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Addictive behaviour in experimental animals: prospects for translation

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10 **Addictive behaviour in experimental animals:**
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12 **prospects for translation**
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20 **Barry J Everitt, Chiara Giuliano and David Belin**
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1
2 Abstract

3 Since the introduction of intravenous drug self-administration methodology over 50 years
4 ago, experimental investigation of addictive behaviour has delivered an enormous body of
5 data on the neural, psychological and molecular mechanisms of drug reward and
6 reinforcement and the neuroadaptations to chronic use. Whether or not these behavioural
7 and molecular studies are viewed as modelling the underpinnings of addiction in humans, the
8 discussion presented here highlights two areas – the impact of drug-associated conditioned
9 stimuli – or drug cues – on drug seeking and relapse, and compulsive cocaine seeking. The
10 degree to which these findings translate to the clinical state of addiction is considered in
11 terms of the underlying neural circuitry and also the ways in which this understanding has
12 helped develop new treatments for addiction. The psychological and neural mechanisms
13 underlying drug memory reconsolidation and extinction established in animal experiments
14 show particular promise in delivering new treatments for relapse prevention to the clinic.
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3 Experimental studies of addictive behaviour in animals would seem to have obvious
4 importance in increasing our understanding of disease mechanisms and received a boost
5 following the pivotal description of addiction as a brain disease by Leshner [1]. They further
6 provide an opportunity to develop new medications for addiction, for which there is a major
7 unmet need [2]. Yet there is a contemporary mood that 'animal models' of brain disorders,
8 while seemingly of great importance, have shown poor translation from animals to humans
9 leading industry to withdraw from, especially, treatment development for psychiatric
10 disorders [3]. In fact, the pharmaceutical industry has never had treatments for addiction high
11 on its list of priorities for development (with one or two notable exceptions) despite the
12 morbidity and mortality associated with the disorder and its enormous personal, family,
13 economic and societal impact [4].
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23 However translational studies of addiction stand on firm ground if in animals, behavioural
24 rather than subjective measures of drug use (e.g. craving, liking) are used to enable contact -
25 homology or analogy - to be made with clinical and human experimental studies. Animals will
26 self-administer drugs that are addictive in humans, often showing patterns of drug taking and
27 foraging that resemble patterns of behaviour seen in humans. More than 50 years of advances
28 in research on drug self-administration have enabled a detailed understanding of the
29 molecular and cellular basis of the reinforcing effects of stimulants, opioids, alcohol and other
30 drug classes as well as, increasingly, circuit level explanations of drug seeking and relapse [5-
31 8]. Yet it has been suggested that *"to anoint rodents engineered or trained to avidly self-*
32 *administer drugs as a model of addiction risks leading translational neuroscience astray. This is*
33 *because, at a minimum, such 'models' are too reductive, the critical brain structures too*
34 *evolutionarily distant and they would fail to capture relevant human risk genotypes"* [3]. With
35 some selective examples, it will be argued here that this is perhaps too pessimistic a view.
36 Experimental investigation of addictive behaviour in animals has delivered a mechanistic
37 understanding of addiction in humans - for example, why people take drugs, the nature of the
38 adaptations they trigger in the brain [9], and more recently explaining why some individuals
39 compulsively seek and take these drugs [10, 11] - leading to advances in theory that have
40 survived direct test in clinical populations. The vulnerability to develop the behavioural
41 characteristics of addiction has been demonstrated in behaviourally heterogeneous rat
42 populations [12-15] that have directly translated to addiction in humans, including sibling
43 studies [16-19], and have begun to define endophenotypes for the disorder, at least in the
44 case of stimulant addiction. There are pharmacological and psychological treatment leads that
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2 have been developed in animal experiments that are on the verge of translation to the clinic
3 [5]. However, it must be acknowledged that there remains a reluctance to invest in expensive
4 clinical trials with novel pharmacological treatments much for the reasons Hyman suggests.
5 These include the continued utilization of simplistic animal models [11] of addiction that are
6 correctly considered unlikely to deliver effective treatments or mechanistic explanations of a
7 disorder that affects only those users with a pre-existing vulnerability, and only after a
8 protracted history of self-administered drug exposure. In that sense, to see the self-
9 administration of drugs – i.e. drug taking - as a ‘model of addiction’ likely underestimates the
10 complexity of this neuropsychiatric disorder at etiological, behavioural and neural levels of
11 analysis.
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20 A selective and cursory overview of the neural correlates of addiction in humans serves to
21 emphasize this point. While much of the experimental focus of experimental studies (and
22 many earlier clinical studies) has been on the brain’s reward system, with the mesolimbic
23 dopamine system at its core (and which is undoubtedly important in mediating the
24 reinforcing effects of addictive drugs), contemporary clinical imaging reveals that there are
25 widespread anatomical and functional changes in the brains of those addicted to drugs. The
26 seminal finding of reduced D2 dopamine receptors, initially identified in the dorsal striatum,
27 of humans addicted to several classes of drugs, including stimulants, opiates and alcohol [20],
28 further implicated adaptations in the dopamine system that were also shown to be highly
29 correlated with reduced metabolic activity of the orbital prefrontal cortex (PFC) [21], thus
30 bringing dysfunction in limbic cortical-dorsal striatal systems into view. Stimulant abusers
31 have been reported to show grey matter loss in anterior cortical areas including the insula,
32 ventromedial PFC, inferior frontal gyrus, and pregenual anterior cingulate gyrus, as well as
33 the anterior thalamus [18] with reports of even more widespread cortical and striatal grey
34 matter loss in the brains of alcoholics [22-25].
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46 Functional and PET imaging studies have further revealed changes in dorsal striatal and
47 cortical function that are correlated with alterations in psychological processes including
48 inhibitory control, decision making and habitual behaviour that contribute to compulsivity, as
49 well as more familiar subjective measures, such as craving and its physiological correlates
50 [26]. These neural correlates of behaviour and subjective states have both driven changes in,
51 as well as reflecting, the evolution of the definition of symptoms and hence the diagnosis of
52 substance use disorders (SUD) now embodied in DSM5. Such widespread neural correlates in
53 the brains of people addicted to drugs clearly indicate that exclusively, or even primarily,
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2 considering activity in the nucleus accumbens dopamine system and the associated enhanced
3 motivation for addictive drugs as the key to understanding and treating addiction is too
4 narrow a view.
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8 The revised DSM5 symptom-based classification of substance use disorder describes varying
9 degrees of severity and no longer refers to drug dependence as in DSM-IV [27]. Although the
10 pharmacological criteria of drug tolerance and withdrawal are still included among the 11
11 symptoms, they are not required for the diagnosis of severe SUD. Along with craving, the
12 majority of symptoms reflect different aspects of compulsive behavior and failures of control
13 which are considered to belong to neurobehavioural continuums. The alternative dimensional
14 approach to defining psychiatric disorders encapsulated by the NIH Research Domain Criteria
15 (rDOC) [28] further emphasises the requirement for objectively measured changes in
16 neurobehavioral systems, for example those that might underlie compulsive drug use, rather
17 than symptom clusters.
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21 This has considerable implications for the ways in which translational studies of addictive
22 behaviour in animals are undertaken. Our experimental approach, as that by other groups,
23 has always sought to understand the symptoms of drug addiction and abuse in humans, as
24 captured by the evolving DSM, but in terms of the underlying neurobehavioral and
25 neurocognitive systems [26]. This is not a trivial undertaking since it needs to go beyond the
26 self-administration of drugs or measuring behavioural responses to non-contingent
27 (experimenter) or even the self-administration of, drugs even though these have been
28 immensely useful in defining the neural basis of drug reinforcement and associated learning.
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32 We have found it important to make a distinction between the *taking* as opposed to the
33 *seeking* of drugs. Drug taking, i.e. self-administration under low response requirements, is
34 directly controlled by the reinforcing properties of the drug and the performance of taking
35 responses, both in naturalistic and under experimental conditions, requires a specific set of
36 motor skills. Drug seeking, or foraging for drugs, over sometimes long delays results in
37 eventual access to the drug and the opportunity to make a taking response (i.e. utilising motor
38 skills whether a lever press or loading a syringe or pipe) and subsequent drug self-
39 administration [29, 30]. Drug seeking is the predominant behaviour of individuals addicted
40 to drugs since they spend large amounts of time on acquiring drugs. Drug seeking is
41 increasingly controlled by drug-associated stimuli and may even become divorced from the
42 rewarding properties of the drug which decreases over time through tolerance – see, e.g. [31].
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4 A large volume of prior research has made clear that the psychological processes and neural
5 mechanisms underlying seeking (appetitive) and taking (consummatory) behaviour are quite
6 distinct, but they interact [32]. Drug seeking and taking are two independent components of
7 complicated chains of instrumental behaviour the performance of which requires skills and
8 flexibility but which are determined by, and subordinate to, either of two competing
9 psychological processes, described by contemporary animal learning theory as depending on:
10 (i) action-outcome (A-O) or (ii) stimulus-response (S-R) associations [33]. The former
11 underpins goal-directed behaviour, within which a behavioural sequence is initiated under
12 explicit goal-directed cognitive schemata utilising a representation of the motivational value
13 of the outcome from the outset. The latter underpins habitual responding, within which a
14 behavioural sequence is enacted with no representation of the motivational value of the
15 outcome, but the performance of which relies, as for goal-directed behaviour, both on skills
16 or more flexible strategies. As discussed earlier, since drug seeking responses are by nature
17 more distal in a behavioural sequence from the drug goal, they are far more likely to be
18 controlled by S-R mechanisms than drug taking responses.
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31 This too has had a marked impact on our understanding of drug seeking behaviour and the
32 growing evidence that there is a transition from goal-directed to habitual control over drug
33 seeking over the course of a long drug use history [34], itself a requirement for addiction to
34 develop: one or few instances of drug self-administration do not result in addiction, it takes
35 time and quantity of drug exposure, as well as the associated history of pavlovian-
36 instrumental interactions for compulsive drug seeking to emerge. Environmental stimuli
37 associated with addictive drugs through pavlovian conditioning both elicit craving (in
38 humans) [35] and profoundly influence the instrumental behaviour of drug seeking [2, 36].
39 Thus, understanding pavlovian conditioning mechanisms and the neural systems that
40 underlie their impact on instrumental seeking behaviour, including mediating long delays to
41 reinforcement, is important. Not all individuals exposed to drugs become 'addicted', by which
42 is meant becoming compulsive in their pursuit and use of drugs and so individual
43 vulnerability and its neural basis in animals is a research area of great interest that is
44 meaningful in terms of understanding addiction vulnerability in humans [13, 37]. Finally,
45 potential treatments for addiction can emerge from understanding and reducing, for example,
46 the impact of drug cues that powerfully elicit relapse to drug seeking and taking, either by
47 pharmacological or psychological means [2].
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Drug cues, drug seeking, craving and relapse

