

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

A number of studies have recently used modern neuropsychological techniques to investigate abnormalities in impulsive personality disorders. In the lead editorial in this issue, Rogers (pp. 1335–1340) reviews this growing field.

Three papers examine developmental issues. Gilman *et al.* (pp. 1341–1355) report findings obtained from a longitudinal birth cohort from Providence, Rhode Island. Low parental socio-economic status, childhood family disruption and frequent residential moves increased the risk of depression both in childhood and in adulthood, with effects of the last two factors more on depression under age 14. Childhood social disadvantage also worsened prognosis, with increased likelihood of recurrence and less likelihood of remission.

In a similar cohort from Christchurch, New Zealand, Fergusson *et al.* (pp. 1357–1367) examine the much discussed association between smoking and depression. They find the two associated in young adults, with many, but not all, of the associations attributable to confounding earlier social and personal factors that are associated with both risks. In a related theme Simon *et al.* (pp. 1369–1379) describe a marked increase at puberty in unhealthy behaviours, particularly smoking and intake of higher fat food. This is not mediated by an increase in stress.

Three papers report on biological and related aspects of eating and its disorders. Attenburrow *et al.* (pp. 1381–1386) report an experiment with dieting in healthy women, dieting for 3 weeks. Fasting plasma tryptophan fell. This was not prevented by administration of oral tryptophan but enhanced prolactin response to intravenous tryptophan was prevented. This group has previously implicated tryptophan depletion in bulimia. Monteleone *et al.* (pp. 1387–1394) studied responses to food in bulimia nervosa for two recently recognized food-related hormones, leptin and ghrelin. They report a new finding, blunting of the normal marked ghrelin decrease in bulimic women compared with healthy controls. Using a twin study, Wade *et al.* (pp. 1395–1405) report on genetic elements and environmental elements in a number of separable attitudinal components of body image in women.

Two papers deal with substance abusers. Chen *et al.* (pp. 1407–1414) seek to distinguish factors leading to psychosis in methamphetamine users in a study comparing users who have had an episode of psychosis and those who have not. Users who developed typical methamphetamine psychosis started use earlier, consumed more, had higher scores for pre-morbid schizoid and schizotypal traits, higher rates of depression, alcohol dependence and antisocial personality. The findings suggest both that greater methamphetamine use is more likely to lead to psychosis, and that schizoid/schizotypal personality predisposes to psychosis and its longer duration. Gruber *et al.* (pp. 1415–1422) compare heavy and light users of cannabis, and find heavier use associated with lower educational attainment and income, and occurring in spite of pronounced negative self-reports of effects of cannabis on their cognition, memory, career, social life, physical and mental health. In a related paper Hettema *et al.* (pp. 1423–1432) report retrospective data from a large longitudinal sample of twins, showing that alcohol dependence and psychoactive substance use disorders, as well as anxiety disorders and conduct disorder, are associated with development of major depressive disorder not only co-morbidly, but also later.

Two papers report neuropsychological studies. Blakemore *et al.* (pp. 1433–1441) find abnormalities in the attribution of intentional contingency in patients with delusions of persecution. Den Hartog *et al.* (pp. 1443–1451) report deficits on Stroop, memory scanning and memory span tasks in patients with major depression. These are on automatic processing but not the more effortful tasks, suggesting that the primary abnormality is in cognitive speed rather than effortful processing.