

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**“If she’s drunk, she’s easy”: Femininity, binge drinking and  
music videos**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

In

Psychology

At Massey University, Wellington, NZ

Shobna Naomi

2014

## **Abstract**

Young New Zealand women continue to drink more than previous generations. Research demonstrates that legislation, access, changing gender roles, identity, marketing and culture contribute to the current desire that many young people, including women, have for the excessive consumption of alcohol. The current study sought to explore popular youth culture, namely music videos, to understand the ways in which young women engage with and understand such media and the role it plays in drinking cultures. Three music videos were used to stimulate discussions surrounding gender, identity and alcohol consumption among four friendship groups, each containing three female participants. Participants were aged between 18-25 years and came from mixed ethnic backgrounds in Auckland, New Zealand. Three music videos were selected for their inclusion of portrayals of femininity and binge drinking (by Katy Perry, The Paradiso Girls and Cobra Starship). The music videos were shown to the groups, and questions prompted discussion following each. The discussions were transcribed verbatim, and subjected to a discursive analysis which identified four key discourses that participants drew on during their discussions. The “contemporary feminist discourse” constructed women as agentic; making conscious choices regarding identity, behaviour and consumption. Limits and boundaries were emphasised in relation to alcohol consumption and self-presentation. The “gender inequality discourse” illustrated women’s inferior positioning in relation to men. It highlighted a tendency to define equality by comparing women directly to men and the tensions this creates. In the “female objectification discourse” music video representations of women were constructed as exploitative, objectifying and unrealistic. Concern was raised over female vulnerability to sexually motivated crimes and exposure to the music videos prompted body image concerns for some participants. Finally, the “normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse” discussed binge drinking in terms of a necessary process for discovering identity and consumption limits, while emphasising the limited temporality of this period. These discourses highlighted a tension between the realities of young female experience and competing ideals presented in popular culture, which illustrates the dilemmatic nature of contemporary femininity.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my primary supervisor, Dr Antonia Lyons, whose unwavering patience, encouragement and enthusiasm throughout the entire process provided the motivation and support to see me through to completion. Utmost thanks as well to my second supervisor, Dr Tim McCreanor, who provided much needed advice and guidance with equal enthusiasm and who was also with me for the duration.

A special thanks to my research participants for sharing their time, energy and thoughts so generously. You are fantastic.

Finally, to all the other contemporary feminists- friends and strangers, we may not always have it easy, but united we stand...!

# Table of contents

<b>Introductory overview</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter 1: Young women, post-feminism and popular culture</b> .....	3
<b>Chapter 2: Drinking, gender and young people</b>	
The rise in binge drinking among young women.....	8
Regulation and legislation.....	9
Accessibility.....	11
Marketing.....	13
Youth culture: Gender and alcohol.....	17
Youth culture: Drinking and peer relationships.....	21
<b>Chapter 3: Music videos, popular culture, gender and alcohol</b> .....	23
Music videos: Alcohol and sexuality.....	24
The influence of celebrity on young viewers.....	26
Sexuality in music videos.....	29
Adverse effects on viewers.....	31
Young women's voices.....	33
Summary of arguments and the current study.....	34
<b>Methodology</b>	
Research approach.....	36
Research design.....	36
Recruitment.....	37
Participants.....	37
Procedure.....	38

The music videos.....	40
Transcription.....	41
Analytic procedure.....	42
Ethical considerations.....	43
Reflexivity.....	44
<b>Results.....</b>	<b>47</b>
The contemporary feminist discourse.....	48
The gender inequality discourse.....	58
The female objectification discourse.....	66
The normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse.....	78
<b>Discussion.....</b>	<b>88</b>
How do young women interpret the messages portrayed in these music videos and do they accept/reject/resist these messages? .....	89
How do young women negotiate messages portrayed in the music videos?.....	90
How do young women talk about the way the videos and messages make them feel?.....	93
How do young women talk about drinking cultures after viewing these music videos?.....	95
The collective discourses and the Feminist Backlash	
Theory.....	97
Implications.....	98
Limitations and reflections.....	99
Future directions.....	101
Conclusions.....	102

**References**.....103

**Tables**

Table 1. Focus group composition.....38

Table 2. Participant alcohol consumption.....40

**Appendices**

Appendix A.....117

Appendix B.....119

Appendix C.....120

Appendix D.....121

Appendix E.....122

Appendix F.....123

Appendix G.....124

Appendix H.....128

## ***Introductory overview***

***“Binge drinking becoming worse among young women” (TVNZ, 2011)***

***“Girls take lead in teen binge-drinking-study” (Collins, 2012)***

***“Girls drinking to match the boys” (Moselen-Sloog, 2013)***

Problematic alcohol use has long been a concern in New Zealand (NZ) (McEwan, Campbell, Lyons, & Swain, 2013). While excessive consumption among adult males has typically been the main focus of public attention, the drinking habits of young people have come under increased scrutiny in recent times. The media has often been questioned over a reporting bias in their depictions of troublesome youth drinking and credited with contributing to unnecessary moral panic (Griffin, Bengrey-Howell, Hackley, Mistral, & Smzigin, 2009; Jackson & Tinkler, 2007; McEwan, Campbell & Swain, 2010; Szmigin et al., 2008). However, research has confirmed that young people are drinking more in one session and more often than ever before (MOH, 2009). Consequently, the trend for binge drinking among youth has become normalised, a situation which contributes to significant societal harm (McEwan et al.). As the headlines cited above demonstrate, the most recent concerns centre on young women.

This attention to young women’s drinking has prompted research, public debate and calls for intervention (Law Commission, 2009; Lyons, Dalton, & Hoy, 2006; McPherson, Casswell, & Pledger, 2004). Research on young women’s drinking specifically continues to grow, providing a valuable platform for understanding contributing factors and identifying opportunities for intervention. A key area of new research on youth alcohol consumption involves the integration of alcohol marketing with social media and young peoples’ identities (McCreanor, Lyons, Griffin et al., 2013). Social media is an integral part of youth culture and this research promises a rich insight into young peoples’ perspectives on drinking. Another core component of youth popular culture is music videos, which was the direction selected for this thesis. The following chapters will explain the pertinence of this research avenue in relation to the topic of young women and drinking. Beginning with the way women are portrayed in popular culture; the first chapter will introduce the feminist perspective which guides the current research and describe the feminist backlash theory which underpins this viewpoint. Chapter two will provide an overview of the current climate of binge

drinking and prior research on potential contributing factors. Finally, chapter three will look at music videos as part of popular culture. Previous research and theory surrounding music videos, alcohol and sexuality will be outlined before the current study is introduced.

## ***Chapter 1: Young women, post-feminism and popular culture***

Popular culture portrays young women in a multitude of contradictory ways. The images and messages distributed via the mass media are wrought with inconsistencies. As Zeisler (2008) aptly asserts, “pop culture is a stew of progressivism and backlash: On one TV network, a woman might be the president of the United States; on another, she’s effusing that being a Pussycat Doll is the dream of a lifetime” (p. 14). The examples in this statement could be taken as indicative of the many freedoms and choices available to young women today. However, numerous feminist scholars (Faludi, 1991, 1992; McRobbie, 2004; Travis, Meginnis, & Bardari, 2000) believe polarities such as these serve not as role models for choice but rather as agents of confusion. In this landscape of post-modernity it is often believed that gender inequalities have been overcome. Women are free to vote, pursue education and careers, travel and have access to contraception and the resultant sexual freedoms. They may, by choice become the next Pussycat Doll or president of the USA (the latter of which has yet to be evidenced). The concept of femininity is being redefined. Femininity today is less likely to conjure up images of floral-apron dressed homemakers than it is to prompt salutations to ‘girl power’ and ‘independence.’

