

ALCOHOL

Social Drinking in Cultural Context

Janet Chrzan

Chapter Seven: Why Do Students Drink?

College students drink alcohol

Harvard Drinking Song: Gin Sling

In the good old colony times
When we lived under the king
Each Saturday night, we used to get
tight

A-pouring down gin-sling

And Senior and Junior and Soph,
And Freshman and Tutor and Prof,
When once they began, they never
left off

A-pouring down gin-sling
(Hayes, 1866: 84)



Important Websites about College Drinking

College Drinking: Changing the Culture: <http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov>

Alcohol: Problems and Solutions : <http://www2.potsdam.edu/hansondj/index.html>

Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study (CAS):
<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/cas/Home.html>

Rutgers University Center of Alcohol Studies (CAS): <http://alcoholstudies.rutgers.edu/>

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University
<http://www.casacolumbia.org/templates/Home.aspx?articleid=287&zoneid=32>

Indiana University Alcohol Research and Health History:
<http://www.indiana.edu/~engs/aarticles.shtml>

CDC Fact Sheet on Underage Drinking: <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm>

Choose Responsibility: <http://www.chooseresponsibility.org/home/>

Alcohol Abuse Prevention: <http://www.alcoholfacts.org/index.html>

Videos about College-Age Drinking

Tuna Lowers my Inhibitions: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWy1qKyu2zE&mode=related&search=>

Asher Roth: I Love College: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYx7YG0RsFY>

Haze: the Movie: <http://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/haze>

Alcohol Binge Test: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uyMfHNL_WA

Booze Britain: <http://www.locatetv.com/tv/booze-britain/78598/episode-guide>

On YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-vwoYln_VA

While these episodes are not necessarily about college drinking, many do cover college students in the UK and other young people. The first link is an episode list and the second the first part of a two-series episode on YouTube. A search on YouTube for Booze Britain and the episode name will find the rest.

Screening and Assessment tools for College Drinkers

Excellent overview of assessment techniques:

http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/NIAAACollegeMaterials/trainingmanual/module_2.aspx

Barnard College Online Self-Assessment: <http://barnard.edu/asap/resources/self-assessment>

Johns Hopkins Screening Test:

<http://www.healthyplace.com/psychological-tests/alcoholism-test/>

Alcohol Screening: <http://www.alcoholscreening.org/Home.aspx>

College Drinking Studies often measure:

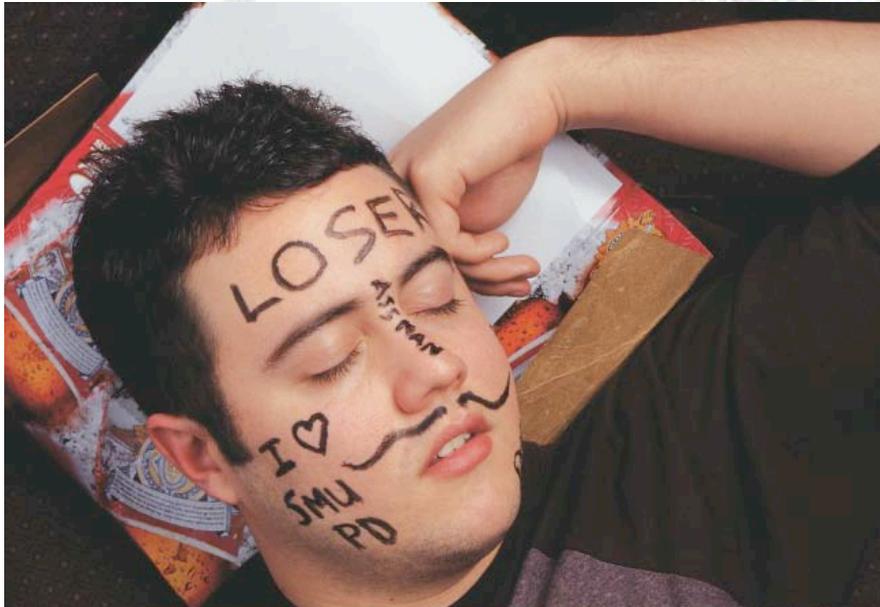
Dichotomous categories based on drinking intake recalls: Binge categories are 5 for males, 4 for females. One 'binge' per fortnight labels the student a high-end drinker

Correlations with:

- ▶ Lower grades
- ▶ Use condoms less frequently
- ▶ More psycho-social problems
- ▶ Less religion
- ▶ Athletes
- ▶ Greeks
- ▶ Male
- ▶ Reside in the North East
- ▶ Positive attitudes about alcohol

These types of studies have led to efforts to encourage intakes of less than 5 for males, 4 for females, often through 'Social Norming' campaigns. Accurately assessing that MOST students don't overdo intake Most of the time, Social Norming seeks to convince students that their peers are drinking less than binge amounts most of the time. Which is, of course, true... but not when students want to 'party'.

