Reviewer's report

Title: Concurrent crack and powder cocaine users from Sao Paulo. Do they represent a different group?

Version: 2 Date: 25 October 2005

Reviewer: Merrill Singer

Reviewer's report:

The authors have responded to the criticisms of the earlier review of their paper but giving their paper a new title that more accurately reflects the actual content of the paper, better integrating their paper with more recent literature on cocaine, and indicating their assessment of how the paper pushes beyond the existing boundary of knowledge about cocaine users. The authors fail to fully engage the prior reviewer's suggesting that the dual users group be assessed for intragroup variation and separation into subgroups based on levels of use. However, they have scaled back analysis to sociodemographic and drug use patterns. One additional problem not addressed by the previous review is the conflation of crime and violence. What the authors found is of value, namely that dual users of crack/powder cocaine are overall heavier polydrug users than mono users and they have greater criminal involvement. Moreover, most users appear to be dual users, which appear to represent a historic shift in cocaine use in Brazil. The later point, shifting drug use patterns might receive greater attention in the conclusion of the paper. Moreover, greater attention to the literature on polydrug use and the ever increasing shift to this pattern is warranted.

With these minor changes, the paper, in my view, merits publication.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions