

Accessing drugs online:

Some user experiences and policy implications

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Acknowledgements

- Dr Adam Winstock for allowing us to use unpublished Global Drug Survey data
- Prof Mathew Allen – ideas and scholarship
- The anonymous participants of the Global Drug Survey and the Silk Road Project

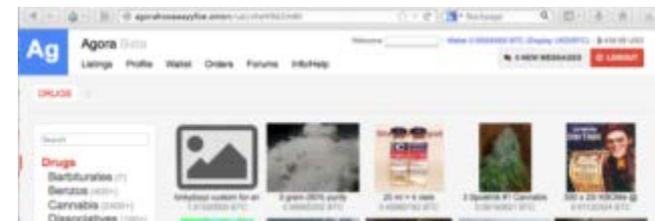
- **Apology: I'm no expert, but my co-authors are!
Errors are mine, insights are theirs**

Overview

- Context – clear/surface web and dark web
- Quantitative data on reasons for buying and not buying drugs from Silk Road from Global Drug Survey
- New qualitative data – our current study
- Conclusions and implications

Context

- Surface web (Clear web)
 - Websites selling NPS
 - Social media
 - Drug discussion forums – largely info seeking
- Hidden web (Dark web)
 - TOR and Bitcoins
 - Silk Road and the newer drug cryptomarket places
 - Dynamic systems - FBI actions etc.



Internet as tool



Internet
as place

Internet
as way of
being

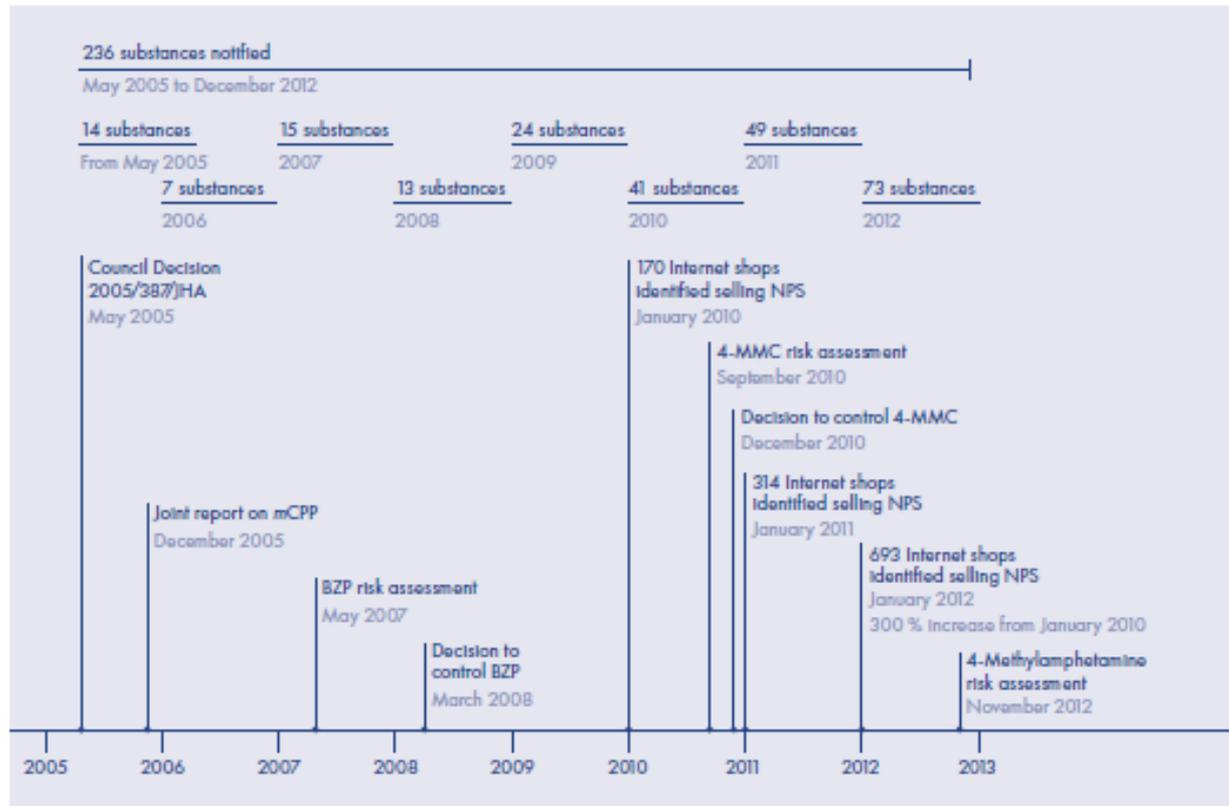
Annette Markham's three metaphors of the internet

Drug discussion forums

- Largely drug info sharing and seeking (e.g. Bluelight.ru)
- Drug seeking discouraged by moderators –
 - open, public
 - concerns re official pressure/actions
- Is complicated, both:
 - Harm Reduction
 - Counter public health - pleasure – ‘PMA sounds fun’
(See Barratt, Allen & Lenton 2014)
- Have/will DLE and official actions, e.g. increased surveillance of online behaviour, move people to dark net?
- Continue despite other channels (e.g. Facebook) possibly due to increased perception of anonymity, encryption, etc.

Accessing drugs on the surface web

Figure 27: Timeline of major developments and number of new psychoactive substances notified since Council Decision 2005/387/JHA came into effect in May 2005



Note: BZP, 1-benzylpiperazine; NPS, new psychoactive substances; 4-MMC, 4-methylmethcathinone (mephedrone). Internet shops identified by EMCDDA monitoring offered NPS/‘legal highs’ for sale and delivery to at least one EU Member State.