Social Norming Poster Examples

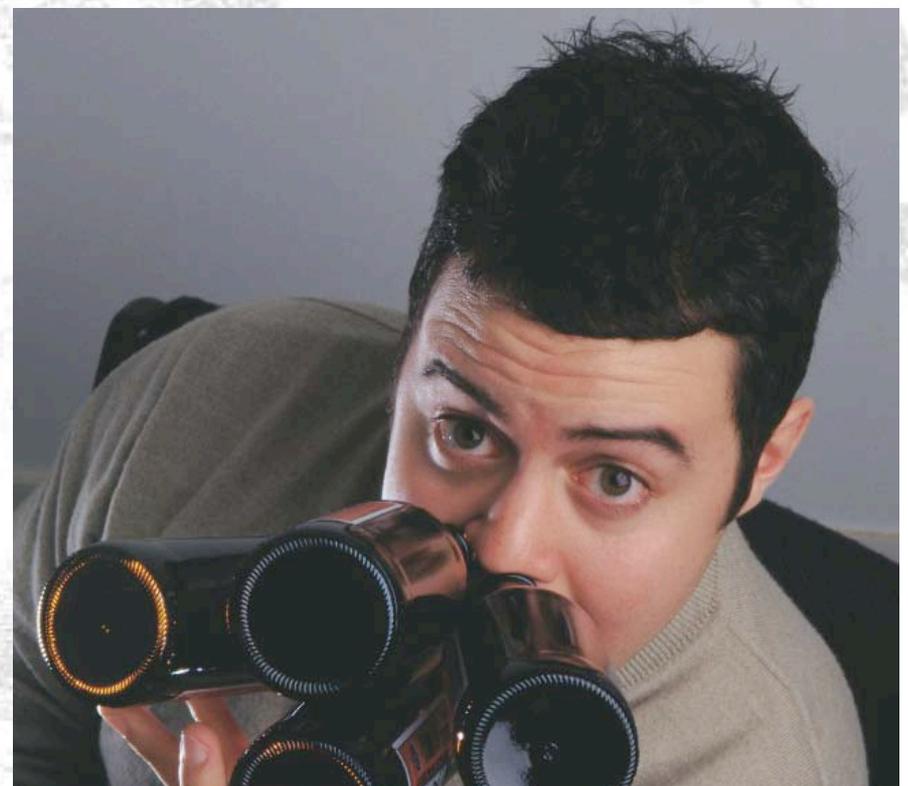


BEING DRUNK IS FUNNY.
It gives the rest of us someone to laugh at.

A 2002 survey of SMU students shows that 69 percent of us drink once a week or less. This shows that we are part of a growing national trend: responsible drinking. The survey also shows that the vast majority of us haven't missed a class due to drinking, haven't gotten into a fight because of drinking, don't drink and drive and have never been in trouble with authorities due to

drinking either on or off campus. The next time you're out, remember that drinking responsibly is actually the most popular student activity. Guess that means you get the last laugh.

Congratulations. And welcome to The Majority.



FIVE DRINKS IN A SINGLE NIGHT IS CRAZY.

