Identifying the Key Sociocultural Influences on Drinking Behavior in High and Moderate Binge-Drinking Countries and the Public Policy Implications

Stephen P. Hogan, Keith J. Perks, and Rebekah Russell-Bennett

Despite considerable state investment and initiatives, binge drinking is still a major behavioral problem for policy makers and communities in many parts of the world. Furthermore, the practice of bingeing on alcohol seems to be spreading to young people in countries traditionally considered to have moderate drinking behaviors. Using a sociocultural lens and a framework of sociocultural themes from previous literature to develop propositions from their empirical study, the authors examine binge-drinking attitudes and behaviors among young people from high and moderate binge-drinking countries. The authors then make proposals regarding how policy makers can use social marketing more effectively to contribute to behavior change. Qualitative interviews were conducted with 91 respondents from 22 countries who were studying in two high binge-drinking countries at the time. The results show support for three contrasting sociocultural propositions that identify influences on binge drinking across these countries.

Keywords: binge drinking, sociocultural, public policy, social marketing

Over the past two decades, binge drinking has become a major concern for many societies in the developed world. This is due to the behavior's impact on national health services, antisocial behavior, violence, drunk driving, and other crimes that can occur as a result of excessive drinking.

In some high binge-drinking countries (e.g., the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia), there are signs that excessive drinking among young men may be peaking or even reducing slightly; however, binge-drinking levels still remain problematic, and there is evidence that binge drinking by women and adolescents is on the rise (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2010; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2010; Grucza, Norberg, and Bierut 2009; Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2009; Martinic and Measham 2008). There are also indications of binge-drinking contagion, with binge-drinking behavior spreading to countries with a reputation for responsible drinking behavior, including those in southern Europe (Arvers and Choquet 1999; Kuntsche, Rehm, and Gmel 2004; MCM Research 2004), central and eastern Europe (Popova et al. 2007), and Asia and South America (Zarzar et al. 2012).

Typically, government efforts to reduce binge drinking have involved either regulatory intervention or education campaigns. However, social marketing—a third option for social change (Rothschild 1999)—has recently received more attention and may offer some additional insights and public policy solutions.

Previous research on sociocultural influences has been largely descriptive, resulting in an extensive list of factors that influence drinking without a clear indication of which of these factors may be more important than others or how they interact. Furthermore, we know little about how these factors may vary between high binge-drinking countries (e.g., the United Kingdom, Australia, Finland, the United States, Germany) and countries with more moderate binge-drinking levels (e.g., France, Spain, Italy, Hong Kong, Japan) (Social Issues Research Centre 1998). An understanding of the factors that can explain these drinking differences may provide a basis for further strategies aimed at curbing binge-drinking behavior. This understanding is particularly important, for example, given the objectives in the U.S. government's "Healthy People 2020" strategy (HealthyPeople.gov 2012) and the Australian National Pre-

Stephen P. Hogan is Associate Head (e-mail: S.P.Hogan@brighton.ac.uk), and *Keith J. Perks* is Reader in Marketing (e-mail: K.J.Perks@brighton.ac.uk), Brighton Business School, University of Brighton. *Rebekah Russell-Bennett* is Professor, QUT Business School, Queensland University of Technology (e-mail: rebekah.bennett@qut.edu.au). Madhubalan Viswanathan served as associate editor for this article.

ventative Health Strategy (National Preventative Health Taskforce 2009) to reduce the levels of binge drinking among students and youth.

The specific sociocultural aspects of drinking we explore in this research are hedonistic behavior, parental influence, peer influence, social affiliation, and cultural norms, which previous research has identified as significant influences on drinking behavior (Kuo et al. 2002; Maclachlan and Smith 2004). In our research, we aim to address the following questions:

1. What are the key sociocultural influences on binge drinking in high and moderate binge-drinking countries?
2. How can these sociocultural influences inform public policy initiatives to change drinking behavior in high binge-drinking countries?

In exploring these questions, we identify behavioral differences in binge drinking within and between high and moderate binge-drinking countries and propose alternative initiatives for public policy makers to consider when formulating and implementing future social marketing actions.

First, we examine the various public policy approaches toward binge drinking and review the literature on sociocultural influences on binge-drinking behavior. We then explain our methodology, present the analysis and our interpretation of the data, and develop three contrasting propositions of sociocultural influences on binge-drinking behavior. Finally, we discuss public policy implications, conclusions, and future directions for research.

Public Policy Approaches to Binge Drinking

The rising incidence of binge drinking across the globe has led to a plethora of academic research and government intervention programs aimed at stemming the problem (Courtney and Polich 2009). Typically, government efforts to reduce binge-drinking levels in high and moderate binge-drinking countries have relied on popular but generally ineffective policies involving either mass media campaigns warning of the dangers of drinking or regulatory interventions (e.g., increasing the tax on alcohol, amending the legal age of drinking, imposing curfews and lock-outs from drinking establishments, adjusting licensing hours). Governments have also used prohibition of or control over the the supply of alcohol and tighter restrictions on marketing and promotions to curb consumption. In some cases, they have clamped down on parents supplying alcohol to minors, with varying degrees of success (see Table 1).

Despite significant spending by governments in developed countries on alcohol education, there is little evidence that these efforts have had a major influence on drinking habits (Plant and Plant 2006). We argue that to change ingrained binge-drinking practices and to arrest any further spread of such behavior to moderate drinking countries, there is a need for a greater understanding of how sociocultural factors influence young people to ignore advice regarding safe levels of drinking, leading them to follow a path of risky behavior. To achieve this, we adopt a bottom-up approach to developing public policy recommendations

(Viswanathan et al. 2012) by examining the issues from a young person's perspective.

Literature Review

Sociocultural Influences on Binge-Drinking Behavior

Mandelbaum (1965) identified the relationship between alcohol and sociocultural factors nearly half a century ago, arguing that alcohol is a cultural artifact in the sense that the drinking of alcohol is almost entirely culturally defined and exists as an entrenched part of culture. Previous research on social cultural influences on drinking has identified four significant factors: hedonism (Bourdieu 1984; O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2002), parental influence (Hutchinson 2009; Nash, McQueen, and Bray 2005), peer influence and social affiliation (Jamison and Myers 2007; Shorthouse 2009), and cultural norms and rituals (Engineer et al. 2003; Maclachlan and Smith 2004).

Despite many subsequent contributions on the topic, however, the specific influence that these factors have on binge drinkers is still inadequately explained (Kuntsche, Rehm, and Gmel 2004). Furthermore, few studies have compared how these factors vary across cultures (Mäkelä et al. 2006). In the following subsections, we review and discuss the literature on the sociocultural influences of binge-drinking behavior. In doing so, we order the constructs according to the micro-level (hedonism and parental influence) and wider social macro-level (peer group, social affiliation, and cultural norms) influences and motivations for binge-drinking behavior.

Hedonism

Extant research has defined and characterized hedonistic behavior as individuals and groups who seek instant (egoistic) satisfaction of selfish desires for pleasure (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2002). The term "hedonism" is derived from Greek, meaning pleasure, enjoyment, or fun, and is associated with self-obsession and "doing one's own thing" without considering the consequences of an action, to excess and with a fun ethic (Bourdieu 1984). Hedonism is viewed as the pursuit of "fleeting" pleasures, in which the avoidance of pain is the main goal in life (Foxall 1996). Hedonism is not only an individual act; indeed, by spreading or sharing their enjoyment, people can also give pleasure to others (Campbell 1987). Young people who want to hear the stories of their peers' drunken escapades are viewed as seeking out pleasure and enjoying life (Honess, Seymour, and Webster 2000). Many young people purposely pursue drunkenness as a form of "calculated hedonism" for "chilling out" with friends to destress after a difficult week of work or study (Measham 2008; Szmigin et al. 2008). Thus, many young people view binge drinking as a pleasurable, socializing activity.

