

# **History of Schizophrenia Treatments Past and Present**

## **Historical Review of Schizophrenia Treatment**

“A brief historical review is provided which reveals that neuroleptics became the treatment of choice after 2 centuries of physically abusive "treatments" that more resembled torture than treatment.”

“The rationale offered for these abuses was that insanity was primarily a physical disorder and that without these methods no recovery was possible”.

“A review of long-term studies of people diagnosed with schizophrenia is provided to show, however, that schizophrenia reverses naturally in most people, with the highest rate of recovery occurring in a non-industrialized country where no neuroleptics were used.”

“The history of psychiatric treatment of people considered mentally ill is a tragic one, and painful to recount.”

Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

## **Historical Review of Schizophrenia Treatment**

“In mid-eighteenth century England, the first "modern" treatments were established. These included: creating open sores into which caustics would be rubbed daily for months, repeated bleedings to the point of loss of consciousness, liberal use of purges, emetics, "stripes," "blows," restraints, and straight jackets, simulated drowning to the point of unconsciousness, near-starvation diets; and a specially constructed "swinging chair" which could induce vomiting, convulsions, and involuntary urination and defecation.

Hunter & Macalpine, 1963; Scull, 1989; Whitaker, 2002.”

From: Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

## **Historical Review of Schizophrenia Treatment**

“All these were defended by the physicians using them as necessary “medical” treatments, without which recovery would be impossible. Physicians claimed that insanity was a physical disorder and presented elaborate theories to justify these aggressive physical treatments. The treatments were effective in at least one way they quickly quieted down unruly and disturbing inmates, making life in the asylum more tolerable in the short term. The long-term effect was to perpetuate both the rational and irrational fears that were actually the primary problem.”

From: Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

## **KINDNESS and RESPECT**

“For a few decades in the early 1800s, these cruel treatments were replaced by a much more humane approach, known as “moral treatment”.

Quakers from York, England, decided to create a "retreat" for people in psychospiritual distress when one of their members died from abusive treatment in an asylum. They believed that soft speech, kindness, and comfortable, safe living conditions would best help the insane to recover”

70% of people recovered and returned to respectable places in society.  
Bockhoven, 1972; Scull, 1989.

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## **Humanity Superseded by Physical Treatments**

Eventually some physicians claimed “moral treatment” was “unscientific” and “By 1880, moral treatment had been completely eradicated. Insanity was again labeled a physical disease, and physical treatments were reintroduced.” i.e:

“Prolonged immersion in very hot or very cold water, needle showers, Being wrapped in wet sheet packs and left to be squeezed like a vice as they dried, Surgery such as hysterectomy, tonsillectomy, colectomy, cholysytectomy, appendectomy, orchiectomy.

Deep sleep therapy, people were kept in a drug-induced sleep for days or weeks at a time.

Source: Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

## **Humanity Superseded by Physical Treatments**

Overall, the patients tended to do poorly. Braslow, 1997; Whitaker, 2002. -poor outcomes.”

“Eugenics became the dominant explanatory model for mental illness, and by the 1920s, American society had accepted the idea that mental illness was genetic in origin”. This concept was influenced by a book written by Madison Grant (founder of the American Eugenics Society), culminating in Adolf Hitler ordering the extermination of about 70,000 mental patients.

Source: Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

## Inconclusive Genetic Research

“No Significant Association of 14 Candidate Genes With Schizophrenia in a Large European Ancestry Sample: Implications for Psychiatric Genetics”

Alan R. Sanders, et al Am J Psychiatry 2008; 165:497-506

“An Agenda for Psychiatric Genetics.” Barondes, S. et al (1999) *Arch. Gen. Psych.* **56**: 549-552. "genetically influenced psychiatric disorders have so far been resistant to analysis"

“The equal environment assumption of the classical twin method: A critical analysis” Joseph, J. (1998).. *Journal of Mind and Behavior*, **19**, 325-358.

Joseph points out that all twin studies of behavioral characteristics-like those defining "schizophrenia" are fundamentally flawed because identical twins have been clearly shown to be raised more similarly than are non-identical ones.

From: A critical bibliography of the Biopsychiatric Model. Loren.R.Mosher MD



## Inconclusive Genetic Research

“A critique of the Finnish Adoptive Family Study of Schizophrenia”

Joseph, J. (1999). *Journal of Mind and Behavior*, **20**, 133-154. Joseph points out that the adoption study methodology depends on random adoption-that is the adoption agency does not know the mother's background when placing the child. The Finnish study, suffers from the fact that the first half of the sample was placed with the knowledge that the mothers had "schizophrenia". This and a number of other important methodological problems make the findings highly questionable.