Much societal change was effected by the feminist movement, which sought to free women from patriarchal oppression. However, it has been suggested that despite considerable gains for gender equality achieved as a result of the feminist movement, there is now what is termed a “backlash against feminism” (Faludi, 1991). Faludi’s (1991, 1992) argument essentially states that the backlash is an attempt to retract the victories of the feminist movement. Describing this as an “insidious counterassault,” Faludi asserts the backlash utilises popular culture and the media to propagate erroneous statistics as a scaremongering tactic to induce anxiety and reduce political will in the lives of women (1992, p. 12). Faludi contends efforts to attack and deride feminism serve two purposes: to avert attention from the true agenda and convince women to oppose their own cause. Faludi stresses that the backlash did not emerge in response to women’s attainment of total equality, but as a “pre-emptive strike” to ensure a state of equality was never realised (1992, p. 14). However, this resistance is not a centralised, organised effort, but rather a multitude of separate emergences each and all of which promulgate an antifeminist view.

McRobbie (2004) describes the complexity of the feminist backlash, using the pervasive terminology of contemporary times of 'post-feminism' which sees feminism as a thing of the past; unnecessary in the current climate of gender equality, individualisation and social mobility. She explains that the victories achieved by feminism in the 1970s and 80s have been deliberately undermined in covert and ingenious ways. Lip service is paid to feminist ideals which create an illusion of support while cleverly retaining and in some ways reinforcing the status quo. It is an emphatic resistance to feminism, couched in a facade of acquiescence. At a deeper level of analysis, McRobbie explains what she describes as a "double entanglement" (2004, p. 255). This term refers to a tension between neo-liberal values surrounding gender, sexuality and family life with more liberal views which emphasise choice and diversity in domestic, sexual and kinship relations. This has been shown recently with debates over traditional marriage versus civil unions and gay marriage. In NZ this was emphasised with the Marriage Amendment Act (2013), which despite receiving much support was also countered with vehement opposition by various sectors of society. Amidst the preceding debate one such opponent, Labour Party MP Sua Sio claimed the majority of the Pacific Island community were against the proposed bill and cautioned this could potentially cost the Labour Party up to 30, 000 votes (3 News, 2012).

McRobbie (2004) also describes the ways in which feminism itself has changed, including a "shifting" away from the State, law and patriarchy toward less concrete sites, events and occurrences with differing power relations such as discussion and discourse analysis. According to McRobbie, these changes occurred around 1990, which was also the time at which 'popular' feminism arose. Popular feminism was distributed throughout popular culture in places such as magazines, which she contends led to a form of feminist success. However, despite widespread changes within institutions relating to law, education, medicine and the like, McRobbie (2004) notes the simultaneous existence of a subtle, yet consistent undermining of feminist ideals across popular culture and political life. This, McRobbie argues, propagated a false sense of achievement while actually resulting in a fragmented, individualistic, disempowered feminist reality. She describes this in terms of feminism "dismantling itself" (p. 256). McRobbie (2004) cites numerous examples from contemporary culture which exemplify this paradox. These include the "normalisation of pornography," (p. 259) the growth of strip clubs and the participatory "self-objectification" of young women in everyday life. She emphasises the individualism espoused by modern society and

highlights the ways in which both historical feminist achievements and enduring gender inequalities are disregarded.

While NZ is a unique nation, it is guided by Western norms and popular culture and is therefore not immune to the backlash. Despite having had two successive female prime ministers, women are still underrepresented in politics and other high ranking and managerial positions across industries. Research from 2010 indicated that only 4% of CEO's were women, however one of these women was responsible for three companies meaning there were only two female heads (McPherson, 2010). Furthermore, data from 2012 indicates that the proportion of women in senior management positions had dropped from a promising 32% in 2011 to the current 28% (Grant Thornton IBR, 2012).

An equally debated concern is the gender pay gap which remains substantial across all sectors of employment. A recent survey found that women earn between \$8,000 and 20,000 less than their male counterparts in digital, marketing and creative roles (Font Talent, 2013). Reports on Statistics NZ data show the average gender pay gap across industries to be 14.18% (Mason, 2012). The backward trend of women's workforce participation has lead a Human Rights Commission (HRC, 2012) census to conclude that, "New Zealand has lost its role as an international leader in progressing gender equality in terms of women's representation at the top in corporate and public governance, management and aspects of professional and public life" (HRC, 2012).

Young NZ women are achieving qualifications at a higher rate than males (MOE, 2013). However, the aforementioned statistics promise these new graduates will be rewarded a lower pay rate than men. At the time these young women are equipping themselves with the knowledge to forge a career their confidence is being simultaneously undermined simply by participating in contemporary society.

Examples of the paradoxical nature of contemporary femininity cited by McRobbie (2004) are plentiful in NZ society, from the abundance of Playboy branded merchandise stocking the shelves of general homewares stores to the introduction of stripper poles in nightclubs. An advertisement for a Playboy branded bath towel in a Briscoes catalogue reads,

With one of the most recognisable logos in the world Playboy is known as more than simply a magazine but also the quality merchandise they produce. Give your bathroom something to make it stand out and have fun with this Playboy bath towel (Briscoes, 2011).

Despite an acknowledgment of the brand's origins, this advertisement presents an immediate minimisation by exhorting positive connotations with the potential consumer. As such promotion and support of a pornography empire has become acceptable in family homes.

As mentioned, a blurring of boundaries between what was once disparaged as sexist and pornographic to light-hearted, 'fun' celebrations of feminine sexuality has resulted in the innocuous introduction of striptease dancing into mainstream society. Pole dancing as a form of exercise has gained recent popularity with children as young as 8 years old performing in competitions. The renaming of a performance group from "sensual movements" to "Kiwi pole kids group" illustrates the swiftness with which these notions are being adopted (Nash, 2010). Accordingly, dance poles are becoming frequent additions in many nightclubs, with young women being encouraged to display their 'exercise' skills to an audience. Such irony supports the relevance of Faludi's (1992) explanation of an "insidious counterassault" to issues in contemporary NZ society. Thus, alongside jelly wrestling and wet t-shirt competitions, bars and clubs no longer require hired entertainment, as female patrons willingly fill this role with little incentive. It is particularly notable that no comparable male entertainment is promoted.

O'Brien (1997) queried the existence of a backlash against feminism in Australia with her review of feminist literature following the publication of two influential books of the time; *The First Stone: Some Questions about Sex and Power* (1995) and *DIY Feminism* (1996). O'Brien argued that the notion of a backlash is a political and cultural tactic supported by the media which serves to homogenise women by positioning them into opposing groups of young and old. In asserting this argument, O'Brien portrays an interpretation of the purported backlash as being concerned with a generational division which emphasises the younger group's active detachment from "traditional" feminism. However, O'Brien's argument focuses solely on one aspect of the backlash, while neglecting the core element of the proposition which does not concern female contention, but rather a concerted effort by the masculine hegemony to covertly resist feminist ideals. While O'Brien's argument is interesting, it illustrates a superficial understanding of, and failure to appreciate the complexity of the feminist backlash issue.

