

Sayette, M. A., Creswell, K. G., Dimoff, J. D., Fairbairn, C. E., Cohn, J. F., Heckman, B. W., et al. (In press). Alcohol and group formation: A multimodal investigation of the effects of alcohol on emotion and social bonding. *Psychological Science*.

This study integrates research on emotion and small groups to address a fundamental and enduring question facing alcohol researchers: What are the specific mechanisms by which drinking is reinforcing? In one of the largest alcohol administration studies yet conducted, we employed a novel group formation paradigm to evaluate the socio-emotional effects of alcohol. Seven-hundred-twenty social drinkers (half female) were assembled into three-person unacquainted groups, and given a moderate dose of alcohol, placebo, or nonalcohol (control) beverage, which they consumed over 36-min. Their social interaction was video-recorded, and the duration and sequence of facial and speech behaviors were systematically coded (e.g., using the Facial Action Coding System). Alcohol consumption enhanced social experience at both individual- and group-levels (e.g., coordination of smiling, speech behaviors), and elevated self-reported bonding. Results indicate alcohol facilitates bonding during group formation. Assessing nonverbal responses in social contexts offers new directions for evaluating the effects of alcohol.

