

THE CAMPAIGN FOR NEO-PROHIBITION

... and why their scientific “crimes” should
worry the wine industry ...

Fortify, Penticton, November 2023

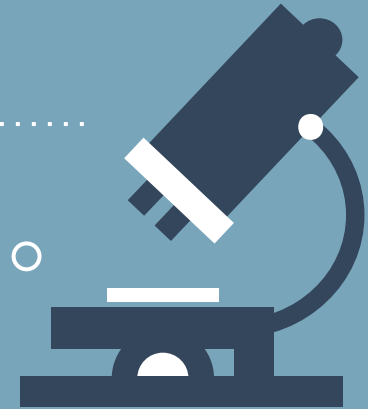
Mark Hicken
Canadian Assoc. for Responsible Drinkers
<http://www.cafrd.ca>



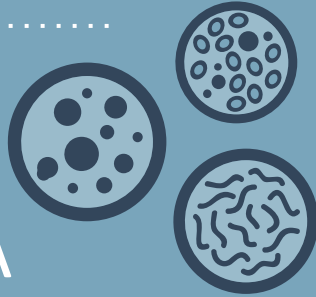
THE PROBLEM



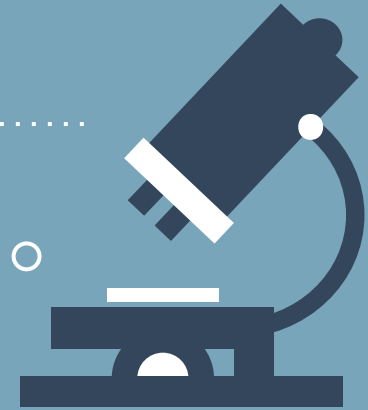
- Sustained and mostly unfair campaign by “neo-prohibitionist” community to change alcohol regulation from an approach targeted toward “harmful consumption” to one dedicated to discouraging all consumption
- Inaccurate or imprecise media coverage provides fuel for the campaign



SCIENCE + MEDIA



- Creation of “scientific” studies and data to “prove” alcohol related health connections
- Ideologically motivated “science”
- Media typically has no scientific training: simply repeats conclusions of the “scientists”
- Scientific crimes!



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DO NO

Crime Scenes? The Lancet

- “Alcohol use and burden for 195 countries, 1990-2016 ...” August 23, 2018.
- “Risk thresholds for alcohol consumption ...” May 31, 2018
- “We found that the ...the level of [alcohol] consumption that minimises health loss is zero.”
- Discredited! <https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/8/29/17790118/alcohol-lancet-health-study>

THE LANCET

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Alcohol use and burden for 195 countries and territories, 1990-2016: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016

GBD 2016 Alcohol Collaborators | Show footnotes

Open Access | Published: August 23, 2018 | DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)31310-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)31310-2)

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PlumX Metrics

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Summary

Introduction

Methods

Results

Discussion

Conclusion

Data sharing

Summary

Background

Alcohol use is a leading risk factor for death and disability, but its overall association with health remains complex given the possible protective effects of moderate alcohol consumption on some conditions. With our comprehensive approach to health accounting within the Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study 2016, we generated improved estimates of alcohol use and alcohol-attributable deaths and disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) for 195 locations from 1990 to 2016, for both sexes and for 5-year age

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Crime Scenes? Globe & Mail

- “Canada’s drinking problem: why alcohol is the new cigarette”.
- Wency Leung & Erin Anderssen. January 30, 2021.
- References Lancet article “the safest level of drinking is none”.



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Crime Scenes? NY Times

- “Should Your Cocktail Carry a Cancer Warning?”
- Anahad O’Connor. March 4, 2021.
- Advocates for lower government limits on alcohol. States that less than one drink/day is problematic. “No safe level of consumption”.