Source: EMCDDA.

Silk Road – what is / was it?

- The Silk Road is the most well known of, now, a number of online drug marketplaces, similar to eBay, with drug listings, vendor ratings, sales, a discussion forum, etc.
- Silk Road is accessed via Tor, through the hidden web, and drugs are bought using Bitcoin, an encrypted virtual currency.
- Tor & Bitcoin, used correctly, apparently make transactions untraceable.
- Drugs delivered through the postal system in ‘stealth packaging’.
- Normally, funds are only released to vendors when buyers receive their goods and are satisfied with them.



Silk Road timeline

The screenshot shows the Silk Road anonymous market website. At the top, it features the Silk Road logo with a camel, navigation links for messages, orders, and account balance, and a search bar. A sidebar on the left lists categories such as Drugs (6,411), Apparel (245), and Medical (22). The main content area displays a grid of drug listings, each with an image, a title, and a price. For example, one listing is for 'INDOOR ORGANIC SOIL -14G- HASHMAN' priced at \$2.96. Another listing is for 'NORGE: 0.5g SUPERB KOKAIN!' priced at \$2.37. A third listing is for '20G BEST QUALITY MEPHEDRONE EVER! LIKE' priced at \$14.79. Other listings include '1 x ATEC Anadrol 50mg per cap. 50 caps' for \$4.13, '10x 10mg Valium (Diazepam) - Ten Pack!' for \$1.51, 'LSD 100-110ug Blotter Paper x 5 (White Fluff)' for \$2.54, '1500x Xanax 1mg Pfizer 'Upjohn purple footballs'' for \$19.79, '4XBOMB FK'N EDIBLES!!! (MIX&MATCH.)' for \$1.06, and '10gram MDMA crystals**Highest grade' for \$6.60. On the right side, there are sections for 'News' and 'Bookmarked items'.

- Online drug market place operated from February, 2011
- June 2011 Gawker article thrust into limelight
- DPR arrest and shutdown 2 Oct, 2013.
- Total number of drug listings:
 - 485 in June 2011,
 - 880 in November 2011,
 - 1159 in March 2012,
 - 6411 in March 2013
 - ~13,000 in October 2013



THIS HIDDEN SITE HAS BEEN SEIZED

by the Federal Bureau of Investigation,
in conjunction with the IRS Criminal Investigation Division,
ICE Homeland Security Investigations, and the Drug Enforcement Administration,
in accordance with a seizure warrant obtained by the
United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York
and issued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 983(j) by the
United States District Court for the Southern District of New York



Silk Road 2.0



messages 0 | orders 0 | account \$0.000

Search

Go

Hi, I

settings - logout



Psychedelics 1868

- 2C-Family 181
- 4-ACO-Family 45
- 4-HO-Family 0
- 5-MeO-Family 0
- NBOMe 230
- LSZ 1
- LSD 349
- TMA Family 0
- Shrooms 108
- MET 1
- LSA 1
- Entheogens 0
- DPT 6
- DOx 28
- DMT 87
- Bufotenin 1
- AMT 4
- AL-LAD 7
- Salvia 20

Alcohol 424

Apparel 384

Art 15

Biotic materials 2

Books 548

Computer equipment 26

Custom Orders 223

Digital goods 770

Drug paraphernalia 174

Drugs 14007

Electronics 49

Erotica 115

Forgeries 110

Hardware 14

Herbs & Supplements 3

Jewelry 131

Lab Supplies 26

Lotteries & games 21

Medical 6

Money 347

browsing psychedelics

sort by: bestselling



ships to my region



ships from my region

update



(10)Gram -GROUND- Cubensis Mush Shroom Powder by MUSHBUD -Shipping WORLDWIDE-

vendor: MUSHBUD
ships from: Canada
ships to: Worldwide

\$0.074567
add to cart



200ug Shiva LSD Blotter - 1

vendor: aKid
ships from: Undeclared
ships to: Worldwide

\$0.022696
add to cart



10 x 1000ug 25i-NBome Blotters HPBCD Complexed

vendor: DaHBome
ships from: United Kingdom
ships to: Worldwide

\$0.027519
add to cart

5/5/2014

Agora

agorahooawayyfoe.onion/cat/vheN9d2mMr

Agora Beta

Welcome [] = Wallet 0.0000000 BTC (Display USD/BTC) :: \$ 438.98 USD

0 NEW MESSAGES LOGOUT

Listings Profile Wallet Orders Forums Info/Help

DRUGS

Search

Drugs

- Barbiturates (7)
- Benzos (400+)
- Cannabis (2400+)
- Dissociatives (100+)
- Ecstasy (1400+)
- Opioids (500+)
- Other (200+)
- Prescription (700+)
- Psychedelics (1200+)
- RCs (200+)
- Steroids (300+)
- Stimulants (1300+)
- Weight loss (60+)

Main menu:

- Counterfeits (200+)
- Data (300+)
- Drug paraphernalia (20+)
- Drugs (9300+)
- Electronics (90+)
- Forgeries (200+)
- Information (900+)
- Jewelry (50+)
- Other (30+)
- Services (400+)
- Tobacco (80+)
- Weapons (100+)

