Addiction Treatment & Recovery among American Women: The Early History (1750-1975)

William L. White
(bwhite@chestnut.org)
Chestnut Health Systems
Presentation Goals

1. Present a brief overview of the early history of addiction treatment and recovery among women in the United States

2. Honor the early women who opened doorways to treatment and recovery

3. Highlight key themes within this history that illuminate the current status of addicted and recovering women
Women, Alcohol & Colonial America

- Pervasive presence of drinking
- Stigma attached to public drunkenness
- Stigma attached to women and drinking increased in tandem the rise of alcohol problems between 1780-1830 and the spread of the American Temperance Movement
Native American Recovery Circles

- Delaware Prophets
- Wyoming Woman (1751)
- Abstinence-based Cultural & Religious Revitalization Movements
Washingtonian Revival

- “Rescue work” with female inebriates
- Martha Washington Society (1841)
- Daughters of Temperance
- Sisters of Samaria
- Lady Dashaway Association
Earliest “Reform” Biography

Confessions of a Female Inebriate (1842)

Written by “A Lady”
(Isaac Shepherd)
Women in the American Temperance Movement

- Opportunity for political organization
- Linkage to abolition and suffrage movements
- Rescue work with addicted women; advocacy for special institutions for treatment of women
GENERAL OFFICERS OF THE WORLD’S W. C. T. U. (1897)

STANDING: MISS AGNES B. BLACK (SECRETARY), LADY HENRY SOMERSET (VICE PRESIDENT AT LARGE)
SEATED: MISS ANNA A. GORDON (ASSISTANT SECRETARY), MISS FRANCES K. WILLIAMS (PRESIDENT), MRS. MARY E. SANDERS (TREASURER)
The Home of an Indulgent Mother

Mixing between meals
Patent medicines and soothing syrups
Plenty of pickles and pork
Mexicanized dishes and peppersauce
Candies and rich pastries
Tea, coffee and coca
Sodas, pop and gingerale
Tobacco and cigarettes
Cards, dice and pool
Liquor and strong drink

A Drunkard's Grave

Starting Her Son Toward a Drunkard's Grave
19th Century Addiction Treatment

- Inebriate Homes
- Inebriate Asylums
- Private Addiction Cure Institutes
- Bottled/Boxed Home Cures
- Urban Missions and Rural Inebriate Colonies
Inebriate Homes

- Martha Washington Home (Chicago) (1869)
- New England Home for Intemperate Women (Boston)
- St. Savior’s Sanatorium (St. Louis)
- Temple Home (New York City)
Inebriate Asylums

New York State Inebriate Asylum (1864)

--400 of first 4,000 applications were from women

--Majority of women seeking treatment did so for treatment of addiction to opium, morphine, chloral and chloroform
Women Pioneers in Addiction Medicine

- Dr. Agnes Sparks
- Dr. Lucy Hall

  --first to link trauma to risk for addiction

  --early study finding that 1/3 of female inebriates had been battered by their husbands
Private Addiction Cure Institutes

- Keeley Institutes (1879)
  -- Ladies Homes
  -- Anonymous admissions
  -- Extreme sequestration
- Gatlin Institutes
- Neal Institutes
- Oppenheimer Institutes
THE LAW MUST RECOGNIZE A LEADING FACT,
MEDICAL NOT PENAL TREATMENT
REFORMS THE DRUNKARD.

KEELEY LEAGUE NO. 1, DWIGHT, ILLINOIS, IN OPEN AIR SESSION.
Patent Medicine Cures

- Explosion of cures for the alcohol, tobacco and drug habits
- Targeting of women
- Exposés
COCAINE TOOTHACHE DROPS
Instantaneous Cure!
PRICE 15 CENTS.
Prepared by the
LLOYD MANUFACTURING CO.
219 HUDSON AVE., ALBANY, N. Y.
For sale by all Druggists.
(Registered March 1885.) See other side.
An early label for the Vegetable Compound, left, enumerated female complaints. A later bottle listed only the ingredients.

Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College

"The Touch." An illustration from a nineteenth-century gynecological text.
Drunkards Saved Secretly

Any Lady May Do It at Home--Costs Nothing To Try.

Send for Golden Remedy. Bring happiness to the family and save the loved ones.

At last, drunk no more, no more! A treatment that is tasteless and odorless, safe, absolutely safe, heartily endorsed by temperance workers; can be given secretly by any lady in tea, coffee or food; effective in its silent work;--the craving for liquor relieved in thousands of cases without the drinkers' knowledge, and against his will. Will you try such a remedy if you can prove its effect, free to you? Then send the coupon below for a free trial package, today.

FREE TRIAL COUPON.

Write your name and address on blank lines below and mail coupon today for free trial package of Golden Remedy.

Dr. J. W. Haines Co., 5424 Glenn Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

I am certain--will not--has the free trial package of your Golden Remedy which you say can be given secretly and easily at home. It must be indeed a "Golden Remedy." Send it to me quickly.

