

Beck Tells Causes of Alcoholism

By MIKE CALLAHAN

When a man steps across the line of social drinking and enters the dangerous habit of alcoholism, he is literally with his back to the wall, fighting against a problem that seems beyond him. He may not realize the source of the frustration that he is seeking to escape, but he has found that alcoholic oblivion is the one sure way to peace. And even if he is committed to a one-way road to death he will follow it gladly, rather than face and overcome his obstacle.

That was the picture of alcoholism as a psychological problem that was presented in a lecture Wednesday night by Dr. Lester F. Beck, associate professor of psychology. Speaking before a group of parents, teachers, and students in Commerce hall, Dr. Beck discussed "Child and Adolescent Psychology and Alcohol" in one of the key lectures of the "Alcoholic Studies Conferences and Lectures series".

This conference, sponsored by the University's general extension division and the educational advisory committee to the Oregon liquor control commission, meets every Wednesday night until the middle of February. Moderated by Dr. J. R. Jewell, former dean of the discussions is attempting to analyze the entire problem of alcohol, with University professors or outside authorities as lecturers.

"I don't believe that any person gets himself intoxicated deliberately," Dr. Beck said at the opening of his address, "but alcoholism is a behavioral symptom, often accompanied by other problems in job-holding, perseverance, or efficiency."

Alcoholism is a symptom of

acute mental conflict, according to Dr. Beck, and he listed these conflicts as one, or a combination of, three simple situations. The individual may find himself between two equally attractive prospects, Dr. Beck explained, but this is a problem that is usually not too serious but may be decided by weighing and analyzing the two prizes.

"Much more dangerous though, is the situation where the person finds himself trapped between two equally bad prospects," Dr. Beck said.

In such a case, according to Dr. Beck, the individual has one of three choices. He can try to "ostrich" away from the entire problem by wishing it away, or he can start all over again. This last, according to Dr. Beck's studies, is the cause for a surprisingly large number of divorce cases.

As a third "solution," Dr. Beck said, "the person may attempt to change the appearance of the conflict by looking at it in a different way, or by bolstering up his courage. And that "dutch courage" often comes from alcohol.

The final problem-situation that may confront a person in the "obstacle between you and the goal" conflict that is one of the most common of all. In such a case, the individual must either surmount the negative force that stands in his way, or resort to other means to change its nature or strength. This again, according to Dr. Beck, can lead to alcoholism.

How can the action of alcohol, which is in itself something of a food, aid in the solution of individual conflicts?

By means of films from the Yale laboratories on alcohol studies, Dr. Beck demonstrated the effect of alcohol on a frustrated personality. Using cats as subjects, the films showed how a routine habit pattern could be so broken up as to produce a neurosis in the cat. This corresponds to the introduction of a seemingly-insurmountable problem in the life of a human. This controlled neurosis experiment affected the basic personality of the subjects, making the meek cats suddenly become dominant and the formerly-dominant ones submissive. In just such a way do human personalities change as the becomes more severe, Dr. Beck explained.

Then, Amytal, which produces in cats the effects that alcohol does in humans, was given to the subjects. Immediately the personalities changed themselves back to their originals, with the once-strong cats again dominating and the once-submissive ones as meek as before. Alcohol, Dr. Beck stated, will do the same to humans. Thus it was shown, Dr. Beck ex-

plained, that alcohol works in "reverse regression," blotting out habit patterns in the reverse order of their learning. Alcohol breaks up the most recently acquired memories, habits, and behavior patterns, (the ones causing the conflict) and takes the person back beyond the problem to his former happy and untroubled state. Thus he has "removed" his conflict, and can, for at least a little while, be content.

But constant alcoholic obliteration is hardly the best solution, Dr. Beck pointed out. Other solutions to alcoholism may be to use encouragement and psychological treatment, such as is the method of Alcoholics Anonymous, or to remove the person from the situation. This last is hardly satisfactory either, Dr. Beck said, as tests have shown that the neurotisms remain and that a remeeting of the conflict situation will reawaken the neurotic tendencies and will lead again to alcoholism.

"People drink because they have to become intolerable and so they must move back beyond their conflict", Dr. Beck concluded. "As long as you treat alcoholism in itself, alcoholism will continue. But when you treat the individual for the problem that is causing the alcoholism, you will abolish that alcoholism."

GIs to Reinstate Old Insurance

Oregon veterans now have until July 31 to reinstate their G.I. insurance without a physical examination, following a new extension of this deadline from last December 31, Donald C. Schworer, veterans administration contact representative at the University, reported yesterday.

During the past 11 months, 13,179 ex-GIs of this state have revived \$89,443,500 worth of national service life insurance, Schworer said. Veterans in Washington, however, more than doubled Oregon's mark, as 27,000 reinstated \$184,000,000 of coverage.

Veterans whose health is as good as when their G.I. insurance lapsed may regain it with no more trouble than an application and paying two month's premiums. Even those who didn't carry service policies when they were in uniform can get them now.

Any amount from \$1000 up to \$10,000, in \$500 multiples, may be retained. Term policy rates are the same as they were in service, and the added amounts paid on permanent types all go into cash reserve values, Schworer explained.

"One of the best service insurance references," he remarked, "is for any doubting ex-GI to talk it over with a World War I veteran who didn't keep his U.S. government life insurance."

Johnson Scheduled For Club Banquet

Dean Eldon Johnson will speak on "A Graduate Program in the Social Sciences" at the next meeting of the social science club, January 26.

Dinner will be served at the Faculty club at 6:15 p.m. Reservations should be made with Miss Wilhelmina Gerot, library secretary, through campus mail or by phone, Ext. 364 before noon Saturday. The price of dinner is \$1.25 per plate.

Just as an X-ray exposes the inside of a structure rather than the outside, obvious form, so Elmer Rice's "The Adding Machine" exposes the yearnings and unknown suppressions of the mind.

GAX Meeting Plans Begin

Plans are under way for the national convention here, February 6 and 7, of Gamma Alpha Chi, national women's advertising fraternity, local chapter president Maryanne Hansen said Thursday.

Delegates from ten universities throughout the nation will be provided with a full schedule of sight-seeing and entertainment, as well as business, she said. Members of Alpha Delta Sigma, men's advertising fraternity, are helping with arrangements for transportation and a joint banquet.

Annamae Winship, '46, national treasurer of GAX; Dr. R. D. Millican, professor of advertising, and Mrs. Millican are advising the hostess chapter. ADS members have also offered to escort the delegates to the Military ball, which will be the final event of the weekend.

Nearly 2,250,000 students are in college this year.

Swank Plans Trip To Attend Meetings

Dr. R. C. Swank, head of the University library, will attend the midwinter conference of the American Library association in Chicago, January 28 to February 1.

Dr Swank is a member of the audio-visual committee and the public documents committee of the A.L.A. He is also chairman of the constitution and bylaws committee of the Association of College and Reference Libraries.

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