	 5 gram (80% purity) 0.56950202 BTC	 20 ml = 4 vials 0.45560162 BTC	 3 Spoetnik #1 Cannabis 0.06150621 BTC	 500 x 25i NBOMe 0.91120324 BTC
 4-AcO-DMT 100 mg 0.06922821 BTC	 25x Pacman's Ghost 0.27905599 BTC	 1 QP (114g) from NW 2.16410770 BTC	 5 x 20-22mg 2C-B 0.09428630 BTC	 0,5 gram of Colombian 0.13952799 BTC
 25g Legal HQ Spice - 0.27336097 BTC	 5g high-class Peruvian 1.13877625 BTC	 Custom order for P...15 0.63000000 BTC	 CocaParis's Pure 0.45560162 BTC	 3.5 Grams Mdma 0.36448129 BTC
 25x20mg Oxycodone 0.93398332 BTC	 500gr. 5-MeO-MIPT 9.11203243 BTC	 2.638g MDMA Crystal 0.21868877 BTC	 Bhang Bar Peppermint 0.06834024 BTC	 1 x SUBUTEX 0.06378422 BTC
 Symbiosis - 100 Pink 1.09344389 BTC	 Indian hand rubbed 0.36448129 BTC	 Snow White Organic 0.87931113 BTC	 1500 grams of pure 9.11203243 BTC	 1lb Medical-Grade Indoor 6.15062189 BTC

↑ numbers of online drug marketplaces

From Digital Citizens Alliance, DeepDotWeb, April 2014

Darknet sites at the time of the Silk Road seizure (10/2/13)	Drug Listings
The Silk Road	13,000
Black Market Reloaded	3,567
Sheep Marketplace	1,407
DeepBay	200
TOTAL	18,174

Marketplaces (Today)	Drug Listings	Total Listings	Weapons
Silk Road 2.0	13,648	17,192	No
Agora	7,400	9,158	Yes
Pandora Openmarket	5,249	5,812	No
Evolution	2,623	5,523	Yes
BlueSky Marketplace	1,740	1,833	No
New Markets			
Dark Bay	292	329	No
The Pirate Market	247	367	Yes
Outlaw Market	230	246	No
Tor Bazaar Alpha	205	252	Yes
Black Bank Market	201	239	No
White Rabbit Anonymous MarketPlace	194	256	Yes
TOTAL LISTINGS	32,029	41,207	

DARKNETMARKETS LISTING COUNT IS BOOMING: APPROACHING 50,000!

Posted by: DeepDotWeb, April 20, 2014 | 6 News & Articles | 4 Comments



“The current number of total drug listings is 176% of pre-TSR take down levels. This growth has come with increased competition ...”

“Silk Road 2.0 is the market leader with a 43% market share. TSR had 71% at the time of its seizure.”

“Agora currently carries 26% of drug listings and has seen major growth in listings, as well as credibility, since the hacks of Silk Road 2.0 and Pandora. Agora further differentiates itself from Silk Road 2.0, Pandora, and BlueSky by offering weapons.”

Comparison of Darknet Markets

If you see an error please contact vault43@safe-mail.net

Need to link the chart in a sorted order?
Here's the URL for the current chart view.

LINK <http://vault43z5vxy3vn3.onion/chart.php?sort=>



Click the heading to an attribute / feature to sort by that column.