Parental Influence

There is evidence that family upbringing and alcohol education by parents has a significant impact on a person's future behavior toward alcohol and substance use (Nash, McQueen, and Bray 2005). This occurs through the socialization process (Neeley 2005). Alcohol consumption is lower in

Table 1.   Public Policy Actions Taken to Curb Binge Drinking

Public Policy Action	Consequence/Effect
Tax and Price Adjustment	
Increasing the duty/price of alcohol and setting minimum price levels per unit of alcohol	This has had a limited impact (Doran and Shakeshaft 2008) but is perceived as being one of the more effective measures. Bingeing is still a problem in countries such as Sweden, where alcohol is expensive. High prices can also encourage home/illegal brewing (Österberg 2000).
	The alcohol industry is important to many local economies (e.g., the United Kingdom), and therefore there is a general reluctance to push prices too high (Fenn 2008).
Reducing the duty/tax on low-alcohol products and soft drinks	This has been found to be effective in Australia when combined with lowering the drunk-driving alcohol blood level and applying rigorous police enforcement. Low-alcohol beer now accounts for 40% of all beer consumed in the country (Mistral et al. 2006).
Education and Warnings	
School education programs (various countries)	Although such programs can increase student knowledge, most studies reveal that they have limited effect in influencing drinking behavior (Babor et al. 2003). Some studies show that many people are still oblivious of the health dangers of bingeing (Plant and Plant 2006).
Television, poster, press, Internet, roadside advertising, and radio campaigns warning of binge drinking's dangers (e.g., drunk driving, short- and long-term health, dependency, personal safety, weight gain) (various countries)	There has been no convincing evidence to date of the effectiveness of educational messages delivered through any of these outlets.
Putting health warnings on drink labels and in advertisements (various countries)	Such warnings are often in small print, and there is no evidence that they are effective (Agostinelli and Grube 2002).
Regulation	
Raising alcohol purchase age from 16 to 18 years old (France)	This measure has been taken in a moderate binge country to combat the increasing bingeing trend (Conseil Départmental d'Accés au Droit des Landes 2009). It is too early yet to observe any impact.
Raising the minimum age for drinking and public possession of alcohol (e.g., to 21 years in the United States and Sweden, 20 years in Japan)	This regulation can be often circumvented. In the United States, for example, exceptions apply and vary across states (some allowing consumption by minors on private property or when a family member consents), so this measure is considered ineffective (Hanson 2008). Many college student drinkers are under 21 years old, so college drinking is still a problem. It is too easy to obtain a fake ID (Martinez, Rutledge, and Sher 2007).
Making it illegal for parents to provide alcohol to those under the legal drinking age (United States)	Regulations vary across the United States, and the measure may be counterproductive because controlled consumption by parents in the home may be more effective in educating youth about alcohol than experimenting later in less or unregulated settings often involving peers (Hanson 2008).
Tightening where and when public drinking is allowed (Spain), confiscating alcoholic drinks from young people (the United Kingdom), and introducing new fixed penalty fines for antisocial behavior (the United Kingdom)	No obvious impact yet.
Increasing sanctions and fines against those displaying public drunkenness (Spain)	This measure was taken in a moderate binge-drinking country to combat the growing binge-drinking trend (Institute of Alcohol Studies 2002). It is still too early to see any impact.
Lowering the allowable drink/drive alcohol blood levels (Spain and Australia) and increasing penalties for those caught over the limit; requiring all cars to carry breathalyzer kits (France)	Penalties need to be severe to have any impact. Being caught over the allowed alcohol blood limit in Sweden can result in a lifetime driving ban.
Marketing Restrictions	
Restricting advertising of strong alcoholic drinks greater than 23% proof (Spain)	Manufacturers of Alcopops (mixed spirits and soft drinks often consumed by minors) can circumvent such a ban (Metzner and Kraus 2007).

Table 1. **Continued**

Public Policy Action	Consequence/Effect
Tightening advertising regulations, for example, placing restrictions on linking alcohol with sports or health care professionals (Germany) or banning advertising messages that link drinking to social or sexual success, physical attractiveness, or stress release (United Kingdom)	Widespread sponsorship of sports and music (e.g., sponsorship of ice hockey in Canada), celebrity endorsement, and media coverage of drunken celebrities reinforce the high-status image of alcohol (British Medical Association 2008) and provide plenty of free global alcohol advertising.
Restricting or banning promotions such as happy hours (e.g., two-for-one deals), free drinks for women, or open bars (unlimited drinks for a fixed price) (various countries)	Creative marketers often find other ways to entice students into drinking establishments. Young people also "preload" with cheaper supermarket alcohol before going out (Ostergaard and Andrade 2013).
Distribution Changes	
Restricting the distribution of drinks (e.g., in Finland and Sweden, alcohol over 3.5% proof can only be purchased from state-run outlets [Alko and Systembolaget, respectively])	In Sweden, the outlets are closed in the evening, so supply is restricted. However, some people cross the national border for supplies, while others home brew.
Extending licensing hours so that drinking can take place over a longer time period (United Kingdom and Iceland)	In many cases, such measures have exacerbated the problem and led to more bingeing and antisocial behavior (Ragnarsdóttir, Kjartansdóttir, and Davidsdóttir 2002).
Placing tougher sanctions on premises that sell alcohol to underage drinkers (United Kingdom)	Such sanctions may be limited by lack of sufficient resources for the authorities to do the necessary checks.

situations in which mutual respect exists and trust is communicated and developed between parents and children (Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller 1992). Often, children can model drinking behavior from parental behavior, and young people are more likely to binge drink if they observe their parents drinking at high levels (Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems 2007). Research has identified closeness to parents, levels of parental monitoring, and parenting styles as risk factors for subsequent alcohol use or abuse (Kuntsche, Rehm, and Gmel 2004). In many cases, young people obtain their alcohol from their parents, either with or without their knowledge (Hutchinson 2009), and some authorities have taken initiatives (e.g., in seven U.S. states and in Australia) to penalize parents who allow this (Hanson 2008).

In several moderate binge-drinking countries (e.g., southern Europe), parents and other family members traditionally introduce children to alcohol at an early age as part of the family meal ritual. Hanson (2004) argues that this is valuable in helping young people understand that drinking in moderation is a natural and normal activity. Choosing either to abstain or to drink responsibly is a sign of maturity and good judgment in such countries. Family structure may also be important because some studies show less adolescent drunkenness in two-parent families (Hawkins, Catalano, and Miller 1992); moreover, among Canadian college students, research has found binge drinking to be less likely when students lived with parents rather than on campus with their peer group (Kuo et al. 2002). Parental influence can therefore have both a positive and negative impact on children's future drinking behavior.

Peer Influence

Peer influence is a strong predictor of binge drinking (Urberg, Değirmencioğlu, and Pilgrim 1997; La Greca, Prinstein, and Fetter 2001) because young people are likely to perceive binge drinking as a peer norm and an essential ingredient to fit in with the group (Kuntsche, Rehm, and Gmel 2004). Research has identified peer pressure as one of the most important influences on drinking for young women who drink to be sociable (Shorthouse 2009), and young people are often discouraged by their friends if they attempt to drink soft drinks (Engineer at al. 2003).

Several studies have shown that peer influence is stronger than parental influence (Kandel and Andrews 1987; Kafka and London 1991), and the larger the social group, the more pressure there is to participate in binge-drinking sessions (Jamison and Myers 2007). Even in some of the more moderate binge-drinking cultures, such as Spain, peer influence and group membership may be driving heavier drinking, with friends rather than family now more likely to introduce young people to alcohol (Pascual Pastor 2002). However, in other countries, such as Italy, young people still look down on those who consume too much alcohol, and drunkenness can cause one to lose the respect of friends and neighbors (Fraser 2007).

Social Affiliation

Research has shown that affiliation through social networks is a powerful influence on the way people behave (Granovetter 1973), and people are "aware of who is affiliated with whom in their immediate social world" (Freeman 1992, p. 118). Abel and Plumridge (2004) propose styles of "drunken comportment" in social networks in which drinking is used as a disinhibitor. They find, however, that whereas some groups will excuse subsequent behavior, others place "within limits" constraints on their behavior. Many studies in sociology and network theory have observed this phenomenon as homophilly or "birds of a feather" (Lazarsfeld and Merton

1954), whereby people associate with similar others and interact in their own, rather than other, social worlds (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001).

Affiliation through social networks and ties is likely to be a strong force not only on people's behavior but also on how they want to influence others and manage impressions of themselves to create social legitimacy (Schlenker and Weigold 1992; Zott and Nguyen Huy 2007). Goffman (1959, p. 4) views people as "actors" who perform in social situations, so when "an individual appears in the presence of others, there will usually be some reason for him to mobilize his activity so that it will convey an impression to others which is in his interests to convey." After people have created an impression, they are expected to behave in accordance with the selected identity to maintain face for themselves and others, enabling social interactions to run smoothly (Schlenker and Weigold 1992). People can use binge drinking and choice of alcoholic drinks as a as a means of constructing a social world and an impression of themselves (American Sociological Association 2012).