“The genetic theory of schizophrenia: A critical overview”. Joseph, J. (1999). *Ethical Human Sciences and Services*, **1**, 119-145. Conclusion: there is no evidence of a specific or important genetic component in "mental illness"

From: A critical bibliography of the Biopsychiatric Model. Loren.R.Mosher MD

## Brain Damaging “Treatments”

“In the 1930s a new group of treatments became widespread. They quieted people down quickly, and, this time, more often permanently.” Insulin-induced comas (brain death), Metrazol-induced convulsions incurring bone fractures, electroshock, high mortality rate, and frontal lobotomy - heralded as a breakthrough, induced infantile permanent states needing toilet training. Still used in late 1960s

**1954 Largactil/chlorpromazine hailed as the next breakthrough, but only a few short term studies had been done. Then ten years later long term studies indicated brain damage. These negative long term results were completely ignored.**

From: Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

## Neuroleptic Induced Brain Damage

**Since as far back as 1954 it has been known that neuroleptic drugs cause Brain damage.**

**1952** French psychiatrists used chlorpromazine as part of a drug cocktail that can put mental patients into "hibernation". It was said to produce a **chemical lobotomy**.

**1954-55** Chlorpromazine, marketed in the U.S. as Thorazine, found to induce symptoms of **Parkinson's Disease**. Also symptoms similar to **Encephalitis Lethargica**.

**1959** First reports of permanent motor dysfunction linked to neuroleptics, later named **Tardive Dyskinesia**.

**1960** French physicians describe a potentially fatal toxic reaction to neuroleptics, later named **Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome**.

**1965** Neuroleptics found to impair **learning in animals and humans**.

*R Whitaker* Time line [Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)

## Neuroleptic Induced Brain Damage continued...

**1972** Tardive dyskinesia is said to resemble **Huntington's disease**, or "**postencephalitic brain damage**".

**1979** Tardive Dyskinesia found to be associated with **cognitive impairment**.

**1994** Neuroleptics found to cause an increase in the volume of caudate region in the brain, which is **a sign of brain damage**.

**1998** Neuroleptic use is found to be associated with **atrophy of the cerebral cortex**

**1998** Harvard researchers conclude that "oxidative stress" may be the process by which neuroleptics cause **neuronal damage in the brain**.

*R Whitaker:* **[Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)**

## Evidence of Iatrogenic Effects of Neuroleptic Drugs

**1978** Canadian researchers describe drug-induced changes in the brain that **make a patient more vulnerable to relapse**, which they dub "**neuroleptic induced SuperSensitivity Psychosis**" (SSP).

**1979** Prevalence of **Tardive Dyskinesia in drug-treated patients** is reported to range from 24% to 56%.

**1982** Anticholinergic medications used to treat Parkinsonian symptoms induced by neuroleptics reported to cause **cognitive impairment**.

**1992** Researchers acknowledge that neuroleptics cause a recognizable pathology, which they named **neuroleptic induced deficit syndrome**. (NIDS)

*R Whitaker:* **[Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)**

## Iatrogenic Effects of Neuroleptic Drugs continued...

**1998** MRI studies show that neuroleptics appear to cause brain hypertrophy of the caudate, putamen, and thalamus, with the increase "**associated with greater severity of both negative and positive symptoms**".

**1998** Treatment with two or more neuroleptics is found to increase **risk of early death**.

**2000** Neuroleptics linked to **fatal blood clots**.

**2000** Tardive Dyskinesia linked to **early death**.

**2003** **Risk of early death** for schizophrenia patients is **found to have increased** since introduction of atypical antipsychotics.

*R Whitaker:* **[Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)**

## Adverse Social and Financial Effects of Neuroleptics

**1962** California Mental Hygiene Department determines that chlorpromazine and other neuroleptics **prolong hospitalisation**.

**1966** NIMH (National Institute of Mental Health) study of one-year outcomes find that **drug-treated patients are more likely than placebo patients to be re-hospitalized**.

**1975** Boston researchers report that relapse rates were **lower** in pre-neuroleptic era, and that **drug-treated patients are more likely to be socially dependent**.

**1980** NIMH researchers find an increase in "**blunted effect**" and "**emotional withdrawal**" in drug-treated patients who don't relapse, and determine that **neuroleptics do not improve "social and role performance"** in non-relapsers. *R Whitaker* [Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)

## Adverse Social and Financial Effects of Neuroleptics cont...

**1985** Drug-induced akathisia is linked to **suicide** and to **violent homicides**.

**1995** "**Quality of life**" in drug-treated patients reported to be "**very poor**".

**2005** NIMH researchers report that (expensive) atypical antipsychotics provide few, if any, benefits compared to old neuroleptics.