Name: ____________________________

Address: __________________________

(Handwritten note:)

Dear Kansas--old as Kansas Kansas Kansas have also had for the Missouri erected. My fat elde ret ten ye in,Kan are pad on my books, and la
MORPHINE!

EASY HOME CURE.
PAINLESS;
PERMANENT.

We will send anyone addicted to OPIUM, MORPHINE, LAUDANUM, or any other drug habit, a Trial Treatment, Free of Charge, of the most remarkable remedy ever discovered. Containing Great Vital Principle heretofore unknown. Refractory Cases solicited. Confidential correspondence invited from all, especially Physicians.

A. G. OLIN CO.,
52 Dearborn Street,
CHICAGO, ILL.
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The principal quack morphin cures.
Rescue Missions

- Jerry and Marie McAuley
- Water Street Mission in New York City (1872)
- Christian Home for Intemperate Women
- Salvation Army (Women as outreach workers)
The Collapse of Addiction Treatment (1900-1920)

- Restigmatization, demedicalization, criminalization
  --Legal prohibition of alcohol
  --Aggressive control of opium, morphine and cocaine

- Transinstitutionalization
  --Inebriate penal colonies, back wards of aging state psychiatric hospitals, federal prisons
Addicted Women and Asylum Treatment

- Addicted women and the American Eugenics Movement
- Chemo- and electroconvulsive therapies
- Psychosurgery (into early 1970s)
- Drug Therapies: exotic & toxic/lethal withdrawal procedures; barbiturates, amphetamines, LSD
A Brief Experiment with Morphine Maintenance

- 44 communities operate morphine maintenance clinics (1919-1924)
- Majority of patients were women
- Forced to close under threat of legal indictment
- Women enter growing illicit drug culture
Modern Alcoholism Movement

- AA
- Yale Center of Studies on Alcohol
- Research Council on Problems of Alcohol
- National Committee for Education on Alcoholism
AA and Women

- Henrietta Seiberling
- Lois Wilson & Anne Smith
- Early female members
- Sister Ignatia
- Early Women’s Groups (1940s)
- Al-Anon (Lois W. and Anne B. (1951)
- Theresa “Teddy” R. (Knickerbocker Hospital)
Marty Mann and NCEA

- Her vision
- Initial resistance
- Founded in 1944
- New “Kinetic Ideas”
- Laying the foundation for modern treatment
- The growth of NCEA, NCA, NCADD
Addiction, Women & the Popular Press

Images that define female addiction as a problem of morality

Highly sexualized images of addicted women

Treatment of Women in AA in Press

"Women Drunkards, Pitiful Creatures, Get Helping Hand"

"AA: No Booze but Plenty of Babes"
DRINK TURNED HER INTO A SEX-CRAZED ANIMAL!

Alcoholic Woman

Ruth M. Walsh

YOU HAD TO PITY THIS WOMAN... EACH TIME SHE FELL INTO THE BOTTLE, SHE SOUGHT SOLACE IN SORDID LOVE...

A NOVEL WHICH PROBES DEEPLY INTO AN UNKNOWN WORLD.
ALCOHOLIC WIFE

G. G. REVELLE

HOW SHOULD HE HANDLE HIS ALCOHOLIC WIFE . . . BEAT HER? CATER TO HER INFLAMED DESIRES? OVERLOOK HER DRUNKEN INTIMACIES WITH OTHER MEN? DESERT HER FOR HIS SEDUCTIVE MISTRESS?
Advocacy Pioneers

- Marty Mann
- Lillian Roth
- Mercedes McCambridge
Beyond My Worth
THE INSPIRING NEW BOOK BY
Lillian Roth
author of I'LL CRY TOMORROW
THE STORY OF LILLIAN ROTH IS NOW A GREAT MOTION PICTURE
Women Pioneers in Addiction Medicine (1940-1965)

- Dr. Ruth Fox
- Dr. Vernelle Fox
- Dr. Marie Nyswander & Dr. Mary Jeanne Kreek
Laying the Early Groundwork for Gender Specific Addiction Treatment

- Dr. Jean Kirkpatrick
- First Lady Betty Ford
- Dr. LeClair Bissell, Dr. Sheila Blume, Dr. Edith Gromberg, Marian Sandmaier, Dr. Sharon Wilsnack; Dr. Linda Beckman, and Dr. Charlotte Kasl.
Continuing Themes

1. Exploitation of women via targeted promotion of psychoactive drugs
2. Blaming women for addiction of their sons and husbands
3. Invisibility and silence (The absence of faces and voices of recovering women)
4. “Adam’s Rib” approach to research and treatment; Iatrogenic Insults (harm done in the name of help)
Continuing Themes


6. Gender-based Tx & recovery support services exist as an appendage to the addiction treatment system, but have yet to be mainstreamed within that system.
Summary: Early pioneers set the stage for the emergence of gender-specific understandings of 1) the etiological roots and patterns of addiction, 2) obstacles and approaches to addiction treatment and 3) pathways, styles and stages of long-term recovery. The time for those breakthroughs to be mainstreamed within every treatment program in the country is overdue.
Resources