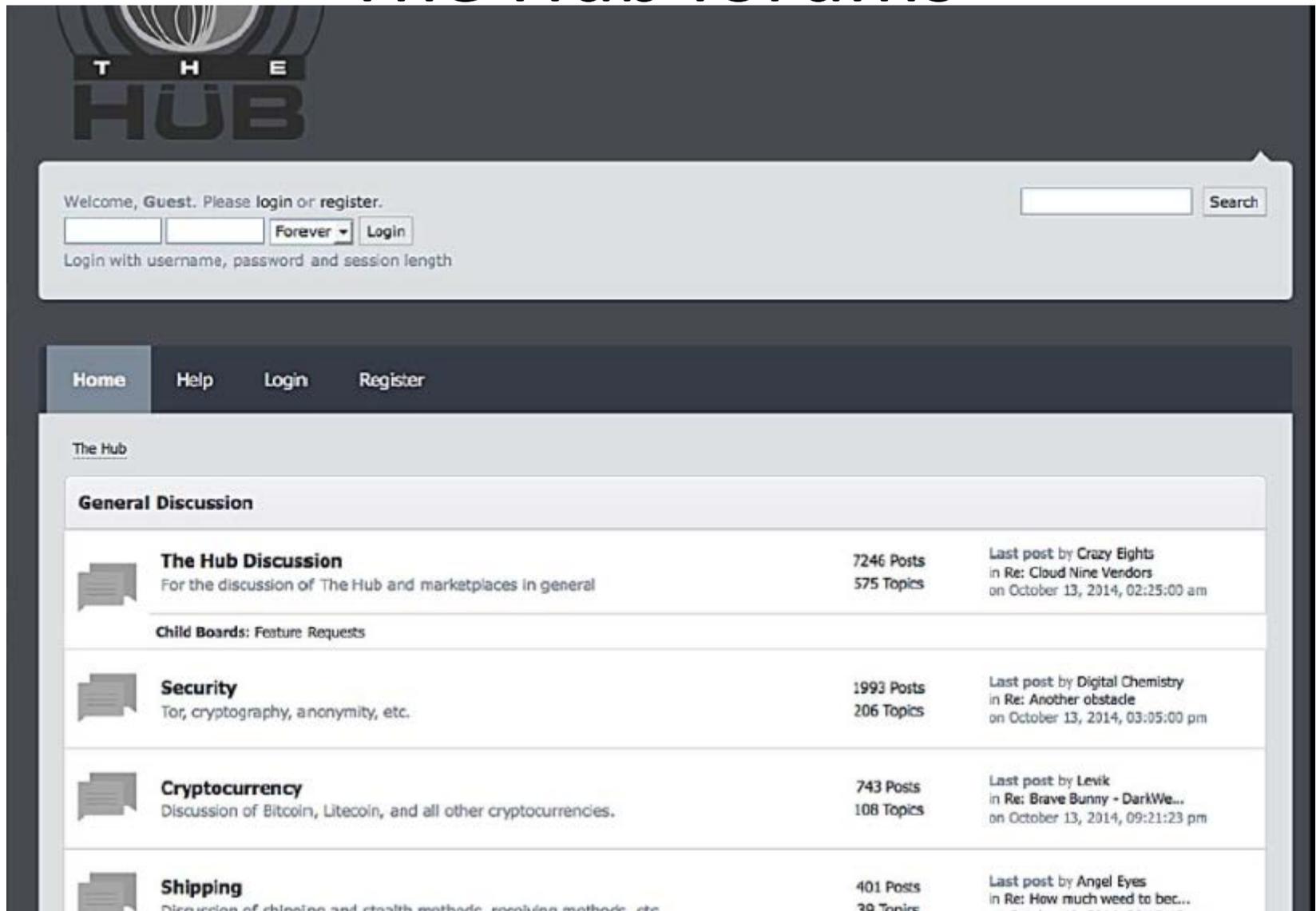
Reset Sort Order

Market Click For Details	URL Click To Visit Site	Uptime	Listings	Grams	Helix	Open Registration	MultiSig	Seamless	Transactions	Warnings	Commission	Fee/Bond	Weapon
Evolution	k5zq47j6wd3wdvjq.onion	96.04%	15851 28.56%	✓	✗	✓	2 3	✗	Both	🔒	3%	0.5 BTC	✓
Agora	agorahooawayyfoe.onion	81.54%	15522 27.97%	✓	✗	Referral Link	None	✗	Centralized	🔒	4%	0.6 BTC	✓
Silk Road 2	silkroad6ownowfk.onion	94.54%	11025 19.86%	✗	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒👤	5%	Closed	✗
Pandora	pandorajodqp5zrr.onion	94.5%	5385 9.67%	✓	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒👤	3%	1.5 BTC	✓
Cloud-Nine	bviaqyj6obc54vhn.onion	99.72%	4311 7.77%	✓	✓	✓	2 3	✗	Both	🔒	0% / 2% / 5%	0 / 150 USD	✗
Andromeda	andromedam363aux.onion	90.48%	1586 2.86%	✗	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒	4%	0 / 30 USD	✓
Hydra	hydrampvvnunidl.onion	99.29%	1512 2.72%	✗	✗	Referral Link	2 3	✗	Both	🔒	5%	150 USD	✓
BlueSky	blueskyp1zv4fsti.onion	99.48%	1476 2.66%	✗	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒	5 - 10%	0.5 BTC	✗
Cannabis Road	cannabiskofv17pa.onion	98.86%	1366 2.46%	✗	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒👤	4%	0.5 BTC	✗
The Marketplace	43y5mwjvhxd6zf7v.onion	87.06%	1145 2.06%	✗	✗	✓	2 3	✗	Decentralized	🔒	4%	250 - 500 USD	✗
1776 Market	n6tizonxy7sod7eqt.onion	96.42%	800 1.44%	✓	✗	✓	2 3	✗	Decentralized	🔒👤	?	0.0 BTC	✗
Onionshop	onionshopkue7srx.onion	99.24%	662 1.19%	✗	✗	✓	None	✗	Decentralized	🔒	3%	0.0 BTC	✓
Pirate Market	yjhzeed15osagmmr.onion	97.04%	537 0.97%	✓	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒	6%	0.05 BTC	✓
Tor Bazaar	bazaarlv2a7i3uyn.onion	99.23%	468 0.84%	✗	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒👤	0%	0.1 BTC	✓
BlackBank	wztyb7vfcw6l4xd.onion	98.30%	426 0.77%	✓	✗	✓	2 3	✗	Both	🔒	3%	200 USD	✗
Alpaca	alpaca7bcqv2rnu3.onion	95.88%	291 0.52%	✗	✗	✓	3 4	✓	Decentralized	🔒	2%	0.0 BTC	✓
Outlaw Market	outfor6jwcztwbpd.onion	97.27%	291 0.52%	✗	✗	✓	None	✗	Centralized	🔒👤{.js}	0%	Per Listing	✓

