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Cold Cook Methods: An Ethnographic Exploration on the Myths of Methamphetamine Production and Policy Implications

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Abstract

Background—Urban legends and myths are prevalent in drug-use environments. However, the distinction between myth and fact is not always clear. We found contradictory claims regarding the emergence of cold cook methods for producing methamphetamine when contrasting user-generated reports with official reports repudiating such methods as myths. Our aim is to open the topic for more academic discussion.

Methods—We examine cold cook methods of methamphetamine production revealed in our ethnographic study and interviews with former (n=50) and current (n=48) methamphetamine users. Data were collected in the suburbs of a large southeastern city in the United States. We compare the data with reports from law enforcement professionals and public health officials.

Results—Official reports claim the cold cook method described by users in our study is a myth and does not produce methamphetamine. Small-scale producers sell it as methamphetamine and users claim it has the same effect as methamphetamine. They are charged for possession and distribution of methamphetamine when caught with this drug. It appears the unintended consequences of recent policy aimed to reduce production and use of methamphetamine may be a user-friendly production method. We do not know the health implications at this time.

Conclusion—We do not make any definitive conclusions on the legitimacy of the stories or myths discussed here but instead suggest that labeling drug stories as myths might lead to dismissing facts that hold partial truth. The subsequent dismissal of cold cook methods among policy and public health officials risks a range of unintended consequences among vulnerable populations. We present our case for more research attention on the myths of methamphetamine production.

Keywords

Ethnography; Methamphetamine; Cold Cook Methods; policy

In 2007 we began a study on methamphetamine use in the suburbs of a large southeastern city of the United States. We conducted ethnographic research among diverse drug networks and interviewed methamphetamine users who lived and used methamphetamine in the suburbs. Respondents reported “growing methamphetamine.” Upon further questioning we learned that growing methamphetamine crystals on a string suspended over a container was

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a common method for producing methamphetamine in the area. Respondents recounted similar but slightly different accounts of how to grow methamphetamine crystals on strings. The ingredients included pseudoephedrine, red phosphorus, charcoal, gun bluing and aluminum shavings. Other recipes involved various cleaning fluids such as acetone and ammonia or chemicals such as iodine. Ingredients were mixed or layered in a container, typically a fish tank or five gallon bucket, and the container was buried in the ground or kept in a dark closet for up to 28 days until crystals grew on strings suspended above the chemical solution. Growing methamphetamine was reported as a safer "cooking" method for the producer ("cook") since it did not involve heating ingredients and was less likely to cause an explosion. The process also allowed the production to be hidden from view, either underground or in a dark closet or basement. Respondents referred to this method as the "fish tank" or "cold cook" method. The drug was called "string dope" and sold as methamphetamine. We decided to investigate this method further.

We used a field trial design to expedite the background research. A field trial design is derived from ethnographic work in which the researchers "review a variety of field sources and look for emergent patterns that replicate this material from a street addict point of view" (Agar**,** Bourgois French, & Murdoch, 2001, p.70). Our basis of information beyond the suburban methamphetamine users interviewed for our study included: (1) official sources, such as criminal justice websites and public health reports; (2) correspondence with the local forensic laboratory chemist; (3) Internet websites found by using word search engines; and
(4) conversations with professional colleagues. Our goal in this paper is to disseminate the claims from disparate sources regarding cold cook methods of methamphetamine production and open this topic to academic discussion and research attention.

Background

As more of our respondents referenced the cold cook method of producing methamphetamine we began our field trial investigation to distinguish the legitimacy of their claims. Our previous understanding on methamphetamine production involved processes requiring a viable heat source and having the potential of violent explosions, as well as the dispersion of noxious chemicals. The environmental dangers resulting from methamphetamine laboratories ("meth-labs") have lead to increased public health concern (Connell-Carrick, 2007; Hannan, 2005).

Our lack of knowledge on the cold cook method referenced by our respondents prompted us to conduct an on-line investigation. A term search on the Internet produced a number of recipes similar to those we heard from our respondents. We also found government sources that call this cold cook method a "myth." For example, using the search terms "fish tank and methamphetamine," or "gun bluing and methamphetamine" led us to the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) website on "Meth Myths" (DEA, 2005).