As Wolf (2002) argues, the backlash encompasses women of all ages. Though recognising a divisive element, Wolf views this in terms of inducing anxiety in women

of all ages. Wolf makes the forceful assertion that, “we are in the midst of a violent backlash against feminism that uses images of female beauty as a political weapon against women’s advancement: the beauty myth” (2002, p. 10). Wolf firmly places the issue within its historical and cultural context, arguing that neither gender, evolution or aesthetics are responsible for the beauty myth. She cites historical examples of power differentials such as the Mediterranean Goddesses who took many (younger) lovers and cultural examples such as the Nigerian Wodaabes (with which women are the economically powerful and men participate in beauty contests) to illustrate her arguments. Wolf concludes that rather than being about women, the beauty myth is actually about male institutions and institutional power (2002, p. 13).

It is argued, in line with Faludi, McRobbie and Wolf, that despite continued progress for women in political, educational, economic and social spheres, the backlash against feminism remains abundantly evident in popular culture today. Travis and colleagues articulate this position best, asserting that,

Socially constructed, narrow definitions of beauty, and thereby, sexuality are used as mechanisms to maintain social, political, and economic control by those who benefit from traditional patriarchal structures. We propose that the conflation of physical appearance and sexuality is detrimental to women on individual, interpersonal, and systemic levels and that it ultimately sustains gender based oppression  
(Travis et al., 2000, p. 237).

These authors align with the views of Wolf (2002), maintaining that sexuality is socially constructed; contrary to traditional postulations that it is biologically and anatomically determined. Furthermore they assert that oppression is enacted through the control of women’s sexuality through the mechanisms of popular media as dictated by mass marketing and “capitalistic pursuits” (Travis et al., 2000). Zeilser (2008) agrees, emotively describing popular culture as, “restricting the roles of women to that of girlfriends, victims, hookers, corpses, sex bombs and cock teasers” (p. vii). The ability of popular culture to persuade and influence young women in detrimental ways is concerning. The next chapter turns to a consideration of one of the most critical changes experienced by young women today and (alongside other factors) looks at the role popular culture plays in contributing to this situation.

## ***Chapter 2: Drinking, gender and young people***

### ***The rise in binge drinking among young women***

Binge drinking among young women has become “normalised” (Lyons & Willott, 2008; McEwan et al., 2010). Previous research has found that legislation, access, marketing and culture have all contributed to the current culture of excessive alcohol consumption. Aspects of culture such as gender and identity have also been recently examined, which is an important direction as to understand young women’s drinking, research should involve young women’s voices. Firstly a brief overview of the current culture will be presented.

Contemporary NZ, like other Western nations has a culture of drinking. A Ministry of Health (2009) survey found that higher than 8 in 10 New Zealanders aged 16-64 years old had drunk alcohol on at least one occasion in the past year. Within safe limits, alcohol consumption is a normative and unproblematic aspect of NZ culture. However excessive drinking contributes to significant societal harm.

It is estimated that approximately 25% of NZ drinkers over 16 years of age either drink dangerously or are alcohol dependant (Wells, Baxter, & Schaaf, 2006). Furthermore, alcohol use in NZ is implicated in over 1000 deaths per year (Connor, Broad, Rehm, Vander Hoorn, & Jackson, 2005) and plays a causal role in over 60 medical conditions (O’Hagan, Robinson, & Whiteside, 1993; Room, Babor, & Rehm, 2005). Finally, the annual societal cost of excessive alcohol consumption is conservatively estimated at over five billion dollars (Slack, Nana, Wester, Stokes, & Wu, 2009).

Excessive consumption, or binge drinking, is highest among the younger age groups and tends to decrease with age (MOH, 2009). The previously known Alcohol Advisory Council of NZ (ALAC) has recently been subsumed into the Health Promotion Agency (HPA). The HPA defines binge drinking among young adults (18-24 years) as the consumption of 5 or more standard drinks the last time they drank alcohol (HPA, n.d.a). However they recommend that females drink no more than 4 standard drinks and males no more than 6 standard drinks on one occasion (HPA, n.d.b).

A survey of past year drinkers in this age group found that 8 in 10 reported at least one episode of binge drinking (MOH, 2009). Young people also drank more regularly; commonly binge drinking at least once per week. Across age groups, 18-24

year olds were the most likely to have sought help for their drinking over the past year (MOH, 2009). In turn, this population experienced a number of adverse consequences as a result of own and others drinking, reporting difficulties with friendships and home life, work, study, finances, legal and concentration levels (MOH, 2009). On average, males reported higher frequencies and amounts of alcohol consumption, with one clear differentiation. Male reports of drinking a large amount of alcohol at age 14 were highest between 18-24 years, decreasing thereafter. However, 25% of 16-17 year old females reported consuming a large amount at age 14. Therefore, consumption of large amounts at a younger age appears to be increasing for females. This last suggestion has gained increased attention, with concern rising over female youth binge drinking rates (Alcohol Concern, 2008; Law Commission, 2009; Lyons, Dalton, & Hoy, 2006). Reports from the UK have found that women's alcohol consumption has been steadily increasing, and that binge drinking among women has gained in popularity (Alcohol Concern, 2008; Cabinet Office, 2004). This supports the results of an earlier study which found that 72.2% of women drinkers reported binge drinking compared to 60.5% of men (Pickard, Bates, Dorian, Greig, & Saint, 2000).

NZ research has shown similar patterns, with Macpherson, Casswell and Pledger (2004) finding that women's drinking had increased from 1995 to 2000 in various ways across nearly all age groups. Importantly, these findings were irrespective of male drinking, with the criteria of "gender convergence" which was defined as increases in women's drinking as opposed to a decrease in men's drinking. Findings such as these demonstrate that there is cause for concern over rising female alcohol consumption. Researchers and policy makers have begun seeking ways to reduce this troubling trend. As mentioned, research has thus far focussed on potential contributing factors such as legislation, marketing, accessibility and youth culture, and these will be considered in the next section.

### ***Regulation and Legislation***

Alcohol marketing and promotion in many countries including NZ and the UK relies on voluntary codes, produced and upheld by the industry itself to govern traditional media such as television and print advertising (Casswell & Maxwell, 2005). There are obvious issues with this type of regulation, from both the receipt and handling of complaints through to penalties in response to breaches of the codes. These issues

were highlighted in a UK report which investigated the conduct of the alcohol industry and found numerous breaches of the marketing codes (Hastings, 2009). At the time of the report codes were in place relating to: not targeting or appealing to under 18 year olds, not encouraging dangerous or excessive alcohol consumption, not linking alcohol to social acceptance and not suggesting alcohol enhances femininity or masculinity. None of the self-regulatory codes included sports sponsorship or new media. It was found that young people were the main target consumers and some companies used market research data involving 15-16 year old participants to inform their advertising campaigns (Hastings, 2009). In addition, increased alcohol consumption was a focus of both market research and marketing campaigns. Furthermore, visual and verbal references to sociability and social success were evident in many campaigns. Finally, explicit and implicit reference to femininity and masculinity were prominent throughout both internal marketing agendas and external advertising (Hastings, 2009). With regard to penalties for breaches, the report cited several cases where complaints were received yet little change occurred. Importantly, one such case highlighted the tragic consequence of a successful marketing campaign in violation of the codes. Halewood International utilised the well-known “girls just wanna have fun” line from the popular Cyndi Lauper song in their Lambrini campaign from 2007. In 2008, a 19 year old UK girl fell to her death after drinking their brand. The news report cited this catchphrase alongside a quote from the young woman’s 17 year old drinking companion who had named the brand (Haywood, 2010).