Cultural Norms

For some, drinking is a social activity linked to lifestyle (Solomon et al. 2006) or an act dictated by subcultural norms (Engineer et al. 2003; Maclachlan and Smith 2004). Anthropological studies have conceptualized cultural norms of drinking behavior in a macro perspective, designating societies as either "wet" (weak temperance tradition, high volume of consumption, low proportion of abstainers, and frequent heavy drinking) or "dry" (strong temperance tradition, low volume of consumption, high proportion of abstainers, and infrequent heavy drinking) (Bloomfield et al. 2003). In contrast, Mäkelä (1983) categorizes drinking cultures by whether alcohol is used as either a nutrient or an intoxicant, resulting in more or less tolerance of heavy drinking (Room and Mitchell 1972).

Drinking is often considered a means of celebrating, socializing, expressing a lifestyle transition, and differentiating one social context from another (Mandelbaum 1965). In high binge-drinking countries, most people view heavy drinking in terms of positive expectations and outcomes—for example, through the notions that alcohol helps people forget their problems and boosts confidence in social interactions (Smithers 2009). Alternatively, in moderate binge-drinking countries, heavy drinking is viewed as having negative connotations and outcomes—for example, it causes people to feel ill, lose face, feel embarrassed, and lose friends (Fraser 2007; Jarvinen and Room 2007).

Synthesis of the Literature

In our literature review, we aimed to identify the sociocultural concepts and antecedents that are most likely to explain young people's binge-drinking behavior. In line with the marketing literature, we argue that attitudes toward binge drinking are initially stimulated by micro-level hedonistic motivations to seek pleasure and have fun (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2002), despite the potential health and other risks (referred to as "calculated hedonism" in the health literature; Measham 2008; Szmigin et al. 2008). Whereas extant research has recognized hedonistic behavior as a single motivator for binge-drinking

behavior, our article synthesizes this construct with a micro-level antecedent, parental influence, and a macro-level antecedent, peer influence, which is linked to social affiliation and cultural norms. We argue that binge-drinking behavior begins at the individual level with the desire to have fun, which is then either stimulated or prevented according to the type of parental influence. Finally, at a wider, macro level, people are influenced by their peer group, social affiliations, and cultural norms. We contend that these context-specific sociocultural dimensions provide a strong set of orienting constructs (Miles and Huberman 2004) for our empirical study.

Methodology

Most empirical studies on episodic drinking among student populations have been of a positivist nature (Gill 2002) and have provided "little or no insight into the social contexts and cultural roles of drinking" (Social Issues Research Centre 1998, p. 13). To better understand people's behavior and attitudes toward binge drinking across multiple cultures, we believe the phenomenon can be more appropriately explored through a qualitative methodology. This methodology allows for the probing and exploration of sociocultural variables and respondents' attitudes, lifestyle variance, and behavior through dialogue and open-ended questioning, using a loosely structured format to account for cultural differences (Silverman 2000). The qualitative approach is also particularly useful for researching sensitive and complex behavioral issues in which differing value systems are present (Liedtka 1992).

Sample and Data Collection Method

Studies of binge drinking have often used student samples (Gill 2002) because this segment has been a major concern for policy makers in the United States, Europe, and Australasia for some time (Kuntsche, Rehm, and Gmel 2004). Our research sample consisted of home and international students aged 18–27 years who were based in host universities in the United Kingdom and Australia, where alcohol is legal to purchase (see Table 2). The sample comprised 91 students from 22 countries, with a slight skew toward female respondents (22 women from the Australian host university and 30 women from the U.K. host university) compared with men (16 from the Australian host university and 23 from the U.K. host university).

Data were collected for this research using semistructured individual interviews conducted both face-to-face and online. Interviews were tape-recorded, and typed transcripts were produced.

The interview questions, designed to explore macro and micro levels of human society, covered four main areas: (1) society—establishing the acceptability of binge drinking in respondents' home countries and identifying any measures taken to address the problem; (2) peers—understanding the of role binge drinking in student life in respondents' home country and gaining their observations about binge-drinking behavior in other cultures; (3) family—examining their upbringing regarding alcohol education and family influence; and (4) individual—probing the students' own attitudes and behavior toward binge drinking. The Appendix presents the questionnaire.

Table 2.   **Respondents by Country of Origin**

Home Country	Australian University Participants (x)	British University Participants (y)	High Binge-Drinking Country[a]	Moderate Binge-Drinking Country[a]
Australia (a)	6		X	
Canada (b)		3	X	
Denmark (c)	1		X	
Ireland (d)		4	X	
Finland (e)		5	X	
France (f)		6		X
Germany (g)		6	X	
Hong Kong (h)	3			X
Hungary (i)		1	X	
Italy (j)		5		X
Japan (k)	2			X
Malaysia (l)	3			X
New Zealand (m)	1		X	
Norway (n)		2		X
Philippines (o)	2			X
Singapore (p)	4			X
Spain (q)		4		X
South Africa (r)	3			X
Sweden (s)		3	X	
Taiwan (t)	4			X
Thailand (u)	2			X
United Kingdom (v)	2	14	X	
United States (w)	4		X	
Totals	38	53		

[a]As labeled by the European Commission (2007) and the World Health Organization (2004).

Analytical Method

Coding System

The data were organized by codes and then themed to identify patterns to uncover how sociocultural factors influence drinking behavior in different countries. Thematic analysis is a process of coding qualitative information by identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns of responses in the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). Our coding system included the use of different fonts as well as underlining, bolding, and color-coding the transcripts to uncover patterns of responses between those from high and moderate binge-drinking countries. As a team, we developed the coding scheme and themes, and one of us maintained the master list codebook (MacQueen et al. 2008). Responses were coded according to the respondent's home country (a–w), study location (x or y), number of respondents per country, and whether the respondent was from a high or moderate binge-drinking country (see Table 2).

Microscopic and Macroscopic Analytical Coding

Respondents were initially categorized by their country of birth and whether this country was regarded as having high or moderate annual alcohol consumption, using data from the World Health Organization's (2004, pp. 28–33) Global Status Report on Alcohol and the European Commission's (2007, p. 10) Eurobarometer "Attitudes to Alcohol" report. The responses were then analyzed individually at the microscopic level followed by a macroscopic thematic analysis to search for patterns across all responses (Strauss and Corbin 1998) to explore the orienting constructs and themes from the literature. Table 3 summarizes the coding and thematic analysis.

Analysis, Interpretation, and Development of the Propositions

We have structured the analysis and themes according to (1) the micro-level influences on binge-drinking behavior—namely, a person's hedonistic motivations and behavior as well as the parental influence on their binge-drinking motivations and behavior—and (2) the macro-level influences on binge-drinking behavior—namely, the wider peer and social group. From each theme, we developed three sets of contrasting propositions of behavioral differences from the empirical data between respondents originating in high and moderate binge-drinking countries.

Theme 1: Hedonistic Influence on Binge-Drinking Behavior

Respondents cited many reasons for binge drinking, but most commonly it was considered an enjoyable activity for both men and women in the high binge-drinking countries. For some, drinking meant deliberately going out to get drunk, but for others, overindulging was not the intention but happened anyway, as the following statements illustrate:

Table 3.   Coding Scheme and Thematic Analysis

Source	Code	Theme
Interviewees World Health Organization's (2004) "Global Status Report on Alcohol"; European Commission's (2007) Eurobarometer "Attitudes to Alcohol" report	Country of birth High or moderate consumption country classification	
Interviewees; previous literature	• Intentions of enjoyment • Relief from boredom • Escapism	Hedonism
Interviewees; previous literature	• Family values • Example set • Drinking education • Parental relationship • Parental approval/disapproval • Freedom from parents	Parental influence
Interviewees; previous literature	• Peer pressure • Group membership • Popularity • Peer behavior • Belonging • Identity status symbol • Attention seeking • Independence • Gender • Conformity • Social toleration • Drinking rituals • Motivations • Expectations	Peer influence, social affiliation, and cultural norms

Why would I drink if I wasn't going to get drunk? There's nothing better to do. It's no fun going out sober. (British man vy4)

I drink because I like to relax and have a good time with my friends. I don't drink to get drunk. I drink to have a good time, but normally end up getting drunk anyway. (British woman vy10)

Most respondents in high binge-drinking countries viewed drinking as a way of breaking down social barriers, forgetting about their problems, and helping build confidence in social situations, such as when making new friends and acquaintances. This is exemplified by the following statement:

