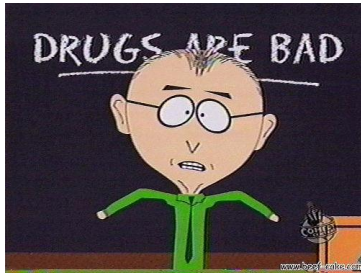


Won't somebody think about the children? Alcohol and Other Drug Moral Panics



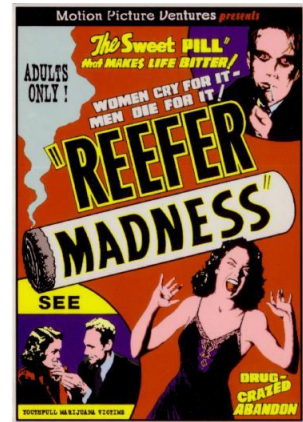
Dr Stephen Bright



Psychodelic Research in Science & Medicine
PRISM is an independent non-profit research association



Curtin University



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20th Century

1960's LSD

1980's Crack (US Only)

1990's Heroin

2000's Ice (Part 1)



21st Century – “Legal Highs”

2000's: “legal highs”

2008/2009: BZP Banned

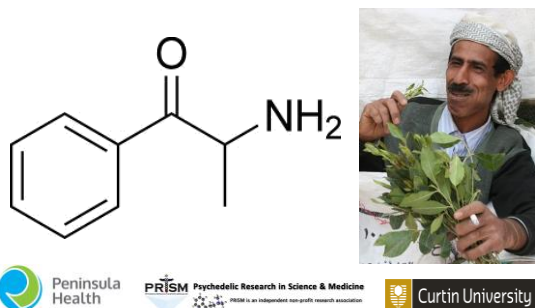


21st Century – “Legal Highs” cont.

Plant food
(e.g., “Dove
feeder”)

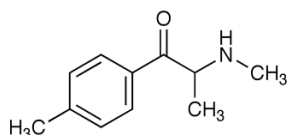


Cathinone



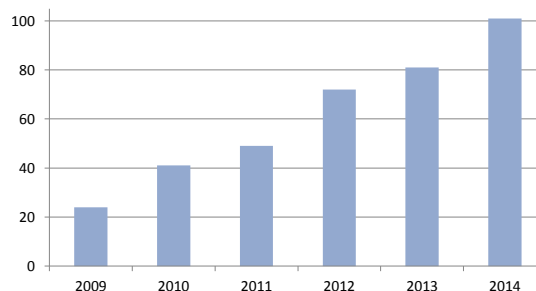
Mephedrone

4-methylmethcathinone "Miaow Miaow"



Mephedrone Banned = More new drugs

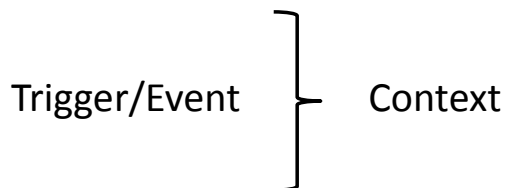
Number of new drugs identified by EMCDDA:



21st Century – "The Ice Epidemic II"

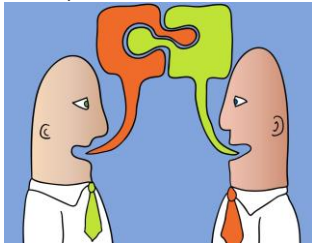


Understanding Moral Panic



Social Contructionism

AODs might have objective pharmacological effects, but they are also social constructions



Social Constructionism

AODs might have objective pharmacological effects, but they are also social constructions

These constructions of AODs limit what can be 'reasonably' said about AODs

Since "views of reality are ... culturally embedded, those views dominant at any time and place will serve the interests and perspectives of those who exercise the most power in a particular culture" (Patton, 2002, p. 100).



Discourse

Social constructionism is underpinned by language

Dominant discourses are those linguistic frameworks that hold the most truth value

They limit what can be thought, said, and researched about a given topic (e.g., AODs)



Dominant Discourses of AOD in Australia

Medical

Moral

Legal

Political

Economic

Glamorous

Each discourse is supported by a dominant institution that has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo

Bright, S. J., Marsh, A., Bishop, B., & Smith, L. M. (2008). What can we say about substance use? Dominant discourses and narratives emergent from Australian media. *Addiction Research & Theory*, 16, 135-148



Drugs vs "non drugs"

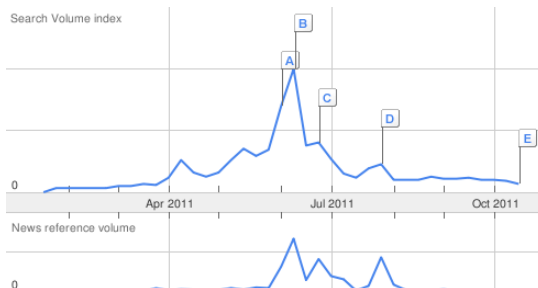


Synthetic Cannabis – Event

April 2011: Callers on JJJ



Google Trends: “Kronic” Searches



Bright, S. J., Bishop, B., Kane, R., Marsh, A., Barratt, M. J. (2013). Kronic hysteria: Exploring the intersection between Australian synthetic cannabis legislation, the media, and drug-related harm. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 24, 231-237.

Further Legislative Actions

Federal:

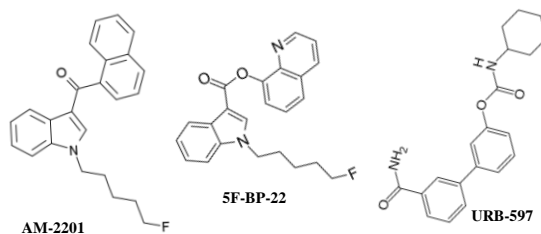
- July 2011: 7 individual chemicals
- May 2012: Broad groups + “Synthetic Cannabinomimetics”
- June 2013: Consumer law re: more individual chemicals

State:

- 2011 – WA (again), NSW, ACT, SA, NT & VIC
- 2013 – QLD & NSW



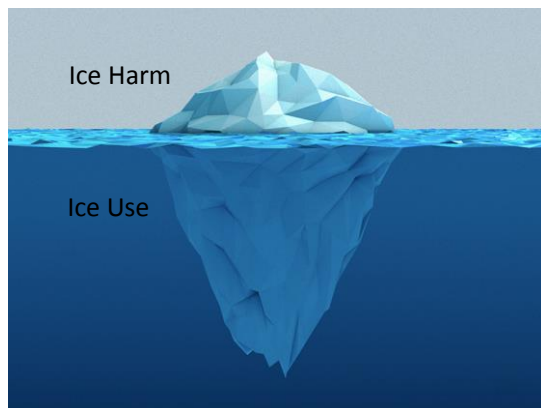
More New Chemicals



Harms (2012+)

GDS: N = 950 (used in last 12 months)

- 2.4% sought emergency medical Rx following use
 - Most common Sx: Panic & Anxiety, Paranoia, Problems breathing
 - More likely to be younger (Winstock & Barratt, 2013a)
- 93% preferred natural cannabis
 - More likely to experience hangover
 - Less pleasurable
 - Shorter duration of effect (Winstock & Barratt, 2013b)



Implications

Normalisation



Implications

Normalisation

Stigma



Implications

Normalisation

Stigma

Drug education about Ice (and all drugs) is not credible

Implications

Normalisation

Stigma

Drug education about Ice (and all drugs) is not credible

Reactive legislation that is not evidence-based



Thank You

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