



The Communication Committee presents:

The International Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism BULLETIN

Contributing to the advancement of alcohol research globally

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HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ **Joint meeting of RSoA and ISBRA** in June 2020 at New Orleans, Louisiana.
- ✓ **Important conferences** were held in the past couple of months: Coverage on LASBRA.
- ✓ Highlights on the **research funding opportunities in Sao Paulo, Brazil.**
- ✓ "New directions" column discusses the potential role of bacteriophage therapy in easing the severity of alcoholic hepatitis.
- ✓ "News and Events" column covers the new development happening in the past few months.

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 Robert Leeman, Co-Chair
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 Vatsalya Vatsalya, Co-Chair

ISBRA Bulletin Vol. 1 (2019) Issue 3

Publications You May Have Missed By Robert Leeman, Ph.D.

Society newsletters often include references for relevant articles. We would like our publication listing in the ISBRA Bulletin to be unique. Thus, we have decided to focus our attention on quality publications that may be overlooked for various reasons such as having been published in a lesser known journal. Each issue, we will report on a selection of such articles with a brief description of why we believe they are worthy of members' attention. If you know of any such publications that may have been missed, please contact us at isbraisbra@gmail.com.

Cont. Publications You May Have Missed By Robert Leeman, Ph.D.



[Effects of Mirtazapine for Methamphetamine Use Disorder among Cisgender Men and Transgender Women Who Have Sex with Men: A Placebo-Controlled Randomized Clinical Trial:](#)

In: JAMA Psychiatry, 2019

By: Philip O. Coffin, Glenn-Milo Santos, Jaclyn Hern, Eric Vittinghoff, John E. Walker, Tim Matheson, Deirdre Santos, Grant Colfax, Steven L. Batki

I debated whether or not to include this article since it is not an alcohol study and was published in a high impact-factor journal though some members who favor addiction specialty journals may not read JAMA Psychiatry regularly. However, these findings are really exciting in that they indicate a rare replication of beneficial treatment effects in reducing stimulant misuse.

[Comparing Meta-Analyses and Preregistered Multiple Laboratory Replication Projects:](#)

In: Nature: Human Behavior, 2019

By: Amanda Kvarven, Eirik Stromland & Magnus Johannesson

Again, not an alcohol study but this is a topic of great importance to all those who work in behavioral research. These authors report findings suggesting meta-analyses may overestimate effect sizes.

[Participant Carelessness and Fraud: Consequences for Clinical Research and Potential Solutions:](#)

In: Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 2020

By: Jesse Chandler, Itay Sisso, Danielle Shapiro

Another valuable general rather than alcohol article: these authors offer a clear explanation of the potential negative impact of low-quality data and provide several valuable suggestions to increase data quality, particularly applicable to data collected via the internet.

[Alcohol Use Disorders:](#)

In: The Lancet, 2019

By: Andre F. Carvalho, Markus Heilig, Augusto Perez, Charlotte Probst, Jurgen Rehm

Similar to the JAMA Psychiatry publication, this paper is in a high-impact outlet, but one that some members may not read regularly. This paper provides a strong, succinct review covering AUD diagnosis, epidemiology, genetics and other risk factors, and interventions. This paper is a nice resource co-authored by leaders in the field.

We are on the Web!

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We are on LinkedIn now: [Communication Committee ISBRA](#)

Find us also on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/ISBRAComm>

Funding Opportunities

By Vatsalya Vatsalya, M.D., Rosana Camarini, Ph.D.

Special Emphasis FAPESP - Sao Paulo, Brazil



The public research foundation, FAPESP, began operations in 1962 with the mission to support all fields of research in the region of Sao Paulo. Notably, the health sciences are heavily funded by FAPESP, with approximately half of all submitted proposals being funded, reflecting the numerous opportunities for Brazilian and foreign investigators in these fields. Following are some of the major funding sources:

FAPESP's funding opportunities are available for the early-career, foreign and Brazilian scientists. "Young Investigator Award," is a four-year grant, ranging from USD 200K to USD 2 million, which includes a fellowship for the investigator, support for laboratory start-up, travel to conferences, and fellowships for students. Detailed information for this program can be found at: <http://www.fapesp.br/en/6251>

Postdoctoral Fellowships are available for the postdoctoral fellow candidates. These funding opportunities last for three-five years in duration and include the fellow's stipend, relocation support, and money for research incidentals (travel and small equipment purchases). Details about these opportunities can be found at: <http://www.fapesp.br/en/postdoc>

