Understanding Addiction. Edition No. 1

Description: This book presents an original study into the workings of heroin addiction. The study analysed how using and non-using informants constituted addiction through language. By comparing the accounts of self-defined recovered, recovering and currently addicted users, the study highlighted how the informant's accounts of heroin use may have implications with respect to either perpetuating or enabling their recovery from addiction. The transcripts of four focus groups were qualitatively analysed using a thematic method that focused on the informants' strategic use of language. This revealed important differences between using and non-using informants in terms of the self-employed discursive practices that they used in constructing their experience of addiction. Many heroin users that have read this study were excited to recognise their behaviour in it and agreed that it captured an element of their experience that they have not seen in print before. This quality can deepen the readers understanding of what it really means to be addicted, how users justify continuing use, and how some are able to recover.

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