I think people start drinking on a night out to "lubricate" conversation and to make them feel more relaxed. It takes away nerves of talking to the opposite sex and helps to lose inhibitions about dancing, singing, etc. It also helps people forget about current stresses in their life—none of these seem to matter when you're drunk. So it serves as escapism from the daily grind. (Australian woman ax1)

Binge drinking within the group gave everyone the opportunity to lose control, with few giving any regard to health warnings, vulnerability, or antisocial consequences. The majority of respondents were aware of the dangers of binge drinking and had seen educational messages but chose to ignore them. Instead, they thought more about what steps to take to avoid the after-effects of a heavy night of drinking. Many viewed binge drinking as a short-term phase, which minimized the perceived health risks, as illustrated by this quotation:

When you are a student, you don't think about things like alcoholic coma or illnesses; you drink to have fun. It's only for a few years; you kind of assume that you will repair any damage you have done to your body later on in life when you don't drink as much. (British woman vy2)

These attitudes are in line with previous research suggesting that people often base their drinking motivations and rationales on overstated expectations of positive benefits (i.e., alcohol will make them feel happy, relaxed, more friendly, and outgoing and will help them forget their problems) and understated measures of actual costs, such as the financial, physical, and social toll that heavy drinking takes on people's lives (Jarvinen and Room 2007; Johnston and White 2004). These responses also support other research that has found that bingeing is often a transitional behavior, and although a minority of drinkers persist in bingeing as they age, leading to long-term health and social problems, most people leave binge drinking behind as they approach their mid-20s, when traits such as rebelliousness, risk taking, and experimentation diminish (Coleman and Cater 2005; Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology 2005).

In contrast, in many of the moderate drinking countries, respondents regularly consumed alcohol not as a vehicle for having fun, to lose control, or as relief from boredom but rather as an accompaniment to the social ritual of chatting, dancing, and people watching. It was difficult for these students to comprehend the reasons for binge drinking because they did not feel the need for copious amounts of alcohol to help them integrate with or meet new friends, as the following statements reveal:

> Hungarians are more open, chatty, and emotional, and talking about problems and sharing worries with friends is absolutely normal; they do not need to hide behind alcohol. (Hungarian woman iy1)

> People drink to have a good time, to lose their inhibitions, and give them confidence. It is sad that people feel they need that to have fun. (Thai man ux1)

These findings lead us to our first set of propositions:

P_{1a}: In high binge-drinking countries, binge drinking is perceived as a means of enjoying life and having fun.

P_{1b}: In moderate binge-drinking countries, binge drinking is not perceived as a means of enjoying life, and having fun can be achieved with little or no alcohol consumption.

Theme 2: Parental Influence on Binge-Drinking Behavior

In high binge-drinking countries, researches have observed that parents seem to play a less influential role in their children's drinking behavior, particularly when they begin college, move away from the family home, and are targeted with alcohol promotions that encourage high consumption (Wall 2007). College life gives students freedom from parental supervision to make their own decisions about with whom to drink, when to drink, and how much to drink. One student admitted that her parents would likely to disapprove of her drinking behavior,

> My parents don't know how much I drink when I am out with my university friends. They would probably get worried. (British woman vy11)

Family culture influences students' drinking behavior. For example, students may observe their parents' drinking habits, and parents may set boundaries on how much alcohol their children are allowed to consume within the family home. Drinking behavior is known to be a learned behavior, whereby children model the behavior of their parents (Bobo and Husten 2000), and it is evident that parental example influenced some respondents' drinking habits, as several respondents indicated:

> I've seen my dad drink excessively on a regular basis, but never appear drunk. My mum drinks quite often and I do see her drunk, but I am often drunk at the same time so neither of us is embarrassed. (British woman vy10)

> My own drinking habits are an example of how I was influenced by those of my parents. As they very rarely drink, I grew up not witnessing them binge drinking or engaging in other drink-related activities. As a result, I am not a big drinker either and have rarely ever taken part in binge drinking. (British woman vy12)

In more moderate binge-drinking countries, the family seems to play a more important role in introducing children to sensible drinking in the home at a young age—that is, in small quantities and as an accompaniment to food. Although there are signs that binge drinking is becoming more prevalent in some moderate countries, most respondents from these countries still viewed drunkenness as a source of surprise and embarrassment for their families, as the following quotations illustrate:

> From my own experience, the Spanish Mediterranean drinking style has been well ingrained in our traditions.... I grew up in an environment where alcohol virtually accompanied all the family meals. As a result, I learned about responsible drinking and adequate behavior while drinking alcohol. Alcohol was never brought to my attention as an issue, rather as a pleasant activity. When I was exposed to drunken behavior, I was normally told that such behavior was caused by personal issues. (Spanish man qy3)

> In Hungary,... it would be rude and embarrassing to be seen drunk by family, relatives, or close friends and, in particular, would be considered disrespectful towards parents. (Hungarian woman iy1)

For other students from moderate binge-drinking countries, such as those in southeast Asia, drinking heavily resulted from curiosity, often stemming from a lack of parental information. In these cultures, respondents described parents as being conservative in giving advice on sensitive issues:

> Although Singapore is a multicultural society, parents are still pretty conservative in educating their children on issues such as sex, pregnancies, and drinking. This leads to the young generation being curious. They find out more from their friends and the Net, but they may not be fully equipped with the information on drinking and try it out. (Singaporean woman px4)

Although some respondents acknowledged that their parents would probably disapprove of bingeing on alcohol, many engaged in the behavior anyway, possibly due to the decreased contact they have with parents by living away from home. Nevertheless, even though their parents were not around, some respondents from high and moderate binge-drinking countries did recall their advice about the dangers of drinking. Some would act on the advice, but others would deliberately ignore it:

> Most people my age who go to parties would have heard warnings from their parents about how bad drinking is and what it could do to you, health-wise. Some people follow that advice (I don't drink partly because of this). (Malaysian woman lx2)

> Young people are more likely to go and do something after they are banned or told not to do it by their parents. It is the rebellion factor, "I can do whatever I want, I don't care what you say," etc. The more publicity it gets and the more people get told what to do and [what not] to do, the more they will go and do totally the opposite. (Australian woman ax9)

Thus, although parental approval of heavy drinking seems to be negative in both sets of countries, as a psychological reaction, young people sometimes tend to do the opposite of what is recommended as way of rebelling and exercising their freedom from parental control. Even though the respondents from moderate bingeing countries seem to pay more attention to parental advice, our findings suggest that some may also ignore parental advice as an act of defiance. This leads to our second set of propositions:

P_{2a}: In high binge-drinking countries, parents socialize their children's attitudes and drinking behaviors by modeling excessive drinking, and young people often ignore parental advice about the dangers of binge drinking as a means of establishing their independence.

P_{2b}: In moderate binge-drinking countries, parents socialize their children's attitudes and behaviors by modeling nonexcessive drinking and providing drinking education, and this influence remains strong into early adulthood.

Theme 3: Peer, Social Affiliation, and Cultural Norm Influences on Binge-Drinking Behavior

We find that in high binge-drinking countries, there is a commonly held view among many binge drinkers that getting drunk is socially acceptable, particularly among younger members of society, and that any drunken behavior can be forgiven:

> People can play the fool or play an alter ego without being judged as that person. Any outlandish/experimental/out-of-character behavior can be excused. (Australian woman ax5)

Several respondents claimed that binge drinking was a regular (and, for some, an everyday) activity. For many, getting drunk was part of the sociocultural norm of the friendship group and integral to both the ritual of partying and the typical student lifestyle. Being a member of a peer group was important for students everywhere, but in most cases, students from the high binge-drinking countries perceived alcohol consumption as a requirement for membership that overrode any risk considerations:

> People want to do like everybody else and to be included in groups; they think if they act in a different way, it's a shame or people are going to reject them. (British man vy6)

> Well, I know I drink too much, but everyone does, and I'm sure I'll cut back when I'm older, but right now I want to enjoy myself and have a good time with my friends.... It's very important being part of the same social group; it's how we bond, like we all go out and get drunk together, play sports together, and stuff like that. (British man vy4)

The social norms of the membership group are known to determine drinking behavior (Russell-Bennett and Golledge 2009), and in both high and moderate binge-drinking countries, the respondents indicated that the value judgment of their peers was therefore an important influence on their drinking behavior. If friends disapproved of drinking, respondents were less likely to drink, whereas if their friends either approved or were neutral about drinking, they increased their drinking.

