

Otto-Michael Lesch · Henriette Walter
Christian Wetschka · Michie Hesselbrock
Victor Hesselbrock

Alcohol and Tobacco

Medical and Sociological Aspects of Use,
Abuse and Addiction



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Last but not least I have to thank my family, especially my wife Elisabeth, because they had to miss me many weekends in the last 30 years. They formed a climate to be able to relax and also made clear that beside working with addicted patients many other much more exiting sites in life exist.

Otto Lesch

Assistant: Josefine Kalenda

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Foreword

It is a pleasure to write this foreword for the text by Professor Otto-Michael Lesch and colleagues dealing with the important topics of alcohol and tobacco. The thoughts offered from this broad based book are likely to be applicable to readers with interests in a wide range of substances of abuse. An earlier version of this text, published in German, has stood the test of time, and the updated chapters in this edition were developed in consultation with eminent clinicians and researchers from sociology (Christian Wetschka), social work (Michie Hesselbrock), and psychology (Victor Hesselbrock) – contributions that complement the approaches offered by Professor Lesch.

The content reflects the wealth of experience of the authors, including the more than 30 years in the field expended by Professor Lesch. The information offered here includes observations on the history of relevant diagnoses; descriptions of the importance to societies of alcohol and tobacco use and problems; theories of factors that contribute to discussions of the diagnostic approaches of the American Psychiatric Association's DSM, as well as those generated by the World Health Organization; along with expansions of these criteria to detecting substance related problems in clinical practice. An important part of the material deals

with the sequelae of alcohol and tobacco use, including comorbidity with psychiatric syndromes. The emphasis on comorbidities is an essential component for a clinically oriented text dealing with alcohol and tobacco as psychiatric symptoms, especially anxiety and depression, can both increase the risk for substance dependence and reflect important consequences of their clinical course.

A special strength of this book, not surprisingly, is a sophisticated description of a broad range of possible typologies of alcohol and tobacco dependence. While much emphasis is placed on the approach developed by Professor Lesch and his colleagues, the text is careful to discuss additional approaches, including those related to genetic predispositions.

Underscoring the clinical usefulness of the information offered is the breadth of the discussion of treatments. These include combinations of sociological and psychological approaches, as well as a presentation of potentially useful pharmacological therapies. The book also recognizes the interest that clinicians are likely to have in preventing alcohol- and nicotine-related disorders.

In closing, this updated English version of a well established text has much to offer a wide range of clinicians.

The book should be considered as potentially important reading for students entering our field as well as for well established practitioners.

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NIAAA's Jack Mendelson Honorary
Award, NIAAA Keller Honorary Award,
Middleton Award for the best research
within the VA system, American Psy-
chiatric Association's Hofheimer Prize
(now the APA Award for Research), So-
ciety for Biological Psychiatry's Gold
Medal Award for lifetime achievement,
Research Society on Alcoholism's Dis-
tinguished Scientist and Seixas
Awards, James B. Isaacson Memorial
Award, Jellinek Award.

Foreword

Alcoholism and smoking are the most frequent causes of addiction in our century. The extent to which alcohol is associated with health problems is remarkable, with Europe sadly adopting a leading role. 55 million adult Europeans use alcohol irresponsibly and 23 million can be categorized as alcohol dependent. The costs of treating the medical sequelae of alcohol abuse and related occupational deficits, which are paid by the health systems, are tremendous, e.g. Germany has reported costs of 20 billion Euros per annum. Besides the dependence itself, a myriad of alcohol related sequelae ranging from accidents to suicide, as well as social and occupational problems (family problems, unemployment), need to be examined. A particular cause for concern is the permanently declining age of initiation for alcohol use, which in the meantime has dropped to the age of 13–14. In view of the early onset of chronic alcohol consumption, an increase in the number of alcohol dependents and severe alcohol related sequelae, e.g. liver cirrhosis, have to be expected in the future.