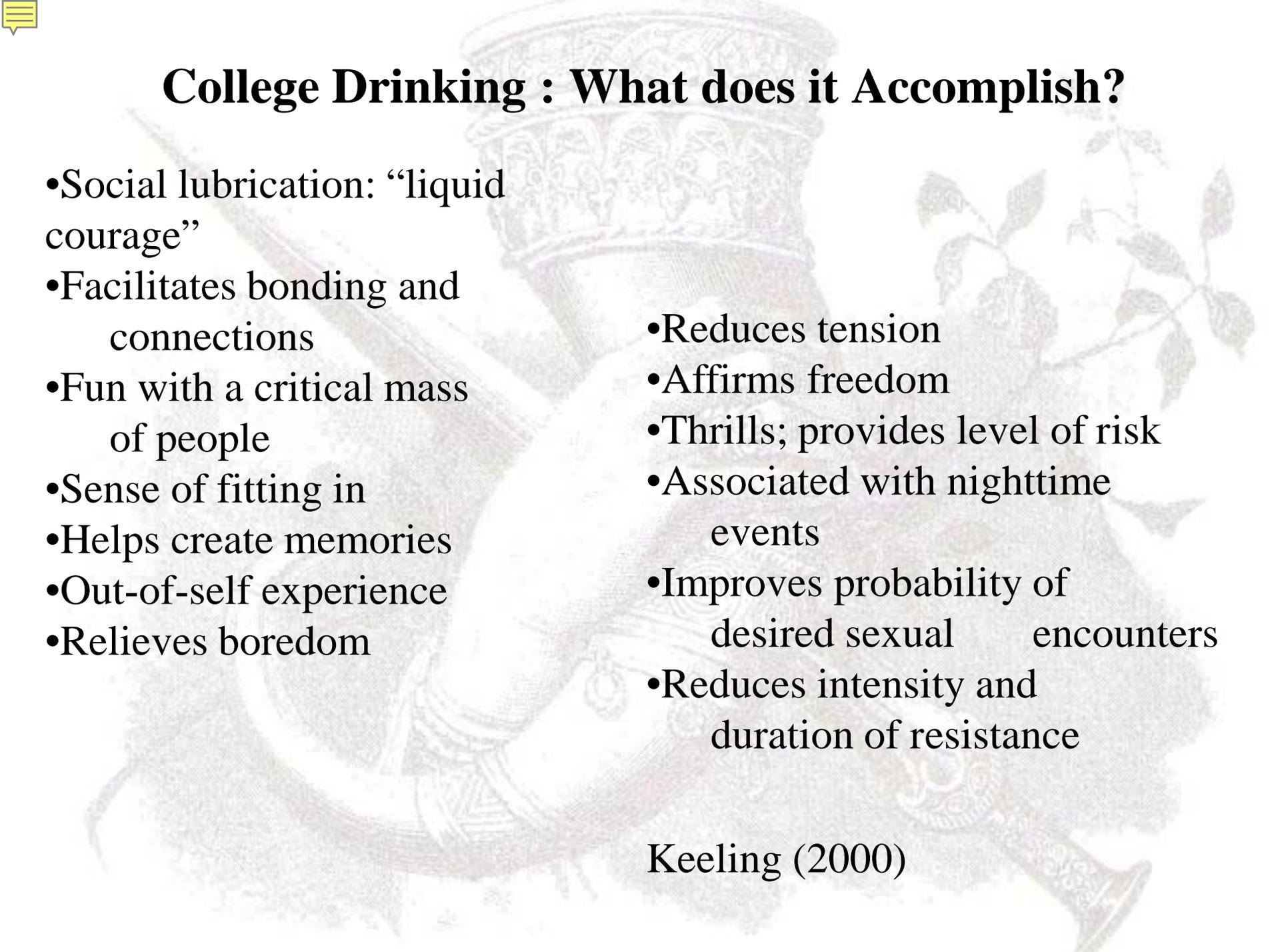
Most of us realize this and don't party insanely.

A 2002 survey of SMU students shows that 75 percent of us average five or fewer drinks when we party. This shows that we are part of a growing national trend. We enjoy partying with friends and do so responsibly. The survey shows that the vast majority of us drink once a week or less. We haven't missed a class due to drinking, haven't gotten into a fight because of

drinking, don't drink and drive and have never been in trouble with authorities due to drinking either on or off campus. The next time you're out, remember that drinking responsibly is actually the most popular student activity.

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College Drinking : What does it Accomplish?

- Social lubrication: “liquid courage”
- Facilitates bonding and connections
- Fun with a critical mass of people
- Sense of fitting in
- Helps create memories
- Out-of-self experience
- Relieves boredom
- Reduces tension
- Affirms freedom
- Thrills; provides level of risk
- Associated with nighttime events
- Improves probability of desired sexual encounters
- Reduces intensity and duration of resistance

Keeling (2000)

Core Institute Study (1998):

What else does drinking provide to students?