> Methamphetamine myths often involve methods of obtaining precursors, such as extracting chemicals from common retail items, as well as methods of producing methamphetamine using ordinary products as precursors. Some methamphetamine abusers may be trying to contend with practical issues—such as faster and cheaper ways to manufacture the drug—when they stumble upon what they believe to be a new method of production or an easier way to obtain a precursor. Consequently, abusers attempting to manufacture methamphetamine often are the source of unfounded information concerning methamphetamine production. (DEA, 2005)

We contacted law enforcement and public health professionals in our area regarding cold cook production of methamphetamine. At first, all dismissed these methods as a myth and referred us to the DEA website referenced above.

It appeared that this cold cook method was an attempt to obtain precursors needed for methamphetamine production. Sources for new precursors were on high demand in the U.S. since the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act (CMEA) of 2005. While the majority of states passed laws curtailing the sale of some precursors, the restrictions varied by state (Goetz, 2007). The CMEA was incorporated into the Patriot Act and was enacted at the federal level on March 9, 2006. Under this Act, over-the-counter products containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, and phenylpropanolamine are subject to strict purchasing regulations (DEA, 2006). Furthermore, all retail distributors of chemicals specified in the Act must keep records of purchaser information and undergo a self-certification on retail protocol. These "anti-meth" provisions introduce safeguards to make certain ingredients used in methamphetamine manufacturing are more difficult to obtain in bulk and easier for law enforcement to track (Bren, 2006).

Those striving to produce methamphetamine are attempting various ways to concoct precursors due to increased regulation. The emerging popularity of the fish tank method appeared to be the result of recent legislation. However, the stark contrast between our respondents' confidence in the methamphetamine produced in a fish tank and the DEA's admonition that this product is a myth concerned us. We took our investigation further.

We came in contact with a public health official who confirmed a cold cook method he heard while working in California. He referred us to a National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC, 2001) report found on the United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) website. The report described what we heard from respondents we interviewed:

> Cold Cook Method: Ephedrine, iodine, and red phosphorus are mixed in a plastic container, and methamphetamine oil precipitates into another plastic container through a connecting tube. The oil is heated, typically by sunlight or by burying the containers in hot sand, to produce small quantities of highly pure d-methamphetamine. (Retrieved on June 9, 2008 from http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs0/670/meth.htm)

The similarities between USDOJ verified cold cook methods and those reported by our respondents were revealing. "Burying the containers in hot sand," mentioned in the excerpt above, almost parallels burying a fish tank (container) in the ground. The cold cook method was mentioned again in a NDIC (2003) report from Arizona. We realized that the addition of gun bluing to the cold cook method was a primary factor for this method being labelled a myth by the DEA. Gun bluing and charcoal, items often mentioned by our respondents, are the two ingredients listed in the DEA website on methamphetamine myths. According to the DEA: "None of these items contain precursors necessary for methamphetamine production" (DEA, 2005).

The USDOJ website also reported that producers often mix different ingredients that are easily obtained to produce an ingredient that is highly regulated:

> Small-scale methamphetamine producers who are unable to obtain iodine crystals occasionally produce them from iodine tincture by mixing iodine tincture with hydrogen peroxide. Iodine tincture is not regulated by law and is sold in retail stores, pharmacies, and farm supply stores. It can be obtained easily via the Internet from horse and farm supply sites and online pharmacies. (Retrieved on June 9, 2008 from http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs0/670/meth.htm)

It is our understanding that gun bluing, often referenced in the cold cook method by our respondents, is not the precursor ingredient but is intended to obtain a precursor or to act

as a catalyst in the chemical process. However, we soon discovered that while using gun bluing produces something similar to methamphetamine, it might not be the real thing.

To gain a better understanding of what this drug might be, we contacted the state forensics laboratory (crime lab). The bench chemist who analysed drugs seized by law enforcement indicated that much of what is analysed under suspicion of being methamphetamine does not test positive. Such unidentified substances are not analysed further:

> The [State] Crime Laboratory will test items to determine whether or not those items contain controlled substances (drugs). If no controlled substances are detected in an item, the analysis will routinely stop without any further investigation to determine the identity of the non-controlled material submitted. (Email communication received on August 12, 2008).