The Hub forums

Marketplaces			
	Featured Vendors Browse the vetted vendors who make a financial contribution to The Hub	1 Posts 1 Topics	Last post by Wit in Re: About Featured Vendor St... on June 02, 2014, 10:47:42 pm
	New Marketplaces Discussion of Emerging or Developing Marketplaces.	740 Posts 77 Topics	Last post by accide in Re: Diabolus MP, a canna... on October 13, 2014, 11:42:48 pm
	Vendor Review Discussion and Reviews of vendors across all marketplaces	3964 Posts 446 Topics	Last post by JackBlue in Re: JackBlue Reviews, Qu... on October 13, 2014, 05:31:03 pm
	Agora Market Discussion of Agora Marketplace	1629 Posts 216 Topics	Last post by Digital Chemistry in Re: We're done with Agor... on Today at 02:35:00 am
	Child Boards: Agora (Referral Link)		
	Evolution Market For discussion of the Evolution Marketplace	868 Posts 129 Topics	Last post by Mr. Mouse in Re: PAY or BURN on October 13, 2014, 05:07:05 am
	Child Boards: Evolution Market (Direct Link)		
	Onionshop Discussion of Onionshop Marketplace	25 Posts 6 Topics	Last post by Onionshop in Re: Onionshop down on September 24, 2014, 01:12:30 pm
	Child Boards: Onionshop (Direct Link)		
	Pandora Market Discussion of Pandora Marketplace	314 Posts 58 Topics	Last post by pothead in Re: Alice... on October 08, 2014, 10:17:22 pm
	Child Boards: Pandora (Direct Link)		
	The Silk Road Discussion of The Silk Road marketplace	2033 Posts 160 Topics	Last post by Digital Chemistry in Re: Success! I got banne... on Today at 02:41:10 am
	Child Boards: Silk Road (Direct Link)		
	The Marketplace.I2P For discussion of the I2P based Marketplace	155 Posts 25 Topics	Last post by godfree in Re: Product Requests on September 02, 2014, 03:24:13 pm
	Child Boards: The Marketplace.I2P (Gateway Link)		
	The Majestic Garden For discussion of The Majestic Garden Market	50 Posts 11 Topics	Last post by pothead in Re: "A New Market, TMG, ... on July 28, 2014, 02:30:37 pm

The Hub forums



The Hub forums homepage. The header features the 'THE HUB' logo. Below it is a login/register section with a search bar and a 'Forever' session length dropdown. A navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Help', 'Login', and 'Register'. The main content area is titled 'The Hub' and lists several forum categories under 'General Discussion':

Forum Category	Description	Posts	Topics	Last Post
 The Hub Discussion	For the discussion of The Hub and marketplaces in general	7246 Posts	575 Topics	Last post by Crazy Eights in Re: Cloud Nine Vendors on October 13, 2014, 02:25:00 am
Child Boards: Feature Requests				
 Security	Tor, cryptography, anonymity, etc.	1993 Posts	206 Topics	Last post by Digital Chemistry in Re: Another obstacle on October 13, 2014, 03:05:00 pm
 Cryptocurrency	Discussion of Bitcoin, Litecoin, and all other cryptocurrencies.	743 Posts	108 Topics	Last post by Levik in Re: Brave Bunny - DarkWe... on October 13, 2014, 09:21:23 pm
 Shipping	Discussion of shipping and stealth methods, receiving methods, etc.	401 Posts	30 Topics	Last post by Angel Eyes in Re: How much weed to bec...

The Hub forums

The Hub - Statistics Center

General Statistics

Total Members:	13596	Average registrations per day:	49.46
Total Posts:	36669	Average posts per day:	154.55
Total Topics:	3370	Average topics per day:	15.77
Total Categories:	4	Total Boards:	46
Users Online:	69	Latest Member:	YOGI
Most Online:	213 - February 13, 2014, 11:08:50 pm	Average online per day:	64.63
Online Today:	98	Male to Female Ratio:	1:1
Total page views:	6272273	Average page views per day:	22481.27

Top 10 Posters

Ghost		1203
EvilGrin		1129
Boogie		663
mary666		657
Wit		539
Alfred		528
Willowsmom		422
Gregory House		402
Jack Harkness		379
Ziggy		352

Top 10 Boards

Off Topic		8119
The Hub Discussion		7246
Vendor Review		3964
The Silk Road		2033
Security		1993
Silkkitie Market		1870
Agora Market		1629
Under The Bridge		1545
Evolution Market		868
Cryptocurrency		743

The Hub forums

Drug safety discussion board



Trip Reports

Sharing and Discussion of Trips with Various Substances

35 Posts
7 Topics

Last post by southeastern
in Re: Ketamine
on July 06, 2014, 07:15:20 am

Pages: [1] 2 3 4

Subject / Started by	Replies / Views	Last post ▾
ENERGY CONTROL: DRUG TESTING SERVICE FOR DEEP WEB USERS Started by EnergyControl - 1 2 >	24 Replies 2702 Views	October 11, 2014, 01:55:59 pm by EnergyControl
Ask a Drug Expert Physician about Drugs & Health Started by DoctorX - 1 2 >	35 Replies 1929 Views	October 07, 2014, 06:36:12 am by blowmeplease
The Hub's Harm Reduction & Drug Awareness Thread Started by Gregory House - 1 2 >	22 Replies 1447 Views	May 24, 2014, 08:31:17 pm by Wit
Drug Kit Started by I R Drugs	0 Replies 447 Views	October 07, 2014, 08:47:12 pm by I R Drugs
Why 420 isn't safe - the dangers of cannabis Started by 2fruits - 1 2 3 >	53 Replies 3402 Views	October 04, 2014, 06:07:17 am by Angel Eyes
Buying Your Drugs Online is Safer Started by Joseph Cox - 1 2 >	25 Replies 1609 Views	September 22, 2014, 05:25:31 pm by dandantheicecreamman
Pure Obsessive compulsive disorder & anxiety, solution? Started by Mordok	1 Replies 293 Views	September 20, 2014, 02:48:51 pm by tub
DMT Business Started by platinumhead5050	6 Replies 365 Views	September 20, 2014, 02:12:25 pm by GosuKimchi
Have you received advice from DoctorX? Started by OzFreelancer	4 Replies 333 Views	September 20, 2014, 03:20:57 am by tub



GLOBAL DRUG SURVEY

Global Drug Survey

- GDS is an independent drug use data mapping agency that conducts annual, online, anonymous, surveys.