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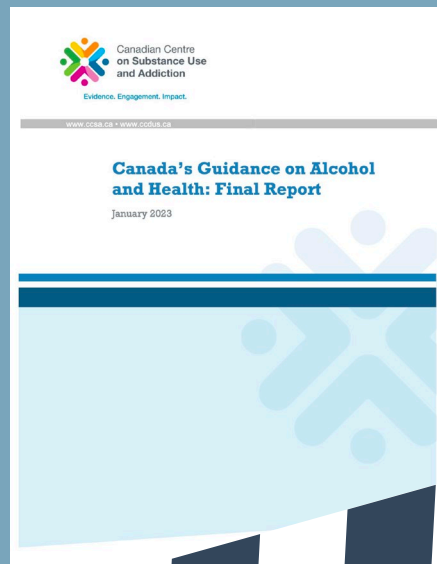
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Crime Scenes? CCSA Report

- “Canada’s Guidance on Alcohol & Health”
- CCSA. January, 2023.
- States that “even a small amount of alcohol can be damaging to health” .
- Low risk = 2 drinks per week!



Major Shift in the Science?

Before ...

Previously, light to moderate drinking has some health benefits.

Heavy drinking causes health problems.



After ???

Suddenly, the media story is ... zero health benefits – all drinking is dangerous.

Safe level is zero.

2 Drinks Per Week?
No Safe Level?



Has the Science Changed?
Do We Need to Change Our Culture?

The Science Has Not Changed ...

Decades of Research Show

Moderate consumption: live as longer or a bit longer than abstainers



Health Canada: Unchanged

Health Canada has not changed its guidelines.

Check their web site!

Science Still Shows This



Check our web site:

<https://cafrd.ca/recent-studies-on-alcohol-health>

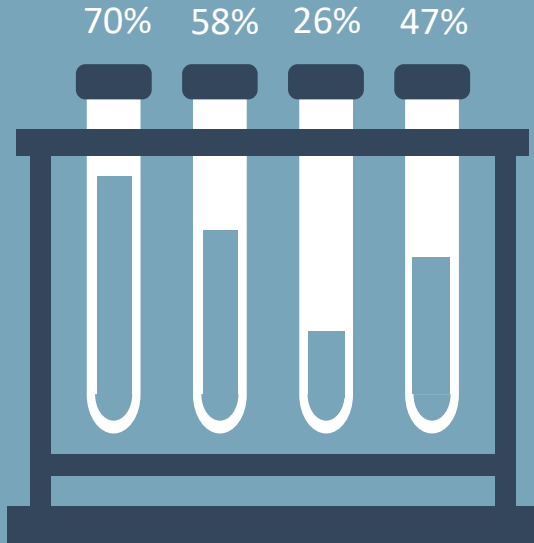
Global Outlier

Wildly out of step with other guidelines around the world.

<https://cafrd.ca/lrdg-global-comparison>



Poor Public Policy



Focusing on Harmful Consumption Works

Stats Canada: lowest levels of heavy drinking ever recorded.
“One size fits all” message will erode public health messaging and cause those with a problem to tune out completely.

Misleading Portrayals of Risk

Life means assumption of risk. Driving. Playing sports.

“there is no safe level of driving, but governments do not recommend that people avoid driving. Come to think of it, there is no safe level of living, but nobody would recommend abstinence.”

It’s Your Choice! Individuals should educate themselves and gauge their own risk based on lifestyle, diet, genetics etc ...



1

Biased and Ideological “Science”

- Anti-alcohol agenda
- Some supposedly neutral scientists have strong connections to temperance groups
- <https://cafrd.ca/ccsa-temperance-connections>
- Movendi – previously the “Independent Order of Good Templars”
- Lifetime pledge of abstinence
- Active at WHO



2



3

Publicity for Inappropriate Conclusions

RECALL THESE CONCLUSIONS FROM EARLIER:

The Lancet

"the level of consumption that minimizes health loss is zero"

Globe & NY Times Articles

"safest level of drinking is none"

"no safe level of consumption"

ALL of these conclusions are incorrect and inappropriate.

