

**Results:** The majority of premorbid and sociodemographic variables as well as course parameters were similar in the two groups. Most of the few differences (in age at first manifestation, marital state at onset, presence of stable heterosexual relationship before onset, acuteness of onset, presence of life events) are closely connected with the inclusion and exclusion criteria applied for the puerperal disorders (exclusion of patients with pre-existing illness or psychiatric symptoms during pregnancy, inclusion only if onset was within 6 weeks of parturition). The puerperal schizoaffective disorders began more frequently with a schizomanic episode and less frequently with a schizodepressive episode than did the non-puerperal schizoaffective disorders, a finding maybe reflecting the "pathoplastic" role of the puerperium on psychotic disorders. Several significant differences were found regarding the long-term outcome (frequency of persisting alterations, level of global functioning and disability, non-achievement of the expected social development, loss of autarky), confirming earlier findings that puerperal disorders have in general a better outcome than other psychotic disorders.

**Conclusions:** The comparison of long-term course and outcome of schizoaffective female patients with and without onset after childbirth showed that there are some differences, resulting from the characteristics of both groups, but there are no findings which justify to separate post partum disorders in a nosological sense.

#### REDUCED BLUE CONE ELECTRORETINOGRAM IN COCAINE WITHDRAWN PATIENT

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**Background** The main reinforcing effect of cocaine is altering dopaminergic neurotransmission in the brain systems. Since dopamine is found in high concentrations in the retina, we investigated whether cocaine dependence may be associated with abnormalities of the electroretinogram (ERG). **Methods** We compared recently withdrawn cocaine dependent patients (N = 20) with age, sex and racially matched normal controls (N = 20) for responses of cone photo-receptors to light flashes on full field ERG. **Results** Cocaine dependent patients had significantly reduced blue cone ERG responses compared with matched controls. **Conclusion** This result suggests that in cocaine dependent patients there is dysregulation of blue cone function. The ERG may be useful in future studies of cocaine dependent patients.

#### USE OF PHARMACOTHERAPY IN CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

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Childhood and adolescence mental disorders are frequent, and often precursors of adult life dysfunctions. The successful treatment of them represents a major public health concern. Drug treatment is far from being the only therapeutic approach nowadays, but does undeniably have a place which should be clearly defined. In children, the use of psychopharmacotherapy has often been a matter of controversy, and has been little studied. Despite of a growing interest and knowledge in the drug treatment of children mental disorders, much remains to be learned. **Objectives:** The purpose of this study is to evaluate the use of psychopharmacologic treatments among children and adolescents, attending an out-patient clinic of child and adolescent psychiatry, in order to know its pattern of use, doses, and side effects. **Methods:** A prospective study about the use of psychotropic drug treatment is carried out in our unit in Madrid. The examined sample consists of 500 children and adolescents who are treated

in our out-patient clinic. The doses and prescriptions of drugs is evaluated in relation with age, sex, and clinical diagnoses (DSM-IV and/or CIE-10). **Results and conclusions:** The main outcome results will be discussed.

#### CLINICAL AND PSYCHOMETRICAL CORRELATES OF ALCOHOL CRAVING IN ALCOHOL DEPENDENT MALE INPATIENTS

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A sample of 276 male alcohol dependent inpatients admitted to Addiction Treatment Unit was divided in two groups: (1) 72 subjects with longer alcohol abstinence (over one month) on the admission and (2) 204 persons with short alcohol abstinence (less than one month). In all patients, extensive clinical assessment was carried out. Psychometric evaluation included: Alcohol Dependence Scale (ADS), Inventory of Drinking Situations (IDS), Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and MMPI test. Also, all investigated persons filled a questionnaire concerning alcohol craving in last 14 days before the admission.

**Results.** In persons with longer abstinence, 52% of subjects reported alcohol craving in 14 days before assessment compared with 85% of subjects with short alcohol abstinence ( $p < 0.00001$ ). Persons with longer alcohol abstinence and alcohol craving compared with persons with short alcohol abstinence and alcohol craving had lower number of alcohol craving days (3 vs 7 days). In subjects with longer abstinence, these which reported alcohol craving compared with persons which did not ( $p < ..$ ) report the craving, had significantly more relatives with alcohol dependence (59 vs 34%). In group of patients with shorter alcohol abstinence, significantly positive correlations were obtained between number of alcohol craving days and the magnitude of scoring on ADS, BDI, all problem index categories of IDS, and on following scales of MMPI test — hypochondriasis, depression, hysteria, psychopathic deviate, paranoia, psychasthenia, schizophrenia, hypomania, social introversion. Also in group of subjects with shorter alcohol abstinence, significantly positive correlations were obtained between the intensity of alcohol craving and the scoring on ADS, BDI and problem drinking categories of IDS such as unpleasant emotions physical discomfort, pleasant emotions, testing personal control, urges to drink, conflict with others, and on following scales of MMPI test — hypochondriasis, psychopathic deviate, depression, hysteria, psychasthenia, schizophrenia, hypomania, social introversion.

**Conclusions.** Alcohol craving is a heterogeneous dimension, with interplay of various clinical and psychological factors.

#### SELF-ESTEEM IN ADOLESCENTS WITH CONDUCT PROBLEMS AND DEPRESSION

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Studies investigating self-esteem and its relation with behavioural problems in adolescents report contradictory and inconsistency results. The contradictory results have been discussed by Kaplan (1975, 1978, 1991, 1992); he found that continuous engagement in deviant behaviour may enhance the self-esteem level, and therefore, low self-esteem may not associated with deviant behaviour for these group of children. Moreover, mixed problems of behaviour and emotion are more strongly associated with low self-esteem than behavioural problems on their own. In contrast, depression has been shown to be consistently associated with low self-esteem.

In order to have a better understanding of adolescents self-esteem