

PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY NEWSLETTER

(Division 28 - The American Psychological Association)

WINTER, 1978

NEW PHARMACOLOGY CHAIR CHOSEN

Psychopharmacologists-behavioral pharmacologists should be elated by the recent action of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in selecting a behavioral pharmacologist as the new Chairperson of the Department of Pharmacology. Donald E. McMillan, presently Professor of Pharmacology at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, will assume the Chair of the Department at the Little Rock campus this summer, succeeding Werner Flacke, a renowned autonomic pharmacologist. Don and his work are well known by many members of Division 28. He was trained in behavioral science at the University of Pittsburgh, then went to Peter Dews' laboratory at Harvard Medical School for a postdoctoral in pharmacology. His interest in the effects of drugs on behavior mediated via the central nervous system persisted as his career in pharmacology developed at the Downstate New York Medical Center and the University of North Carolina. His laboratory studies describing the effects of various types of drugs and chemical substances on behavior and the central nervous system represent a substantial contribution to the literature in behavioral pharmacology and behavioral toxicology. Moreover, his utilization of schedule-controlled behavior in the study of psychoactive drugs has contributed to an enhanced awareness of the value of conditioned operant behavior in quantitating the effects of drugs on the central nervous system. The selection of Don McMillan as Chairperson of the Pharmacology Department at Little Rock represents a milestone in the development of behavioral pharmacology and is an event of which the membership of Division 28 should be proud. Congratulations, Don.

CONVENTION POSTSCRIPT

At its meeting on October 13-14, the Board of Convention Affairs completed an analysis of attendance in San Francisco. It found that the number of registrants, including accompanying persons, reached an all time high of 16,967. The Board also reviewed the finances of the child care center and found it necessary to recommend to the Board of Directors and Council of Representatives fee structure changes in order to minimize the substantial deficit experienced in San Francisco. Aside from the financial problems of the center, according to those attending the Consumer Meeting held near the end of the convention, the center was a smashing success.

(APA Causerie, November, 1977)

(Editor's addendum: The Board of Convention Affairs should also be apprised of the disruptive effect that resulted from placing the registration table for the child care center in the hall outside a meeting room. Those attending paper sessions (e.g. Behavioral Pharmacology II) in the Rosewood Suite of the San Francisco Hilton were subjected to frequent and unnecessarily loud laughing, crying and talking by parents and children alike. Surely a more suitable location for the registration table could have been found elsewhere in the hotel.)

REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS

The Executive Committee of Division 28 invites nominations for three offices. Nominations for President-Elect, Secretary and Members-at-Large (two) should be forwarded to Herbert Barry III, Division 28 Secretary, University of Pittsburgh.

PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY RESEARCH AT BOSTON
UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Psychopharmacology research has been carried out at Boston University School of Medicine since 1959 when I came to the University from the NIMH. By the early 1960's, Psychopharmacology research was flourishing not only in my laboratory, but in the laboratories of Allan P. Mirsky and Seymour Fisher in the Division of Psychiatry and Joseph Cochin in the Department of Pharmacology.

At the present time, psychopharmacology research is carried out in a number of laboratories. Most human experimentation is done in the Psychopharmacology Laboratory (Division of Psychiatry); the director of this laboratory is Seymour Fisher and its major investigators are Douglas McNair, Richard Pillard and James Barrett.

The work of the Psychopharmacology Laboratory covers a variety of activities. The group has pioneered in the use of symptomatic volunteers as research subjects in psychopharmacology research. The volunteers are individuals who have psychiatric symptoms but are not in any therapy program. Recruitment is by means of newspaper advertisements in which a brief symptom questionnaire is given for the prospective subject to fill out and send into the laboratory. Among the long range goals of this laboratory is the development of experimental model systems for the study of clinical anxiety, depression and hostility. These models have proved to be quite useful in the study of anti-anxiety or anti-depressant drugs and are now being used as screening tests for putative therapeutic compounds.

The Laboratory of Behavioral Pharmacology in the Division of Psychiatry is staffed by myself, one post-doctoral student (Ralph Esposito) and a number of graduate students. The work in the laboratory may be roughly divided into experiments designed to model in the rat the attentional disorder seen in the schizophrenic patient and studies on the

effects of various abused and therapeutic drugs on the threshold for intracranial self-stimulation. The studies attempting to model the attentional disorder have made use of test procedures that are go - no go tasks for the rat. This is modeled after an attentional task used in studies of schizophrenic patients. Once animals are trained, they are surgically implanted with a stimulating electrode or a push-pull cannula in the reticular formation. We have been studying the effects of electrical stimulation or direct application of norepinephrine to the reticular formation on behavior and interaction with the effects of systematically administered antipsychotic drugs.

The intracranial self-stimulation studies have made use of psychopharmacological methodology for the study of the effects of various drugs on self-stimulation thresholds. These experiments suggest that we may have a model for determining the abuse potential of various psychoactive drugs that would complement the present drug self-administration model.

Other investigators at Boston University involved in psychopharmacological studies are Allan P. Mirsky (Laboratory of Neuropsychology), who by means of single-unit techniques, has been studying the relationships among drug action, behavior and single-unit activity in the monkey, and Joseph Cochin and Gladys Friedler, two pharmacologists who are investigating various aspects of the action of narcotic drugs. Cochin has studied factors contributing to the development and loss of tolerance to analgesic drugs, and Friedler has looked at the effects of pregestational narcotic drug administration on the growth and behavior of the offspring.

There is a post-doctoral training program in the Division of Psychiatry, directed by Seymour Fisher. This program takes candidates with either Ph.D. or M.D. degrees. Many of the fellows have done their research work in psychopharmacology.