It is not scientifically valid to jump to these conclusions from the studies done yet the media continues to repeat them.

Quote the Experts

See: <https://cafrd.ca/ccsa-medical-commentary>

Dr. Martin Juneau,
director of prevention
at Montreal Heart
Institute

The health risks
are "very, very
slight until you get
to about 14 drinks
per week."



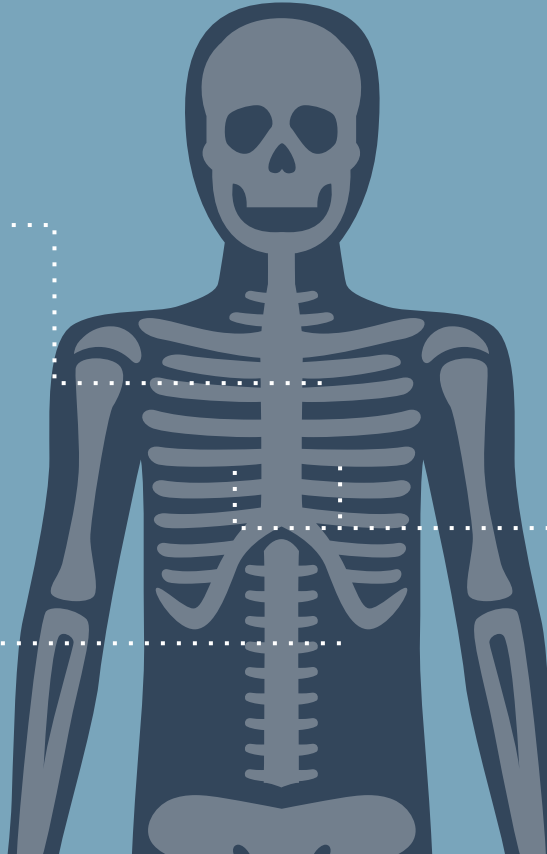
Dr. Harry Rakowski,
Toronto cardiologist

"I think the previous
recommendations for seven
drinks a week for women
and 14 for men are more
reasonable than the new
more restrictive CCSA
ones."



Dr. Richard Harding,
co-author of UK
guidelines for
alcohol
consumption

**"Fifty years of
epidemiological and
clinical research point to
substantial health benefits
– not harms – of daily
intakes of small amounts
of alcohol ...the plain fact
is that, if people were to ...
reduce their consumption
to two small drinks or less
a week, it is likely that they
would be worse off in
health terms."**





BEWARE OF POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

- Increased Regulation Against Alcohol Consumption
- Change Societal Views on Alcohol Consumption
- CAPE alcohol project – disturbing objectives
 - Raise drinking age to 21/25
 - Reinstatement of government retail monopoly
 - Raise prices
 - Prohibit takeout and delivery
 - Eliminate preferences for local producers
 - Restrict all advertising and marketing
- Warning Labels
- Alcohol = Tobacco

CONCLUSIONS



“SCENE OF THE CRIME” INCIDENTS WILL CONTINUE

Industry needs to wake up to the scale of the problem and the likely consequences. Do not let Prohibition repeat itself.



SLOW AND STEADY PROBLEM

There will be a “tipping point” on the consequences ... But it will be too late to undo the worst of the damage if societal and political views reach that point.



ORGANIZED REACTION REQUIRED

Ticking time-bomb! Industry needs to fight back before it's too late.

CARD: help us to help you



CARD formed to provide an alternative view

We have formed the “Canadian Association for Responsible Drinkers” to provide a more balanced and sensible perspective on these issues. We provide unbiased information and education that encourages responsible drinking and reduces harmful consumption



Website provides resources and information

Our website (<http://www.cafrd.ca>) provides more detail about what we are doing. It's also home to a wealth of resources and information including links to the various scientific and medical studies referred to above, as well as to analysis and commentary.



Become a supporter

If you agree with our objectives, please join us! <https://cafrd.ca/info-resources-index>

THANKS

Do you have questions?

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