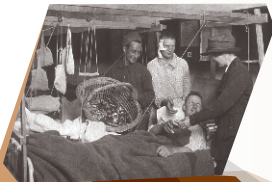


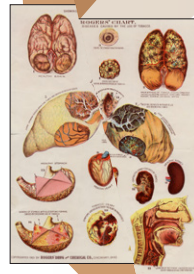
TOBACCO



Red Cross worker distributing cigarettes to injured soldiers, 1918
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

During the First World War, the popularity of cigarettes was spurred on by the distribution of free supplies to soldiers.

Smoking has endured as a popular pastime despite early evidence of tobacco's dangerous effects. Regular users were labeled "slaves" to their habit. This reflects not just the addictive properties of the tobacco alkaloid, nicotine, but the great success of advertising, which helped to foster the habit among women as well as men, rich and poor, at work and at play.



Rogers' Chart. Showing diseases caused by the use of tobacco, Rogers' Drug and Chemical Co., 1901
Courtesy National Museum of American History

The negative health effects of tobacco were noted early on. Physicians became increasingly cautious about tobacco as a medicine because of its poisonous qualities.



Advertisement for Lucky Strike cigarettes, 1930
Courtesy National Museum of American History [Jackler Collection/Archives]

Glamorous depictions of women smoking cigarettes began to appear in movies by the 1920s. Soon smoking came to be seen as a symbol of the modern, emancipated woman.

Illustration of *Nicotiana Tabacum* from Jacob Bigelow, *American Medical Botany*, 1817
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

MARIJUANA



Cannabis had been available in patent medicines sold at pharmacies or via prescription in the 19th century. Recreational users adapted the technique of smoking the leaves of the plants, which had been introduced by Mexican immigrants during the 1920s. This association of the drug with unpopular groups of users undermined its legitimacy as a medical resource for decades. After years of lobbying, some states are permitting sale and private use of the substance.



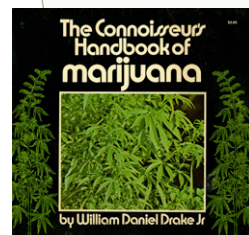
Cannabis, Fluid Extract, U.S.P., Parke, Davis & Co., 1933
Courtesy National Museum of American History

Pharmacologists attempted to harness the active properties of plants like cannabis and package them for medicinal use.



Advertisement for the film *Marihuana*, 1936
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

In the 1930s, officials relabeled cannabis with the Spanish name "marijuana" to link it to Mexican immigrants.



***The Connoisseurs Handbook of Marijuana*, a celebration of the drug and its popularity among the American counterculture, 1971**
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

Fueled by a social and cultural revolution, cannabis had become the most widely-used illegal drug in the United States by the end of the 20th century.

Illustration of Cannabis plant from Charles F. Millspaugh, *American Medicinal Plants*, 1887
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

PICK YOUR POISON

INTOXICATING PLEASURES & MEDICAL PRESCRIPTIONS



Saturday night, Craigville, Minnesota, 1937
Courtesy Library of Congress



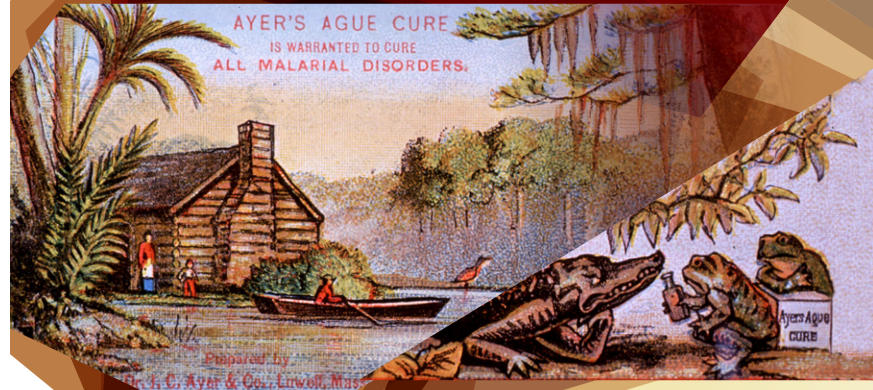
The National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health produced this exhibition
Curated by Manon Parry, PhD
Exhibition design by The Design Minds
www.nlm.nih.gov/pickyourpoison