Alcohol gives students something to talk about

Alcohol facilitates friendship and social encounters

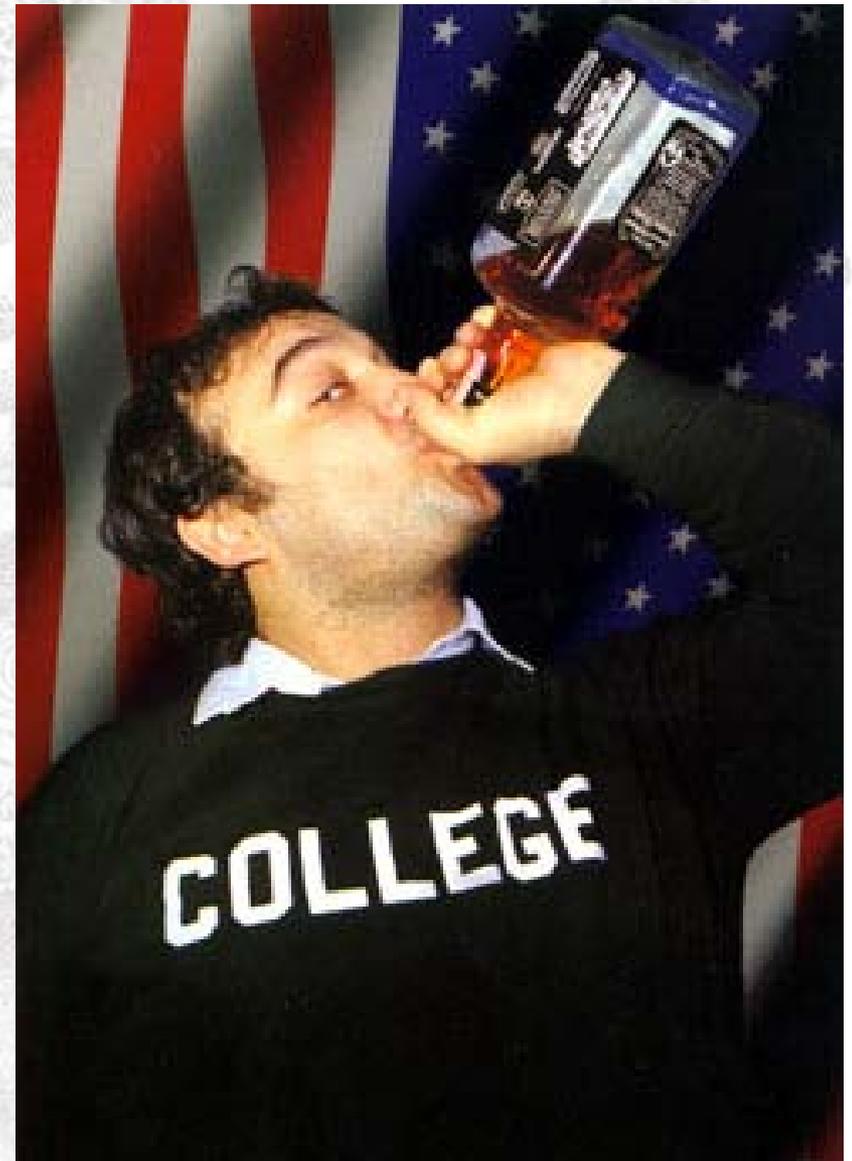
Alcohol makes people seem sexier and makes the drinker feel sexier

Alcohol provides a primary leisure activity

Alcohol promotes feeling of freedom

Alcohol is perceived to help cope with problems

Alcohol is fun





Vander Ven and Smith (2012): What does drinking do for students?

Drinking episodes help to create a drunken, fun-loving social image (the 'Drunken Self')

To uphold a 'work hard, play hard' ethic

To dampen critical self dialog

To demonstrate friendship through caretaking

Alcohol helps to create stories that can be shared with others to project an identity that is fun, socially competent and popular

Alcohol provides a purpose for gathering, relief from social anxiety, a means to experiment with differing social personae and an excuse if incipient adults fail to perform adequately



Chrzan (2012): What does drinking do for students?

Relieves anxiety and helps release the “Drunk Self”

Facilitates social interactions

Negotiates the Gendered Self – identity and sexuality

Facilitates accomplishment, caretaking and performance of adulthood



By Dani Lurie from London, United Kingdom (everyone take a drink) [CC-BY-2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons

“Pre-game” (Urban Slang Dictionary)

to drink (alcohol) with friends before going out to a bar or party.