**2007** British researchers report that quality-of-life was better on old drugs than on atypicals.

*R Whitaker* **[Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)**



## Worse Outcomes:

**1994** Harvard investigators report that schizophrenia outcomes have **worsened over past 20 years**, and are now no better than in first decades of 20th century.

**1995** "Real-world" relapse rates for schizophrenia patients treated with neuroleptics said to be above 80% in two years following hospital discharge, which is **much higher than in pre-neuroleptic era**.

**2006** **Suicide rate for schizophrenic patients is reported to be 20 times higher today than it was a century ago.**

*R Whitaker* **[Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)**

## Better Outcomes:

**1978** California investigator Maurice Rappaport reports markedly superior three-year outcomes for patients treated **without** neuroleptics. (as above)

**1979** Loren Mosher, head of schizophrenia studies at the NIMH, reports superior one-year and two-year outcomes for Soteria patients treated **without** neuroleptics. (as above)

**1992** World Health Organization reports that schizophrenia outcomes are much superior in poor countries, where few patients are maintained on neuroleptics.

**2007** Illinois investigators report that long-term recovery rates for unmedicated schizophrenia patients are **eight times higher** than for medicated patients.

From: “Mad in America”, A research timeline for antipsychotic drugs, Robert Whitaker Timeline [Mad in America \(www.madinamerica.com\)](http://www.madinamerica.com)

## Schizophrenia Shifting Hypotheses

**“To say that an unknown number of biomechanical substances may interact in an unknown way to produce schizophrenia is a tortuous way of admitting that we have no clue as to what the hell is going on”**

Scrabanek P. *The death of humane medicine and the rise of coercive healthism.*

Bury Saint Edmunds (UK): Crowley Esmonde; 1994. p. 37-41.

**“It is commonly believed that reversal of schizophrenia is accomplished primarily through neuroleptic drug treatment, but this belief can be maintained only by ignoring a great deal of material published in the historical and scientific literature.”**

Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

**Randomized studies of programs similar to moral treatment that have been carried out in the last 30 years have had similar good results, without using neuroleptics or other "physical" treatments.**

**Bola & Mosher, 2003; Irwin, 2004.**

Reversal of Schizophrenia Without Neuroleptics. Matt Irwin, Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry, Volume 6, Number I Spring 2004

## **Treatment Based upon Shifting Sands**

**The Quakers' Moral Treatment Movement, cared for vulnerable patients with humanity and respect with existentialist values.**

Past treatments used physical methods that caused gross physical and psychological suffering to vulnerable patients.

**Because of the visibility of the effects of these treatments, they would now be looked upon as inhumane.**

## Treatment Based upon Shifting Sands

Today's NICE Guidance neuroleptic treatment is considered to be acceptable, respectable practice.

Today's neuroleptic treatment is a physical method, due to the dysregulation of many neurotransmitters - vital for healthy physical and psychological functions - incurring toxicity that causes inevitable brain damage.

Today's neuroleptic treatment continues to perpetuate gross physical and psychological suffering to vulnerable patients, many of whom are hidden away from the public, being stripped of their innate ability and human right to realise their potential in life.

**Because of the invisibility of the neuroleptic effects,  
the current physical treatment is looked upon as  
being humane.**



**“The standard beliefs about modern drug treatments in Psychiatry are similar to delusions. They are fixed and probably false, and based on a distorted reading of the evidence”**

**(Moncrieff 2002)**

## **Useful websites:**

**Law Project for Psychiatric Rights:**

<http://psychrights.org/index.html>

**AHRP Alliance for Human Research Protection**

[www.ahrp.org](http://www.ahrp.org)

**ICSPP The International Center for the Study of Psychiatry & Psychology**

<http://www.icspp.org>

**MindFreedom International: Mental Health Rights and Alternative Mental Health**

<http://www.mindfreedom.org/>

**A critical bibliography of the Biopsychiatric Model. Loren.R.Mosher MD**

<http://www.moshersoteria.com/litrev.pdf>

**Psychiatric Drug Facts with Dr. Peter Breggin**

<http://www.breggin.com/>

## **Contributors:**

**Catherine Clarke SRN, SCM, MSSCH, MBChA**

**Jan Evans MCSP. Grad Dip Phys**

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