

Date: Fri, 23 Apr 2004 19:35:18 +0300

To: editor@wsj.com

From: Alexei Koudinov <alexeikoudinov@neurobiologyoflipids.org>

Subject: letter to the editors on WSJ coverage of Alzheimer's research (ver.1)

23 April 2004

Dear Editor:

I appreciate *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) excellent Science journal article "Scientists World-Wide Battle a Narrow View of Alzheimer's Cause" ([16 April 2004, p.A.9](#)) as well as earlier public-eye-opening WSJ article "Is Alzheimer's Field Blocking Research Into Other Causes?" ([9 April 2004, p.B.1](#)). Both articles provide a long needed true view on state of affairs in Alzheimer's disease (AD) research.

I therefore do not agree with the [Alzheimer's association letter to the WSJ editor](#) that April 16 article by Sharon Begley "incorrectly implies Alzheimer science is headed down a blind alley". Oppositely to the Association view I and many other scientists firsthand involved in AD research believe that Alzheimer's neuroscience is indeed "headed down a blind alley" and is under the arrest by the amyloid dogma. What WSJ reports miss is the coverage of the [severe competing financial interest by an Alzheimer's field leader](#), well qualified to be investigated by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Unfortunately, one can not exclude that Alzheimer's association and National Institute of Aging (i.e. major non-government and government bodies funding AD research, respectively) are the parts of the amyloid cabal. Such view comes to mind after reading earlier WSJ article "Did Ties To Alzheimer's Test Maker Sway NIH Report?" ([30 Nov 1998](#)), associated Nature Medicine ([Vol.5, 713, 1999](#)) coverage and Boston Phoenix article "Science for Sale" ([29 April 1999](#)); and the [testimony of Richard J. Hodes, M.D.](#), Director, National Institute on Aging (NIA) to the Labor-HHS Subcommittee Hearing on Alzheimer's Disease Research (23 March 2004); the fact of awarding [Alzheimer's association grant to Dennis Selkoe in 1999](#); his service for a National Institute of Health as a [member of the NIH NACA](#) (National Advisory Council on Aging) for a number of years; and his listing as a speaker at the upcoming Alzheimer's Association Research Conference, Philadelphia, PA, July 17-22, 2004 ([Program for Monday, July 19, 2004](#)) without acknowledging Dr.Selkoe' service as director for Elan Corporation, plc, [the conference Premier Level Sponsor](#).

I personally doubt Sheldon Goldberg [letter to the editor](#) statement that Alzheimer's association has "the fairest review systems" for grant proposals. My view is based on the no response by Alzheimer's Association on my letter of concern regarding Alzheimer's Association grant reviewers' competing interests explained in my last year letter to the Association top official (21 January 2004, provided below). If the review system is fair I wonder why the same reviewer when asked for "Applicant information" (i.e. on "Does the applicant and if appropriate his/her co-workers have the required experience and scientific or technical training to carry out this research project?") assigns to my two last year distinct grant proposals the score of "nine" and "seven" ("ten" being the highest possible score), respectively. Can this and other grant applications critics' discrepancy be explained by the reasons other than bias?

I further had hard time understanding Sheldon Goldberg estimation that "of the \$15 million we awarded 75 researchers last year, 30 percent went to amyloid research, with the bulk to diagnosis, risk management, care, and diversity issues." Those who apply for Alzheimer's association funds know that the association has [three areas of interest](#): "Research into the causes of Alzheimers disease"; "Research into diagnosis, treatment, and prevention"; "Research into improving care". Does it mean that "30 percent went to amyloid research" represents near ALL funds allocated for "research into the causes of Alzheimers disease"?

I and my colleagues are indebted to The Wall Street Journal for Sharon Begley investigation and look forward hearing more on Alzheimer's disease research. Without your help we scientists will not get rid of the amyloid cabal. Will it be in the public interest?