For short-term research, there is the "Visiting Researcher Program" a funding mechanism to cover stipends and travel expenses for foreign investigators visiting higher education and research institutions in the state of Sao Paulo for periods of two weeks to one year. Further Details:

<http://www.fapesp.br/en/visiting>

There is also the "Sao Paulo School of Advanced Sciences" This program offers short duration courses (1-3 weeks) in advanced research to foreign graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and early career investigators. These courses provide great opportunities to interact with scientists from all around the world and initiate new collaborations. More information:

<http://espca.fapesp.br/home>

FAPESP has a collaborative mechanism for international programs. More than 300 agreements for joint research funding are currently signed with foreign funding agencies, universities, research organizations and companies all around the world. FAPESP currently has 100+ joint agreements with the US alone. Further reading:

<http://www.fapesp.br/acordos/en>

Cont. Funding Opportunities**By Vatsalya Vatsalya, M.D., Rosana Camarini, Ph.D.**

The “Sao Paulo Researchers in International Collaboration” (SPRINT) is designed to encourage and promote collaborations between Sao Paulo researchers and scientific partners abroad. This program provides funding for the initial phase of the international collaboration with the clear expectations that the partnership will continue after the initial phase is completed. More information can be reviewed at: <http://www.fapesp.br/en/sprint>.

There is a fairly new program funded by FAPESP for the advancement of scientific research called as “São Paulo Excellence Chairs”. This is a 3 to 5 years research grant that encourages top international scientists to conduct collaborative research in Sao Paulo for at least three months each year.

To learn more about the quality research conducted in Sao Paulo, and the opportunities for international investigators, please visit:

<http://agencia.fapesp.br/home/>.

**New Directions****By Ricardo Pautassi, Ph.D.**

- A significant fraction of patients exhibits co-occurrence of alcohol use disorders (AUD) and mental health conditions (MHCs). The correct assessment of this co-morbidity and the delivery of effective treatments for this population is a significant challenge. A recent article discusses these issues, and reviews screening and assessment tools for the primary care setting and factors that affect functioning and prognosis for these individuals. More reading [click here](#).

- New pre-clinical research, partially supported by the National Institutes of Health, showed that targeting a specific strain of a common bacteria (*E. faecalis*) may significantly diminished the detrimental consequences of liver disease. Specifically, in a mouse model of alcohol-associated liver disease mice, the researchers found reduced liver injury and inflammation, and reduced levels of cytolysin after treatment with an *E. faecalis*-targeting bacteriophage, compared to controls. The study, which was led by researchers at University of California San Diego and the VA San Diego Healthcare System, is now online at Nature. More reading: [click here](#).

- More reading on new and emerging research, click the hand right there →



Global Jobs

By Nioud (Neo) Gebru, M.P.S.

1. Medication Discovery and Toxicology (USA) - The Division of Therapeutics and Medical Consequences (DTMC) at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has an opening in the Addiction Treatment Discovery Program. The incumbent is responsible for helping lead a therapeutics development research program that ranges from preclinical models through to clinical testing in Phase I, Phase II and Phase III trials. Contact Dr. Jane B. Acri, (jacri@nih.gov).
2. [Professor in Social Science Drug and Alcohol Research at Aarhus University \(Denmark\)](#) - Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research (CRF), Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, School of Business and Social Sciences at Aarhus University invites applications for a position as professor in the field of social science drug and alcohol research. The professorship is a permanent full-time position starting on 1 august, 2020 or as soon as possible subject to mutual agreement. For more info:
3. [Coordinator \(Policy and Public Affairs\) \(Scotland\)](#) - Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS) is Scotland's national alcohol charity, committed to preventing and reducing harm to individuals, families, communities and Scotland as a whole. AFS is seeking a skilled policy professional to join our passionate team in the delivery of our strategic priorities. You will have a varied and challenging role, with a focus on developing and communicating our policy advocacy work, sharing the latest research, and keeping the team up to date on developments in parliament.



Fellowships/Post-doctoral positions

1. [JSPS Research Fellowships \(Japan\)](#) - The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) conducts fellowship programs for foreign (non-Japanese) researchers to promote international cooperation in and mutual understanding through scientific research in Japan. The program provides opportunities for U.S. citizen and permanent resident researchers to conduct cooperative research under Japanese host researchers in Japan.
2. [University of Maryland School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry \(USA\)](#) - A postdoctoral position is available in the Laboratory of Addiction Genomics at the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Maryland School of Medicine for a candidate who would like to extend her/his training knowledge to the field of alcohol and other substance use disorders.
3. [Postdoctoral Fellow in Internet Interventions for Mental Health & Alcohol Misuse Problems \(Canada\)](#) - The postdoctoral fellow will work in the Online Therapy Unit located in the Department of Psychology at the University of Regina under the direction of Dr. Heather Hadjistavropoulos. The Online Therapy Unit delivers and evaluates Internet-delivered Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (ICBT) for mental health conditions and alcohol misuse.

