

is much debated' or that 'the beverage alcohol industry are active participants in policy development and implementation' (report from ICAP workshop in Vietnam 2009) [1].

My second observation is regarding the comment from the Global Alcohol Producers Group, that most countries already have some degree of regulatory framework. This is not the case for the Asia-Pacific region. Most of the countries have no regulations on alcohol or, if they do, they are outdated regulations around industry and trade, with no consideration to public health.

My third observation concerns the issue of the economic operators promoting responsible drinking and self-regulation codes on marketing and advertising as two effective ways to reduce harmful use of alcohol. From the viewpoint of reducing harmful drinking in countries where large segments of the population are still abstainers, this is nonsense. Especially women, but also young people in many lower-income countries, have traditionally been abstainers. Massive advertising campaigns for western-style beverages are now taking over the streets with pictures of success, sex and sports, with the side slogan 'drink moderately'. Entirely new groups of people are taking up the habit of alcohol consumption, and the industry wants us to believe that messages of moderate drinking are the way to reduce harmful use of alcohol.

#### Declaration of interests

I declare no conflict of interest.

**Keywords** Alcohol policy, alcohol industry, Asia-Pacific.

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### THE ALCOHOL INDUSTRY AND THE WORLD CUP IN BRAZIL

An editorial published last year in *Addiction* [1] described the development of a ban on alcohol selling and consumption inside Brazil's soccer stadiums. Such a regula-

tion was first put into place in 1995 in São Paulo state, as a reaction to the death of a teenager during a soccer match. Other states in the country followed São Paulo's lead with their own regulations and finally, in 2003, the ban became a federal law (Estatuto do Torcedor: Spectators' Law).

In April 2008, the president of the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) signed a document supporting the alcohol ban and stated: 'I am absolutely convinced that this practice will show an important result' [2]. Only 14 months after this comment was made public, however, the World Soccer Cup Local Organizer Committee (COL) informed the states that will host the 2014 World Soccer Cup that the alcohol sales and consumption ban laws would have to change to allow alcoholic beverages to be sold [3].

In fact, in June 2012, 1 day after our federal lawmakers changed the Spectator's Law on the matter, also allowing the states to regulate alcohol in the stadiums during the World Cup, the new president of the CBF indicated that the state legislators should have 'conscience of their responsibility of what is better for Brazil' [4]. This statement was interpreted as an indication to state legislators that they should change the state laws and lift the ban on alcohol selling and consumption. Currently, most of the states have indeed lifted the ban, and several voices in the government are advancing the idea of permanently allowing alcohol in stadiums.

This seems to have been the result of pressure by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). For years, FIFA has had in place a lucrative contract with AB Inbev's brand, Budweiser, that has just been extended to the Qatar World Cup in 2022. FIFA's Secretary General was very clear in his position towards the matter: 'Alcoholic drinks are part of the FIFA World Cup, so we're going to have them. (...), that's something we won't negotiate. The fact that we have the right to sell beer has to be a part of the law' [5].

This turn of events contrasts with the statements produced by the Director General of the Global Alcohol Producers Group affirming that they 'do not dispute that final decisions about policy are matters for governments' [6]. In the case just described, the alcohol industry, represented by the world's largest brewer, had a very public opportunity to not interfere in a country's alcohol policy and, visibly, did exactly the opposite.

Therefore, let us be very clear: the alcohol industry seeks to determine alcohol policy, as it has no problem in pressuring for changes in policies already in place when such policies interfere with their corporate aims.

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## **ANIMAL FARM MUST GIVE WAY TO DOUBLETHINK WHEN STUDYING ADDICTION**

A recent editorial in *Nature*, entitled 'Animal Farm', argued against a lobbying campaign that aims to prevent animals from being used for addiction research [1], rebutting the view from the lobbyists that 'addiction is a social problem' and claiming instead that it is a 'brain disease'. It seems to us that the authors of the editorial mirrored

the mistake being made by the lobbyists in ignoring a large body of research that does not fit their world view: evidence showing that addiction is socially patterned, and that prevalence responds to influences that do not need to assume pathology, such as social marketing campaigns (in the case of smoking), price rises (tobacco and alcohol), recovery without treatment arising from a change in personal circumstances and restrictions on availability [2].

Readers of *Addiction* will be familiar with the perennial debate about the extent to which addiction is a brain disease [3–12]. After many decades of research in this area, it must be preferable to frame the problem in terms that permit the gamut of potentially effective interventions to be harnessed, not simply those that focus upon pathological failures in choice or executive control mechanisms or powerful acquired drives [13].

George Orwell coined the term 'doublethink' to refer to the act of holding contradictory views in different contexts. When it comes to a socially defined construct such as addiction, where definitions serve a utilitarian function, this is no bad thing. In fact, there are well-articulated models that can explain addiction in terms that permit a focus on biological, psychological and social aspects depending on the context. These models [e.g. PRIME Theory [2]] bring together such apparently diverse *zeitgeists* into coherent explanations that make predictions for effectiveness of interventions that are borne out by the evidence [2,13]. It would be helpful if people working in the field across the spectrum from basic to social science would set their research agenda within these integrative approaches so that we can make faster progress and apply the knowledge gained more effectively.

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**Keywords** Addiction, brain disease, interventions, models, motivation, theories.