Sincerely,

Alexei Koudinov, MD, PhD  
neuroscientist and editor

cc: U.S. Senator Arlen Specter, Chairman, U.S. Senator Thad Cochran, U.S. Senator Judd Gregg, U.S. Senator Larry Craig, U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, U.S. Senator Ted Stevens, U.S. Senator Mike Dewine, U.S. Senator Richard Shelby, Speakers at U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations:

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education that held a [hearing on Alzheimer's research, March 23, 2004](#) .

competing interest declaration: none

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At 10:33 AM 1/21/2003 -0600, Jennie Robinson wrote:

Delivered-To: alexeikoudinov@neurobiologyoflipids.org  
From: Jennie Robinson <Jennie.Robinson@alz.org>  
To: alexeikoudinov@neurobiologyoflipids.org  
Subject: Out of Office AutoReply: important note  
Date: Tue, 21 Jan 2003 10:33:08 -0600  
X-Mailer: Internet Mail Service (5.5.2653.19)

I will be out of the office until January 22, 2003 and will NOT be checking email. If your request is urgent please contact Ms Sheila Cooper at: sheila.cooper@alz.org for assistance. Sorry for any inconvenience!

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At 11:45 AM 21/1/2003 +0300, Alexei Koudinov wrote:

## Neurobiology of Lipids

Expert peer-review journal published by the editorial group

21 January 2003

Dear Dr. Jennie Ward-Robinson,

As a founding and managing editor of the Neurobiology of Lipids, an expert peer review journal published by the editorial group, I come to some information that indicates the potential conflict of interest for several scientists to serve as reviewers for the Alzheimer's association grants.

I therefore feel obliged to bring these facts (below) to you, so hopefully this year evaluation of the grant proposals on the subject of cholesterol/lipid and Alzheimer's disease will have less chances to be affected by a possible bias.

I will appreciate your confirmation of my communication.

Sincerely,

Alexei R. Koudinov  
neuroscientist, editor and grant applicant  
Neurobiology of Lipids  
<http://neurobiologyoflipids.org> (access password: index)  
<http://anzwers.org/free/neurology>

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### I. Possible patent based conflict

Possible patent based conflict may be the case for the following scientists. The patent page at the Neurobiology of Lipids is attached as .PDF file imprint and can be navigated to (to further proceed to the patents full text at USPTO) at the following URL: <http://neurobiologyoflipids.org/patents/patents.html> ( user ID: nolpatentpage , password: uspto.gov ). The referred patents are issued recently or less then 5 years from now.

1. Wolozin; Benjamin
2. Holtzman; David M.
3. Niven; Anne Fagan
4. Strickland; Dudley K.
5. Hyman; Bradley T.
6. Kounnas; Maria Z.
7. Moir; Robert D.
8. Tanzi; Rudolph E.
9. Rebeck; G. William

10. Yankner; Bruce A.
11. Nadeau; Philip
  
12. Cordell; Barbara
13. Xu; Qiang
14. Naidu; Asha
15. Paul; Steven M.
16. Bales; Kelly R.
  
17. Williams; Kevin Jon
  
18. Growdon; John H.
19. Nitsch; Roger M.
20. Wurtman; Richard J.
  
21. Deck; Lorraine
22. Vander Jagt; David L.
  
23. Fielding; Christopher J.
24. Fielding; Phoebe E.

## **II. Possible conflict based on a scientist interest as a company founder**

The company is Abeta GMBH of Heidelberg, Germany. It is available at: <http://www.abeta.de> . An appropriate web page that names the company founders is attached as .PDF imprint. The list of founders follows:

25. Tobias Hartmann
26. Konrad Beyreuther
27. Gerd Multhaup

## **III. Possible conflict based on a scientist interest as a company share holder**

The company is Elan and the person is Denis J Selkoe. Two documents that indicate his severe conflict are The Business Post article of August 18, 2002 and Science magazine correction note of September 27, 2002. Both documents are attached for your convenience.

28. Denis J Selkoe