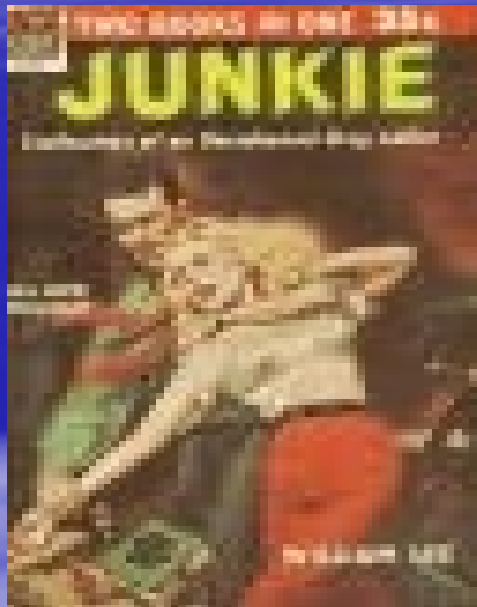
- The Frankenstein narrative:-

Act one : the drug is discovered and its novelties and benefits celebrated

Act two : the drug escapes from the laboratory and makes its journey in the world

Act three: the powers that be unite in their attempt to extinguish it.

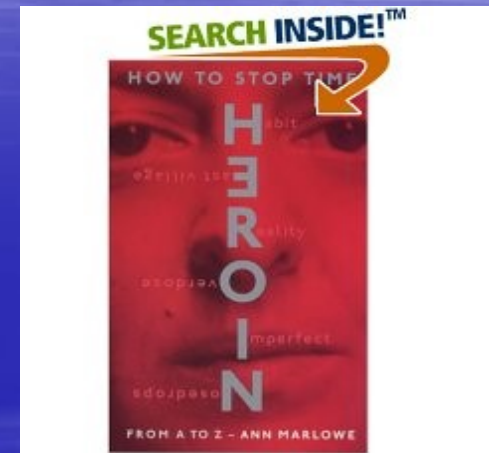
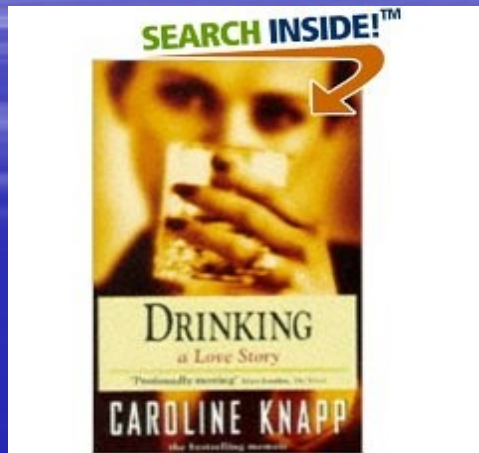
# The Work of Burroughs



# Junkie

- “For the protection of the reader ,we have inserted parenthetical notes to indicate where the author clearly departs from accepted medical fact or makes other unsubstantiated statements in an effort to justify his actions”(Publisher’s note at the front of Junkie by William Lee (William Burroughs),1953
- “Doctors are so exclusively nurtured on exaggerated ideas of their position that,generally speaking,a factual approach is the worst possible.Even though they do not believe your story,nonetheless they want to hear one.....You need a good bedside manner with doctors or you will get nowhere.” (Junky,1953)

# Telling the story-an increasing genre?



- Different narrative types exist in memoirs in terms of explanation of addiction and drug use and recovery.
- See Hanninen and Koski-Jannes(1999) “Narratives of recovery from addictive behaviour” *Addiction*,94,1837-1848

# Drunkalogs and the AA tradition

- The AA and NA movement and its worldwide success has provided the predominant narrative for addiction and recovery.



# conclusion

- The past is never dead, it's not even past.

William Faulkner

- Hopefully we can have further such conversations in the future at the SSA.