The crime lab chemist referred us to a report called “Methamphetamine Urban Legends” (Escamilla, 2004). In the report, recipes similar to those reported by our respondents, including one using gun bluing in the “aquarium method” [fish tank] were described in detail. The author indicated that these were myths and did not produce methamphetamine:

> In an effort to stay one step ahead of law enforcement, methamphetamine manufacturers are finding creative ways to obtain the precursors and reagents that are needed for their manufacturing processes. In most cases these efforts have been successful, but others have become what can be called "methamphetamine urban legends." …Each time a method involving gun blue is discovered, it fades away just as quickly as it appeared. This may be due to the fact that the method does not produce methamphetamine and may even have some disagreeable side effects” (Escamilla, 2004, p. 2).

We utilized the Internet throughout our investigations on cold cook methods and easily found recipes for methamphetamine. Many blog sites referred to the book of methamphetamine recipes written by “Uncle Fester” (also mentioned by our respondents), which describes various cold cook methods. One series of postings by “anonymous” cited a recipe that was similar to those we heard. When his recipe was called a fake by another blogger, he responded:

> As I have said in a previous posting, meth is not produced from this cooking or growing process but it gets you high just the same. Tell the $2800 in my pocket that it doesn't, that's what I just made for this bunk crap. For about $14.00 in household chemicals. (posted June 15, 2007, retrieved from http://gideonsguardians.blogspot.com on July 15, 2008)

Another Internet search using the term “string dope” resulted in a number of links to additional cold cook recipes: “String Dope is generally cooked using activated charcoal, gun bluing, and sudsless ammonia in an airtight cooler, where the methamphetamines will grow on unwaxed strings like stalactites over a period of 14–31 days” (retrieved 15 November, 2008 from http://www.urbandictionary.com/). A similar recipe posted on another blog claimed that string dope made with gun bluing was not methamphetamine; however, “its effects are supposed to be physiologically identical to meth, but the substance will not test as meth.” This prompted another blogger to respond: “this recipe is all a bunch of crap; even the DEA knows it” (posted July 18, 2007, retrieved from http://gideonsguardians.blogspot.com on July 15, 2008).

Whether or not this product has the exact chemical composition as methamphetamine seems to be where the “myth” lies. It is apparent that people are getting high using this substance, but other health consequences are unknown. Furthermore, several of our respondents reported being arrested for possession of this cold cooked product under the

assumption it is methamphetamine; yet, law officials report the method is a myth does not produce a controlled substance. Our crime lab correspondence appears to support this claim.

In sum, referencing government sources to validate stories we heard in our study did not clarify the question of whether or not a cold cook method involving a fish tank produces methamphetamine. While the USDOJ claims that various ingredients in a container and buried in warm ground for a few weeks produces methamphetamine, the DEA classifies a similar method as a myth. Their argument is that "these ingredients" (only charcoal and gun bluing are named specifically) do not produce the necessary precursors. We interviewed numerous respondents who claim to be either manufacturing or using what they believe to be methamphetamine that is manufactured through this cold cook method, which includes gun bluing. We informed one of our respondents that the substance she was using may not be methamphetamine and was considered a myth according to the DEA. Her response was: "Well what is it?" We could not answer her question. Further inquiries led to indication that the emergence of "string dope" growing in fish tanks is an unintended consequence of recent regulation. Labelling it a myth calls into question potential policy and health implications.

Our goal is to open these questions to academic discussion. The voices of our respondents provide the contextual setting.

Methods

In our ethnographic study on methamphetamine use in the suburbs we used qualitative methods that are particularly applicable for studies among hidden populations (Carlson et al., 2004; Lambert, Ashery, & Needle, 1995; Shaw, 2005; Small, Kerr, Charrette, Schechter, & Spittal, 2006). The data collection included: (a) participant observations (b) drug history and life history matrices, and (c) audio-recorded in-depth interviews. We spent at least 20 hours a week over the course of a year in the field to become familiar with the environment of the study population and to develop community contacts (Agar, 1973; Bourgois, 1995; Sterk-Elifson, 1993). A combination of targeted, snowball, and theoretical sampling methods were used to recruit respondents for the study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Watters & Biernacki, 1989). The typical method of establishing contact with methamphetamine users involved talking with people at public places, such as coffee houses, bars, clubs, grocery stores, tattoo shops, or other shopping areas. We gave our contact card to people who expressed interest and posted fliers in public areas and private establishments, with permission. Often, rapport was established with a potential respondent on the field and arrangements were made to meet for an interview. Otherwise, a user who heard or read about the study called our cell phone and arranged a meeting. At that time, we discussed the time commitment, interview process, confidentiality concerns, and $25 reimbursement they would receive for their participation. Oral consent was obtained before collecting information. A screening process was used to ensure that participants pass the eligibility criteria to participate in the study. Criteria included being age 18 or older and having used methamphetamine in the suburbs. No identifying material was collected. The research team consisted of the principal investigator and two trained research assistants. All were involved in the recruitment, interviewing and analysis for this paper.