Limitation: findings are not representative of drug using population

- Questions about access, purchase from Silk Road, & motivations for use/non-use.
- The base sample (n=9470) reported recent drug purchase and resided in the United Kingdom (n=4315, median age 24, 76% male), Australia (n=2761, median age 32, 76% male) or the United States (n=2394, median age 21, 80% male).

Drugs purchased on SR

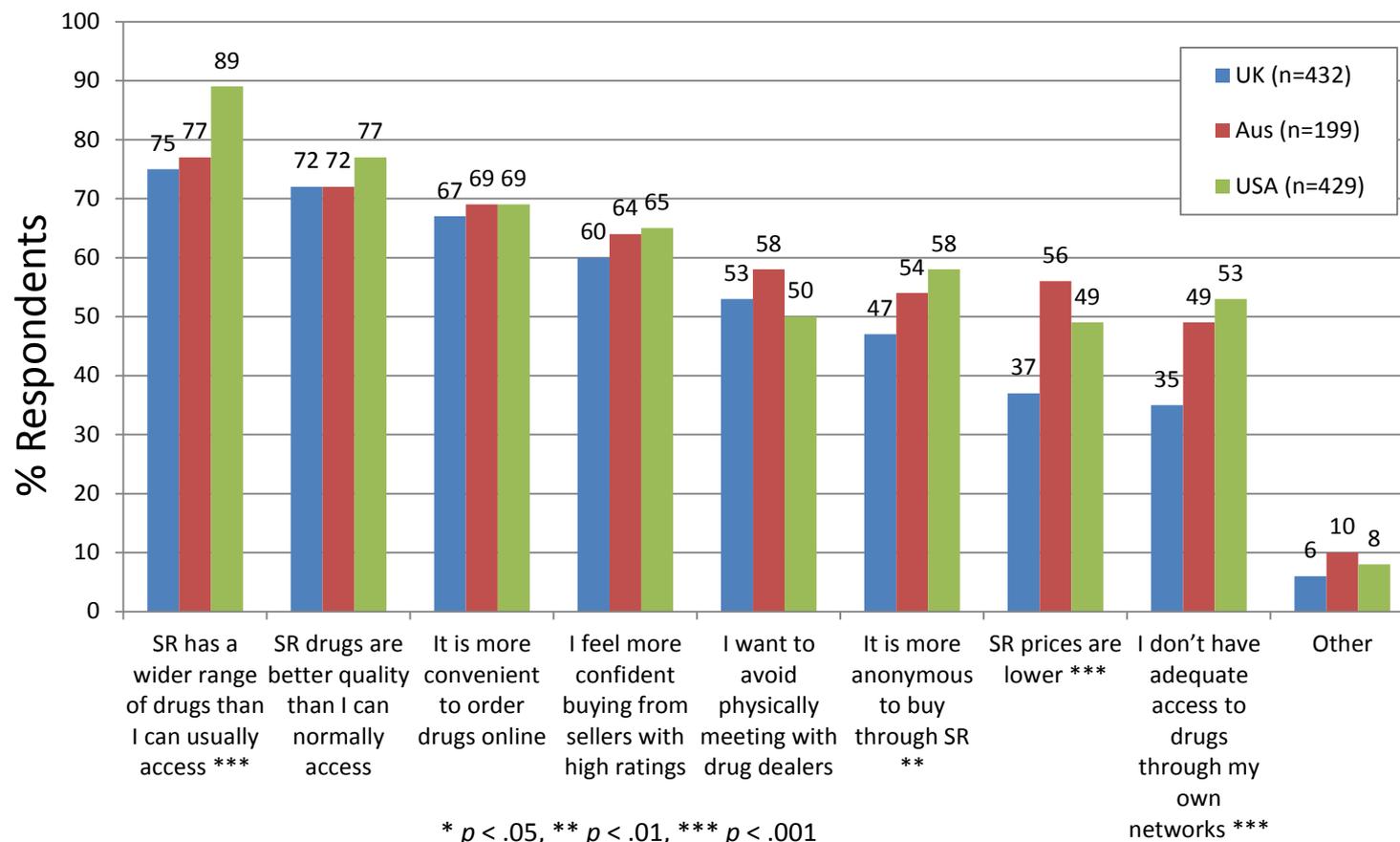
From Global Drug Survey 2012 see Barratt, Ferris & Winstock (2014)

Rank	UK (n=422)		Australia (n=193)		USA (n=421)	
	Drug	%	Drug	%	Drug	%
1	MDMA (All)	56	MDMA (All)	60	MDMA (All)	53
2	Cannabis (All)	51	MDMA powder	47	MDMA powder	45
3	MDMA powder	43	Cannabis (All)	34	LSD	45
4	Cannabis Skunk	39	LSD	33	Cannabis (All)	34
5	LSD	29	MDMA pills	27	NBOMe (All)	29
6	Cannabis Resin	29	Cocaine	25	2C (All)	27
7	MDMA pills	29	Cannabis Skunk	24	Magic Mushrooms	27
8	2C (All)	23	2C (All)	16	Cannabis Skunk	24
9	2C-B	22	Amphetamine (All)	16	DMT	24
10	Cannabis Grass	21	NBOMe (All)	15	25I-NBOMe	22
11	Prescription drugs (All)	18	Prescription drugs (All)	15	MDMA pills	21
12	Ketamine	17	DMT	15	Prescription drugs (All)	20
13	NBOMe (All)	13	Cannabis Grass	14	2C-B	18
14	DMT	11	2C-B	13	Cannabis Resin	17
15	25I-NBOMe	11	Magic Mushrooms	13	25C-NBOMe	16
16	Benzodiazepines	10	Amphetamine	13	Ketamine	15
17	Magic Mushrooms	9	25I-NBOMe	12	Benzodiazepines	12
18	Cocaine	9	Ketamine	9	Methoxetamine	11
19	Amphetamine (All)	9	25C-NBOMe	9	2C-E	11
20	Amphetamine	9	Benzodiazepines	9	Cannabis Grass	10