An important mechanism by which drug CSs can influence instrumental drug seeking is conditioned reinforcement, through which pavlovian conditioned stimuli (CSs) acquire a representation of the reinforcing properties of a drug and are able themselves to reinforce seeking behaviour when presented response-contingently. There is a clear distinction between this process and other pavlovian influences on behaviour such as 'sign-tracking' (or Pavlovian approach behaviour) [38] and pavlovian-instrumental transfer (PIT, previously termed Pavlovian motivation)[39, 40]. Both the latter involve CS presentations that are not contingent on instrumental responses and either elicit an automatic approach response (sign-tracking) or potentiate ongoing instrumental responding (PIT). Conditioned reinforcement, PIT and sign-tracking depend upon dissociable components of limbic corticostriatal circuitry, the abundant associated data have been reviewed in detail elsewhere [26, 41-44].

In our own research, we have investigated the impact of conditioned reinforcers on drug seeking in second-order schedules of reinforcement for cocaine, heroin and alcohol [45-47]. Rats will work for long periods of time for an infusion of, or access to, these reinforcers at high levels of responding and these seeking responses decrease dramatically if response-contingent CS presentation is omitted (Figure 1) [reviewed in 48], thereby demonstrating the response-invigorating effects of conditioned reinforcement in the mediation of delays to drug reward. Non-contingent presentations of the same CS have much less effect and may even decrease seeking behaviour [49]. In widely used 'extinction-reinstatement' [50] or 'incubation of craving' [51] procedures, it is also the conditioned reinforcing properties of the CS that underlie 'relapse'. Rats learn instrumentally to respond for the CS in the absence of the primary reward (self-administered drug) after either a period of instrumental (not CS) extinction (extinction-reinstatement) or a period of abstinence (incubation of craving) when the behavioural impact of the conditioned reinforcer increases with time in abstinence.

It is perhaps worthwhile pointing out the difference between these different ways of measuring drug seeking and the impact of CSs. In second-order schedule procedures, rats from the outset must utilize CSs on a daily basis to mediate delays to reinforcement as they forage for drugs. Extinction-reinstatement procedures [50, 52] by contrast may look straightforward, but are psychologically more complex. There are three phases: (i) rats learn to take, but not seek drugs and each infusion is associated with a CS presentation; (ii) rats then undergo lever press (i.e. instrumental) extinction – they learn new association of lever

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2 press-no drug and lever press-no CS, i.e. two new pavlovian and instrumental inhibitory
3 associations; (iii) in the key test ('relapse' phase) rats now learn that lever presses result only
4 in conditioned reinforcement. So, there are three separate learning phases and in the final test
5 phase, rats learn to respond with conditioned reinforcement and these responses will never
6 be reinforced by the drug. The procedure undoubtedly taps into an aspect of inhibitory
7 control (inhibiting lever presses in the absence of drug) and this is reflected in the extensive
8 information we now have on the underlying circuitry, in which a prefrontal cortex-nucleus
9 accumbens pathway is key [52], as well as the adaptations in glutamate homeostasis seen
10 after cocaine self-administration and withdrawal that can be remediated with N-
11 acetylcysteine [53].

