

Washington University School of Medicine

Digital Commons@Becker

---

Posters

2009: Translating Basic Science Findings to  
Guide Prevention Efforts

---

2009

## Mood and urgency effects on alcohol expectancies

H. R. Treloar

*University of Missouri - Columbia*

D. M. McCarthy

*University of Missouri - Columbia*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/guzeposter2009>



Part of the [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Treloar, H. R. and McCarthy, D. M., "Mood and urgency effects on alcohol expectancies" (2009). *Posters*. Paper 30 Samuel B. Guze Symposium on Alcoholism.  
<https://digitalcommons.wustl.edu/guzeposter2009/30>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the 2009: Translating Basic Science Findings to Guide Prevention Efforts at Digital Commons@Becker. It has been accepted for inclusion in Posters by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Becker. For more information, please contact [vanam@wustl.edu](mailto:vanam@wustl.edu).



# Mood and Urgency Effects on Alcohol Expectancies

H. R. Treloar & D. M. McCarthy  
University of Missouri



## Introduction

- Current mood facilitates the activation of mood congruent memory (Mood-congruent Memory Theory; Hufford, 2001).
- Therefore, specific mood states should influence the activation of specific expectancies in memory.
- Alcohol expectancies are anticipated outcomes from alcohol use stored in memory (Goldman et al., 2006).
- Prior studies of mood and alcohol expectancies have shown that individuals self-generate more:
  - positive reinforcement alcohol expectancies after a positive mood induction
  - negative reinforcement expectancies after a negative mood induction (Birch et al., 2004; McKee, Wall, Hinson, Goldstein, & Bissonette, 2003).
- We tested whether individual differences in the personality trait urgency affects the activation of alcohol expectancies following mood induction.
- Urgency is a sub-component of impulsivity that:
  - is closely tied to mood reactivity
  - has both positive and negative components
  - is associated with drinking behavior (Cyders et al., 2007).

## Method

### Participants

- 324 participants signed up for the study; 313 (97%) completed both parts.
- Participants were 18 to 23 years old (mean age = 18.6; 62% women; 87.3% Caucasian) recruited from introductory psychology courses at the University of Missouri.
- 79.3% of our sample had at least one alcoholic drink in the past month.

### Measures

- **Questionnaire measures included:**
  - Demographics
  - UPPS Impulsive Behavior Scale—Revised (UPPS-R; Whiteside & Lynam, 2001)
  - The Positive Urgency Measure (PUM; Cyders et al., 2007)
  - Alcohol Expectancies Questionnaire (AEQ; Brown, Goldman, Inn, & Anderson, 1980)
  - The Drinking Styles Questionnaire (Smith, McCarthy, & Goldman, 1995)
- Visual Analogue Scales (VAS)
  - Participants rate their current mood state on four positive affect (*cheerful, happy, glad, and pleased*) and three negative affect (*sad, depressed, and blue*) scales by drawing a vertical line through a 100mm continuum.

### Example:

How *cheerful* are you right now?

Not at all-----Very

## Procedure

- Participants were randomly assigned to a mood manipulation task (positive, negative, or neutral) in which they rated IAPS slides (Greenwald, Cook, & Lang, 1989) and listened to mood-congruent music. Examples:

Positive Slide



Neutral Slide



Negative Slide



- Immediately following, participants self-generated alcohol expectancies by responding to the stem, "Alcohol makes me....."
- All questionnaire measures were completed online.

## Results

### Manipulation Check

- VAS scale positive and negative mood ratings were significantly different between positive, neutral, and negative mood conditions ( $p$ 's < .05).

### Main Effects

- Counts of self-generated positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, and negative consequences alcohol expectancies were not significantly different across mood conditions.
- Main effects of positive and negative urgency on expectancy counts were non-significant as well.

### Interactions

- ANOVAs revealed a significant interaction between mood condition and positive urgency on positive reinforcement alcohol expectancies,  $F(2, 236) = 4.51, p = .012$ .
- Interaction of mood condition and positive urgency on negative consequences expectancy activation was also significant,  $F(2, 236) = 3.26, p < .05$ .
- Probing these interactions revealed that positive urgency is significantly *negatively* related to activation of positive reinforcement expectancies when participants are in a negative mood ( $r = -.36$ ; Figure 1) and significantly *positively* related to negative consequences when participants are in a negative mood ( $r = .25$ ; Figure 2).
- Mood condition did not interact with positive urgency to influence negative reinforcement expectancy activation, showing specificity of the effect.
- Interactions between negative urgency and mood condition were non-significant for all three expectancy types.

Figure 1. Positive Reinforcement Expectancies by Positive Urgency and Mood Condition

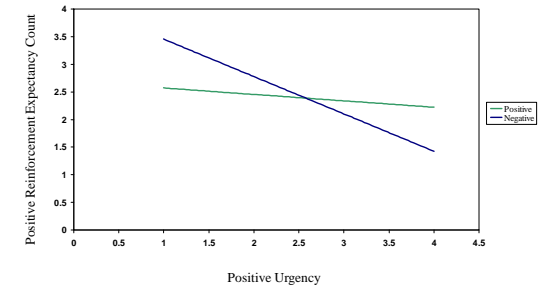
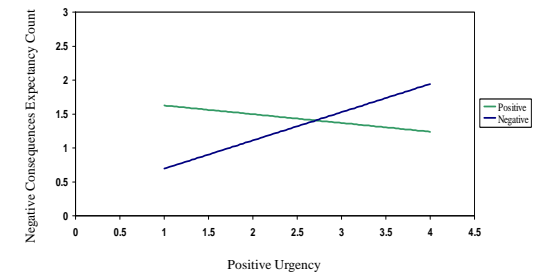


Figure 2. Negative Consequences by Positive Urgency and Mood Condition



## Discussion

- As hypothesized, differences in mood affected the relationship between the personality characteristic positive urgency and activation of specific mood-related alcohol expectancies in memory.
- Unlike prior studies (Birch et al., 2004; McKee et al., 2003; Simons et al., 2005), no main effects of mood on expectancy activation were observed.
- This study is a first step toward demonstrating expectancy activation as a mechanism by which personality traits and mood influence alcohol use decisions.
- Future research is needed to test whether the differential activation of expectancies found in this study would lead to actual differences in drinking behavior.