NIH U.S. National Library of Medicine

Mind-altering drugs have been used throughout the history of America. While some remain socially acceptable, others are outlawed because of their toxic, and intoxicating, characteristics. These classifications have shifted at different times in history, and will continue to change.

The transformation of a particular drug, from an acceptable indulgence to a bad habit, or vice versa, is closely tied to the intentions of those endorsing its use, and their status in society. This exhibition explores some of the factors that have shaped the changing definition of some of our most potent drugs, from medical miracle to social menace.



Ayer's Ague Cure Is Warranted To Cure All Malarial Disorders, 1800s
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

Manufacturers of patent medicines, which were sold directly to the public without a physician's prescription, realized the popularity of alcohol-based remedies.



"Vitis vinifera" from William Woodville, *Medical botany: containing systematic and general descriptions...Royal Colleges of Physicians of London, Edinburg, and Dublin, 1832*

Courtesy National Library of Medicine



Coryza Bell morphine tablets, Hollings-Smith Co.
Courtesy National Museum of American History

Beginning in the 1860s, American physicians began prescribing morphine, an alkaloid of opium, and distributing pills and powders among Civil War soldiers and veterans.



Advertisement for a children's remedy containing morphine for the pain of teething, ca. 1880
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

The often secret ingredients of patent medicines that promised miracle cures were cocaine, opium, and alcohol, like in Mrs Winslow's Soothing Syrup.



"Natives of Colombia chewing coca" from Angelo Mariani, *COCA and its Therapeutic Application, 1896*
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

South American Indians chewed coca leaves to stave off hunger and exhaustion.



Fluid Extract Coca for medicinal use, ca. 1910
Courtesy National Museum of American History

Cocaine was a breakthrough medical drug because of its application as a local anesthetic.

OPIUM

The pain-relieving properties of opium had been known for centuries when the drug was first used therapeutically in America. By the 19th century, many doctors believed fervently in the benefits of opium; the enthusiasm for medical treatments created many addicts among doctors and their patients. Yet, reformers' efforts to restrict opium use focused on Chinese immigrants and the practice of opium smoking that they had introduced to America.



Advertisement for *King of the Opium Ring*, showing raid on an opium den, 1899
Courtesy Library of Congress

Reformers singled out the Chinese and successfully lobbied for new laws and police raids to crack down on opium dens in Chinatown districts.

Fig. 874—*Papaver somniferum* in Dennis Emerson Jackson, *Experimental Pharmacology and Materia Medica, 1939*

Courtesy National Library of Medicine



Erythroxylon coca* in William Martindale, *Coca and Cocaine: Their History and Medical and Economic Uses, and Medicinal Preparations, 1892

Courtesy National Library of Medicine

COCAINE

In the late 19th century, physicians recommended cocaine for the treatment of numerous diseases. Widespread use of the drug soon demonstrated the addictive potential of the substance. Nevertheless, cocaine's low cost made it popular among poorer groups and young people in saloons and dance halls. This association with thrill-seekers and poor laborers fuelled successive waves of panic about the drug during the 20th century.



***Crack is Wack* playground mural, Keith Haring, 1986**

Courtesy © Keith Haring Foundation and Jonathan Kuhn/New York City Parks & Recreation

In the 1980s, a form of smokeable cocaine, known as crack, gained notoriety. While rival gangs fought violently for control of the illicit market, sensational media coverage blamed a crack epidemic for a rise in crime. The ensuing panic led to long prison sentences for users as well as dealers.