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20 The 'incubation of craving', first demonstrated by Grimm, Shaham, Wise and colleagues for
21 cocaine [51], revealed that after extended access to (i.e. long sessions of) cocaine self-
22 administration (drug taking) followed by increasing periods of enforced or voluntary (i.e.,
23 when an alternative reinforcer is offered as mutually exclusive choice) abstinence [54],
24 reinstatement of the taking response in a 'relapse' test is greatly increased [55], i.e.
25 responding with conditioned reinforcement has 'incubated' during the drug-free period.
26 Again, in the test session, rats are learning for the first time that the taking response, now
27 termed seeking behaviour, is reinforced only by the CS as drug is no longer delivered.
28 Intriguingly, in Figure 1 of Grimm et al. [51], the data are described as "Persistence of a
29 cocaine-seeking habit as a function of time since the last day of self-administration of cocaine",
30 which might be closer to what this phenomenon reflects than was perhaps intended at the
31 time (see below)

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41 The incubation phenomenon has been investigated neurally in great detail [see for example
42 56, 57]. Thus while the impact of conditioned reinforcement on responding in this procedure
43 was initially shown to depend on the basolateral amygdala (BLA, as expected from our prior
44 studies on conditioned reinforcement and cocaine seeking acquisition under a second-order
45 schedule), the incubation effect was shown instead to depend on ERK phosphorylation in the
46 central amygdala [56]. Incubation of cue reactivity in the incubation procedure has since
47 been shown to be associated with a number of time-dependent adaptations during the
48 withdrawal period in a number of brain loci, including changes in excitatory transmission in
49 NAcB medium spiny neurons associated with alterations in AMPA receptor subunit
50 composition [57] and the un-silencing of synapses in the BLA-NAcB shell pathway [58]. In
51 extending this approach to the incubation of methamphetamine craving, AMPA receptor
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1 changes were also observed in the NAc core [59], but the incubation phenomenon was
2 further associated with increased expression of several proteins, including BDNF and
3 glutamate receptors, selectively in dorsal striatal neurons activated by drug CSs [60], bringing
4 DLS mechanisms and the S-R processes it mediates into focus. More recently dorsomedial
5 striatal neuronal ensembles have also been shown to play a role in the incubation of
6 methamphetamine craving after choice-based abstinence [61]. The neural picture is thus
7 increasingly complex and it remains to be seen whether these various demonstrations of
8 incubation at a neural level can be brought together in a circuit based explanation, or whether
9 the incubation responses to different drug-associated stimuli established in different ways are
10 underpinned by separate mechanisms and circuits.

11 Utilizing second-order methodology to study drug seeking [48] has enabled us to make
12 progress in defining the underlying psychological processes and neural circuitry in both the
13 acquisition and long-term maintenance of cue-controlled drug seeking, as opposed to drug
14 self-administration. It has also provided a way to explore putative pharmacological and
15 psychological treatments that will decrease drug seeking and relapse by diminishing the
16 impact of conditioned reinforcement. These findings have recently been reviewed extensively
17 [2, 26, 30, 62] and will be considered briefly here with an emphasis on their possible
18 translational relevance.

19 In summary, circuitry involving the BLA and nucleus accumbens core (NAcC) is necessary
20 for the acquisition [63, 64] and initial performance [65] of cocaine seeking. However, when
21 the behaviour is well-established over several weeks, dopamine dependent mechanisms in
22 the anterior dorsolateral striatum (aDLS) exert dominant control over seeking (but not
23 taking) behaviour [66, 67], consistent with the hypothesis that initially goal-directed cocaine
24 seeking emerges as a stimulus-response (S-R) habit over time and extended training [68]. The
25 temporal nature of this transition has been further demonstrated by timed interventions in
26 the dorsomedial striatum and aDLS at different stages of acquisition and performance [69].
27 Moreover, the recruitment of the aDLS control over seeking depends upon the ventral
28 striatum and is likely mediated by the spiraling circuitry [70] that links the nucleus
29 accumbens with dorsal striatum dopaminergic mechanisms [71]. Indeed, *in vivo* voltammetry
30 during CS-elicited cocaine seeking confirmed the dependence of aDLS dopamine release on
31 antecedent ventral striatal processing [72]. It should be emphasized that under these
32 conditions, the aDLS is dominant in its control over drug seeking, as compared to the
33 importance of ventral and dorsomedial striatal mechanisms earlier in training and the lack of
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2 involvement of the aDLS at that time. This should not be taken to mean that the NAcB or DMS
3 are no longer engaged, but in having recruited the aDLS, their role is subordinate to it in
4 functional terms [72]. Extensive research on the striatal basis of goal-directed and habitual
5 responding for food further emphasizes the parallel engagement of ventral and dorsal striatal
6 circuitry, but relative dominance of one over the other and shifts between them when probed
7 directly by reinforcer devaluation and inactivation of each independently, allowing the other
8 to exert its control over instrumental behaviour [73-75].
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15 In more recent work we have shown that functional recruitment of dopamine-dependent
16 aDLS control over cocaine seeking depends upon the BLA, but the maintenance of the cocaine
17 seeking habit depends upon the central amygdala (CeN) and its dopamine-dependent
18 functional interaction with the aDLS [76]. However, there is no direct amygdala-aDLS
19 connectivity and so the circuitry must involve other nodes. Using *in vivo* electrophysiology, we
20 have established that the BLA influence on aDLS neuronal activity is mediated by antecedent
21 glutamatergic mechanisms in the NAcB and thence via a polysynaptic route involving the
22 substantia nigra and its dopaminergic innervation of the DLS [76]. The pathways linking the
23 CeN to the DLS have not been established directly to date, but there is a well-established
24 projection from the CeN to the substantia nigra that has previously been shown to have a
25 functional role in conditioned orienting [77], while central amygdala interacting with the
26 aDLS has also been shown to play a key role in habitual responding for food [78].
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36 It is not simply the idiosyncrasies of second-order schedules of reinforcement that have
37 revealed and emphasized the progressive importance of dorsal striatal processes and habits
38 in drug seeking. Using a seeking-taking chained schedule of cocaine reinforcement that we
39 established to investigate the involvement of A-O versus S-R associations in instrumental
40 cocaine seeking, Zapata and colleagues [79] both confirmed our earlier finding that cocaine
41 seeking is initially goal-directed using a devaluation procedure, and went on to show that
42 after extended training cocaine seeking eventually became dependent on the aDLS the
43 inactivation of which restored goal-directedness (i.e. sensitivity to reinforcer devaluation).
44 Alcohol seeking was also shown to involve a transition from goal-directed to habitual control
45 over time and that this involved a progression from the DMS to the DLS [80], with habitual
46 responding depending on DLS AMPA and dopamine D2 receptors [81]. These behavioural
47 data indicating a transition from ventral to dorsal striatal engagement in well-established
48 cocaine and alcohol seeking, especially but not only in behaviour supported by conditioned
49 reinforcers, are paralleled by a number of neural studies showing a similar progression from
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2 ventral to dorsal striatum in neuroadaptations to long-term cocaine self-administration [82,
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7 **Ventral to dorsal striatal processing in imaging studies in humans.**