In addition to the already apparent problems with self-regulation over television and print advertising, technological change has resulted in increasingly sophisticated marketing and promotion strategies that extend far beyond traditional media forms. Campaigns now capitalise on a multitude of avenues to reach potential consumers such as; sports sponsorship, email, mobile phone, the internet and music.

The Advertising Standards Authority of NZ released an updated code for the advertising and promotion of alcohol in January 2013, which attempts to include the application of advertising standards to the internet and social media (ASA, 2013). However, issues remain with this type of regulation; for example the only criteria for entry to a restricted 18 website promoting alcohol is a date of birth indicating the user is 18 years of age (ASA, 2013). Furthermore, the consequence of breaching the advertising code is generally removal of the advertisement, which considering the short life of advertisements is not particularly effective (Casswell & Maxwell, 2005). Recent

concern was raised over the dearth of research regarding the contribution of marketing via social media to young peoples' drinking alongside an urgent call for this to be addressed (McCreanor, Lyons, Griffin et al., 2013).

With little regulation, innovative marketing strategies and multiple avenues with which to target consumers, alcohol brands have evolved into what has been described as a "living entity with a personality with which we can form a relationship and that can evolve over time" (Hanby, 1999, p.12). Thus, alcohol branding and marketing often has a direct, unregulated line into consumers' private lives. Correspondingly, the interactive nature of social and entertainment media allows brand infiltration to occur regularly with young, impressionable consumers.

Aside from the voluntary codes which guide alcohol marketing, formal legislation has been enacted with regard to other aspects of alcohol use. However, policy change has relaxed rather than restricted access to alcohol. Furthermore, policy debate has been criticised for its neglect to consider public health research and over reliance on the opinions of those with a vested interest, such as the Broadcasting Standards Authority, politicians and the alcohol industry itself (Casswell, Stewart, & Duignan, 1993). The next section describes policy changes that have taken place over recent years and the effect this increased access has had on young consumers.

### *Accessibility*

There is considerable agreement among researchers and health advocates that the increased availability of alcohol has made a significant contribution toward the current Kiwi binge drinking culture (Cashell-Smith, Connor, & Kypri, 2007; Casswell, Pledger, & Pratap, 2002; Casswell & Zhang, 1997; McEwan et al., 2013). In turn, this is also credited in part with influencing the amount young females are drinking (McEwan et al., 2013; McEwan et al., 2010; McPherson et al., 2004). Significant changes to alcohol policy occurred in NZ in 1999. This involved firstly, a lowering of the purchase age from 20 to 18 years, secondly Sunday trading was allowed, and thirdly beer (and wine) became available in supermarkets and grocery stores (Huckle, Casswell, & Pledger, 2006). These changes have particularly affected the drinking habits of youth.

Research prior to the law changes identified that access to alcohol at ages 15 and 18 years was significantly predictive of current and later drinking. Furthermore, it was found that access to licensed premises exerted a stronger influence over drinking

behaviours than peer and parental influence (Casswell and Zhang, 1997). This data supports the critique of policy makers' neglect to consider public health interests as it clearly implicates access to alcohol at a younger age as a precursor to later drinking behaviours. Research following the 1999 changes confirmed these results, again finding that access to licensed premises at age 18 was predictive of greater quantities of alcohol consumed and more frequent drinking occasions later on for both male and female drinkers (Casswell et al., 2002). Further evidence for the influence of a lowered purchasing age and increased availability on youth drinking habits can be found with alcohol-related offences, which showed substantial effects after the law changes. An examination of these offences found that fatal and non-fatal crashes involving alcohol showed negative trends for youth across age groups from 14-24 years prior to 1999 but all rose after 1999. The largest increases involved the 18-19 and 20-24 year old age groups- the former being those directly affected by the changes (Huckle et al., 2006).

Alongside the concern expressed by researchers and health advocates, there has been increasing community unrest regarding the number of alcohol outlets in suburban areas throughout NZ (Shelton, 2011; Tapaleao, 2013; 3 News, 2007). Recent legislative changes may aid the reduction of this problem. In December 2012, three acts were passed which constitute what has been termed the alcohol reform legislation. These are: the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act (2012), the Local Government (alcohol reform) Act (2012) and the Summary Offences (alcohol reform) Act (2012). One of the provisions under the new legislation allows for local territories to draft local alcohol policies (LAPs) restricting opening hours, location and density of, and imposition of conditions on licensed premises.

Several other salient changes relate to: the responsible supply of alcohol to minors, offences relating to fake identification or the use of others' identification, and national licensing laws. Finally, of particular relevance to the current topic is that it is now an offence to promote excessive drinking, to target minors, to provide free alcohol or discounts greater than 25% and to offer free goods or services with alcohol purchases (MOJ, 2012). However, despite these changes, the purchase age remains at 18 years, and the legislation has been criticised for its failure to amend this alongside other key concerns (TVNZ, 2012). The following section turns to a discussion of one such concern- the prevalence of alcohol marketing.

## *Marketing*

Marketing and the media are often seen to be key contributors to the normalisation of binge drinking in NZ and other Western societies, and it is argued that youth are particularly susceptible to marketing appeals (British Medical Association, 2009; McCreanor, Greenaway, Moewaka Barnes, Borell, & Gregory, 2005; McCreanor, Lyons, Griffin et al., 2013; McEwan et al., 2010). Thus there has been increased interest in the youth alcohol marketing field in recent times.

Rapid societal changes taking place due to mass communication have become an important influence on the way in which brand marketing affects the thoughts and behaviours of young people (McCreanor et al., 2005). Interactive technologies including the internet, email, text and pxts have enabled alcohol brand marketing to become an integral part of youth culture (Casswell, 2004; Casswell & Maxwell, 2005). Branding has become so powerful that rather than simple brand affiliation, researchers are raising concern over the apparent “commercialisation of identity” (McCreanor et al., 2005). Drawing on theories which describe youth identity in terms of consumption, McCreanor and colleagues note the way in which this “shape(s) their identity and status in relation to others” (2005, p. 253). This raises significant concerns for the wellbeing of young people and introduces a new layer of complexity to considerations involving alcohol policy and public health initiatives.

Marketing campaigns by liquor companies are also becoming increasingly innovative and strategic in their attempts to both lure new customers and increase the consumption of current customers into the binge drinking cultural arena. Their appeal to consumers was aptly demonstrated by Casswell’s (2004) reference to an award winning Smirnoff campaign. The “Smirnoff half day off” implored consumers to forgo other commitments such as work, study and family for a half day in order to drink Smirnoff at a participating bar with friends. This campaign was so successful that some bars reported an increase of 130% from their usual takings (Smirnoff- Best in the World, 2003; as cited in Casswell, 2004, p. 472).

