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# Stories of Addiction

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In

Psychology

Peter Robert Ashton

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## Abstract

This thesis examines lay understandings of addiction in the context of academic and clinical understandings and how these discourses are encapsulated in the treatment modalities available to persons experiencing addictive behaviour. It examines the tensions that exist in the treatment sector due to diverse 'expert' understandings of the addictive process and the very 'construct' of addiction. Participants' narratives exposed the mutually constitutive nature of lay and professional discourses but also suggested that such use of narratives in clinical settings may have utility in the alleviation of addictive behaviours. However, the predominance of the medical model of addiction within the New Zealand treatment sector, and an increasing focus on highly manualised brief treatment modalities, may not be conducive to solutions that are deemed 'creative' rather than 'corrective' and give 'voice' and credence to the understandings of clients.

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