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10 Do these briefly summarized data translate to imaging and other clinical studies of drug
11 addiction? More or less contemporaneously with our initial studies on amygdala involvement
12 in cocaine seeking, the earliest functional imaging studies of cocaine addiction revealed
13 metabolic activation of the amygdala, orbitofrontal cortex and other limbic structures in
14 response to cocaine CSs that elicited craving responses [84, 85]. Subsequently, stimulant drug
15 cues were shown to increase dopamine release in the ventral striatum of healthy volunteers
16 after just three prior doses of amphetamine paired with discrete cues, but in those with
17 cocaine use disorders, similar drug CS presentation increased dopamine release in the dorsal
18 striatum. Craving was induced by these cues in both situations [86, 87]. These data led Leyton
19 and co-workers in an important recent study [88] to investigate whether stimulant cues
20 induce dopamine release in the dorsal striatum only in individuals with drug use disorders
21 (addiction), or whether this can occur in cocaine users explicitly not meeting DSM criteria of
22 addiction. The results emphatically show that cocaine cues (personalised videos) that led to
23 the opportunity to take cocaine in recreational cocaine users increased extracellular
24 dopamine levels in the dorsal striatum and therefore prior to any diagnosable substance use
25 disorder [88]. From a translational perspective, this is precisely what our own data,
26 summarised above, and other animal experimental studies, predict: in no sense are rats
27 seeking cocaine under the control of drug CSs in a second-order schedule of reinforcement
28 'addicted', but the maintenance of this persistent seeking behaviour depends on dorsal
29 striatum, dopamine-dependent S-R habit mechanisms. We have further hypothesised that
30 these habits are important building blocks of later emerging compulsive drug seeking that is a
31 key characteristic of addiction [26]. Cox et al. (2017) similarly speculated that cue-induced
32 dopamine release in the dorsal striatum is associated with 'an accumulation of dorsal
33 striatum related habits' that in their turn can be modulated by motivational processes [for
34 review, see 26]
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53 Clinical imaging data have also supported our hypothesis of a shift from ventral to dorsal
54 striatal processing during the establishment of addiction [30]. Thus, in former heroin addicts,
55 functional coupling between the ventral and the dorsal striatum was revealed to be increased
56 and associated with decreased functional coupling between the striatum and the prefrontal
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2 cortex [89], suggesting diminished top-down control over striatal function. A similar shift in
3 activation from the ventral to the dorsal striatum was demonstrated in response to alcohol
4 cues in alcohol-dependent subjects when compared with recreational alcohol drinkers [90]. A
5 link to the dominance of habitual behaviour in addiction was further shown in alcohol-
6 dependent individuals who displayed an overreliance on S-R learning that was associated
7 with increased activation of the posterior putamen, a region mediating habitual behaviour,
8 and decreased activation of the ventromedial PFC and anterior putamen, a region involved in
9 goal-directed learning [91]. Intriguingly, the ventral-to-dorsal striatal transition has also been
10 demonstrated in a behavioural addiction – internet gaming disorder. Those with the disorder
11 showed higher CS-induced activations than healthy controls in both ventral and dorsal
12 striatum. But activity in the left ventral striatum was in fact negatively correlated with CS-
13 elicited craving which was instead positively correlated with activations in the right dorsal
14 striatum (putamen) and left caudate nucleus [92]. These data indicate that the intrastriatal
15 transitions we have demonstrated in rats seeking cocaine and heroin (Murray et al.,
16 unpublished), and seen in humans addicted to drugs, may not be restricted to drug-induced
17 plasticity in this circuitry. In human subjects engaged in learning a virtual maze task that
18 revealed individual differences in spatial versus stimulus-response navigational strategies,
19 response learners, who had greater use of abused substances than spatial learners (double
20 the lifetime alcohol consumption, a greater number of cigarettes smoked and a greater
21 lifetime use of cannabis), also showed increased dorsal striatal grey matter volume and
22 activity measured using fMRI, while spatial learners had increased hippocampal grey matter
23 and activity [93]. Finally, cocaine addicted individuals and also their non-cocaine abusing
24 siblings had a significantly enlarged left putamen [18, 94], suggesting that greater dorsal
25 striatal (putamen) volume may be associated with a predisposition to acquire drug seeking
26 and taking habits (see below). Furthermore, cocaine addicted subjects showed reduced white
27 matter connectivity of the right inferior frontal gyrus that correlated with impulsivity on the
28 stop signal reaction-time task [19], a relationship also seen in non drug-abusing siblings [95]
29 and further suggestive of a cocaine addiction endophenotypes.

50 **Prospects for treatment of attenuating the motivational effects of drug cues**

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53 Whatever the mechanisms underlying the pavlovian-instrumental interactions that
54 contribute to the development of maladaptive habits, it has been apparent for some time that
55 decreasing the impact of drug CSs on drug seeking in animals may have considerable utility if
56 translated to the clinic to prevent relapse to drug use and thereby prolong abstinence. There
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2 are several possible ways of achieving this. The increased understanding of the neural and
3 neurochemical basis of CS effects on behaviour indicate that pharmacological treatments
4 might be used to reduce or prevent the effects of the CS on drug seeking and, in humans,
5 decrease craving. Psychological treatments such as cue exposure therapy – essentially CS
6 extinction through non-reinforced presentations – which have been in use for many years, can
7 decrease subjective and physiological measures of craving in the clinic, but rapidly lose their
8 effectiveness in the real world [96, 97]. This may partly be explained by the marked context
9 dependence of extinction learning (CS extinction in the therapeutic setting does not transfer
10 to the drug use setting) but may also reflect that the conditioned reinforcing effects of CSs,
11 which are not restricted to exteroceptive cues, are quite resistant to extinction. However, CS
12 extinction may be more effective when preceded by a brief CS exposure (memory
13 'reactivation', i.e. brief CS memory retrieval) in so-called super-extinction procedures [98, 99].
14 Finally, as discussed extensively in this issue, memory reconsolidation-based methods
15 established in animal experimental studies have recently emerged as a potential treatment
16 approach addiction [100-102] and other psychiatric disorders including phobias [103], and
17 post-traumatic stress disorder [104].
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30 **Pharmacological approaches to reducing cue-elicited drug seeking and relapse**

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32 Our initial approach was to explore treatments that reduced drug seeking under a second-
33 order schedule, since this behaviour depends for its vigour on response-contingent CS
34 presentations and provides an opportunity to study the impact of any treatment both prior to
35 and after the self-administration of drug [48]. Our initial breakthrough was to show that an
36 antagonist or an inverse agonist at the D3 dopamine receptor both had the ability to markedly
37 decrease cocaine seeking [105, 106]. The antagonist was further shown to be effective in
38 reducing conditioned responses to CSs associated with several drugs, including nicotine and
39 heroin, in a number of procedures [107]. The D3 receptor antagonist had very limited effects
40 on cocaine reinforcement (i.e. self-administration under continuous reinforcement) and did
41 not impair locomotor activity, being devoid of what would be viewed as the unacceptable
42 side-effects associated with D1 or D2 dopamine receptor antagonists. However, compounds
43 from this class were subsequently shown to have unfavourable cardiovascular effects [108]
44 and they have not been developed further as treatments for addiction, revealing some of the
45 risks associated with drug development even when the preclinical lead is strong.
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57 In demonstrating disturbances in glutamate homeostasis following cocaine and heroin self-
58 administration [109], Kalivas and colleagues have highlighted this as a potential therapeutic
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1 target and gone on to demonstrate that the cysteine pro-drug N-acetylcysteine, a substrate for
2 the cysteine-glutamate antiporter, prevents cued relapse in an extinction-reinstatement
3 procedure [110]. Subsequently, we showed that it is also effective in reducing both cocaine
4 and heroin seeking when well-established, as well as restoring control after volitional
5 abstinence in the face of punishment in rats with a history of escalated cocaine self-
6 administration, an effect that was associated with adaptations in a plasticity gene, *zif268*, in
7 the dorsolateral striatum [111]. While open-label clinical trials showed early promise in
8 cocaine addiction (see [112]), as did placebo-controlled clinical trials of cocaine and nicotine
9 addiction [113], subsequent clinical trials have disappointingly not confirmed this early
10 promise [114, 115]. However, NAC may show more promise as a treatment adjunct to reduce
11 craving or cue reactivity [116-118] as discussed in detail by Kalivas and Kalivas [119],
12 perhaps emphasising that specifying the treatment target (e.g. craving versus use) in clinical
13 trials is especially important. It cannot be overstated that the potential of this treatment
14 emerged from experimental investigations in rats across several behavioural procedures,
15 suggesting an animal experimental drug development pipeline can deliver therapeutic leads
16 that show clinical promise.