Marketing campaigns are often highly effective in reaching their target market, regardless of whether intended consumers are of legal drinking age. Numerous studies have found that ready-to-drink marketing has been aimed primarily at young people and females (Brain, 2000; Jackson, Hastings, Wheeler, Eadie, & MacKintosh, 2000; Mosher & Johnsson, 2005; Sutherland & Willner, 1998). A NZ study sought to assess whether

ready-to-drink (RTD) also known as alco-pop consumption was linked to heavier drinking. The researchers' found that RTD consumption was highest among young people aged 14-24 years and females. Of all the age groups, 14-17 year olds consumed the most RTDs. Finally, it was found that RTD drinking among females in this age group was predictive of heavier drinking, when compared to beer, wine and spirits (Huckle, Sweetsur, Moyes & Casswell, 2008).

Clearly, securing young consumers is profitable and the alcohol industry has been quick to capitalise on the emerging young female market (McEwan et al., 2010). Despite a legal purchase age of 18 years and an advertising code detailing that marketing should not be aimed at minors, alcohol advertising holds particular appeal for youth. Seeking to understand the industry's strategising, Chen and colleagues (2005) investigated the factors which make alcohol advertising attractive to young people aged 10-17 years. The most popular elements of marketing identified consisted of advertisements containing animal characters, humour, good music and a good storyline. Conversely, an advertisement containing beer brewing and the product itself held less appeal (Chen, Grube, Bersamin, Waiters, & Keefe, 2005).

While the link between alcohol marketing and consumption may seem obvious, research evidence is required to support this assumption. Numerous studies have attempted to find support for a direct link between exposure to advertising and actual drinking behaviours. Meta analytic research has confirmed this is the case, with media exposure and alcohol advertising exerting effects over both initiation of drinking and increased alcohol consumption (Anderson, de Bruijn, Angus, Gordon, & Hastings, 2009; Smith and Foxcroft, 2009). Furthermore, allegiance to particular beer brands at age 18 has been associated with heavier drinking at age 21 years (Casswell and Zhang, 1998).

Accordingly, the *amount* of exposure is also important, as more frequent alcohol related cues coupled with alcohol advertising has been shown to increase current consumption (Engels, Hermans, van Baaren, Hollenstein, & Bot, 2009). The inclusion of overall media exposure and alcohol-related cues not contained in direct marketing campaigns is of particular significance. Exposure to alcohol in media does not solely consist of advertising, with many forms of popular media such as movies containing alcohol, drinking, and associations with both. Babor and colleagues (2010) conclude that "alcohol advertising increases the likelihood that young people will start to use alcohol and will drink more if they are already using alcohol" (p. 189).

This leads to a more insidious type of marketing; product placement. Product placement is a strategy whereby companies pay for brand exposure in movies, television shows and unrelated advertisements (Casswell & Maxwell, 2005). The subtle placement or use of the branded items is then (often subconsciously) registered in the viewers mind. The potential for the alcohol industry to capitalise on this was raised as a concern in 1997 (Gupta & Gould, 1997). Unsurprisingly, product placement was found to be prevalent in popular music by 2008 (Primack, Dalton, Carroll, Agarwal, & Fine, 2008). Therefore, in addition to obvious brand inclusion, much popular media also contains alcohol-related cues which may (intentionally or unintentionally) promote consumption. At the time of writing, fast food giant Burger King had teamed with beer brand Tui, airing a commercial naming Tui the provider of their beer-battered onion ring burgers. Similar results to direct advertising have been found for the effect of this more subtle exposure to alcohol on drinking behaviours of viewers aged 10-16 years, with higher exposure to movies indicating a greater likelihood of drinking uptake and binge drinking (Hanewinkel & Sargent, 2009).

The way in which alcohol is portrayed has also been examined. McGee, Ketchel and Reeder (2007) analysed the amount of alcohol related imagery on NZ television. They found that positive or neutral depictions outnumbered negative portrayals by 12 to 1. Although the study was only undertaken over one week, alcohol was pictured 648 times, translating to an average of one alcohol related image every 9 minutes. Importantly, they also found that advertisements promoting alcohol outnumbered those aiming to reduce consumption by 3 to 1.

An extensive search of the literature found only one recently published combined NZ study which analysed the alcohol content in music videos (Sloane, Wilson, & Gunasekara, 2012). This research incorporated data from a 2005 study to compare with a 2010 sample to assess differences over time. The researchers predicted an increase in alcohol imagery over time and expected this would be most evident in hip-hop/rap music. Additionally, they hypothesised that product placement would have increased by 2010. The analysis involved 564 videos from 2005 and 861 in 2010. They found that alcohol imagery did increase, from 15.7% in 2005 to 19.5% in 2010, however the increase was only statistically significant for the rhythm and blues (R & B) genre. Product placement decreased from 5.4% in 2005 to 2.4% in 2010, but this was not significant. Although the study's hypotheses were not supported, other salient findings emerged. In line with previous research, the musical genres of hip-hop and R &

B contained the most alcohol-related content at over 30%. Importantly, it was found that reference to the negative consequences of alcohol use were only present in 2.2% of the 2005 sample and 4.2% in 2010. Finally, NZ music videos contained significantly less alcohol content at 11.8% than videos made by international artists at 22.6% (Sloane et al., 2012).

This last point is particularly notable as it identifies an opportunity for intervention. Young New Zealanders constitute a significant proportion of the fan base for NZ music and local artists hold an advantage over international role models. Of related importance, an anti youth binge drinking music video was released in May 2012 by a NZ music group comprised of seven popular NZ artists and featuring a further three artists (All My Brothers, 2012). The song is entitled, “Find a Way” and the video specifically raises issues relating to alcohol consumption, including the uptake of binge drinking among youth, accessibility to and the normalisation of alcohol use, alcohol’s links to aggressive behaviour, the progression from use to abuse and the impact this on the ability to achieve life goals. These types of role models are an invaluable avenue through which anti-alcohol abuse messages can be promoted as they are an influential component of local youth culture. However, before such interventions can be instigated relevant research needs to be undertaken. As detailed, the above study analysed the content of music videos. As the sole (known) local research it has yielded valuable information and created a platform for further research in this area. Nevertheless, in line with the arguments throughout this thesis, local audience reception research of music videos is of comparable urgency.

The apparent futility of strategies to combat the harm caused by alcohol in NZ society is noted by a striking comparison of the annual amount the HPA (the former ALAC) receives for reduction initiatives- a considerable \$12 million, versus the amount spent on promotion, which is believed to approximate \$50-150 million (McEwan et al., 2010; NZ Drug Foundation). The widespread popularity of recent anti-drink driving campaigns, such as the oft cited “ghost chips” commercial, presents a greater rival than previous efforts. The advertisements’ appeal is due to its utilisation of strategies well known to the opposing alcohol industry: young, well-known characters, humour and a good storyline. This ability to navigate and appeal to youth culture is an essential tool for relaying messages to a young audience. However, achieving an actual reduction in drinking is a difficult task as progress reports indicate that despite awareness of the message, alcohol behaviours and attitudes remain the same (HPA, 2013). The next

section examines previous research on youth culture in relation to alcohol, including gender and identity studies.