“We'll probably pre-game over here till 10:30 then go out.”

(Dec 10 2001)

Invented by college students; it means drinking before going out to party, mostly to prevent oneself from spending too much on alcohol while out

"what?? the drinks are \$5 each? we shoulda pre-gamed..."

“The culture of drinking in college has developed to include this ritual of pre-gaming because partygoers prefer to socialize while being intoxicated.”

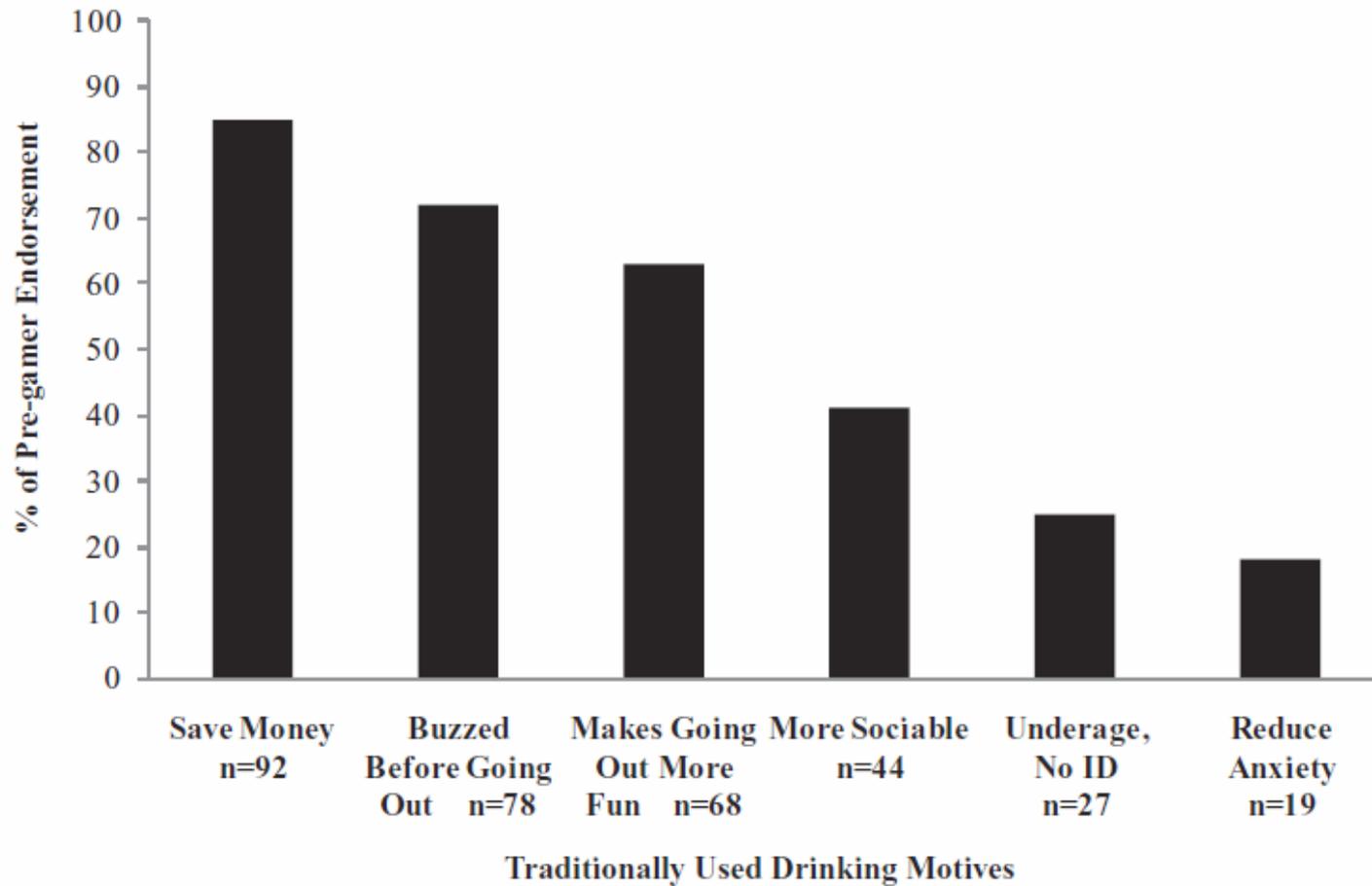


FIGURE 3. Endorsement of reasons for pre-gaming among pregamers.