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30 More recently, we have shown that a highly selective μ -opioid receptor antagonist,
31 GSK1521498, is effective in reducing cocaine, heroin and alcohol seeking as assessed in rats
32 responding for these drugs under second-order schedules [46, 47] (Figure 2). The effects are
33 only seen in the presence of response-contingent CS presentations, and not when seeking
34 responses are made in the absence of the CS, suggesting an interaction with the conditioned
35 reinforcement process. These data are salient because they strongly implicate μ -opioid
36 transmission in incentive motivational processes. Additional advantages for the treatment of
37 opioid addiction is that in addition to reducing CS-induced drug seeking and relapse (as
38 naltrexone has been shown to do in clinical trials) it should also diminish the impact of a lapse
39 as it antagonizes the reinforcing effect of self-administered heroin (it is without effect on the
40 reinforcing effects of cocaine) [47], although this may carry the risk of increasing drug intake
41 and attendant mortality under treatment. The same compound, in addition to decreasing CS-
42 controlled alcohol seeking also reduced compulsive alcohol seeking (responding for alcohol
43 under the threat of intermittent seeking punishment) and alcohol drinking [12] (Figure 2 and
44 Figure 3). Antagonists at the μ -opioid receptor such as nalmephe are already in clinical use
45 to decrease volumes of alcohol drunk in drinking bouts in alcohol-dependent subjects [120].
46 Again, then, here is a potential treatment that may both diminish the propensity to relapse
47 and also the impact of a lapse to drinking. The compound is well-tolerated in humans after
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1 chronic treatment and decreased the subjective response to alcohol, but it has yet to enter
2 into a clinical trial [121].
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6 It should be acknowledged at the outset that most experimental demonstrations of the effects
7 of drugs from several drug classes to reduce drug seeking and relapse involve acute
8 treatments, whereas in the clinic such treatments will likely have to be given chronically to
9 promote abstinence and decrease relapse. Few animal experiments have investigated the
10 effects of chronic dosing on preventing drug seeking and relapse and this is an obvious
11 challenge to translation, but one that has initially been met in trials with N-acetylcysteine.
12 However, the present climate is not encouraging for the development by pharmaceutical
13 companies of anti-relapse medications and it can only be hoped that this might change given
14 the major unmet need.
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22 **Targeting drug memories in the prevention of drug seeking and relapse**

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25 The putative problems of chronic dosing and the compliance necessary to continue an
26 abstinence-promoting treatment may however be avoided if the associative memories
27 encoded by drug CSs could be erased or suppressed with single, or very few treatments. This
28 is the prospect provided by psychological therapies targeting memory reconsolidation and
29 extinction. These topics have been reviewed extensively [see current volume, also 2, 101] and
30 the focus here will be on the degree to which these treatments that have been developed in
31 theory and in practice in animal experiments may successfully translate to the clinic. Memory
32 reconsolidation is the process by which brief retrieval, or 'reactivation', of a memory by brief
33 presentations of a CS (or context) that are insufficient to engage extinction - results in the
34 memory becoming destabilized in the brain The process by which it becomes re-stabilized to
35 persist has been termed 'reconsolidation' and disrupting it leads to amnesia - i.e. the loss of
36 behavioural response to the CS when tested subsequently [122-124]. The great majority of
37 experimental investigations of reconsolidation have been on conditioned fear and these have
38 yielded considerable understanding of the molecular and neurochemical mechanisms,
39 including the fundamental requirement of new protein synthesis, the expression of a key
40 protein (ZIF268, the protein product of the immediate-early gene *zif268*), the necessary
41 activation of NMDA receptors and the ability of β -adrenoceptor antagonists to prevent
42 reconsolidation in many instances [100, 124-126].
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57 Pavlovian fear presents a very tractable method for studying reconsolidation as a very small
58 number of CS-US (footshock) pairings is required to establish a persistent memory and the
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1 retrieval conditions to achieve destabilisation are relatively straightforward – often a single
2 CS presentation [127]. Thus, NMDA or β -adrenoceptor blockade (and other treatments) in
3 association with memory reactivation results in amnesia and the loss of conditioned fear
4 when the CS is again encountered. There is no amnestic effect of the same treatment given at
5 the same time but in the absence of reactivation, hence it is a retrieval-dependent deficit. The
6 effect seems to be persistent, leading to suggestions that the memory has been erased [124]
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12 It is relatively unproblematic to demonstrate reconsolidation of a drug memory in a
13 comparable pavlovian procedure such as conditioned place preference in which there are few
14 CS-drug pairings, followed by a simple CS-context exposure to reactivate the memory coupled
15 with an amnestic treatment, and an equally simply preference test to measure the amnestic
16 effect [128-130]. It is more challenging to demonstrate this phenomenon in a drug seeking
17 setting that involves several days (usually at least ten) of instrumental drug self-
18 administration and as many as 300-500 discrete pairings of CS and drug US. What
19 reactivation parameters would destabilise such a memory? The success of preventing
20 pavlovian drug memory reconsolidation can only be measured by the loss of effect of the CS
21 on drug seeking, itself underpinned by an instrumental memory that might persist even when
22 the pavlovian memory has been diminished or erased. Nevertheless, we (Jonathan Lee, Amy
23 Milton and our colleagues) showed that brief memory reactivation by presenting the drug CS
24 in association with knockdown of *zif268*, or NMDA receptor antagonist treatment or, in some
25 circumstances, β -adrenoceptor blockade could prevent drug memory reconsolidation and
26 lead to significant reductions in drug seeking in several procedures: (i) the impact of the CS
27 acting as a conditioned reinforcer in rats responding under a second-order schedule [125];
28 (ii) in an acquisition of a new response procedure – the most precise demonstration of the
29 loss of conditioned reinforcing properties of the CS following reconsolidation blockade [125,
30 131, 132] (iii) in an abstinence-reinstatement procedure, where the effect tended to be
31 smaller, but significant and no different from the effect of CS omission itself [133].
32 Reconsolidation blockade has also been shown for alcohol-CS [134] and heroin withdrawal-
33 CS memories [135]. This is a brief summary of work from the Cambridge lab over the past
34 decade or more; there are many other demonstrations in several labs [102, 126, 136], and
35 also, of course, some failures that have been discussed informatively elsewhere [124].
36 Memory reconsolidation is a complex process, the precise retrieval conditions required
37 successfully to destabilise the memory remain unclear and there is as yet no definitive
38 biomarker for destabilisation. This would appear to be a very unpromising basis for
39 translation to clinical populations.
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However, that reconsolidation-based treatments can successfully be translated to the clinic has been shown emphatically by the dramatic success in treating specific phobias, as summarised by Merel Kindt in this volume [103, 137]. The outcome of attempts to apply similar treatments to the addiction clinic have been more mixed, but with reasons now for optimism. In a very well designed study with smokers treated with memantine, an NMDA receptor antagonist, at CS-induced memory reactivation, there was no effect on smoking levels, cue salience or reactivity to smoking-associated stimuli assessed in the post-treatment phase and even some indication of a slightly worse outcome in terms of relapse latency [138]. The authors discussed in detail the problems of knowing whether the reactivation protocol resulted in memory destabilisation – pointing out that a smoker of 2 years will have undergone about 146,000 CS-nicotine pairings – and hence the difficulty in understanding whether memantine was indeed without therapeutic utility or just not administered in conjunction with a destabilised memory. However, a double-blind placebo-controlled trial of propranolol given at cocaine CS memory reactivation did provide evidence of albeit transient reductions in craving and cardiovascular reactivity on subsequent presentation of the same cues [139]. These data suggest that β -adrenoceptor blockade might be used in conjunction with drug memory reactivation, but that the treatment parameters need to be manipulated to optimise destabilisation. This potential has been confirmed in a combined animal and human study of nicotine (smoking) memory reconsolidation blockade by propranolol [140]. Rats either underwent nicotine place preference conditioning or were trained to respond instrumentally for nicotine. Treatment with propranolol in association with memory reactivation induced by non-contingent injection of the US – i.e. nicotine – and not the CS, resulted in subsequent impaired conditioned place preference at test and diminished CS-reinforced and nicotine-induced reinstatement in a relapse test after abstinence. This reconsolidation-blockade effect was then demonstrated in a population of smokers who also received propranolol treatment in association with nicotine-induced (i.e. US-induced) memory reactivation; there was reduced preference for nicotine and nicotine cues, and nicotine craving induced by nicotine in the smokers [140]. These data indicate the potential of reconsolidation-based therapies in the treatment of addiction and also that memory destabilisation might more effectively be achieved by US- (drug), rather than CS-based reactivations, perhaps because this results in the stronger prediction error that is required for memory destabilisation to occur [124, 141, 142].