Interviews were conducted in a safe location agreed upon by the interviewer and respondent. Typical interview sites included the respondent's home, library rooms, hotel rooms, the interviewer's car, and private university rooms. The respondent's drug history and life history events were recorded with paper and pencil, followed by an audio-recorded, in-depth interview. Ethnographic field work and interviews were conducted between July 2007 and August 2008.

The drug history data were entered into an SPSS computer program and the recorded

interviews were transcribed and entered into the computer program NVivo. These programs were used for data management. For this paper, the qualitative interview data were read and coded by all three authors for any mention of methamphetamine production methods. The

data were analysed using an iterative model of triangulation for ongoing analysis (Boeri, 2007; Hansen, Maycock, & Lower, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). We compared the results of our coding with the drug histories and observational field notes. We collected 100 interviews and two were excluded after triangulation of the data revealed too many discrepancies. The findings in this report represent the preliminary analysis of cold cook methods as reported by our respondents. In the findings presented below we selected the quotes that best represent cold cook methods described by more than one respondent. Quotes are edited to stay on topic. For example, extraneous words ("you know"), interview questions, and repeated comments are substituted with three dots (…).

Voices from the Field

The sample (n=98) includes 64 males and 34 females ages of 18–65. Fifty are former users and 48 are current users, defined as having used methamphetamine in the last month. Five are Hispanic, 11 African American, and 82 are Caucasian. Over a third of current users reported using methamphetamine more than once a week.

Due to the emerging nature of the knowledge on this topic, most of the early respondents were not asked if they had heard of string dope or cold cook methods. After several mentioned similar stories without prompting from the interviewer, we began to explore this area in subsequent interviews. Of the 27 people directly asked about string dope or cold cook methods, 7 reported first-hand knowledge, 8 reported second-hand knowledge (i.e. having heard of the fish tank method but never seen it directly), 11 had never heard of it, and only 1 respondent claimed that the fish tank method was a hoax.

Nearly all of those with first-hand knowledge of string dope or a cold cook method indicated it was produced in a suburban area. For example, the first respondent who reported "growing meth" in a fish tank buried in the ground revealed: "You grow it anywhere, but generally from what I've seen — the people that I've known that have grown it and dealt it, has been in the suburbs." Another respondent confirmed that the product obtained using this method resulted in a drug that served its purpose: "I've seen them on the string before. I've seen a man go in his backyard, dig it up. We did it, and I got really high."

Those who referenced the cold cook method emphasized its benefits, indicating that it did not produce a noxious odor, it was less likely to cause an explosion, and it was hidden from sight in suburban neighbourhoods. One enthusiastic respondent reported: "And it doesn't— when you're cooking it, oh it stinks terribly. Underground you're safe." Another respondent remarked: "You can grow methamphetamine by using charcoal and a number of chemicals that will grow instead of chemically cooking it and possibly blowing something up."

The majority of respondents reported slightly different processes and ingredients, but all recipes resulted in a methamphetamine-like substance that crystallized on strings. Typically, this was referred to as "string dope" or "shards," a popular term used for methamphetamine in our study area. For example, one respondent described his version of a cold cook method:

> Or you can get a fish tank if you want to. What you do is you got your cover and your hanging filament line and you got your chemicals at the bottom, you seal it, and what happens is it grows from the chemicals in the bottom up the filament line to the top. And you have to seal it. You let it sit for forty-five days without touching it. You open it up and you got quarter pound shards. (34-year-old

former user)

Even though many called it a cold cook method, some claimed that heat was required in the preparation of the ingredients:

> You have to prepare each individual ingredient to get it to where when you mix it together it will be right. When they use, like, gun blue or something, they have to light it on fire and melt down. They put iodine tincture in there and they have to, they have to fix it but they don't cook all…It's not being cooked when they're making it. They might cook an individual ingredient over here to make and then they'll put all the ingredients together. It's still going to be cold. And once they get every ingredient together, they put the strings over it or they do whatever they're going to do. (24-year-old current user)

Others mentioned that pseudoephedrine was used in the mixture:

> I know he's using ammonia. I know he's using gun blue. He's using charcoal. He's using five gallon buckets. I've seen him pull it off with the shards on the strings… He's still looking for Sudafed but instead of being able to go into drug stores and buy a whole bunch anymore he's got all his customers going out and buying the max of two or three or whatever they can… I've seen metal shavings. I don't know if it was aluminum…He takes in five gallon buckets and puts them in the ground and leaves them there, and he don't mess with them for twenty-eight days, and when he pulls those lids off, unscrews those lids, he's got the shards hanging from the strings and it's all there. And it's damn good. (50-year-old current user)

As seen in the selected recipes quoted above, the primary cold cook method involved mixing ingredients in a fish tank or bucket, covering it with a lid that held suspended strings, and burying it in the ground. However, one respondent who was recently introduced to methamphetamine in the suburbs described a noteworthy variation:

> Looks like little ice crystals…on a mop head. He had it in this little room. It was like a little dark room. And he just flipped on a light and I just saw it… it was over a bucket. It had a piece of aluminum foil on the top of the bucket and it would just drop down on the bucket. You could just shake the mop and it would fall down onto the aluminum foil… He just told me some of the things he'd put in it… Red phosphorous is one of 'em. He used Sudafed and then he used something from a cough syrup…But, it's a lot of ingredients. It's not just one or two ingredients. (49-year-old current user)

The mop head variation was supported by a 35-year-old female from a completely different social network who reported the production method she saw: "It's done on a one hundred percent cotton mop string with charcoal, gun blue, and there's pure ammonia, purified ammonia. And that's it. Now the amounts I'm not quite sure."

The price of locally grown/produced methamphetamine was low in comparison to national averages for methamphetamine. A government website reported methamphetamine costs
$141.42 to $244.53 a gram (www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov). Respondents in our study reported paying between $80 and $100 for a gram during the last year. We know that the price and purity of drugs are related. Methamphetamine purity fluctuates more than most other drugs, and as regulation of precursor ingredients increase, we expect prices to increase (Office of National Drug Policy Control, 2004). However, our preliminary findings indicate that after increased legislation regulating precursor ingredients, methamphetamine was being sold at drastically reduced prices compared to official reports. Our more experienced users in the study offered one reason for the reduction in price. They indicated that all the large-scale producers of high quality methamphetamine in the area were in jail or prison.

Moreover, with pseudoephedrine products difficult to obtain in large quantities, users

were producing their own small batches of methamphetamine and selling it at lower prices. They added that newer users would not be able to tell if it was poor quality methamphetamine or another drug.

According to our respondents, the purity of string dope ranged from being “fake” or “crap” to being the “best dope” available. For example, a 33-year-old female who had been using methamphetamine for many years proposed: “It’s not as potent. You don’t get as high…. Probably because you can’t make it in the labs, it’s not a good form of the drug. I do think it’s still addictive, and I do think it’s still meth.”

Likewise, a current user who injected methamphetamine said the new drug called string dope was the result of recent regulations that made it more difficult to produce methamphetamine in large quantities. He suggested that only intravenous (IV) users would know the difference:

> They banned pseudoephedrine pills in the nation and everything for a little while. It’s back now, but it all went to shit, and then you’d see stuff around here and there but it really wasn’t the real stuff…they had like a fraction of some other kind of ingredient in it. And like snorters and smokers were getting off decently fine but any IV people, they wouldn’t do shit. You’d feel ripped off. I’d gotten a friend a half ounce of the stuff and it was crap for what I’d spend for it. And that was just like the start of all the bad stuff.

More experienced users claimed the new methamphetamine produced by cold cook methods was the result of recent regulations banning precursor ingredients and was less potent. In contrast, newer users claimed that string dope was as good or better than previous methamphetamine. Many users had little experience with methamphetamine produced before the growing process became popular.

Typically, the younger users (18–29) in our study who reported primarily using string dope produced in fish tanks, buckets or jars. One 24-year-old current female user maintained: “String dope—you don’t cook anything. That’s the main way they do it now.” Most of these younger users claimed that string dope was methamphetamine, but even if it was not, it made them high. A 21-year-old current user proposed: “Okay, well it may not produce methamphetamine but whatever it produces will fuck you up.”

