

METHADONE MAINTENANCE THE VERY EARLY DAYS

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PRE-HISTORY | LATE 1800s—EARLY 1900s

- ▶ PAIN RELIEF AS ONE OF THE FEW EFFECTIVE MEDICAL TREATMENTS
- ▶ CIVIL WAR VETERANS IN PAIN
- ▶ WOMEN USING LAUDANUM FOR MENSTRUAL PAIN

PRE-HISTORY I | EARLY 1900s to 1924

- ▶ World-wide movement to control narcotics, led by US and China
- ▶ Narcotic use shifting to underclass, racism, xenophobia, temperance movement,
- ▶ Federal Harrison Narcotics Act of 1918, a tax act with requirements for record keeping
- ▶ Morphine maintenance

PRE-HISTORY III The "CLASSIC ERA OF NARCOTIC CONTROL" 1924 to 1965

Bureau of Narcotics within the Treasury Department

Shut down of morphine maintenance clinics

Harry Anslinger appointed in 1930—fiercely abstinence oriented,
skilled bureaucrat, UNCORRUPTIBLE

Narcotic Hospitals/"farms"/prisons in Lexington KY, Fort Worth TX

Stereotyped drug use: created insanity, violence, hypersexuality

Stereotyped drug user: sociopath, cruel, vicious, lack of
empathy, dangerous

Marie Nyswander

- ▶ Psychiatrist who worked at Lexington
- ▶ Attempting to cure addiction through therapy
- ▶ Episode of the birthday cake

Vincent Dole

- ▶ Worked at Rockefeller Institute
- ▶ Important discoveries in metabolism research
- ▶ Board member of Alcoholics Anonymous
- ▶ Asked to develop treatment for heroin dependent users undergoing withdrawal in city jails

Dole and Nyswander mid 1960s

- ▶ Research on various medications to treat heroin dependency
- ▶ Patients brought into Rockefeller Institute Hospital as inpatients-constant observation
- ▶ While on methadone, many patients lost interest in drug seeking, expressed interest in employment, education, families

Dole and Nyswander mid 1960s. Reactions to early research findings

- ▶ Disbelief among law enforcement and therapeutic community advocates, the experts in addiction
- ▶ “Like giving booze to an alcoholic”
- ▶ Anger and threats from the Bureau of Narcotics, threatened to revoke Dole’s medical license

- ▶ Dole and Nyswander persevered with the research, enlisting the support of prestigious Rockefeller Institute leadership

- ▶ Eventual compromise: methadone maintenance treatment permitted but only with highly restrictive clinic settings

Components of Development of Methadone Maintenance

- ▶ Treating persons who used heroin as human beings
- ▶ Brilliant science
- ▶ Personal courage
- ▶ Powerful allies
- ▶ THANK YOU