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The reconsolidation approach involves a combined psychological and pharmacological treatment protocol but with the advantage that very few drug treatment sessions are required,

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2 thereby avoiding problems of treatment compliance and adaptations to chronic treatment.
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4 The reconsolidation phenomenon and the demonstration that fully consolidated memories
5 can become labile under certain retrieval conditions is also beginning to have an impact on
6 cue extinction therapies. This follows from the demonstration that brief fear memory
7 reactivation an hour or so before extinction (repeated non-reinforced CS presentations) leads
8 to enhanced extinction and reduced spontaneous recovery, reinstatement and renewal of the
9 fear memory following CS, context or US exposure in both rats [98] and humans [143]. A delay
10 of 6 hours between reactivation and extinction prevents the effect, suggesting initially that
11 destabilisation of the memory by reactivation to induce reconsolidation mechanisms results
12 in the original memory being 'overwritten' by the new CS-noUS extinction memory [144].
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14 There remains considerable debate as to whether the phenomenon does indeed depend upon
15 engaging reconsolidation mechanisms prior to extinction, or whether extinction itself is
16 rendered more effective by the prior retrieval event [145]. This so-called super-extinction
17 effect, though not always replicable [124], has now been successfully deployed in the
18 treatment of addiction. Thus, rats self-administering cocaine or heroin were subjected to a
19 protocol of brief CS exposure followed by extinction repeated over several days were shown
20 to have much lower levels of drug seeking at subsequent test [99]. This approach was then
21 translated to heroin-dependent inpatient population who were briefly shown heroin
22 paraphernalia and an explicit drug use video (reactivation), followed by long exposure to the
23 video (extinction) soon afterwards or after a delay of 6 hours. In the retrieval-short delay
24 extinction group, but not the delayed group, there was a significant reduction in craving and
25 physiological responses to heroin cues as well as relapse measured up to 6 months post-
26 treatment [99] – a truly remarkable demonstration of translation from animal experimental
27 studies of addiction treatment directly to the clinic. More recently, this memory updating
28 procedure has been compared with extinction alone in a randomised clinical trial of smokers,
29 showing that retrieval-extinction resulted in “substantially attenuated craving to both familiar
30 and novel smoking cues and reduced the number of cigarettes smoked per day by participants
31 1 month after treatment relative to extinction training alone”, the authors concluding that this
32 approach indeed has the potential to enhance relapse prevention [146].
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53 There is still much research needed to understand the underlying mechanisms of super-
54 extinction, to define the retrieval conditions that optimise memory destabilisation in
55 reconsolidation-based treatment procedures, and also increasing the range or
56 pharmacological treatments that can be used safely and effectively to block reconsolidation.
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2 However, the clinical rewards for persisting with this approach would appear to be great.
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4 **Compulsive drug seeking and its treatment: a translational challenge**

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7 A major challenge for understanding addictive behaviour and its treatment concerns the
8 compulsive nature of drug use: can this be measured in animal experimental procedures in a
9 way that is relevant to the human disorder, and would this enable the development of
10 treatments that would decrease or even prevent compulsive drug seeking and taking in
11 addicted individuals? There is considerable interest in procedures that measure compulsion
12 in animals – primarily rats – seeking and taking drugs. Compulsive behaviour can be defined
13 as the maladaptive persistence of responding despite adverse consequences [147] and this
14 can be recognised in several of the criteria of substance use disorder in DSM5. The origins of
15 compulsivity in addiction are likely complex and have been suggested to include withdrawal
16 via a negative reinforcement mechanism and allostasis [148] and stress [149], sensitisation to
17 the effects of addictive drugs (although this may be more important in the early stages of drug
18 use) [150] and, as a result of imaging and psychological studies of clinical populations, the
19 progressive loss of top-down inhibitory control over drug use as a result of dysfunction of the
20 prefrontal cortex [see above and 26].
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32 Compulsive drug use in animals has generally been measured according to its persistence in
33 the face of an aversive outcome. Wolffgramm and Heyne's demonstration of persistent alcohol
34 drinking in rats made the important observation that this only occurred after a very long
35 period of drinking alcohol and that the chronically elevated intake was not affected by quinine
36 adulteration at this stage, whereas intake was reduced at an earlier (non-addicted, in their
37 terms) stage [151]. With intravenous drugs, taste adulteration is not an option to test
38 persistent drug use and so punishment, usually mild footshock [14, 152], but also aversive CSs
39 [153], have been used to probe the persistence of responding despite negative outcomes. In
40 our own work, we have again exploited the power of separating seeking and taking
41 instrumental responses so as to avoid the interpretational complications of associating
42 footshock with the self-administered drug. This might devalue the drug if delivered after a
43 taking response and a drug infusion and the shock may also come to predict the resultant
44 drug-induced increase in ventral striatal dopamine through counter-conditioning, thereby
45 also decreasing its aversiveness [154].
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57 Thus, we developed a modified seeking-taking chained schedule of cocaine reinforcement in
58 which a seeking response is never reinforced, but instead allows a rat to gain access to a
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1 taking response which is always reinforced by drug – cocaine in our initial studies [155].
2 Under this schedule, seeking responses are directly related to the dose of cocaine (not
3 inversely related as in the case of the taking response) [155] and cocaine seeking is initially
4 goal-directed [156] but emerges as a S-R habit under dorsal striatal control after an extended
5 self-administration history [79]. To measure compulsive cocaine seeking, we introduced
6 intermittent and unpredictable punishment of the seeking response, such that on some trials
7 cocaine seeking resulted in the opportunity to make a taking response and receive i.v. cocaine,
8 but on a random 50% of the trials the outcome of seeking responses, but never taking
9 responses, was a single mild footshock and no presentation of the taking lever [14]. Under
10 this procedure rats must therefore run the risk of punishment in order to gain the
11 opportunity to take cocaine; it thereby taps into some aspects of drug seeking in people who
12 compulsively seek drugs. Key findings from these studies include: (i) all rats suppress their
13 cocaine seeking after a brief cocaine taking history, i.e. they abstain from drug seeking and
14 use; (ii) after a long drug history – that does not require escalation of cocaine intake – only a
15 sub-set of rats, about 20%, persist in seeking cocaine despite punishment, i.e. are compulsive
16 [14]. This individual vulnerability was also seen in a related study using an electric grid as a
17 barrier to the taking response [152]; (iii) the development of compulsive drug seeking is
18 related to the level of drug intake [14, 157]; (iv) the ability to withhold seeking responses
19 under punishment is increased by the availability of an alternative, concurrently available
20 ingestive reinforcer [158]; (v) pre-existing trait impulsivity predicts CS-induced relapse after
21 abstinence [159]. Trait impulsivity was further shown to be an important vulnerability factor
22 in the development of compulsive cocaine self-administration in the 3-criteria model of
23 cocaine addiction, which does not utilise separate seeking and taking responses [13]. We have
24 recently demonstrated compulsive alcohol seeking in rats that show a preference for alcohol
25 when again a subgroup of compulsive individuals emerged after an extended alcohol taking
26 and drinking history and, further, that this compulsive phenotype was stable over a 10 month
27 period [12] (Figure 3).