### ***Youth Culture: gender and alcohol***

As mentioned, gender differences in drinking behaviours and the recent rise in female binge drinking have received considerable attention in recent times. Much of the research in this area has utilised qualitative methods, which is important, as it is imperative to hear the voice of the individual if the motivations for their behaviours are to be understood. Furthermore, the ideas and opinions of young people about topics directly relevant to their lifestyle are a valuable source of knowledge for any change attempts.

There are numerous reported reasons for female binge drinking, including: fun, sociability, relaxation, self-medication, gender equality, a liking for the taste and even unintentional binge drinking (Carpenter et al., 2007; Lyons & Willott, 2008; Montemurro & McClure, 2005; Rolfe, Orford, & Dalton, 2009). Reasons for the apparent rise typically focus on societal change, such as; delayed childbearing or choosing not to have children and an increase in income and availability (Lyons and Willott, 2008). Interestingly, the abovementioned reasons cited by young people themselves are in line with theory and research on the topic (e.g. Jackson & Tinkler, 2007; McEwan et al., 2010).

In the UK, the common perception of a dramatic rise in youth binge drinking has been challenged. A review of young people's drinking patterns from the early 90's to the mid 2000's found that although some youth were drinking more at one time, overall drinking had begun to level off in recent years. However, as with NZ trends it was acknowledged that binge drinking has become normalised. Furthermore UK youth attitudes toward drinking were generally positive, mimicking NZ's widespread support for excessive consumption (Measham, 2007).

As previously noted, gender convergence in alcohol consumption has been found when examining the drinking patterns of NZ women of all ages (McPherson et al., 2004). However, despite evidence in some countries that women's alcohol use is rising; there are still considerable differences in consumption between men and women in others. For example, gender convergence has been found in Germany, The Netherlands and Switzerland, but not in Norway or Finland. Furthermore, Sweden

shows consumption increases with both genders (Holmila & Raitasalo, 2005). Therefore, convergence is not a universal occurrence, which highlights the importance of cultural influences on drinking behaviour.

Looking at one such cultural influence, Montemurro and McClure (2005) investigated changing gender norms in relation to alcohol consumption by interviewing women about their experiences of bachelorette parties. They found alcohol to be central to the occasion. In line with this, it was credited with increased enjoyment of the festivities and enhancing female bonding. Furthermore, alcohol was deemed a relaxant and also used as a “justification” for deviant behaviour (p. 279). The term deviant has often been used in conjunction with descriptions of women and alcohol. Examination of British media representations of young females found numerous reference to the troublesome and therefore negative “modern girl” of early years (1918-1928) and the “ladette” of recent times (1995-2005) (Jackson & Tinkler, 2007). ‘Ladette’ is a term used to describe women who behave in ways traditionally deemed masculine. The dictionary defines a ladette as a “boisterous, heavy drinking young woman” (Microsoft Word, 2007).

Other British research on the topic of women and alcohol has found that the conception of the ladette is being challenged as drinking is seen to be “increasingly feminised” (Day, Gough, & McFadden, 2004, p. 172). Aptly demonstrating the backlash in action, this research found a number of tensions and inconsistencies in newspaper coverage of this topic. For example, it was apparent that alcohol consumption had risen among women, that new bars/cafes aimed to attract female patrons and that it was considered somewhat more acceptable for women to drink for pleasure in recent times. Notwithstanding, ideals of motherhood and appearance were invoked as a warning to deter women from drinking excessively. A contradictory discourse of woman as victim of male aggression and woman as aggressive pursuer of men was also identified. Overall, women’s drinking was portrayed negatively (Day et al.).

Arguing that media representations of the modern girl and the ladette attempt to induce a type of “moral panic,” Jackson and Tinkler (2007) posit that the ladette’s potential to disrupt the masculine hegemony is at the core of such negative portrayals. This is convincingly demonstrated by their specification of four commonalities across time. The first concerns the emergence of these negative depictions at times where women were considered to be advancing in social, economic and political spheres. The

second regards the postponement or dismissal of marriage and children. The third relates to women's increased financial freedoms and the consumer opportunities this presented. The final emphasis is on the role of the mass media in defining both the *ladette* and the "modern girl" and the increasing prominence of both as the subject and consumer of such media (Jackson & Tinkler, 2007).

It appears the media efforts have been effective, as gender double standards in relation to alcohol use are frequently evidenced. De Visser and McDonnell (2012) found that despite equal reports of binge drinking between men and women, attitudes toward drinking were heavily gendered with drinking being perceived as masculine and very drunk women viewed negatively. Discourses in explanation of gender double standards typically focussed on women's greater vulnerability to sexual assault when displaying drunken behaviour in public. One study also found older women, attractive women and very drunk women to be particularly derided for their drinking behaviour (Lyons & Willott, 2008). Thus, despite being considered equal in some senses, social control is still exercised over women for numerous reasons.

Various drinks are also afforded gender characteristics, with cocktails and alcopops being viewed as feminine and beer and spirits considered masculine (DeVisser & McDonnell, 2012). However, this appears to be changing as beer becomes increasingly popular with women drinkers and men report an increasing alcohol repertoire (Willott & Lyons, 2011; Young, Morales, McCabe, Boyd, & D'Arcy, 2005). Beer drinking has such strong connotations with a traditional masculine identity that it has been described as a necessary skill to learn regardless of the individual's taste preference (Willott & Lyons, 2011). Despite this, women's uptake of beer consumption appears to be influenced by men, with female research participants reporting males to pay particular attention to drink selections and to be more impressed by female beer drinkers (Young et al., 2005). This male attention to the *type* of drinks consumed by women is mirrored by a focus on the *amount* women drink. The women of one study reported the pressure to consume more to be more prominent when drinking with male peers. Furthermore, they noted that female friends paid little or no attention to the amount their friends drank and were more accepting of abstinence (Young et al., 2005).

Research has found the increase in female alcohol consumption to be partially explained by beliefs about gender equality and women's rights (Lyons & Willott, 2008; Rolfe et al., 2009). While participants in the previously mentioned study associated "drinking like a guy" with gender equality, a stronger theme emerged from the analysis

of their discussions. Most women felt they drank more to be more desirable around male peers rather than to be like them, thus confirming their heterosexuality (Young et al., 2005). Although this desire to be more accepted by male peers has been cited as an assertion of heterosexuality, the tensions between this and the rationale for using men's alcohol consumption as a "yardstick" with true gender equality have not gone unacknowledged (Young et al.). Research on male drinking behaviours has found high consumption to be viewed particularly positively, with "skulling" a lot of alcohol and being able to "handle" or "hack it" being held in high regard (Willott & Lyons, 2011). These expectations are not new, as reflections on the "six o'clock swill" attest to. Contemporary NZ remains mostly unchanged from the traditional expectation for males to drink copious amounts of alcohol whilst appearing relatively unaffected (McEwan et al., 2010). Furthermore, there has always been a certain stigma attached to public demonstrations of drunkenness, although this is less pronounced in the current climate as binge drinking has become more socially acceptable (Lyons & Willott, 2008).