A few respondents indicated that while the drug sold as methamphetamine might be another drug or a less potent form of methamphetamine, it could also be a more toxic form of methamphetamine with unwanted or dangerous effects. Without analysis of the drugs produced by different cold methods of methamphetamine production, we do not know. What we do know is that methamphetamine users in our area are smoking, injecting, inhaling and ingesting a drug that they think is methamphetamine. We know the crime lab reports that many of the materials tested for methamphetamine are not methamphetamine. We also know that some users said they were arrested and convicted for possession and/or distribution of methamphetamine for a product derived from a fish tank recipe that many government sources state is not methamphetamine. For example, one young man who claimed that string dope was the only methamphetamine he ever used recounted the story of his recent arrest:

> I got caught shoplifting they found a baggie that had residue in it is what they said. They called it residue, and that was my first time ever being in jail longer than like three days. I was scared to death. My lawyer told me, she said look, you know there’s no chemical test for this so they can’t test it and tell you that it’s methamphetamine, but they’re going to say that it’s methamphetamine because of what it looks like. But at the same time though you can either spend like all this time going through all this stuff to find out that it is meth—and it was meth, at least it was my meth, what I called meth—or you can just plead out right now, get

five years probation and have a felony on your record.

The legal process reported in the story above was later confirmed through conversations with professional colleagues who work in the criminal justice system. It appears that, for various reasons, people charged with methamphetamine are advised to plead guilty before the confiscated substance is analysed. For many, such as this young man, a felony record means he will never be able to attend college on federal scholarships and may not work in some jobs.

Discussion

Urban legends and myths are prevalent in drug-use environments, and dispelling myths is an important function of some drug research (Hammersley & Reid, 2002; Hughes, 2007). However, the distinction between myth and fact is not as clear as some myth busters suggest. Using a field trial design (Agar et al., 2001) we investigated the myths of methamphetamine production found on the Internet and reported by government sources. Our investigation into cold cook methods of producing methamphetamine emerged from an ethnographic study on suburban methamphetamine use. Sterk (2003) proposes that “ethnography is a process as well as a product.” (p. 127). We are still in the process of investigating the dynamics surrounding the myth of cold cook methods. Our inductive investigation is influenced by growing concern regarding the unintended consequences of increased methamphetamine precursor regulation (McKetin, 2008; Sexton, Carlson, Leukefeld, & Booth, 2006).

Recent research shows that while the number of “meth labs” seized has decreased since regulation of precursor ingredients, the number of methamphetamine users has not declined (Cohen, Sanyal, & Reed, 2007). An ethnographic study on methamphetamine production in the rural south reported that methods called “throw down batches” produced a poorer quality of methamphetamine with problematic health effects (Sexton et al., 2006). Our current ethnographic study supports these findings. According to the younger users, this new inexpensive and potentially more toxic form of methamphetamine has become normalized in their drug networks. The risks associated with the use of this form of methamphetamine, called string dope, are not yet known or well-documented.

As of the writing of this report, the law enforcement officials we contacted indicated that the drugs produced by these methods are not being analysed and the production method is a myth. Myth or no myth, when individuals report that they are using this drug and the so- called urban legend is spreading across the Internet, a more thorough investigation focused on policy and health implications is warranted. Sexton et al. (2006) call for further investigation into various forms of methamphetamine production methods, proposing that more detailed knowledge of new production methods is more useful than secondhand discussions. We might add that calling these methods a myth does not help in establishing what is being sold and used as methamphetamine. Our findings on new cold methods of production also call for more attention on suburban areas, particularly suburban youth who are new users.

In this paper, we open the topic for more academic discussion. We do not make any definitive conclusions on the legitimacy of the myths discussed here but instead suggest that labelling drug stories as myths might lead to dismissing facts that hold partial truth. Official decisions on policy and public health are influenced when facts are labelled as myths, which could result in adverse health repercussions for those affected by such decisions. It appears that the unintended consequences of recent policy aimed to reduce availability of methamphetamine may be cheaper and more user-friendly production method. We do not know if the drug produced by the method described in this study is

methamphetamine, but we know it is sold and used as methamphetamine. This discussion raises important questions

regarding public health consequences and legal repercussions that call for further investigation. The implications for harm reduction policy, public health awareness, and myriad issues surrounding emerging patterns of methamphetamine use in the suburbs will be further explored in our study, drawing on relevant theory. We present our preliminary analysis and field trial findings regarding the myths of cold cook methods and string dope methamphetamine to open this inquiry to increased research attention.

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