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There is only a limited amount of data on the neural mechanisms underlying compulsive cocaine seeking in rats. Reduced forebrain serotonin (and striatal dopamine) levels were seen in compulsive versus non-compulsive rats, despite a very similar cocaine history [160]. Pharmacologically reducing central serotonin or treatment with a 5-HT_{2C} receptor antagonist resulted in the emergence of punishment-resistance in rats after a brief cocaine history at a time when none displayed compulsivity. Moreover, a 5-HT_{2C} receptor agonist reduced compulsive cocaine seeking in compulsive rats, as did treatment with the serotonin-selective

1 reuptake inhibitor, citalopram [160], suggesting that SSRIs may be used clinically to reduce
2 compulsive cocaine use. While clinical trials with SSRIs have not been generally successful in
3 the treatment of cocaine addiction [161-163], at higher doses fluoxetine was shown to
4 decrease the likelihood of relapse in patients that were abstinent at the start of treatment,
5 while those with detectable blood levels of fluoxetine showed lower craving [164]. As we have
6 discussed previously [160], higher doses of SSRIs such as those used in the treatment of
7 obsessive-compulsive disorder, might have clinical utility in reducing compulsive drug use
8 [165, 166]. Compulsive alcohol seeking, as well as alcohol intake, was significantly reduced by
9 the μ -opioid receptor antagonist GSK152498 (Figure 3) again suggesting clinical utility.

17 The corticostriatal systems underlying compulsive drug seeking have been relatively little
18 studied, but significant advances have been made. A discrete zone of the dorsal striatum is
19 required specifically for mediating cocaine seeking under punishment in this task, but not
20 unpunished seeking which is subserved by an equally discrete zone in the mid-lateral anterior
21 dorsal striatum [167]. Pre-training lesions of the anterior cingulate, prelimbic, infralimbic,
22 orbitofrontal or anterior insular cortices were without effect on the development of
23 compulsive cocaine seeking while lesions of the BLA, although resulting in persistent seeking
24 under punishment also significantly reduced conditioned fear, which is not seen in rats that
25 have become compulsive after a long cocaine self-administration history [168]. Together,
26 these data suggest that any impairment in top-down inhibitory control mechanisms that
27 might be associated with compulsivity are emergent, arising as a consequence of chronic drug
28 exposure, rather than pre-existing [168]. Functional imaging data also suggest this to be the
29 case [18]. This notion is further supported by the demonstration that long-term cocaine
30 seeking in the seeking-taking with intermittent punishment task introduced by Pelloux et al
31 (2007) is associated with decreased *ex vivo* intrinsic excitability of deep-layer pyramidal
32 neurons in the prelimbic cortex and that this was most evident in the sub-group of rats that
33 were compulsive (a proportion very similar to that seen by Pelloux et al.) [15]. In an
34 ambitious study, it was further shown that optogenetic stimulation of this area of prelimbic
35 cortex reduced compulsive cocaine seeking, while optogenetic inhibition of this area in non-
36 compulsive rats resulted in increased responding under punishment [15]. These data show
37 rather convincingly that chronic cocaine self-administration is associated with reduced
38 prelimbic neuronal excitability and that this is causally involved in compulsive cocaine
39 seeking.

40 Although clinical practice is some way from adopting optogenetic manipulation of the brain,
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2 this finding in rats that optogenetic stimulation of a hypo-excitabile prelimbic cortex reduced
3 cocaine seeking in compulsive rats has been related to the hypofrontality seen in individuals
4 addicted to cocaine [21]. Thus, Bonci and his collaborators in Italy [169] have translated into
5 clinical treatment an attempt to increase prefrontal cortical activity by transcranial magnetic
6 stimulation. Cocaine-addicted patients recruited to the study were assigned as a treatment
7 group or as controls in an open-label study. They received repetitive transcranial magnetic
8 stimulation (rTMS) of the right dorsolateral prefrontal cortex and this treatment was
9 repeated on subsequent occasions as required. Of course, rTMS of this general area of frontal
10 cortex in no sense targeted the functional equivalent, if any, of the prelimbic cortical area
11 targeted in the rat study, but was intended to modulate frontal circuitry in general, but the
12 two bodies of work might ultimately be tapping into analogous functional networks. The
13 results revealed significantly higher numbers of cocaine-free urines and lower cocaine
14 craving in the rTMS subjects, some of whom had repeated rTMS sessions in order to maintain
15 abstinence or reduce cocaine use. As the authors argue, the study supports the safety and
16 potential efficacy of rTMS in treating individuals addicted to cocaine. If these preliminary data
17 are taken in the context of a meta-analysis of a several studies involving rTMS of the DLPFC in
18 substance use disorders that provided clear evidence of decreased craving [170], there is a
19 strong case for double-blind, placebo controlled trials of the kind now underway
20 independently at NIDA, in Rome and Medico City. Time will tell whether the data emerging
21 from them will provide a definitive answer to the promising preliminary data from Terraneo
22 et al. 2016 [169].
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37 38 **Conclusions** 39

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41 The data summarised here on measuring the effects of drug-associated stimuli on drug
42 seeking and relapse, including manipulations of drug memories through reconsolidation
43 blockade or extinction, as well as compulsive drug seeking provide some of the evidence that
44 experimental investigation of addictive behaviour in rats (but in mice and primates as well)
45 can provide translationally relevant and important data. They give insights into the
46 underlying neural circuitry and mechanisms of drug seeking characterising addictive
47 behaviour. They have also indicated new treatment approaches that are already showing
48 signs of promise in the clinic. This review has focused on the approaches used in our
49 laboratory since the behavioural methodologies are somewhat distinctive, but we have also
50 pointed to the rich source of data using approaches developed in other laboratories. We hope
51 that the different approaches across the world of addiction research are not viewed as being
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2 in competition, but as part of a common endeavour to understand addiction as a disorder and
3 provide hope to those who are addicted to drugs by helping to develop much need treatments.
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12 David Epstein and Peter Kalivas for their constructive input.
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Figure Legends

Figure 1: The effects of drug CSs acting as conditioned reinforcers on cocaine, heroin and alcohol seeking

The three panels show drug seeking instrumental responses during a fixed interval of 15 minutes (open columns on the left of each panel) and the impact of presenting drug-associated CSs response-contingently, i.e. as conditioned reinforcers (shaded bars) over several sessions of daily testing. Introduction of the CS (in the second-order schedule of reinforcement) results in a marked increase in the vigour of seeking responses for cocaine (left panel, heroin (middle panel) and alcohol (right panel). These effects are prior to the first drug infusion and therefore measure the seeking of the drug and not the effects of drug on instrumental behaviour or conditioned reinforcement. Omitting presentations of the CS results in a marked decrease in responding (open columns on the right of each panel. Data are mean + SEM of responses/Fixed Interval 15min in the presence (coloured bars) or absence (white bars) of drug CS presentation.