> Saying no to your friends depends on the mental and social strength of the individual. Peer pressure is a very serious problem among young people in Australia. Education into saying no, choosing your own options, and not following the flock are vital to create a safer country. (Australian man ax3)

Some viewed consuming alcohol to the point of excess as something to be admired within the group, but for others, it was difficult to refrain from drinking because peers pressured them to drink in the first instance and then encouraged drinking to excess. Some respondents viewed such pressure as compelling:

> Peer pressure can be overwhelming and engulf you in what your friends are doing and in what they think is "cool." (Australian woman ax6)

> There is also the social pressure. The fact that your friends ask you to come and drink, and that if you don't drink, they'll ask what's wrong with you. Usually people go, "Are you pregnant?" or "Are you driving?" "Come on! Just one, I'll buy you one." A lot of people can't stand this and end up drinking as an easier solution. It's easier to drink so you don't have to make any excuses for not drinking. (British woman vy11)

The definition of "cool" is fuzzy and difficult for people to describe; however, it has been defined as behaving in a smooth, self-controlled way (Lyman and Scott 1968). The need to appear cool is an important driver of behavior, particularly for younger people because they are establishing their identity. Young people will often drink because it makes them appear cool (Fry 2010). There is an inherent paradox of drinking and being cool: to be sociable, drinking is considered cool but only if the drinker does not go too far. In some binge-drinking cultures, drinking to excess can lead to embarrassing, unsafe, or shocking behavior, resulting in a person being considered "uncool," as the following excerpts reveal:

> People need to be shamed more that binge drinking is not cool. Ads about the girl who "just is not drinking tonight" are ineffective. [Ads] should focus [more] on the negative effects of drunken behavior ... and shame people who get wasted. (Australian woman ax1)

> In the U.K., you see drunk people every night in the street, whereas in France, you drink at home or at parties. You don't show that you are drunk; it's a bit of a taboo to be seen falling over in the street and embarrassing yourself. (French woman fy2)

For those new to observing behavior in a high binge-drinking culture, the extent of binge drinking in numerous public locations (e.g., on streets, in parks, on trains, on television programs) can be shocking. In addition, it is not only where alcohol is consumed but also the numerous occasions on which it is consumed to excess and the perceived normality of it, as one visiting Hungarian student noted:

> Alcohol is tolerated almost everywhere and anywhere in the U.K. There is not one national holiday, birthday celebration, hen night, Christmas, Easter, and so on where alcohol is not present; the issue is that any of these days is seen by English teenagers and students as another reason to get drunk. They drink if something goes well, if they passed an exam, or if they had an awful day, because they feel they deserve it—and most adults do exactly the same thing. It is normal, it's tolerated, it's what everyone else does. (Hungarian woman iy1)

In general, students from many moderate binge-drinking countries did not perceive binge-drinking behavior as acceptable, because it could lead to embarrassment and loss of face. As a Malaysian student explained,

> If someone is really drunk, people look down upon that person and consider them unethical and careless. (Malaysian woman lx2).

Not only would family and friends view drunken behavior negatively, but there also seemed to be less tolerance from the authorities.

Despite the "work hard, play hard" mentality in Hong Kong, getting drunk in public is likely to lead to arrest by a police force [sic] who want to maintain Hong Kong's fashionability and cleanliness. (Hong Kong man hx2).

The police are also quite highly respected [in Spain] and are somewhat intimidating, which isn't the case in other countries.... Therefore, when individuals are drunk, they don't tend to cause fights or arguments with authority figures. (Spanish man qy3)

In some of the Mediterranean countries, although it was not uncommon to see young people drunk, it typically did not happen in public; when it did occur, it was viewed as more acceptable for men. When women overindulged, it was mostly considered the result of a mistake or error of judgment rather than a deliberate intent to get drunk. Some respondents claimed that getting drunk did not fit with the expected image of women in their country, so if a woman wanted to affiliate with a group of women, she would model the behaviors identified as "feminine." A female Hungarian student exemplified this notion:

It is cool to get "absolutely wasted" in the U.K. ... because when you are drunk, you are allowed to do anything.... It seems as if English girls have lost their femininity, which is certainly not the case in Hungary. (Hungarian woman iy1)

In moderate binge-drinking countries ("dry cultures"; Bloomfield et al. 2003), excessive drinking is not the social cultural norm, and young people have been brought up to drink alcohol responsibly. As a Japanese student notes,

Overall, in our culture and community, we have been taught to be disciplined and not to drink in excess. I think most of us do live like that. (Japanese man kx1)

Other social cultural norms prevail in moderate binge-drinking countries (e.g., socializing through eating rather than through drinking alcohol) and include a different set of priorities, as the following quotations illustrate:

There is less focus on drinking and more focus on eating. People generally do not get overly drunk. Saving face is key. (Singaporean woman px4)

When turning 18 years of age, Italians cannot wait to get their driving licenses, whereas the British look forward to being able to drink alcohol legally. (Italian man jy4)

Thus, in "dry" (Bloomfield et al. 2003) or "nutrient" (Mäkelä 1983) cultures, the focus is on eating rather than on drinking, and alcohol consumption is viewed as a shared part of this activity. These findings lead to our final set of propositions:

P_{3a}: In high binge-drinking countries, binge drinking is a symbol of affiliation with a peer social group and is perceived as having high social benefits.

P_{3b}: In moderate binge-drinking countries, binge drinking is a symbol of social exclusion and disaffiliation from a peer social group and is perceived as having a low social priority.

Summary, Discussion, and Public Policy Implications

The findings of our study contribute to the knowledge and understanding of a longstanding and seemingly intractable issue of young people's binge-drinking behavior. We have taken a unique approach to addressing this problem by comparing and contrasting sociocultural influences in a sample of students from high binge-drinking countries with those of a sample of students from moderate binge-drinking countries.

Much of the extant research has used definitions of binge drinking that are medically based, such as the consumption of alcohol in excess of recommended limits over a short period of time or the number of alcohol units consumed. In contrast, the research participants from both high and moderate binge-drinking cultures conceptualized "bingeing" in terms of drinking's positive and negative effects, rather than the amount consumed, and indicated disbelief when advised of the official definitions of binge drinking. This alternative perception perhaps explains why current binge-drinking messages may lack credibility for young people.

In our review of the sociocultural behavior literature stream, we identified three key areas of influence on binge-drinking behavior that share some commonality across high binge-drinking countries. Our findings reveal that in these countries, many young people drink for hedonistic reasons. Both male and female respondents consider binge drinking and the resulting intoxication an enjoyable experience that helps support their image and peer group popularity, boosts their social confidence, and facilitates greater relaxation. Although there seems to be an increasing problem with binge-drinking in some moderate countries, students still predominantly seek fun and pleasure from other social activities, such as going for meals or to the cinema, where alcoholic drinks have a limited or no part in the social event. When binge-drinking does occur, patterns differ from those in high binge-drinking countries, with heavy drinking taking place at private functions rather than in public places, due in part to less social tolerance of drunken behavior. Furthermore, respondents from moderate binge-drinking countries were less tolerant of binge drinking by women, indicating the prevalence of gender stereotypes around drinking norms.

We found that parental influence was important in both high and moderate binge-drinking countries, which partly explained some students' participation, or nonparticipation, in binge drinking. Other respondents used the freedom of being at college as an opportunity to develop their own values and identity by contradicting parental expectations and following the peer social group. Moreover, there seems to be little evidence of responsible early drinking education by the parents of many of the respondents. Alternatively, in moderate binge-drinking countries, parental influence over students was strong, even if they lived away from home, and many reported that their parents had introduced them to alcohol as part of their education, which guided their subsequent behavior. Most voiced concern that any drunken behavior on their part, if discovered, would prove highly embarrassing both for themselves and for their parents.

The final sociocultural influence we identified in our research was social affiliation. In the high binge-drinking countries, rather than gaining enjoyment from binge drinking, some respondents reported feeling pressured by their peers to drink to fit in with what they believed to be the

peer norm. Several respondents also mentioned occasions when their peers seemed to be deliberately aiming to get them or friends drunk. For others, however, getting intoxicated gave them a perceived high status with their peers, particularly if their drunken antics were witnessed, recorded, or shared. In contrast, for respondents from moderate binge-drinking countries, and particularly women, getting drunk was viewed as harmful to their image and would be largely unacceptable to their friends.