It appears the drinking habits of contemporary females are being increasingly influenced by the same impossible expectations that males have traditionally been subjected to. This was demonstrated by a UK study which found participant discrepancies between actual consumption levels of female drinkers and attitudes toward female drinking to be explained via a clear distinction between amount drunk and drunken behaviour, with the latter being less accepted (DeVisser & McDonnell, 2012). Thus the prevailing mindset appeared to suggest that young women can, should and do drink equal amounts to men, yet this should not be apparent in their behaviour.

Therefore, it seems young women are undergoing a type of initiation whereby they are implored to drink in the same way as men, however when they inevitably fail to maintain certain standards of social respectability and femininity they are derided much more so than their male counterparts. Such unrealistic expectations do a disservice to both genders, however the promotion of equal consumption coupled with neglect of the physiological differences between males and females is doubly unjust to the latter gender.

This type of flawed rationale appears to be mostly driven by males. The aforementioned Young et al., (2005) study found that women who reported the highest alcohol consumption also reported a preference to socialise with males rather than females. Thus there are inconsistencies with the proposition that heavier drinking is associated with true gender equality as those in the lower consumption group did not

indicate such a preference. Furthermore, as with many previous studies this research contained much dialogue on the avoidance of sexual assault, which illuminates the complexity of young women's notions of gender equality and further highlights the heavily influential opinions and behaviours of men (Day et al., 2004; De Visser & McDonnell, 2012; Lyons & Willott, 2011). The following section delves briefly into the concerns expressed by looking at the way alcohol consumption is integrated with peer relationships.

### *Youth Culture: Drinking and peer relationships*

Peer relationships are an important part of emerging young identities (Sussman, Pokhrel, Ashmore, & Brown, 2007). Alongside an increase in perceived sociability, level of intoxication has been found to be significant for young drinkers. Those who abstain or drink less than their peers have reported feeling socially excluded (Griffin et al., 2009). An analysis of 16 focus group studies found the desire to fit in was sufficiently strong that drinking to the extent of memory loss and loss of consciousness was considered both a normative and expected part of youth culture (Griffin et al., 2009). However, clear gender differences emerged relating to the act of "passing out." Females often expressed conflict over perceptions of femininity whilst highlighting safety concerns and loss of control whereas males tended to see the passing out as an inevitable consequence of the intended goal of extreme intoxication, which the researchers refer to as "determined drunkenness" (p.468). These differing perspectives provide a stark illumination of the realities of gender inequalities. While women live with an ever present consciousness, or in some cases- fear of sexual assault which serves to govern their behaviour, men appear to be relatively free from such constraints.

Nevertheless, such pressure to conform to a socially acceptable identity has been found to affect both genders with regard to harmful sexual experiences. NZ research found that 15.8% of young men and 10.8% of young women reported engaging in recent unprotected sex. Furthermore, 5.9% of women and 7.2% of men reported sex they were not happy with at the time. Finally, sex which was later regretted was reported by 18.6% of men and 15.5% of women (Cashell-Smith et al., 2007). Interestingly, in each of these categories, male reports were considerably higher than females. This suggests that males may be underestimating the detrimental impact of their drinking on health and wellbeing.

Later research confirmed harmful and unsafe sexual experiences to be common among young people of both genders. Such experiences were additionally associated with an early age of first drink, high school binge drinking and heavier current drinking (Connor, Gray, & Kypri, 2010). These findings demonstrate the paradox with which young people are presented: despite an awareness of the risks of negative outcomes of binge drinking, they are simultaneously encouraged by peers and the ever convincing liquor industry to consume as much as possible. Thus excessive youth drinking continues. In conclusion, explanations for the rise in binge drinking among young women are multifaceted and include legislation, access, marketing and culture. The next chapter will look at the role youth culture plays in reinforcing this behaviour, particularly concerning young women's drinking and sexuality.

### ***Chapter 3: Music videos, popular culture, gender and alcohol***

In order to understand young women's perspectives on their behaviours, research should delve into *their world* of popular culture, to examine and question how they engage with it. A key part of popular culture is music videos. In this chapter an overview of prior theorising and research on music videos, alcohol and sexuality will be presented. It will then be argued that there is a lack of audience reception research on music videos which needs to be addressed. Finally the current study will be introduced with an explanation of how it seeks to contribute to bridging this gap from a NZ perspective.

Music is a powerful cultural medium and some argue its most evident function is to maintain social order through the management of social relationships (Cross & Woodruff, 2009; Feld & Fox, 1994). The assimilation of music into the mass media has enabled music to become a potent vehicle for the representation, recreation and reinforcement of cultural values. Early research on the mass media posited that the audience unquestioningly accepted the dictates of the media force (Longhurst, 2007). However, this view was criticised for its assumption of the audience as naive, passive recipients of the dominant message. It is now believed this relationship is somewhat interactive; with audiences choosing to either accept or resist the messages represented (Longhurst, 2007). Despite this revised view it is evident that the media retains its influence, albeit in less direct ways (Longhurst, 2007).

Popular music has been described as a "cultural phenomena" (McRobbie, 1999) which is an important part of life and central to many people's social identities (Shuker, 2008). Although it is clear individuals make their own consumption choices, their musical preferences are somewhat constrained by the dictates of those in control of the industry (Shuker, 2008). There are just 4 major record companies dominating the world market. In NZ it is estimated that around 90% of the market is controlled by international labels (Shuker, 2008).

McRobbie (2000) argues that the music industry is predominantly run by males and therefore, the music filtered out for mass production is essentially decided by a select few men at the very top. In keeping with this argument, it may be said that the music industry is biased toward a male perspective. Perhaps the most apparent demonstration of male superiority is evidenced in music videos, which:

...provide fertile grounds for examining how gender and sexuality are portrayed in media because not only are love and sex predominant as themes, but the visual nature of music videos make shortcuts and sexual stereotypes commonplace. They contain rather potent messages with regard to gender and sexuality, thus making them worthy of analysis (Aubrey & Frisby, 2011, p. 476).

Research into popular music was scant in the 1970s-80's however by the 1990's it had increased exponentially (Shuker, 2008). Yet despite this rise, research from a feminist perspective is decidedly lacking (McRobbie, 1999). Furthermore, although the music video is a hugely popular form of music consumerism there are still relatively few studies covering this topic (McRobbie, 1999; Shuker, 2008).

The study of music videos can either involve a textual or content analysis, or they may examine the audiences' perceptions of, and reactions to music videos (Shuker, 2008). Studies involving audience reception analysis are rare, leading to strong arguments for more research in this area (Aubrey & Frisby, 2011). Accordingly, this research proposes to investigate the audience's reception of popular music videos. Below a review of the broader literature relating to music videos, alcohol and sexuality is provided.

### ***Music videos: Alcohol and sexuality***

As discussed, music and music videos are a substantial aspect of contemporary youth culture. Their popularity enables them to create, represent and reinforce potent messages regarding identity and behavioural norms. Common themes found in music videos integrate substance use with notions of gender, sexuality and consumerism.