Figure 2: The μ -opioid receptor antagonist, GSK1521498, decreased cocaine, heroin and alcohol seeking under second-order schedules of reinforcement and on voluntary alcohol consumption

The highly selective μ -opioid receptor antagonist, GSK1521498, was effective in reducing cocaine (in blue, on the left), heroin (in green, in the middle) or alcohol (in light grey, on the right) seeking in rats responding for these drugs under second-order schedules. GSK1521498 also reduced alcohol intake (in dark grey, on the right) during the 20-minute drinking period earned by prior alcohol seeking responses reinforced by the alcohol-associated CS during the prior 15 minute fixed interval. Data are mean + SEM seeking responses/Fixed Interval 15min; alcohol intake is expressed as g/kg body weight. GSK1521498 was given at three different doses (0.1, 1, 3 mg/kg) and injected intraperitoneally 20 minutes before session.

Figure 3: Persistent compulsive alcohol seeking phenotype in rats with a preference for alcohol (P rats) and its reduction by μ -opioid antagonism

A) Rats were trained on a seeking-taking chained task to respond for alcohol, and when a stable baseline was established, seeking responses were punished probabilistically by mild electric foot-shocks of increasing intensity, from 0.25, to 0.30, 0.35, 0.40 mA, before stabilizing

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2 at 0.45 mA for 6 consecutive daily sessions. The arrow indicates the first session with a 0.45
3 mA foot-shock. Based on the persistence of alcohol seeking during the last three punishment
4 sessions, measured as the number of completed seeking-taking cycles, a cluster analysis
5 enabled the segregation of subgroups of rats: compulsive (C, in black), in which behaviour
6 persisted despite unpredictable adverse outcomes (i.e. foot-shock punishment), and non-
7 compulsive (NC, in grey), which ceased seeking under punishment and 'abstained'.
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10 B) Compulsive (in black, on the left) and non-compulsive (in grey, on the right) rats were
11 tested under extinction (no reward was available) on the seeking lever only. Alcohol seeking
12 responses were greatly decreased, especially in compulsive rats, by systemic administration
13 of the selective μ -opioid receptor antagonist GSK1521498. Data are mean seeking lever
14 responses + SEM); GSK1521498 was administered at the dose of 1 mg/kg, intraperitoneally
15 20 minutes before session. White bars, black and grey bordered bars, represent the seeking
16 responses in vehicle injected, compulsive and non-compulsive rats respectively. Black and
17 grey bars represent the seeking responses in GSK1521498 treated compulsive and non-
18 compulsive rats, respectively.
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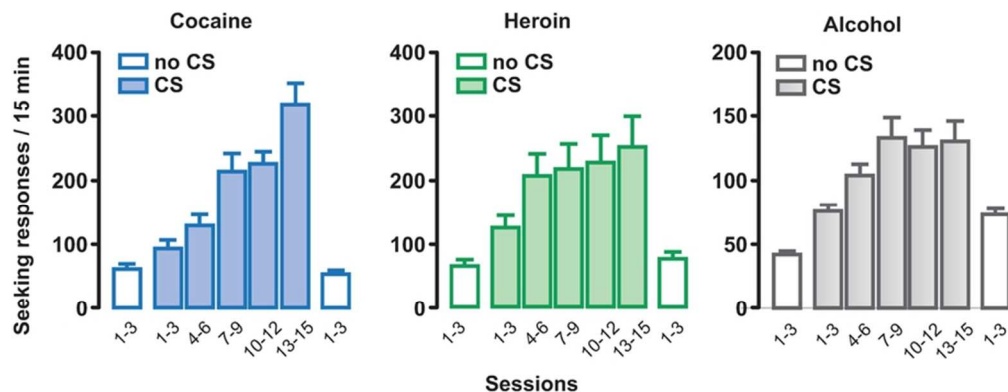


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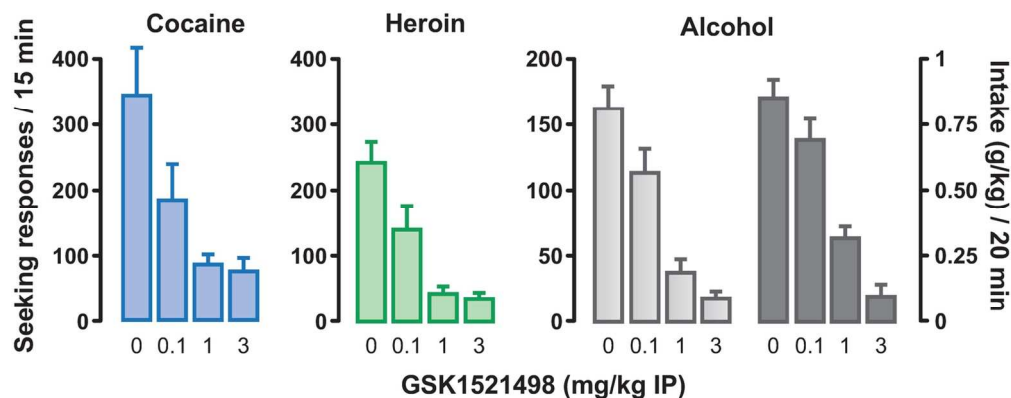


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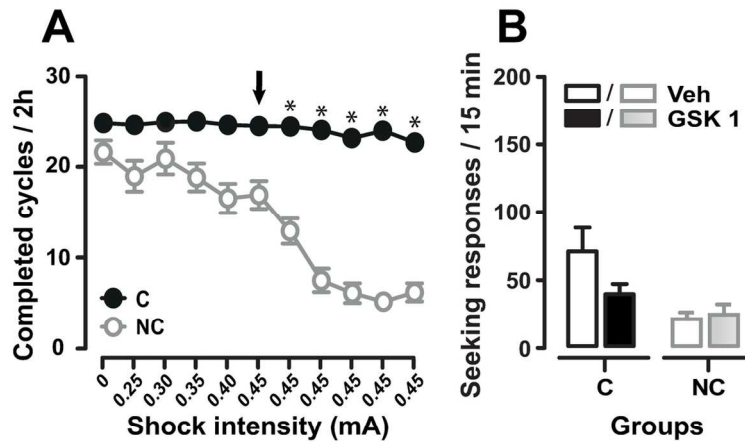


Figure 3: Persistent compulsive alcohol seeking phenotype in rats with a preference for alcohol (P rats) and its reduction by μ -opioid antagonism

A) Rats were trained on a seeking-taking chained task to respond for alcohol, and when a stable baseline was established, seeking responses were punished probabilistically by mild electric foot-shocks of increasing intensity, from 0.25, to 0.30, 0.35, 0.40 mA, before stabilizing at 0.45 mA for 6 consecutive daily sessions. The arrow indicates the first session with a 0.45 mA foot-shock. Based on the persistence of alcohol seeking during the last three punishment sessions, measured as the number of completed seeking-taking cycles, a cluster analysis enabled the segregation of subgroups of rats: compulsive (C, in black), in which behaviour persisted despite unpredictable adverse outcomes (i.e. foot-shock punishment), and non-compulsive (NC, in grey), which ceased seeking under punishment and 'abstained'.

B) Compulsive (in black, on the left) and non-compulsive (in grey, on the right) rats were tested under extinction (no reward was available) on the seeking lever only. Alcohol seeking responses were greatly decreased, especially in compulsive rats, by systemic administration of the selective μ -opioid receptor antagonist GSK1521498. Data are mean seeking lever responses + SEM; GSK1521498 was administered at the dose of 1 mg/kg, intraperitoneally 20 minutes before session. White bars, black and grey bordered bars, represent the seeking responses in vehicle injected, compulsive and non-compulsive rats respectively. Black and grey bars represent the seeking responses in GSK1521498 treated compulsive and non-compulsive rats, respectively.

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