

## The effect of boredom on attentional bias in light and heavy social drinkers

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**Introduction:** Boredom is state of cognitive and emotional discomfort that has been associated with a variety of addictive behaviors. While boredom has been shown to increase the likelihood of subjective cravings for substance use, research has found that explicit self-report of cravings is insufficient to predict relapse. It has been suggested that attentional bias, the implicit allocation of spatial attention to substance related cues, is a positive predictor of risk for relapse.

**Aim:** To investigate the effect of state boredom on attentional bias to alcohol related cues in light and heavy drinkers. To examine the relationship between alcohol consumption and both state and trait boredom.

**Method:** A boredom induction task and a control task were given to a random sample of 60 light and heavy drinkers from ages 18-30 prior to completion of a visual-probe attentional bias task. All participants completed a State Boredom Measure, the Boredom Proneness Scale (BPS), the Lifetime Drinking History (LDH) and the Timeline Followback (TLFB) for alcohol consumption.

**Results:** Heavy drinkers were found to have significantly higher attentional bias scores than light drinkers in the boredom induction group. Boredom proneness was positively correlated with alcohol consumption over the lifetime, while high state boredom scores were positively correlated with alcohol intake over the past three months.

**Conclusion:** The state of boredom in a population of social drinkers is a predictor of increased implicit attention to alcohol related stimuli. Boredom is an important factor for consideration when assessing risk for alcohol relapse.

### Biography

Tracey M. Rogovin received her Bachelor's Degree from The New School University – Eugene Lang College. She is a Master's Degree candidate in psychology for the 2012 year at the New School for Social Research and has recently been accepted to the New School for Social Research Doctoral Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology.

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