PROGRAMME
The Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(Department of Psychology)

Kristina Brache
2009  University of Victoria  MSc
2007  University of Calgary  BSc

“Alcohol and Energy Drinks: Motivations, Drinking Behaviours and Associated Risks”

Monday, September 29, 2014
9:30 A.M.
Technology Enterprise Facility, room 264

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Timothy Stockwell, Department of Psychology, UVic
(Supervisor)
Dr. Erica Woodin, Department of Psychology, UVic (Member)
Dr. Scott MacDonald, Department of Health Information Science, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Sean Barrett, Department of Psychology, Dalhousie University

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Lynda Gagne, School of Public Administration
Abstract

Introduction: Consuming alcohol mixed with energy drinks (AmED) has become a growing and popular trend among young adults worldwide. Although there have been some mixed findings, generally AmED use is associated with heavy drinking, risky behaviours and negative outcomes, compared to alcohol use alone. Little research has been done outside of college samples and few researchers have investigated motivations for consuming AmED. Purpose: The purpose of the current research was to expand on previous research by investigating motivations for AmED use and the associations between AmED use and heavy drinking, alcohol use disorders, risky behaviours, and negative outcomes in community samples, while controlling for potentially important third variables, like sensation seeking. Methods: Using multivariate regression analyses the associations between AmED use and other variables were investigated in a randomly selected Canadian sample ($n = 13,615$) and a Canadian community young adult sample ($n = 456$). An in-depth qualitative investigation of university students’ ($n = 465$) reported motivations for AmED and energy drink use was investigated using content analysis. Results: Compared to alcohol only, AmED use was found to be associated with heavy alcohol use, increased risk for alcohol use disorders, and increased risky behaviours and negative consequences (e.g., being a passenger in a vehicle with a drunk driver; drinking and driving; being involved in physical aggression; having harmful effects on relationships, health, employment) in both the Canadian and community samples. More frequent AmED use (e.g., weekly or more) was associated with ever having had a sexually transmitted infection. These relationships remained significant even after controlling for demographic variables and sensation seeking personality in the Canadian community sample. The most commonly reported motivations for AmED use were due to the taste of the beverage, enjoyment of a particular AmED (e.g., Jagerbomb), for increased stimulation (e.g., wakefulness, energy, alertness) while drinking, to facilitate “partying” or staying out late when drinking, to counteract the depressant effects of alcohol, for social purposes, and because of ease of availability (e.g., purchased by others/ given for free). Conclusions: This research has contributed to a better understanding of the relationships between AmED use and personality traits, drinking behaviours, and risk behaviours in two relatively large community samples. It has contributed to a better understanding of the motivations for AmED use and how these motivations may be related to heavy drinking and risky behaviours. Along with the accumulating research in this area, the current research could be valuable for directing and planning future research studies and for formulation effective policies and intervention programs.
Awards, Scholarships, Fellowships

2011  BC Psychological Association Certificate Award for Outstanding student graduating with an MA or PhD
2010  Alcohol & Injury/Casualties one-time scholarship award for the paper presented at the 36th Annual Alcohol Epidemiology Symposium for the Kettil Bruun Society for Social & Epidemiological Research on Alcohol, Lausanne, Switzerland
2009  SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship
2008  CIHR’s Institute of Gender & Health Travel Award
2008  Integrated Mentor Program in Addictions Research Training (IMPART) Training Fellowship
2008  Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research: Junior Graduate Studentship
2008  SSHRC Canada Graduate Scholarship
2007  University of Victoria Fellowship

Presentations


4. **Brache K., & Stockwell, T.** “Drinking patterns and risk behaviours associated with combined alcohol and energy drink consumption.” 36th Annual Alcohol Epidemiology Symposium of the Kettil Bruun Society for Social and Epidemiological Research on Alcohol, Lausanne, Switzerland. 2010. (paper) (award received for paper – see below)

### Publications


2. **Brache K., Stockwell, T., & MacDonald, S.** “Functions and harms associated with simultaneous polysubstance use involving alcohol and cocaine.” *Journal of Substance Use, 2012, 17*(5-6), 399-416.

