



ADDICTION THEORY NETWORK

ATN Webinar: The Puzzle of Addiction
Featuring: Hanna Pickard

When? 14/11/2022; 1530-1700 Edinburgh; 1630-1800 Berlin 1030-1200 NYC; 0730-0900 Vancouver

The free event will be held via MS Teams. Those interested in attending must register via:

https://teams.microsoft.com/registration/kYY1CY5NHEmgdgpcvVunNA.0lh1YttGVUG6l3-AfZYYPg.ebVfuWIW50W7-3s_ze-ADw.CE4OINj2vEGVrQJt84d4AQ.566UGapiOE64rfr69ELDq.mf2EvVcWdKy_enkcAv-gNg?mode=read&tenantid=09358691-4d8e-491c-aa76-0a5cbd5ba734

Please forward this advertisement to interested colleagues and friends.

Event description:

In a recent ATN webinar, Bruce Alexander threw down a gauntlet. He complained, quite rightly, that theories of addiction proliferate and compete, dividing the field and fomenting disagreement about something as apparently simple as how addiction should be defined. He called for a new paradigm. In this talk, I pick up Bruce's gauntlet, in the hope of providing one.

The paradigm I propose starts by asking a basic question: what are all theories of addiction trying to explain? The answer, I suggest, is determined by what I have called the puzzle of addiction: why people continue to use drugs when costs appear to outweigh benefits. All theories of addiction must answer to this why-question. But not all answers must apply equally to all people who are addicted. Theories of addiction only compete if they aspire to universality. Once we recognize the heterogeneity of addiction, they become compatible: some theories apply to some people, while other theories apply to other people. This recognition of heterogeneity, in turn, encourages more effective integration between addiction research and good clinical practice, focusing on individually-tailored care.

Having proposed this paradigm shift towards heterogeneity, the second half of the talk will explore a range of factors that can be part of a solution to the puzzle – some of which are mutually compatible, while some are not. Time permitting, I will speak briefly to at least some of the following: (i) factors emphasized by the currently dominant paradigm, such as brain changes, withdrawal, and craving; (ii) cognitive factors, such as denial, temporal myopia, and chasing the first high; (iii) social, economic, and psychiatric factors, such as co-morbidity and mental suffering, isolation, hopelessness, poverty, and lack of meaning or sense of purpose; (iv) a factor that is typically overlooked but which I believe is nonetheless fundamental to understanding some people's relationship to drugs and addiction, namely, self-identifying as an "addict".

This event is for anyone interested in contemporary approaches to addiction theory and intervention. Hanna Pickard will speak for approximately 45 minutes and there will then be opportunity for questions and discussion. Please note that a recording of the Webinar will be made available online.

Speaker: Hanna Pickard

Hanna Pickard is Bloomberg Distinguished Professor of Philosophy and Bioethics at Johns Hopkins University. Prior to joining Hopkins, she held a Chair in Philosophy of Psychology at the University of Birmingham U.K. and was a Visiting Research Scholar to Princeton University's Program in Cognitive Science as well as a Fellow of All Souls College at the University of Oxford. In addition to her academic work, she also worked for many years as an Assistant Team Therapist at the Oxford Health NHS Trust Oxfordshire Complex Needs Service, a specialist service for people with personality disorders and complex needs. For more information see www.hannapickard.com.

Organisers: Addiction Theory Network (ATN)

Please see <https://addictiontheorynetwork.org/> for more information about the ATN and contact Derek Heim (heimd@edgehill.ac.uk) for any queries regarding our webinar series.