The above mentioned groups have graduate students from either pharmacology or psychology participating in their respective research programs. What is somewhat unique in the Laboratory of Behavioral Pharmacology is that we have both pharmacology as well as psychology graduate students. This allows for a great deal of cross-fertilization between fields. In addition to graduate students, we often have Boston University undergraduate students who are doing distinction (honors) work in my laboratory.

Hopefully, research in various aspects of psychopharmacology will continue to flourish at Boston University School of Medicine.

(Conan Kornetsky)

AWARDS

The American Psychological Foundation (APF) invites nominations for the 1978 Gold Medal Award. The award is given in recognition of a distinguished record of scientific and scholarly accomplishment, and is limited to North American psychologists at least 65 years of age. A letter of nomination and a statement highlighting the accomplishments of the nominee should be forwarded to the American Psychological Foundation, 1200 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, before March 15.

THE APP also invites nominations for the 1978 Award for Distinguished Teaching in Psychology. Characteristics of the nominee should include demonstrated influence as a teacher of students who become outstanding psychologists, development of effective teaching methods and materials, outstanding performance as a classroom teacher and development of innovative curricula and courses. Nomination materials can be obtained from Bill Kalkhof, Teaching Award Committee, 1200 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

KLERMAN NOMINATION UPDATE

Hearings on the nomination of Harvard Medical School psychiatrist Gerald Klerman as the new Administrator of HEW's Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA) took place on October 26 before the Senate Committee on Human Resources. Because this is an important appointment for the field of mental health, APA asked to testify at the hearings. Public speculation had centered around what some believe to be APA's "opposition" to Klerman. However, Dr. Kiesler's testimony emphasized that APA does not oppose the nomination of Klerman, but rather desires to get Klerman's position concerning issues such as research funding, graduate training, training support, and sharing of leadership among all mental health professions on the record. These issues had been discussed previously in the meetings with Dr. Klerman and with Assistant Secretary for Health, Jules Richmond. Copies of Dr. Kiesler's testimony may be obtained from Steve Nelson at APA.

(APA Causerie, November, 1977)

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Two-year fellowships are available in the Research Training Program in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Department of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School. A consortium of research units in the several mental health centers of the Department of Psychiatry provides training in a number of high priority areas including alcoholism, drug abuse, human development and child mental health, depression and suicide, schizophrenia, the evaluation of treatment modalities, mental health services, sociocultural factors and mental illness. The program is supported by an NIMH National Research Service Institutional award. For information, contact Elliot G. Mishler, Program Director, Research Training Program in Social and Behavioral Sciences, 74 Fenwood Road, Boston, Massachusetts 02115.

SUPPORT FOR BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH TRAINING

The National Academy of Sciences panel studying the nation's needs for research personnel is sticking to its guns in urging a shift in behavioral research training from mostly predoctoral support to mostly postdoctoral support, according to its third and latest report. The NAS Committee on a Study of the National Needs for Biomedical and Behavioral Research Personnel last year recommended that federal funds for research training in the behavioral sciences undergo substantial redistribution in the next few years so that ultimately 70 percent of research training awards are channeled into postdoctoral support.

Despite arguments from professional groups that the research enterprise needs more not fewer behavioral scientists, the Committee concluded that the academic job picture isn't looking any better and that a considerable slowdown from the current growth in behavioral science Ph.D. faculty can be expected over the 1975-82 period. The report repeated last year's recommendation that the institutional training grant be retained as the primary mechanism for support in the behavioral sciences. It specifically urged that the current proportion of 82 percent traineeships to 18 percent individual fellowships be continued.

Early signals on the FY 79 Carter budget suggest that the research training program at NIMH will be tagged for dollar cuts and only postdoctoral fellowships will be allowed to continue. Training grants would be phased out, as would predoctoral support.

(APA Monitor, January, 1978)

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Material of interest to the membership of Division 28 should be forwarded for inclusion in the Newsletter to:

Dr. Larry D. Byrd
Yerkes Regional Primate Research Ctr.
Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia 30322

PSYCHONEUROENDOCRINOLOGY

The 9th Congress of the International Society of Psychoneuroendocrinology will be held August 20-24, 1978, at the University of Dublin in Ireland. Information concerning the Congress can be obtained from Dr. Austin Darragh, The International Society of Psychoneuroendocrinology, Irish Medical Association, 10 Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin 2, Ireland.

PUBLICATIONS

Bertelli, A., Cassano, G. B., Castrogiovanni, P., Levine, J. and Wittenborn, J. R. (eds.): Evaluation of New Drugs in Clinical Psychopharmacology. J. R. Prous: Barcelona, 1977, 462 pp.

Clark, W. G. and Del Giudice, J. (eds.): Principles of Psychopharmacology, 2nd Ed. Academic Press: New York, 1977, 950 pp.

Cohen, M. J.: Drugs and the Special Child. Halsted Press: New York, 1977, 276 pp.

Iversen, L. L., Iversen, S. D. and Snyder, S. H. (eds.): Principles of Behavioral Pharmacology. Plenum Publishing Corp.: New York, 1977, 453 pp.

Iversen, L. L., Iversen, S. D. and Snyder, S. H. (eds.): Drugs, Neurotransmitters, and Behavior. Plenum Publishing Corp.: New York, 1977, 610 pp.

Lemberger, L. and Rubin, A.: Physiologic Disposition of Drugs of Abuse. Halsted Press: New York, 1976.

Levitt, R. A. (ed.): Psychopharmacology. A Biological Approach. Halsted Press: New York, 1975, 502 pp.

Chambers, C. D., Inciardi, J. A. and Siegal, H. A.: Chemical Coping. A Report on Legal Drug Use in the United States. Halsted Press: New York.

Lavender, W. J.: LSD Psychosis: A Longitudinal Study. Dabor Science Publications: Oceanside, New York.
