drugs aren’t just put into the rats.

The rats were surgically connected to self-infliction apparatus.

Chemical addiction came from rats, the scientific proof.

In the 1950s and 60s, the scientific proof.

... with drug addiction caused by mere self-inflicted injury.

One of the biggest assumptions is that drugs are seductively addictive.

Our understanding of drugs is built on many assumptions.

Our understanding of addiction...
"mass-addiction and"

"in preference to food and water."

"the rats would choose drug injections"

"Do not repeat by their habits some of"

"the implications were"

"black and worrying"

"The researchers watched on as the caged rats"
Professor Bruce Alexander thought differently.

Descended from wild Norway Rats, albino lab rats remain curious, gregarious social creatures...

He wondered how much insight could be gathered by studying rats in solitary confinement.

...so the sensory deprivation of the classical drug experiments must have been akin to torture.

Alexander wondered if he too would retreat into a drugged haze, if locked in a box and given no other option.
The team ventured bravely into the dark... with some special differences...

The team decided to repeat the classical rat-drug studies...

addiction using morphine... Their experiment would...

...destroy notoriously close to.


In 1977, Prof. Alexander assembled a team of Simon Fraser University researchers.
university and began preparing a controlled experiment.

t of the room they array of standard cages (8 x 25 x 8cm).

cage walls would isolate preventing them from seeing each other.

In the other part of the room, the researchers constructed a large plywood enclosure.

Measuring 8.8m², the enclosure had over 200x the area of the standard laboratory cages.
the researchers began trying to seduce the rats into drinking morphine.

Wondering if the rats would avoid the drug because of its bitter taste, the team ‘sweetened the deal’...

...adding various ratios of sugar to tempt the rats into drinking the morphine.

learned that of rats fluids (yup)...

...and hated bitter fluids (a non-drugged quinine solution).

Growers also tested both groups' the bitter-sweetness of a quinine-sucrose solution.

Days 4-8
The isolated cage rats began drinking the
higher volumes. “...and in much
far earlier than the Rat Park rats."

The researchers observed how much
the rats would tolerate this bitter taste in order to
experience the effects of the morphine drug.

Days 9–13: At first, all rats avoided the
excessively bitter morphine–sugar solutions.
Gradually transforming the bitter narcotic
taste, every 5 days, the mixtures
stepped down, transforming
into a sweeter, but nonetheless
charged brew.
The researchers upped the sugar... ...and the caged rats slipped further into their narcosis.

But still the Rat Park rats avoided the freely available morphine.

Rat Park’s consumption rose, but still remained a fraction of their isolated neighbours.
The sugar taste
the sugary taste
by adding water to the sugar
as an antidote
drug mixes spread with NIH
Drug would lap up prey
The addicted worked as an antitoxin
to the morphine counteracting the
narcotic content
No help with light
Drinking the sweet
Drug gave humans
around the heavily
The rats which had
Days 24-28
Finally, Alexander's team tipped the sugar/drug ratio
to a cocktail that none of the rats could resist.
Another Rat Park experiment tested the 'additive' nature of opiates from the opposite direction.

...the researchers deliberately made junkies out of the rats, and then watched what happened when given choice again.

...a notion which suggests that the physiological effect of quitting opiate use is so unbearable that users cannot stop their drug habits.
The team punctured the
field with nine choice days.

This is besides drugged morphine water.

On most days, the rats were given no

The researchers took 32 new rats.
Rats continued their terror and actually increased over the 'choice days'.

The story across the room, in Rat Park was different.

Addy, dependent on morphine, the Rat Park rats decreased their drug use on 'choice days'.

Symptoms were noted in the twitchy rats. Rat Park rats avoided the morphine.

To Alexander and team, the Rat Park rats were choosing to endure the morphine withdrawal symptoms...

...deliberately trying to return to a social life not disrupted by the drugs.

A 'normal' social life unavailable to the caged rats.
Toward a more... trying to corner and confront the evidence at the foundations of drug addiction theory. Together the team swept their multiple experiments within Rat Park. Bruce Alexander and his colleagues ran the basic for drug production. "Demonic drugs" from bogeyman, take hide of evidence away. Researchers spotlighting "The Rat Park studies". The lab techs "looked a lot".
1: Despite the addictive 'demon drug' reputation of heroin...

...the researchers had to strongly coax the rats into taking drugs.

...sugar, forced-habituation and isolation were essential to make the rats want to drink the morphine.

II: Given the chance to live in a normal society with comfortable housing and social contact...

...the rats living in Rat Park had little appetite for opiate drugs.

III: Chemical addiction was not the strongest factor influencing the rats' habits.

Rather than becoming identically spellbound by addiction...

...the rats' drug-taking varied with physical, mental and social setting.
The university cancelled the research funding in 1982...

...the plywood was sawn up into pieces...

...the rats were taken from their paradise...

Bruce Alexander was wary of overgeneralizing the findings of Rat Park...

...and making the implications of the 1960's rat research...
Would humans need to be locked in a cage to feel the same way?

Or are there other types of isolation which might lead to addiction?

...despite drugs being readily available...

about 'Rat Park', which allowed to avoid addiction...
What is the difference between not being added to and being added to?

But was shadowed

to the world

of people

Bruce Alexander's world novel

It's a sad story...