The analysis, interpretation, and development of the three sets of contrasting propositions have answered the first part of our research question regarding how sociocultural influences on binge drinking vary between countries that are traditionally high or moderate in their drinking behaviors. We next outline the public policy implications that arise from our empirical study. Using three alternative strategies available to policy makers to create social change—policy/regulation/law, education, or social marketing (Rothschild 1999)—we find that the three areas play a coordinated role in moderating binge-drinking behavior.

Policy/Law/Regulation

Policy makers in various countries have achieved some success in moderating drinking levels through regulations such as increased taxes on alcohol, older minimum drinking ages, and restrictions on advertising and promotions. However, as our research finds, in the high binge-drinking countries, young people often ignore or circumvent regulations of higher prices and restricted alcohol availability.

High binge-drinking countries require a more sustained public policy effort at changing parental influence and peer group acceptance of public intoxication. The solution to this issue could include more bans on drinking alcohol in public places (and, in particular, stricter enforcement of them) and increased penalties for those who display drunken behavior and supply alcohol irresponsibly to minors.

Education

Educational initiatives can be used to inform people of the opportunities as well as risks of binge drinking; however, such activities only moderately influence behavioral change (Rothschild 1999), which is also evident from our research. Although many of the research participants were aware of educational campaigns warning of the dangers of binge drinking, their attitude was either to ignore them or to delay making short-term behavioral changes. In addition, using "danger" statistics in public education campaigns can backfire by creating a social norm that "everyone is doing it" and thus encouraging, rather than discouraging, binge drinking (Kotler and Lee 2008).

Public policy campaigns aimed at young people should leverage peer group influence to encourage less drinking and develop positive norms of moderate drinking or abstention. An example strategy could be to use social media to encourage sharing photographs and experiences of friends having a good time without alcohol. The more exposure people have to moderate drinking, the more the moderation becomes the social norm.

We also advocate the targeting of education to parents as well as young people and recommend that campaigns encourage early home education and modeling of responsible drinking behavior. Drinkwise Australia's "Kids Absorb Your Drinking" campaign successfully adopted this approach, which resulted in 28% of parents reducing their drinking in front of their children (Drinkwise Australia 2010). Educational initiatives and messages underlining the importance of setting a responsible example, as we found in the responses of young people from moderate binge-drinking countries, might prove more effective than threatening parents with regulations.

Finally, we believe that education campaigns should aim to dispel some of the myths about binge drinking. For example, an effective method of dispelling binge-drinking myths could be the communication of information regarding the number and types of young people who moderate their drinking and the types of rituals they use to do this. Other educational campaigns could use responsible celebrity endorsement, thereby helping create a moderate drinking social norm. Another potentially effective public policy initiative to reduce binge drinking would be to publicize statistics on the actual levels of drinking because, for example, university students in the United States and Canada thought that alcohol consumption was far higher than the reality. This approach has proved effective in these countries, whereby an education campaign that published the statistics of student drinking resulted in altered descriptive norms and a decrease in alcohol consumption (Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health 2013; Skorton and Altschuler 2012).

Social Marketing

Social marketing has been effectively used in combination with regulation, restriction, and education to change behavior and attitudes. Smoking rates in Australia, for example, have been steadily decreasing since the 1970s as a result of restricted supply, advertising, and promotional bans and quit programs (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2013).

Public policy makers can use social marketing strategies to create opportunities that demonstrate that pleasure (hedonism) can be achieved through other activities such as sports, cultural activities, or getting together for meals, when alcoholic drinks are either not present or consumed in moderation as part of the fun of being with friends. For example, policy makers could use media and promotion initiatives such as the United Kingdom's "Sub21" campaign, which designs activities for young people to come together and create that "Friday feeling" without involving drinking (National Social Marketing Centre 2013). The campaign has resulted in reduced binge-drinking levels, less public drinking, and reduced alcohol purchases.

In our research, we find that cultural norms inform the use of alcohol as a coping device in high binge-drinking countries. To modify peer group influence factors, policy makers could develop training programs and web and mobile phone solutions to assist people in improving their ability to cope without turning to alcohol. The social marketing campaign "Hello Sunday Morning," for example, uses blogging to change social norms about drinking and peer group influence; people choose to give up alcohol for a

period of time, register on the site, and then blog about their experiences. Other people then follow these blogs and read about the bloggers' difficulties and coping behaviors and gain insights into strategies to use when faced with peer pressure to drink. Early outcomes of the program have shown that for every person blogging, another ten people reduce their level of drinking (Raine 2010).

Given the popularity of smartphones, campaigns and interventions that use these devices may have a better chance of reaching young people. For example, researchers in Australia implemented a social marketing approach called GOKA (Game On, Know Alcohol) and found that the use of online games to simulate the effects of alcohol had a significant impact on high school students' drinking attitudes and intended behaviors (Rundle-Thiele et al. 2013).

Conclusions and Future Research Directions

The problem of binge drinking and drunkenness in young people remains a financial and social problem for governments and public policy makers. In many communities in high binge-drinking countries, emergency services are kept busy dealing with the aftermath of drunken behavior every weekend. Although there are signs that binge drinking may be peaking in young men, binge-drinking numbers still remain high, and the proportion of women and young teens drinking to excess is increasing. It is therefore unsurprising that public policy makers in moderate binge-drinking countries are concerned about the "migration" of binge-drinking behavior to their countries when observing the deeply rooted binge-drinking problems elsewhere.

Previous policies to moderate binge-drinking behavior have had a mixed effect, and some forms of regulation and education have had some impact. We contend that young people's mindsets must be changed through the use of fresh ideas, which we have proposed. We argue that sociocultural influences drive binge-drinking behavior and that public policy makers can learn valuable lessons from the experiences of moderate binge-drinking countries. This is no simple undertaking—understanding cultural influences on young people's alcohol consumption is an easier objective than changing behavior because cultural norms about drinking are often resistant to change (Measham and Brain 2005).

Further research, therefore, should adopt longitudinal methods and studies to evaluate the time necessary for public policy and social marketing initiatives to effect behavioral change. In addition, more understanding, knowledge, and public policy research of drinking behavior is required, for example, to explore why more young women in some countries are binge drinking. Our study has provided researchers with an empirically grounded set of three propositions to explore the underresearched area of sociocultural influences on young people's binge-drinking behavior in different countries. We have also provided public policy makers with recommendations as to how social marketing, as part of wider public policy initiatives, could be more effective in reducing binge-drinking behavior in high and moderate binge-drinking countries.

Appendix: Semistructured Questionnaire on Binge-Drinking Behavior

Part A: Social Influences

• How acceptable is binge drinking in your country?
• Why do you think young people binge drink in your country?
• What social and cultural factors do think influences drinking levels?
• What measures are being taken in your country to decrease drinking levels?
• What differences have you noticed between drinking alcohol here and in your home country?

Part B: Peer Influences

• Do [you] feel any social pressure to drink and if so, why?
• How influential have your friends been on your drinking habits?
• What would happen if one of your friends decided to drink more or less than usual?
• What do you think about friends who get drunk?

Part C: Family Influences

• How influential have your parents been on your drinking habits?
• Did they allow you to drink alcohol at home and from what age?
• How would your parents feel if they knew about your current drinking levels?

Part D: Individual Influences

• What factors or situations might make you drink more or less alcohol?
• What personal dangers, if any, do you see from binge drinking?
• How much do the price, availability and marketing/promotions of alcohol influence your drinking habits?

References

Abel, Gillian M. and Elizabeth W. Plumridge (2004), "Network 'Norms' or 'Styles' of 'Drunken Comportment'?" *Health Education Research*, 19 (5), 492–500.

Agostinelli, Gina and Joel W. Grube (2002), "Alcohol Counter-Advertising and the Media," *Alcohol Research and Health*, 26 (1), 15–21.

American Sociological Association (2012), "Binge Drinking College Students Are Happier Than Their Non-Binge Drinking Peers," press release, (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120820090848.htm].

Arvers, Philippe and Marie R. Choquet (1999), "Regional Variations in Alcohol Use Among Young People in France: Epidemiological Approach to Alcohol Use and Abuse by Adolescents and Conscripts," *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 56 (2), 145–55.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2010), "Drinking Patterns in Australia, 2001–2007," research report, (accessed January 29, 2014), [available at http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6442474884].

—— (2013), "Tobacco Smoking," (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.aihw.gov.au/risk-factors-tobacco-smoking/].

