



CSDP Travels To San Diego

This summer, Dr. King and the staff of the Chicago Social Drinking Project traveled to San Diego to present data at the annual meeting of the Research Society on Alcoholism. When not enjoying the beautiful California weather, the CSDP staff had the opportunity both to learn about current research from some of the country's most prominent researchers and to present updates from the CSDP and related studies.



The unpublished data we presented included:

- Preliminary results from two years of follow-up on alcohol and substance behavior patterns over time in different subgroups of social drinkers. Some report very consistent

drinking over time while others have variable patterns.

- Factors involved in experiments with multiple substances (such as alcohol, and mild stimulants and sedatives) and how participants are able or not able to distinguish active drugs from a placebo. For some, it can be challenging to accurately guess what the beverage contains and at what dose level.
- Techniques leading to our impressive 99.1% CSDP follow-up rate. We included our strategies (i.e. sending cards, holding raffles, etc.) that other studies can implement. Of course, we expressed our gratitude to all of you for your dedication and participation.

All in all, Dr. King, Patrick, Megan and Dan were successful in spreading the word about CSDP, and the next steps for the study.

The Fatigued Get Their Fix: Cosmetic Neurology

From learning how to read to sipping coffee sleepy-eyed on the way to work, we are not short on ways to enhance our brains. Scientists have recently begun to call the use of psychoactive drugs, particularly stimulants, to augment brain function **cosmetic neurology**. Martha Farah of the University of Pennsylvania explains that, unlike other psychoactive drugs, stimulants generally produce gains in attention and memory whether a deficit in these areas is present or not.

An estimated 10-20% of undiagnosed students in the United States report boosting their brains with stimulants like Adderall, Ritalin, and Provigil (typically used to

treat ADHD, narcolepsy or sleep apnea) to improve their academic performance.

But, is this drug abuse or self-improvement?

Interventions in plastic surgery, sports medicine, and fertility medicine reflect the expanded use of medical technology to improve lifestyle rather than to just treat illness. Cosmetic neurology might, then, be an apt use of pharmacology toward achieving similar enhancements—but at uncertain costs.

Research has not adequately assessed the side effects of these drugs and their impact on brain development, especially in people without the disorders they are designed to treat. Furthermore, some see

this practice as a deceitful and “unnatural” doping that might skew performance unfairly, similar to steroid use in athletics. If this practice grows in popularity, it could give rise to unreasonable demands in the workplace and might further disadvantage people unable to pay for the benefit of the drugs.

The complexity of cosmetic neurology hints that these advances might require careful incorporation into our lives.

Further Reading:
'Towards responsible use of cognitive-enhancing drugs by the healthy': <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v456/n7223/full/456702a.html>

Director's Note



In this issue of "What's On Tap?" we update you on our recent data presentation in San Diego, announce the October Raffle, and introduce you to our new staff. We also present a special sudoku puzzle raffle and examine the issue of cosmetic neurology. We hope that you have a great Fall, and look forward to hearing from you during your next follow-up interview!

Dr. Andrea King

Principal Investigator

Follow-Up Raffle



If you completed an Annual Follow-Up between **April** and **September of 2009**, you are automatically enrolled in the October 15th Follow-Up Raffle!

Prizes include a \$100 gift card and CSDP gifts. Best of luck to all! All winners will be announced by e-mail, so keep us updated with your most recent address!



Concerned about your drinking or substance use or about that of a friend or family member?

If needed, feel free to call Dr. Andrea King directly on a confidential basis to provide suggestions, feedback, or referrals at **773-702-6181**

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CORNER

PUZZLE

	7	3		6			1	
8			7	1				
	4						9	
7		8					5	2
9			5		7			4
5	3					7		1
	9						6	
				5	6			3
2				7		8	4	

Contest for a \$40 Gift Card lottery!

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

For the first 10 participants who successfully master the puzzle and email us the correct answers (i.e., the 9 numbers in the **boxes covered by leaves**) by 10/15/09, you will be entered in a raffle to win a \$40 gift card (1st place) and other CSDP gifts items (2nd, 3rd place)!

New Staff Spotlight



Recruitment Coordinator

Sarah Butler, a 2009 graduate of the University of Chicago, has joined the lab to take charge of recruiting new CSDP participants over the next year. As an undergraduate, Sarah majored in comparative human development and is interested in cultural differences in the expression of mental illness and the subsequent use of culturally sensitive clinical interventions. She spends her free time learning how to cook and reading craft blogs. Sarah will take the lead on recruiting a new CSDP participants and also conduct experimental sessions, screening and orientation, and assist with the database. We are glad to have Sarah join our research team!



Follow-Up Coordinator

Katie Foster, a 2006 graduate of Colorado College and a native of Alabama, will replace Megan Conrad as the Follow-up Coordinator for CSDP. Katie has been working in the psychology department at the University for the past three years researching cognitive psychology. She majored in Psychology and English and hopes to use her experience working with CSDP to pursue a career in clinical psychology and the study of emotion regulation. In her free time, she plays competitive beach volleyball. Katie will take the lead on CSDP follow-up interviews and will also conduct experimental sessions, screening and orientation sessions, and assist in data analyses. We are delighted to have Katie's involvement in the study!