Note. Base sample = Respondents who usually buy their own drugs (including 'legal highs') and report having consumed drugs that were purchased through Silk Road

Reasons for accessing drugs on Silk Road

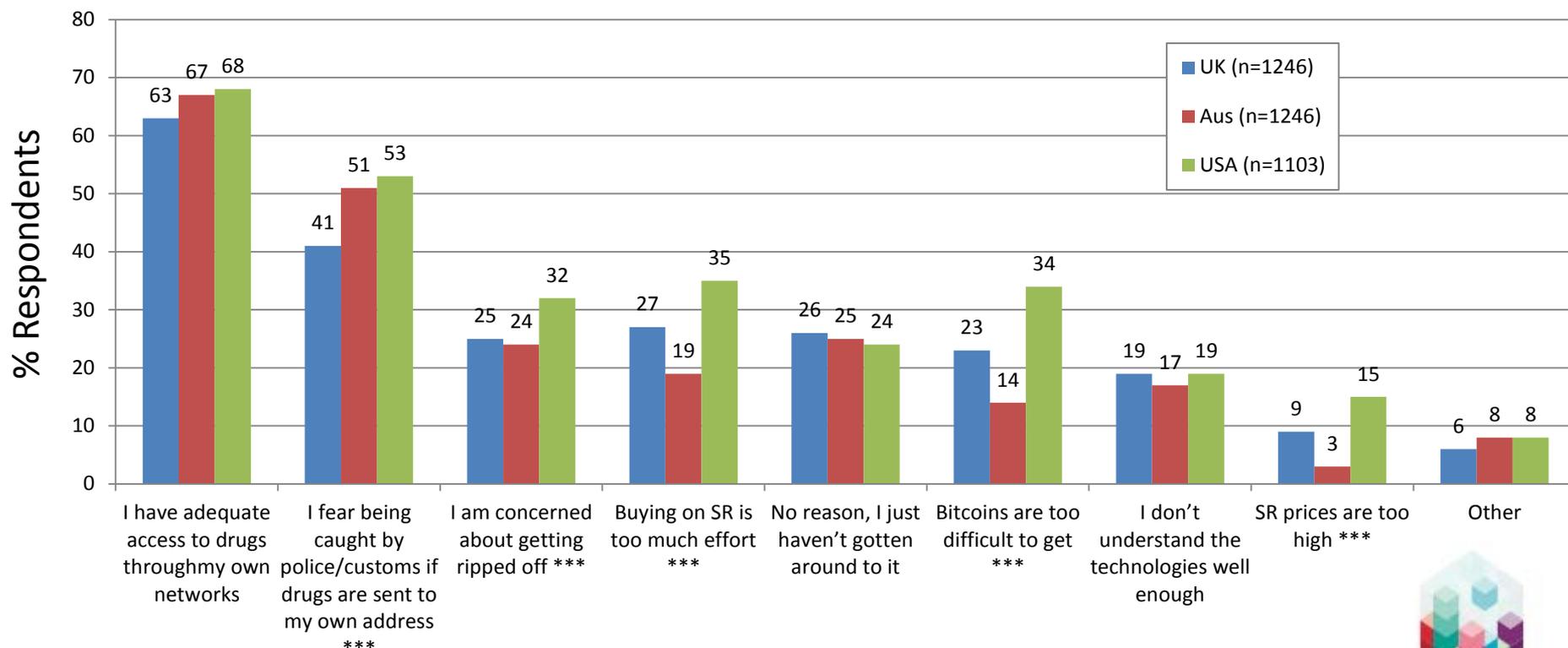
From Global Drug Survey 2012 see Barratt, Ferris & Winstock (2014)



GLOBAL DRUG SURVEY

Reasons for NOT accessing drugs on SR

From Global Drug Survey 2012 see Barratt, Ferris & Winstock (2014)



* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$



GLOBAL DRUG SURVEY

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- Aims to understand Silk Road use from a buyer's perspective.
- People who purchased drugs from Silk Road 1.0 were invited to complete anonymous, encrypted, online instant messaging interviews.
- The (n=17) interviews took a life history approach to ascertain drug use trajectories and drug purchasing trajectories, exploring the contexts of online drug purchasing and drug use.
- We are also interested in how drug use and harms are affected by increased access and the availability of a wider range of substances through Silk Road.
- We also discussed their tech context: computer skills, Internet use and experiences of Tor, encryption and Bitcoin.
- Will present some interim results here today

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- Wider range of drugs than I can access offline

4:46:32 pm [interviewer]: After reading the gawker article, what was it that motivated you to access SR? ie, what in particular were you going there for?