Most alcohol dependents also smoke and, in fact, there are hardly any who do not. The effects of smoking are similarly health damaging and a German study has shown that around 110,000 people die each year from tobacco-re-

lated causes (cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory diseases). Alcohol and tobacco dependence has remarkably wide-ranging effects on almost all organs of the human body. For this reason, it is very important that not only psychiatrists and addiction experts tackle this subject, but that physicians, regardless of their specialisation, are also aware of the problem and are able to diagnose and choose adequate and timely interventions.

With his book, "Alcohol and Tobacco: Medical and Sociological Aspects of Use, Abuse and Addiction", Professor Otto-Michael Lesch, a psychiatrist of the highest international reputation, with over 40 years of experience in treating dependents, has not only explored all of the major issues, but has also managed to consider most aspects of dependence (prevention, diagnostics, sequelae, therapy). Despite the comprehensive scope of his book, the authors have successfully managed to discuss certain aspects in more depth without losing sight of the whole picture. In this book, both theory-based researchers as well as professionals in practice will find the information they are looking for. Especially interesting are a number of case studies from practice which have been included in the book. Here, the authors have put special emphasis on the typology of al-

cohol dependence which Lesch himself developed. Lesch's typology of alcohol dependence has received wide acceptance internationally and has recently been re-evaluated and structured by a research group, directed by Lesch. The reason why this typology is so important is because it can be used as a tool to predict both the assessment for prognoses, and therapeutic responses to different therapies.

With his work, Otto-Michael Lesch continues the classical tradition of German-speaking psychiatrists in the domain of alcohol research and treatment. In this respect, he sets new standards in almost all areas by introducing modern viewpoints and new scientific results. As President of the European Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (ESBRA), I would like to congratulate Otto-Michael Lesch and his colleagues on this work and also thank him sincerely. The English

version is now available for many interested readers in the European Community and I hope it helps to increase the quality of life of dependent patients.

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Statement

In as far as this book uses personal terms and definitions, they apply equally to women and men; for the sake of clarity, and without any intention to discriminate, only one gender-specific denomination has been used.

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Information about the origination of this book

As alcohol and tobacco consumption often occur concomitantly, scientific and therapeutic interest in both substances has significantly increased over the past years. The concomitant use has clearly more damaging effects than alcohol or tobacco use by itself. In practice, patients have often mentioned that they were able to quit the consumption of one substance without difficulty, but at the same increased the consumption of the other (e.g. if the patients managed to quit smoking, their alcohol consumption significantly increased). Our knowledge about dependencies is permanently expanding and basic research keeps improving explanations of the functioning of specific brain circuits. Therefore it is very important for us to deliver findings that clinical practitioners can apply in therapy or during consultations with tobacco and alcohol dependents. A differentiation between phenomena like the reward system, dependence memory, withdrawal symptoms or the craving for tobacco and alcohol is needed in order to carry out objective therapy and consultation. Very old concepts can still be found in the literature today (Bleuler M. 1983; Forel A. 1930, 1935; Haller R. 2007), which are formulated into general rules for the therapy of dependents. Yet, of-

ten, these authors use values which are unacceptable today. Relapse is always viewed as something negative and the negative stigma of the “dependence” diagnosis still remains a problem. This book will try to deliver objective information which shows that a dependence has nothing to do with faults or personal weakness. Practitioners have divorced themselves from these general therapy guidelines and now use “individual therapy for every patient”. These therapies are “therapy according to dimensions”, “resource-oriented therapy” or therapy which accepts unchangeable variables and seeks to influence changeable variables. Although we principally agree with these modern approaches, this book will nevertheless outline factors with global validity, which have been shown to be effective in the therapy of dependent patients. Scientific findings about subgroups according to Lesch’s typology form the basis of therapy, but often need to be modified according to the individual. Classifications according to subgroups that suggest that dependencies are exclusively caused by the effects of a substance, can often be found in the literature. In this book, we will outline different interactions between personality, environment and the effects of the substance.