Babor, Thomas F., Raul Caetano, Sally Casswell, Griffith Edwards, Norman Giesbrecht, Kathryn Graham, et al. (2003), *Alcohol: No Ordinary Commodity: Research and Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bloomfield, Kim, Tim Stockwell, Gerhard Gmel, and Nina Rehn (2003), "Alcohol Research and Health," *Journal of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism*, 27 (1), 95–109.

Bobo, Janet K. and Corinne Husten (2000), "Sociocultural Influences on Smoking and Drinking," *Alcohol Research and Health*, 24 (4), 225–32.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1984), *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Richard Nice, trans. London: Routledge & Kegan.

Braun, Virginia and Victoria Clarke (2006), "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), 77–101.

British Medical Association (2008), "Alcohol Misuse: Tackling the UK Epidemic," research report, (February), (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.dldocs.stir.ac.uk/documents/Alcoholmisuse.pdf].

Campbell, Colin (1987), *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010), "Vital Signs: Binge Drinking Among High School Students and Adults—United States, 2009," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 59 (39), 1274–79.

Coleman, Lester and Suzanne Cater (2005), "Underage 'Risky' Drinking: Motivations and Outcomes," research report, (February 2), Joseph Rowntree Foundation, (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.jrf.org.uk/system/files/1859352812.pdf].

Conseil Départemental d'Accés au Droit des Landes (2009), "Loi Bachelot du 22 juillet 2009: Interdiction de vente d'alcool aux mineurs sous peine de sanctions," (July 24), (accessed July 24), [available at http://www.cdad-landes.justice.fr/Infos-et-orientations/Actualites-juridiques/Interdiction-de-vente-d-alcool-aux-mineurs].

Courtney, Kelly E. and John Polich (2009), "Binge Drinking in Young Adults: Data, Definitions, and Determinants," *Psychological Bulletin*, 135(1), 142–56.

Doran, Christopher M. and Anthony P. Shakeshaft (2008), "Using Taxes to Curb Drinking in Australia," *The Lancet*, 372 (9640), 701–702.

Drinkwise Australia (2010), "Drinkwise 'Kids Absorb Your Drinking' Campaign Picks Up National Award," press release, (May 28), (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://drinkwisewebsite.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/10/DRINKWISE-%E2%80%98KIDS-ABSORB-YOUR-DRINKING%E2%80%99-CAMPAIGN.pdf].

Engineer, Renuka, Annabelle Phillips, Julian Thompson, and Jonathan Nicholls (2003), "Drunk and Disorderly: A Qualitative Study of Binge Drinking Among 18- to 24-Year-Olds," research report, (February), Home Office Research Study, Development and Statistics Directorate.

European Commission (2007), "Attitudes Towards Alcohol," research report, (March), Special Eurobarometer 272b/Wave 66.2—TNS Opinion & Social, (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_272b_en.pdf].

Fenn, Dominic (2008), *Drinks Market*. Hampton, UK: Key Note Limited.

Foxall, Gordon (1996), *Consumers in Context*. London: Routledge.

Fraser, Christian (2007), "Attitudes to Alcohol in Europe: Italy," *BBC News*, (November 13), (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7093143.stm#italy].

Freeman, Linton C. (1992), "Filling in the Blanks: A Theory of Cognitive Categories and the Structure of Social Affiliation," *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 55 (2), 118–27.

Fry, Marie-Louise (2010), "Seeking the Pleasure Zone: Understanding Young Adults' Intoxication Culture," *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 19 (1), 65–70.

Gill, Jan (2002), "Reported Levels of Alcohol Consumption and Binge Drinking Within the UK Undergraduate Student Population over the Last 25 Years," *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 37 (2), 109–112.

Goffman, Erving (1959), *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday Anchor Books.

Granovetter, Mark (1973), "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology*, 78 (6), 1360–80.

Grucza, Richard A., Karen E. Norberg, and Laura J. Bierut (2009), "Binge Drinking Among Youths and Young Adults in the United States: 1979–2006," *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 48 (7), 692–702.

Hanson, David J. (2004), "Italian Teens Frown on Binge Drinking," (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/YouthIssues/1098903340.html].

——— (2008), "Minimum Legal Drinking Ages Across the World," (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/LegalDrinkingAge.html].

Hawkins, David J., Richard F. Catalano, and Janet Y. Miller (1992), "Risk and Protective Factors for Alcohol and Other Drug Problems in Adolescence and Early Adulthood: Implications for Substance Abuse Prevention," *Psychological Bulletin*, 112 (1), 64–105.

HealthyPeople.gov (2012), "Substance Abuse," (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/objectiveslist.aspx?topicId=40].

Honess, Terry, Louise Seymour, and Russell Webster (2000), "The Social Contexts of Underage Drinking," research report, Home Office Research Study, Development and Statistics Directorate.

Hutchinson, Martin (2009), "Parents Giving Children Alcohol 'Fuels Binge Drinking,'" *BBC News*, (December 17), (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at www.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8413559.stm].

Institute of Alcohol Studies (2002), "Spain Moves on Youth Binge Drinking," *The Globe*, (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.ias.org.uk/What-we-do/Publication-archive/The-Globe/Issue-2-2002/Spain-moves-on-youth-binge-drinking.aspx].

Jamison, James and Lynn B. Myers (2007), "Peer Group and Price Influence Students Drinking Along with Planned Behaviour," *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 43 (4), 492–97.

Jarvinen, Margaretha and Robin Room (2007), *Youth Drinking Cultures: European Experiences*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.

Johnston, Kim L. and Katherine M. White (2004), "Beliefs Underlying Binge-Drinking in Young Female Undergraduate Students: A Theory of Planned Behaviour Perspective," *Youth Studies Australia*, 23 (2), 22–30.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2009), "Alcohol in Britain: Trends Show Young Men Are Binge Drinking Less, but Women Are Binge Drinking More," (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.jrf.org.uk/media-centre/alcohol-trends-in-britain].

Kafka, Randy R. and Perry London (1991), "Communication in Relationships and Adolescent Substance Use: The Influence of Parents and Friends," *Adolescence*, 26 (103), 587–97.

Kandel, Denise B. and Kenneth Andrews (1987), "Processes of Adolescent Socialization by Parents and Peers," *International Journal of the Addictions*, 22 (4), 319–42.

Kotler, Philip and Nancy R. Lee (2008), *Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Kuntsche, Emmanuel, Jurgen Rehm, and Gerhard Gmel (2004), "Characteristics of Binge Drinkers in Europe," *Social Science and Medicine*, 59 (1), 113–27.

Kuo, Meichun, Edward M. Adlaf, Hang Lee, Louis Gliksman, Andrée Demers, and Henry Wechsler (2002), "More Canadian Students Drink but American Students Drink More: Comparing College Alcohol Use in Two Countries," *Addiction*, 97 (12), 1583–92.

La Greca, Annette M., Mitchell J. Prinstein, and M. Fetter (2001), "Adolescent Peer Crowd Affiliation: Linkages with Health-Risk Behaviors and Close Friendships," *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 26 (3), 131–43.

Lazarsfeld, Paul and Robert K. Merton (1954), "Friendship as a Social Process: A Substantive and Methodological Analysis," in *Freedom and Control in Modern Society*, Morroe Berger, Theodore Abel, and Charles H. Page, eds. New York: Van Nostrand, 18–66.

Liedtka, Jeanne M. (1992), "Exploring Ethical Issues Using Personal Interviews," *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 2 (2), 161–81.

Lyman, Stanford M. and Marvin B. Scott (1968), "Coolness in Everyday Life," in *The Sociology of the Absurd*, Stanford M. Lyman and Marvin B. Scott, eds. Pacific Palisades, CA: Goodyear Publishing, 145–57.

Maclachlan, Malcolm and Caroline Smith (2004), *Binge Drinking and Youth Culture: Alternative Perspectives*. Dublin: Liffey Press.

MacQueen, Kathleen M., Eleanor McLellan-Lemal, Kelly Bartholow, and Bobby Milstein (2008), "Team-Based Codebook Development: Structure, Process, and Agreement," in *Handbook for Team-Based Qualitative Research*, Greg Guest and Kathleen M. MacQueen, eds. Lanham, MD: AltaMitra Press, 119–35.

Mäkelä, Klaus (1983), "The Uses of Alcohol and Their Cultural Regulation," *Acta Sociologica*, 26 (1), 21–31.

Mäkelä, Pia, Gerhard Gmel, Ulrike Grittner, Hervé Kuendig, Sandra Kuntsche, Kim Bloomfield, et al. (2006), "Drinking Patterns and Their Gender Differences in Europe," *Alcohol & Alcoholism*, 41 (1), i8–i18.