News and Events

By Fengyuan (Linda) Li, M.S.

News

New issue of NIAAA spectrum featuring "Alcohol and "Deaths of Despair" released. Click to learn more:

[NIAAA spectrum Vol 11, Issue 3](#)

The latest article from Alcohol Research Current Reviews explores interactions between stress and alcohol. To learn more: [Biobehavioral Interactions Between Stress and Alcohol](#)

Types of integrate treatments for co-occurring mental disorders have been reviewed in: [Integrating Treatment for Co-Occurring Mental Health Conditions](#)

"Bugs as Drugs": Bacteriophage therapy may ease severity of alcoholic hepatitis. Find more at: [Nature volume 575, pages505–511\(2019\)](#)

Event

March 30, 2020 to April 5, 2020

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week® 2020. To register in advance:

[National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week](#)



Research Highlights:

Scientists have developed new compound that helps find early signs of liver damage, find more at: [Nat Commun. 2019 Oct 29;10\(1\):4777.](#)

The co-occurrence of alcohol use disorder (AUD) and depression was explored. The full article can be found at: [AUD and Depressive Disorders](#)

Higher educational attainment, lower risk of alcohol dependence? See the study from NIH researchers at: [Educational Attainment Impacts Alcohol Dependence](#)

Co-use of marijuana and alcohol increases the risk of fetal development disruption. Full article can be found at: [Cannabinoids Exacerbate Alcohol Teratogenesis](#)

The effects of kratom and the potential impacts on people with alcohol use disorder has been examined. Read more from the study by the Purdue scientists: [Br J Pharmacol. 2019 Nov 8.](#)

MicroRNA-137 drives epigenetic reprogramming in the adult brain after adolescent alcohol exposure. Find more details of the study at: [MircoRNA-137 and Adolescent Alcohol Exposure](#)

Ever wonder how adults exposed to alcohol go on to develop compulsive drinking behaviors? [Find more here](#)

One-off dose of ketamine could enable heavy drinkers to reduce their alcohol intake by 'erasing' drink-related memories. Read more: [Ketamine for alcohol addiction treatment](#)

Conference Report

By Ricardo Pautassi, Ph.D.

The **IX LASBRA INTERNATIONAL MEETING: “Determinants of Alcoholism: bridging the gap between epidemiological and basic research”** took place at the Centro Cultural Cordoba (Cordoba, Argentina), from November 7th to 9th 2019. The attendance was close to 150, comprising researchers and graduate and undergraduate students from Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, USA and some European countries. The meeting was organized by the Latin American Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (LASBRA), with the financial help of Secretaría de Prevención y Asistencia de las Adicciones (Gobierno de Córdoba, Argentina), IBRO, CONICET, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Instituto Ferreyra (INIMEC-CONICET) and the Ministry of Science and Technology (Gobierno de Cordoba).

The meeting included eight keynote conferences given by outstanding researchers. Dr. Marcelo López (USA) and Dr. Joseph Labrie (USA) discussed new pharmacological and environmental interventions to treat excessive alcohol consumption, whereas Dr. Camarini (Brazil) and Dr. Thomas (USA) presented recent data on other non-pharmacological treatments for alcohol-use disorders or effects. The conferences by Drs. Aguayo (Chile), Spanagel (Germany) and D’Addario (Italy) focused on molecular and genetic factors underlying these disorders. Dr. Yedy Israel (Chile) closed the meeting focusing on results that determine alcohol intake, from initiation to maintenance and relapse binge-drinking.

There were four symposiums featuring presentations by local, regional and international speakers, such as Alexander Gómez (USA), Yanina Pepino (USA), Ricardo Pautassi (Argentina), Rosana Camarini (Brasil), Miriam Virgolini (Argentina) and Eduardo Karahanian (Chile), among many others.





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Looking for Leadership Opportunities?

Be part of an organization that is dedicated to building community amongst ISBRA's diverse population; that is committed to bringing news about career building resources and events to ISBRA members; to being a voice regarding issues that are of importance to ISBRA members. Contact any of the committee officers to find out about being a part of the Communications Committee.