

## Abstracts

### *The Neurochemistry of Morality*, **Molly Crockett**

Our moral values form a core part to who we are; so much so that when a person's moral values change, we think of them as a different person. But recent work in neuroscience shows that it is possible to alter people's moral values with psychoactive medications. I will discuss this work and its implications for our notions of self and the ethics of pharmacology.

### *The Intensity of Legal Control*, **Rudi Fortson**

The law operates on many levels which vary in type and intensity, depending on what is at stake. The Psychoactive Substances Act - as drafted - is too broadly drawn, too uncertain as to its reach and scope, and not apt to address current drug use and drug abuse. Not all drugs are equally harmful. Not all actions with respect to drugs are equally dangerous. And thus, the idea that a "one size fits all" approach to legislation - which seems to me to be the practical effect of the PSA - is inappropriate. However, drug production and distribution cannot be left unregulated, particularly in relation to vulnerable persons.

### *Fundamentally Flawed*, **David Nutt**

The Psychoactive Substances Act is flawed in terms of logic and definition. It is a purely political Act based on dishonest presentation of the facts about the harms of legal highs. It might not achieve its aims – it is likely to make things worse, there are proven much less draconian approaches to deal with the legal highs issue. Furthermore, it could seriously damage brain research in the UK.

### *Defending the Indefensible*, **John Ramsey**

Attempts to control the supply of NPS by amending the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) has led to the development of increasingly toxic compounds. The real possibility exists that producers will stumble across a compound like MPTP, a single dose of which causes irreversible symptoms of Parkinsonism. The PSA has its difficulties, but we owe it to the young and vulnerable to do our best to protect them from harm from recreational drugs in a similar manner to how we protect patients from novel pharmaceuticals with the Medicines Act. If not the PSA then what?

### *Questions from an Economics Framework*, **Jonathan Cave**

Is the individual taking psychoactive substances for recreational or performance-enhancing purposes? What are the differences between NPS and traditional partially-processed natural products? What are the 'framing' effects of legal status? Of retail distribution? Of their proximity to other substances known or believed to be safe, such as cannabinoids? And of social network/peer pressure?

### *A Universal Human Theme*, **Stuart Walton**

Altered consciousness has been an indispensable category of experience throughout all human affairs, and one that poorly thought acts of parliament - either a century ago or today - won't succeed in taking from us. A condensed outline of the cultural-historical aspects of the issue can trace this attempt back to the medicalisation of psychoactivity in the 19th century, in turn an effect of its dispersal into recreational social contexts from its roots in ancient shamanic and classical religious ritual. It is too deeply imbued in our evolutionary history to be wished away.

### *Perception, Illusion, Hallucination*, **Ophelia Deroy**

This experience is aimed at showing that by stimulating our senses, we can feel novel perceptions. Guests are invited to put a Sichuan pepper solution on their lips, then invited to watch a projection of oil-painting illusion artist Bridget Riley, while listening to a soundscape.

### *The Scent of Terpene Molecules*, **Yewande Okuleye**

This relational aesthetics encounter attempts to re-conceptualise cannabis through the embodied experience of the olfactory system. Guests will smell two common terpenes with the view to open up the discussion about how mapping cannabis terpenes profiles might enable cultivators to engineer medical cannabis strains. As guests explore the associations, feelings and memories evoked, they become part of the experiment, as their feedback could potentially be insightful to scientific enquiry.