Mandelbaum, David (1965), "Alcohol and Culture," *Current Anthropology Journal*, 6 (3), 281–92.

Martinez, Julia A., Patricia C. Rutledge, and Kenneth J. Sher (2007), "Fake ID Ownership and Heavy Drinking in Underage College Students: Prospective Findings," *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 21 (2), 226–32.

Martinic, Marjana and Fiona Measham (2008), *Swimming with Crocodiles: The Culture of Extreme Drinking*. New York: Routledge.

MCM Research (2004), "WTAG Binge-Drinking Research," research report, (September), Wine Intelligence, (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.sirc.org/publik/binge_drinking.pdf].

McPherson, Miller, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and James M. Cook (2001), "Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 415–44.

Measham, Fiona (2008), "The Turning Tides of Intoxication: Young People's Drinking in Britain in the 2000s," *Health Education*, 108 (3), 207–222.

—— and Kevin Brain (2005), "'Binge' Drinking, British Alcohol Policy and the New Culture of Intoxication," *Crime, Media, Culture*, 1 (3), 262–82.

Metzner, Cornelia and Ludwig Kraus (2007), "The Impact of Alcopops on Adolescent Drinking: A Literature Review," *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 42 (2), 230–39.

Miles, Matthew B. and A. Michael Huberman (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mistral, Willm, Richard Vellemana, Lorna Templetona, and Claudia Mastachea (2006), "Local Action to Prevent Alcohol Problems: Is the UK Community Alcohol Prevention Programme the Best Solution?" *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 17 (4), 278–84.

Nash, Susan G., Amy McQueen, and James H. Bray (2005), "Pathways to Adolescent Alcohol Use: Family Environment, Peer Influence and Parental Expectations," *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 37 (2), 19–28.

National Preventative Health Taskforce (2009), "Australia: The Healthiest Country by 2020," (June 30), Australian Government Preventative Health Taskforce, (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.preventativehealth.org.au/internet/preventativehealth/publishing.nsf/Content/nphs-roadmap/$File/nphs-roadmap.pdf].

National Social Marketing Centre (2013), "Sub21," (accessed October 13, 2013), [available at http://thensmc.com/resources/showcase/sub21?view=development].

Neeley, Sabrina (2005), "Influences on Consumer Socialisation," *Young Consumers*, 6 (2), 63–69.

Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (2013), "Youth Binge Drinking in Alberta," research report, (July), (accessed January 29, 2014), [available at http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/CMOH-Youth-Binge-Drinking-In-Alberta.pdf].

O'Shaughnessy, John and Nicholas J. O'Shaughnessy (2002), "Marketing, the Consumer Society and Hedonism," *European Journal of Marketing*, 36 (5/6), 524–47.

Österberg, Esa (2000), "Unrecorded Alcohol Consumption in Finland in the 1990s," *Contemporary Drug Programs*, 27 (2), 271–301.

Ostergaard, Jeanette and Stefan B. Andrade (2013), "Who Pre-Drinks Before a Night Out and Why? Socioeconomic Status and Motives Behind Young People's Pre-Drinking in the United Kingdom," *Journal of Substance Use*, (published electronically July 12), [DOI: 10.3109/14659891.2013.784368].

Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (2005), "Binge Drinking and Public Health," *Postnote*, (July), (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn244.pdf].

Pascual Pastor, Francisco (2002), "Percepción del Alcohol Entre los Jóvenes," *Adicciones: Revista de Socidrogalcohol*, 14 (1), 123–32.

Plant, Martin A. and Moira Plant (2006), *Binge Britain: Alcohol and the National Response*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Popova, Svetlana, Jurgen Rehm, Jayadeep Patra, and Witold Zatonski (2007), "Comparing Alcohol Consumption in Central and Eastern Europe to Other European Countries," *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 42 (5), 465–73.

Ragnarsdóttir T., A. Kjartansdóttir, and S. Davidsdóttir (2002), "Effect of Extended Alcohol Serving-Hours in Reykjavik," in

The Effects of Nordic Alcohol Policies: What Happens to Drinking and Harm When Alcohol Controls Change? Robin Room, ed. Helsinki: Nordic Council for Alcohol and Drug Research, 145–54.

Raine, Chris (2010), "Reducing Alcohol Consumption Through the Use of Social Media: The Hello Sunday Morning Project," paper presented at the International Non-Profit and Social Marketing Conference, Brisbane, Australia (July 15–16).

Room, Robin and Andrea Mitchell (1972), "Notes on Cross-National and Cross-Cultural Studies," *Drinking and Drug Practices Surveyor*, 5 (14), 16–20.

Rothschild, Michael L. (1999), "Carrots, Sticks, and Promises: A Conceptual Framework for the Management of Public Health and Social Issue Behaviors," *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (October), 24–37.

Rundle-Thiele, Sharyn, Rebekah Russell-Bennett, R. Cheryl Leo, and Timo Dietrich (2013), "Moderating Teen Drinking: Combining Social Marketing and Education," *Health Education*, 113 (5), 392–406.

Russell-Bennett, Rebekah and Andrew H. Golledge (2009), "An Investigation of Cross-Cultural Differences in Binge-Drinking Perceptions and Behaviours," paper presented at the Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference, Melbourne (November 30–December 2).

Schlenker, Barry R. and Michael F. Weigold (1992), "Interpersonal Processes Involving Impression Regulation and Management," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 43, 133–68.

Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (2007), "Alcohol: Price, Policy and Public Health," research report, (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/alcohol/Forum/docs/alcohol_lib3_en.pdf].

Shorthouse, Ryan (2009), "Alcohol Price Hikes Won't Stop Binge Drinkers—It Will Only Penalise the Rest of Us," *The Daily Mail*, (April 2), (accessed January 22, 2014), [available at http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-1166056/RYAN-SHORTHOUSE-Alcohol-price-hikes-wont-stop-binge-drinkers—penalise-rest-us.html#ixzz18Nn258Ma].

Silverman, David (2000), *Doing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Skorton, David and Glenn Altschuler (2012), "A Sober Assessment of High-Risk Drinking on College Campuses," *Forbes*, (December 12), (accessed January 29, 2014), [available at http://www.forbes.com/sites/collegeprose/2012/12/17/a-sober-assessment-of-high-risk-drinking-on-college-campuses/].

Smithers, Rebecca (2009), "UK Teenagers Among Heaviest Drinkers in the EU," *The Guardian*, (March 26), (accessed January 29, 2014), [available at http://www.theguardian.com/society/2009/mar/27/teenage-drinking-alcohol-binge].

Social Issues Research Centre (1998), "Social and Cultural Aspects of Drinking," research report, Amsterdam Group.

Solomon, Michael R., Gary Bamossy, Soren Askegaard, and Margaret K. Hogg (2006), *Consumer Behaviour: A European Perspective*, 3d ed. London: Prentice Hall.

Strauss, Andrew and Juliet Corbin (1998), *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*, 2d ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Szmigin, Isabelle, Christine Griffin, Willm Mistral, Andrew Bengry-Howell, Louise Weale, and Chris Hackley (2008), "Re-Framing 'Binge Drinking' as Calculated Hedonism: Empirical Evidence from the UK," *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 19 (5), 359–66.

Urberg, Katheryn A., Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu, and Colleen Pilgrim (1997), "Close Friend and Group Influence on Adolescent Cigarette Smoking and Alcohol Use," *Developmental Psychology*, 33 (5), 834–44.

Viswanathan, Madhubalan, Srinivas Sridharan, Robin Ritchie, Srinivas Venugopal, and Kiju Jung (2012), "Marketing Interactions in Subsistence Marketplaces: A Bottom-Up Approach to Designing Public Policy," *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 31 (Fall), 159–77.

Wall, A.P. (2007), "Government 'Demarketing' as Viewed by Its Target Audience," *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*, 25 (2), 123–35.

World Health Organization (2004), "Global Status Report on Alcohol 2004," research report, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, Geneva.

Zarzar, Patricia M., Kelly Jorge, Tuula Oksanen, Miriam Vale, Efigenia Ferreora, and Ichiro Kawachi (2012), "Association Between Binge Drinking, Type of Friends, and Genders: A Cross-Sectional Study Among Brazilian Adolescents," *BMC Public Health*, 12, 257.

Zott, Christoph and Quy Nguyen Huy (2007), "How Entrepreneurs Use Symbolic Management to Acquire Resources," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 52 (1),