Drinking, gender identity and sexuality



“Candy is Dandy
But Liquor is Quicker”



Four Themes: Identity Performance

College identity is linked to drinking habits: to be social is to drink to get drunk; males and females drink differently however

Male 'power' can be appropriated by females through male drinking patterns

Alcohol helps to frame gender identity and behavior: gender and life-stage symbolism

Beer and shots = boys/out of control/childhood

Cocktails and wine = girls/in control/adulthood

Drinking and Sexuality

'Shitshow': accomplishment narratives



Gendered framing of drinks and behavior



LITHO & PUB. BY KUMMEL & SONS 2116 216 CARU. STR. N.Y.

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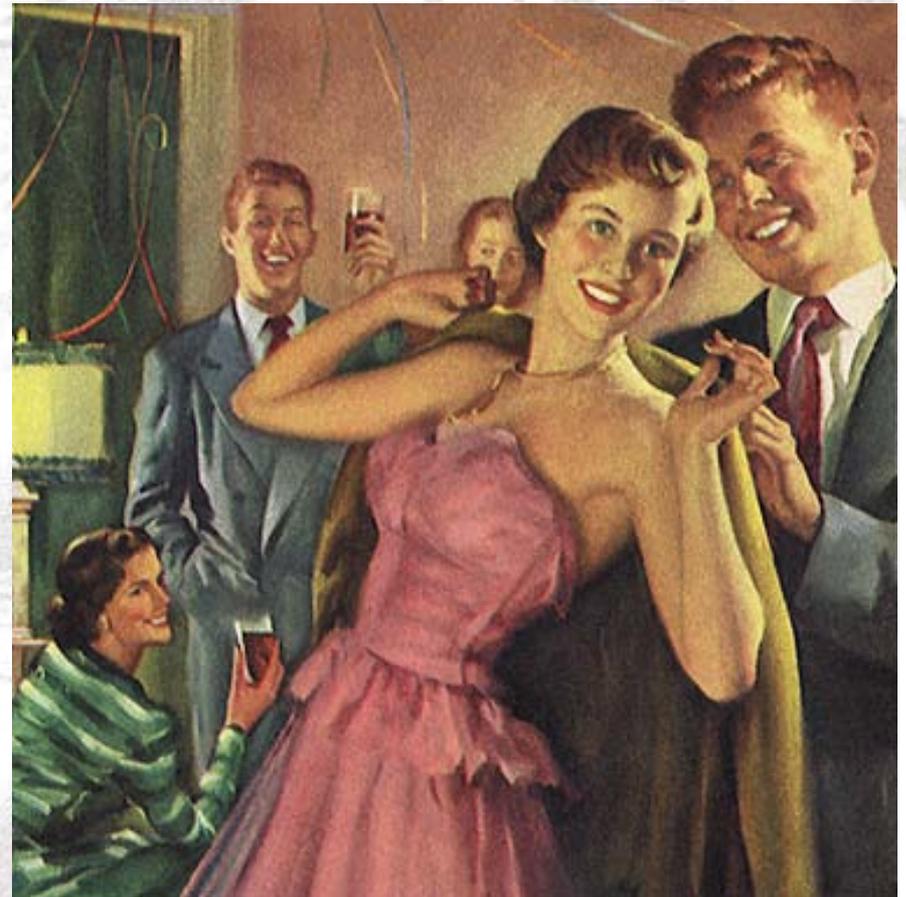
ORIGINAL DESIGN BY W. W. WOOD

WHO DOES NOT LOVE WINE, WIFE & SONG
WILL BE A FOOL FOR HIS LIFELONG!