4:47:31 pm [P21]: initially, it was disbelief, "there's no way that this can be real," sort of thing

4:48:05 pm [P21]: and then i compared the amount and variety of drugs available on there along with the prices to drugs locally

4:48:40 pm [P21]: it just made more sense to order from SR instead of buying locally

- SR drugs are better quality or cheaper than I could access offline

9:13:59 am [P15]: "...I only started really buying consistently out of necessity. I live in an area where the quality of marijuana is not up to par to someone with a tolerance like me. It was very difficult to get medical-grade weed, such that would come from a dispensary. When it was available, it was expensive and there were no price breaks. It just became impractical..."

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- More convenient than purchasing drugs offline

10:24:09 am [P11]: I didn't move online. I was always online, I've never purchased drugs in person. I don't like the idea of it.

10:25:09 am [Interviewer]: what appeals to you about being able to buy cannabis online ...

10:25:48 am [P11]: ...It's so easy to order cannabis online. You pay someone, an anonymous person, anonymously, and the drugs arrive a day later.

10:26:09 am [P11]: No worries, and almost no risk when purchasing domestically.

- Confidence in buying from sellers with high ratings

7:52:08 am [Interviewer]: what made you trust the environment enough to purchase? (or was this not an issue?)

7:55:01 am [P15]: Well, I'm the kind of person that obsessively researches any chemical I'm taking so I know exactly what the risks are, what the dosage should be like, and just safety in general. SR was able to facilitate that because I could pour through a vendor's reviews, as well as read through their forum review thread.

The rating system and feedback were enough to quell any misgivings. It wasn't like I was unfamiliar with how the mail system works in relation to chemicals being sent to me

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- I want to avoid physically meeting with drug dealers in person
1:04:16 pm [P22]: I preferred the experience of buying online really. I could shop around get the product I wanted and it felt much safer.
1:05:01 pm [P22]: Than going to some dodgy car park in the middle of the night to meet some bloke to buy whatever it was he had to sell.
- It's more anonymous to buy drugs through SR
11:16:55 am [P11]: The simplicity of it all. A quick online search, a simple step-by-step guide to follow, and not much later you have illegal substances in your mailbox. And no one knows I did it! (Except the vendor...)

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- Avoid having drugs 'pushed' to you

Quote 1

10:31:10 am [P11]: Also regarding purchasing drugs online; I don't like the fact that the [offline] dealer could potentially try to make me buy more (or other) drugs than I want. He can advertise on Silk Road all he wants, but I can choose to ignore it there. I feel that if I meet him in person, he'll be able to... well, act differently. (Could be a she!)

Quote 2

9:00:45 am [P15]: Yes, I've bought locally. It's pretty universal for dealers to oversell their product. The very few that don't are the successful and more business-oriented ones.

The reason there was no pushing on SR was simple- the rating system let the product speak for itself. It's very common for a vendor to get very very high quality product.

Once a few orders go out and the great feedback starts building up, vendors can get so many orders that they get swamped and have to temporarily take down their listings while catching up

9:01:58 am [P15]: I saw it happen a lot when the general quality of a particular drug across the entire site is lacking. A vendor will get some great product, word gets out, and everyone flocks to them

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- Movements between markets online.

[Interviewer] @ 1:25: so what made you decide to purchase drugs on SR, it seems you had a good supply network already established?

[P24] @ 1:26 everyone was moving to sr to captilise on the traffic and popularity, so even my suppliers were migrating there

[Interviewer] @ 1:27 Can you tell me how your early experiences of purchasing there compared to your previous channels?

[P24] @ 1:29 not much besides the escrow and being able to try new things my other people may have not had access to and the convenience of searching and sorting products

[P24] @ 1:30 I would always read the sr forums daily so i knew what was going on and who i could trust

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- Turn to direct dealing after SR seizure

[Interviewer] as you mentioned earlier SR 2.0 is now down and other market places are coming and going pretty quickly. the hub has started up.

[Interviewer] how have you been affected by these changes?

[P16] I window shop on many sources, I'm beginning to have direct deals with known vendors as a first choice more than buying from listings

[P16] I also like to think that I already had my "peak" on online drug purchase.

[line deleted as asynchronous interviewer question]

09:54:26 [P16] and i'm spending less time online on the markets.

The NDRI Silk Road study

(Barratt, Lenton & Maddox, ongoing)

- Middleman

7:17:26 am [Interviewer]: I'd like to talk about how you found out about SR. Can you tell me a bit about what took you there in the first place? (ie motivation to get on it and places where it first came to your attention, for example)

7:19:18 am [P20]: I heard about it through an Internet friend (met in an online discussion forum) whom I haven't met in person, it was exciting to hear that I could discreetly get shipped drugs, especially psychedelics which I had been wanting to get but hadn't previously had the knowledge to acquire otherwise

7:19:48 am [P20]: I also saw the possible profit incentive in getting bulk marijuana mailed

Conclusions

- Although NPS are not the most frequently accessed drugs, there are between country differences which probably reflect local drug market factors.
- motivations for buying drugs online are varied and include
 - Variety of drugs available
 - Quality
 - Convenience
 - Price
 - Confidence provided by online seller rating schemes
- The dynamic nature of the online drug market places, including the impact of drug law enforcement actions and responses to these, means this aspect of the NPS story is one that is rapidly changing.

Conclusions cont.

- Clamping down on surface web drug discussion may send people to dark web
 - Harder to monitor
 - More of a supply/access focus
 - Further marginalisation/distance
- Drug market effects
 - New products rapidly find way into the market
 - Mail delivery of small amounts – clusters of harm
 - Labelling not valid, content & purity unknown
 - Secondary supply – especially for young, inexperienced users

