Class Activities

Chapter 16: Drugs and Crime

**Class Activity 1: Commonly Abused Drugs: Alcohol**

**Defining Concepts (Paired or Group Activity)**

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions about alcohol use and college students

1. What is the extent to which alcohol is abused on college campuses?
2. How does binge drinking influence this abuse? What are the consequences of binge drinking?
3. How do drinking games influence binge drinking?
4. What policies could/should universities and colleges adopt to reduce the risks of binge drinking?

**Class Activity 2: Narcotics**

**In the News**

**New ‘Shake and Bake’ Meth Method Explodes (about.com)**

**Instructions:** Read the news story below and answer the questions that follow.

A new method of manufacturing methamphetamine, designed to get around laws restricting sale of the ingredients needed to make meth, is spreading across the country and law enforcement officials claim the new “shake and bake” process is even more dangerous than the old makeshift meth labs.

One wrong move and the concoction [can explode into a large fireball](http://alcoholism.about.com/b/2012/01/25/meth-shakers-overwhelm-burn-units.htm), authorities say.

Also known as the “one pot” method, shake and bake meth is produced in a two-liter soda bottle. A few cold pills are mixed with common, but noxious, household chemicals and produces enough meth for the user to get a few hits.

**Smaller, Mobile Meth Labs**

The old meth labs required hundreds of pseudoephedrine pills, containers heated over open flames and cans of flammable liquids. The cooking process created foul odors making the labs [difficult to conceal](http://alcoholism.about.com/od/meth/a/methlab.htm). They often sparked explosions.

The shake and bake method requires only a few pseudoephedrine pills, circumventing laws passed [restricting the sale](http://alcoholism.about.com/b/2004/05/18/oklahoma-law-may-be-slowing-meth-production.htm) of large quantities of over-the-counter decongestants, cold and allergy remedies.

The new method requires little room. All of the necessary items can be carried in a backpack, making the process mobile. Drug users are making meth while driving around in their cars and throwing the used plastic bottles, containing a poisonous brown and white sludge, along the highway.

**Extremely Dangerous Method**

But the shake and bake method is extremely dangerous. If the bottle is shaken the wrong way, or if any oxygen gets inside of it, or if the cap is loosened too quickly, the bottle can explode into a giant fireball.

If the old clandestine meth labs caught fire, the cookers would just run away. But with the shake and bake method, they are actually holding the bottle when it explodes. Police in Georgia, Alabama, Oklahoma and other states have linked dozens of flash fires—some of them fatal—to meth manufacturing.

**Dangerous to the Public**

Police departments across the nation are training officers how to handle the new mobile labs if they encounter them during traffic stops.

“The mixture can burst into flames when exposed to oxygen, making it extremely dangerous for an officer who unscrews the lid of what may look like an ordinary soda bottle,” said Kansas City Police Sgt. Tim Witcig. “They have to know what to do so it doesn't explode on them.”

**Sudden Increase in Meth Labs**

After years of [declining numbers of meth labs](http://alcoholism.about.com/b/2008/04/15/meth-use-declines-sharply-in-us.htm) being busted by law enforcement, due to the laws restricting the sale of pseudoephedrine, seizures are suddenly increasing again.

“I would say about 85% of our labs so far this year have been the one pot or shake and bake method,” said Lt. Tony Saucedo of the Michigan State Police.

Saucedo said the new shake and bake labs put everyone in danger, because they can explode while the drug users are driving around, putting other drivers in danger. The old labs were usually concealed in secluded or rural areas because of the odors, but the new “labs” can be anywhere.

**Don’t Touch Discarded Bottles**

The discarded soda bottles used in the process are also dangerous. “We’re finding them in ditches, we’re finding them in people’s yards, we’ve found stuff in dumpsters,” Saucedo said.

“It simplified the process so much that everybody’s making their own dope,” Kevin Williams, sheriff of Marion County, Alabama, told reporters. “It can be your next-door neighbor doing it. It can be one of your family members living downstairs in the basement.”

Authorities suggest that people who find discarded bottles containing an unknown mixture leave them alone, do not open them or pick them up. Call the police and let them investigate to see if it’s a danger.

1. Define the term *narcotic*.
2. Define the term *methamphetamine*.When and where was methamphetamine first manufactured?
3. What do you think should be the sanction for manufacturing methamphetamine? Do you think meth addicts would benefit from a drug treatment program? Why or why not?
4. Of the criminological theories discussed in the textbook, which one do you feel best explains drug use and abuse?

**Class Activity 3: The War on Drugs**

**Case Study (Paired or Group Activity)**

**Instructions:** Read the case study carefully and answer the questions below.

John was working at a construction site and fell off a 30 foot scaffolding ladder. Four vertebrae in his lower back were compressed as a result of the fall. While in the hospital, the doctors prescribed oxycodone. Doctors were unaware that John had a history of drug abuse. After leaving the hospital, his girlfriend, Sara, began to take John’s oxycodone as well. Sometimes she would sell the pills to friends so she would to be able to afford more prescriptions for oxycodone.

Sara soon discovered she was pregnant, but she kept it a secret from most of her family and friends. However, John was aware she was pregnant, but they both continued to take the oxycodone. When Sara gave birth, the doctors discovered that the infants exhibited signs of drug addiction. The infants were tested and found to be suffering from withdrawal symptoms. The doctors also tested Sara’s blood and found that there were high levels of oxycodone in her blood.

The department of child services was called in and they placed the infants with foster parents. Both John and Sara admitted to the case workers and police that they were addicted to oxycodone.

1. What is oxycodone?
2. What crime or crimes do you think the couple should be charged with? Explain your answer.
3. Do you think prescription drug abuse is as serious as street drug abuse? Why or why not?
4. Do you think the couple will respond to drug treatment? Why or why not?