Male	Female
beer/shots	wine/cocktails
bad behavior	good behavior
out of control	in control
childhood	adulthood

Desantis, 2007: Gender framing

Male	Female
heterosexual promiscuity	monogamy and virginity
toughness and assertiveness	nurturing and caring
imposing physical bodies	petite physical bodies
relational independence	relational interdependence
professional orientation	domestic orientation



Accomplishment, Caretaking and Performance of Adulthood

Male Accomplishment/Caring Behaviors:

“When I went over to at 10 pm, Hank was very drunk. By 11, Hank was so drunk he had passed out on the bar. His tab for the night: \$150. Bill and I spent the rest of the night taking care of him. At 12, Hank was coherent enough (relatively speaking) that we could get him home. Bill and I walked him home the 5 blocks from the bar through the snow and put Hank to bed, even as he drunkenly berated us. The next morning he apologized. I told him not to worry about it, since he’s a good friend, but that there would come a time when I wouldn’t be willing to deal with it anymore.” (Male student)

Female Accomplishment/Caring Behaviors:

“During the game of Beirut Victoria became inebriated and began vomiting. Victoria was surrounded by a group of her friends who were making sure that she was OK. They brought her water, tissues, made sure that she was coherent, held her hair while she threw up, etc. And it was not only Victoria’s friends who were concerned for her, several other people at the mixer began offering to help with Victoria: they offered to walk her home and/or a place to stay the night if she “couldn’t make it home.” The game did not resume until Victoria stopped vomiting and was taken home.” (Female student)



Image by Ninjacayugan (Own work) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Time Out Drinking, Stress, and Control



“The atmosphere at a college party is unlike anything else. During college, both responsibilities to the 'real world' and supervision by authority figures are at a minimum. The Spring Festival weekend is a time of further relaxation of the standards of discipline, and is seen by most students as a 48-hour period of drunken debauchery. This belief is reinforced by the actions and statements of police which reportedly include, "Well, if you're going to drink, at least get off the sidewalk" and “you're either going to have to dump those beers or chug them.”



College Drinking

College students use alcohol as an essential ingredient for peer to peer and romantic social interaction; alcohol use patterns influences social identity

Pregaming activities are primarily social and designed to build friendships and to use 'Dutch Courage' to ease tensions about identity performance in public 'party' nightlife spaces

Parties and Bars are public and competitive. Students compete for social status, sexual partners and reputation while they try out adult roles

Gender identities are frequently perceived in terms of power and alcohol use and misuse is a male gender attribute. Young women appropriate misuse as a means to appropriate male power

Dichotomies between social constructions of male/female, child/adult, and misuse/use fuel confusion about drinking behaviors and encourage heavy use among both women and men.

Identity-creation is an essential social and psychological task for this age group and alcohol plays a core role in collegiate understanding of identity construction; alcohol functions as sign and referent for activities that allow students to 'try on' differing models of adult identities

We need to better understand how drinking and identity create social personae among college students if we desire to design better programs to discourage dangerous drinking behaviors, and we need to understand how college students learn how to drink

Conclusions

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Where and how do students learn to drink with abandon? Why is 'out of control' their model for drinking?

- Fluffed and Whipped Vodka:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIxYmdxo4UA>
- Heineken 2011:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz-MJNMfLP4>
- Heineken 2012:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VkggcawM-Y>
- Heineken 2012 Skyfall:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZsfB0ycfMo>
- Budweiser black crown:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Fa3EXngxTQ>

Take-away thoughts:

- **A night out is a strategic event with different fields and sites of action**
- **It is a ritual with a predictable trajectory, and participants know what should occur at each site or field of the ritual**
- **The strategic goals of each field may be different:**
 - **Pregame: social solidarity and friendship exploration**
 - **Frat party or bar: social success (hierarchical, competition within genders) and sexual success (hierarchical between competitors for sexual access but tactical between potential sexual partners)**
 - **The drinking games played in each reflect these differing goals**
 - **Pregame: collaborative, drink-matching games**
 - **Party/Bar: competitive and designed to get potential partners drunk or to overwhelm potential sexual competitors**

Anthropology and Alcohol: Discussion Questions

Do you think it's reasonable to label people 'heavy drinkers' if they drink 5 or more drinks at least once a month?

College alcohol use is not a simple topic--rather, it is quite complex. Identify what college-specific factors this book identifies as playing a role in the college drinking culture. Have you have experienced any of these factors?

How do you and your friends think about the gendered use of alcohol? Are there 'male drinks' and 'female drinks'? Do you think that men and women experience alcohol differently, and if so, how? Does drinking sexualize people?

How can your college make drinking safer for students? What are some of the initiatives you'd like to see implemented to do so? How would they work? One thing that always has to happen in attempting to change anything- especially behavior – is that you have to be able to 'connect the dots' with the action plan. The goal has to be tied to solid, reasonable actions. Chart how your policy changes would connect the dots.