Research has found that music video viewing is associated with increased uptake of alcohol consumption for teens (with a mean age of 14.6 years at baseline). Robinson, Chen and Killen (1998) found that with each additional hour of music video exposure, initiation of alcohol consumption rose by 31% over the next 18 months. This was contrasted with general television viewing at 9% and VCR viewing which lowered the risk of uptake by 11%. Aside from initiation of alcohol use, music videos and overall amount of television viewing has also been shown to significantly predict the amount young people consume. Young people who watch more television and music videos

consume more alcohol (Van Den Bulck, & Buellens, 2005). Research has found both males and females (aged 16-17 years) spend an equal amount of time viewing music videos (Van Den Bulck & Buellens, 2005).

Much of the research on music videos thus far has focussed on content analyses. The examination of alcohol in music videos has found that across genres, rap and hip-hop contain the most alcohol references. Furthermore, the majority of the time alcohol is portrayed positively (Du Rant et al., 1997; Gruber, Thau, Hill, Fisher, & Grube, 2005; Primack et al., 2008).

Many studies emphasise the potential for observational learning from music videos. Celebrity role modelling can have a powerful effect on young people and as Bandura and Walters (1965) note; learning is enhanced if identification with the model is strong. Humour may also increase the appeal of messages involving alcohol (and other substances) to young people. Gruber and colleagues (2005) found that alcohol-related references were present in one third of music videos sampled by them and the pairing of humour with substances occurred 2.5 times more often than in substance-free videos.

More recently, Primack and colleagues (2008) found that 41% of some 279 songs analysed contained at least one reference to substance use, with alcohol being the most frequent. Substance use was commonly related to humour, partying, sex, violence and drug dealing and trafficking. Brand names were specified in 17 songs and 15 paired substance use with vehicle operation. The majority (68%) of the songs mentioning substance use portrayed positive consequences, and a specific anti-substance message was only found in 4 songs. Pop music contained the least amount of references to substance use at 9% of the sample and 2.1 references per hour. Rap music had the most references, with 77% of rap songs including some mention, which translated to 104.5 references per hour. Based on this data, the authors concluded that, “the average adolescent is exposed to approximately 84 references to explicit substance use per day, 591 references per week, or 30, 732 references per year” (p. 173).

A recent UK longitudinal study found similarly concerning results. In their analysis of top 10 songs over the past 30 years, Hardcastle and colleagues found alcohol references have increased substantially (Hardcastle, Hughes, Sharples, & Bellis, 2013). By 2011 one in five songs contained reference to alcohol and one in eight to heavy drinking, most portraying this in a positive light. Furthermore, up to 3% of songs included alcohol brand names.

Concern over the glamorisation of alcohol and sexuality in youth oriented media is not new. An American study conducted in 1997 looked at 518 music videos to determine the amount of alcohol and tobacco use portrayed (Du Rant et al., 1997). They found alcohol use to be paired with sexuality in 27-30% of the videos. Of the videos containing alcohol use, the lead singer was three times as likely to drink as a backup singer or musician. Rap music contained the most references to alcohol use at 27.4%. In videos involving alcohol use, this was more likely to be performed by young adults, at 68% of the time. Although 85.5% of the videos showed males engaging in alcohol use, approximately half (48%) of the videos also showed females drinking alcohol. Finally, where alcohol use was portrayed, this was predominantly in a positive light (76.9%) (Du Rant et al.).

### ***The influence of celebrity on young viewers***

As previously mentioned, it is argued that a core aspect of popular youth media is the role celebrity's play in modelling appropriate behaviour. According to social learning theory the ways in which celebrities choose to represent themselves can have implications for young viewers who are highly susceptible to their influence on many aspects of identity and behaviour (Bandura, 1986). Lambiase (2003) analysed the content of websites related to well-known celebrities to determine whether there was a difference in the way female and male celebrities were visually portrayed. This research was interested in whether, or how much sexualised images differed between genders and across fan sites or "official" sites (celebrity owned or governed). Of 14 females and 14 males this study found that all the men on the official sites were presented in a "demure" way compared to only half the women. Furthermore, on unofficial sites most (85.7%) of the men were considered demure, compared to only 35.7% of females. The remaining female depictions (64.3%) were classed as suggestive or partially clad. These findings suggest firstly, that female celebrities are portrayed in more sexualised ways than males on fan sites but are also more often portrayed in a sexualised manner on their own, official sites. This type of 'self objectification' illustrates McRobbie's (2004) argument that rather than being recognised and promoted for talent or skill in their field, female celebrities are admired almost exclusively for their sex appeal. Thus through their active subscription to the industry standard appearance ideals they become participants in their own objectification.

In relation to music videos, Frisby and Aubrey (2012) recently conducted a content analysis in which they looked at female artists' sexual objectification of themselves. They compared portrayals of black and white women in order to identify differences by race. They also investigated the musical genres of pop, hip-hop/R & B and country for differences in sexual objectification. Finally, an overall measure of sexual objectification was determined, which included four indicators, namely 1) body exposure 2) provocative attire 3) sexual dancing and 4) being both the sender and receiver of "the gaze"- a term used to refer to looking at others or being looked at by others. The 166 music videos by 65 artists selected were all in the top 10 billboard charts, spanning 2006-2010. Of these, 49% were pop, 29% hip-hop/R & B and 22% country music. There were clear racial differences according to musical genre with hip-hop/R & B solely represented by black artists and country only by white artists. The majority (75%) of pop artists were white, compared to 25% black pop artists. The genres of pop, hip-hop/R & B videos contained more skin exposure than country. Across genres, females were shown as the "target of the male gaze" in 15% of videos, whereas they perpetrated the gaze only 9% of the time. A total of 36% of artists displayed sexualised dancing while 46% wore provocative clothing and black artists did so two times more than white artists. Furthermore, pop, hip-hop/R & B artists wore more provocative clothing than country artists. Overall, 72% of the videos contained at least one indicator of sexual objectification, with 15% containing all four. Although there were no significant differences between black and white artists with regard to overall sexual objectification, pop, hip-hop and R & B all contained significantly more sexual objectification than country. The authors concluded that "sexual objectification in female artists' music videos is normative" (p. 81) and that "in essence, women's bodies exist for the consumption and pleasure of the viewers" (Frisby & Aubrey, 2012, p. 82).

The issue of women participating in their own objectification is central to this thesis as it is argued that the inception and promotion of female appearance ideals as distributed via the mass media are responsible for the thriving feminist backlash. The question of who is ultimately responsible for the way in which artists are portrayed is debatable. While many 'manufactured' pop groups such as the Pussycat Dolls are clearly selected to conform to the preconceived mould of music producers, other artists have greater individual licence over their image.

This particular point was recently highlighted in the mass media with regard to the young female pop singer, Miley Cyrus. Cyrus engaged in an explicitly sexual performance at the 2013 American Music Television (MTV) Video Music Awards (VMA). The risqué nature of her performance drew worldwide attention through social media, the internet and even featured in NZ national news (NZ Herald, 2013a). Amidst a discourse divided between condemnation and glorification was the response of a veteran feminist performer, Sinead O'Connor. Entertainment news reports cite O'Connor as stating in an open letter to Cyrus:

The music business doesn't give a shit about you, or any of us. They will prostitute you for all you are worth and cleverly make you think it's what YOU wanted... and when you end up in rehab as a result of being prostituted, 'they' will be sunning themselves on their yachts in Antigua, which they bought by selling your body and you will find yourself very alone.

Continuing with,

You are worth more than your body or your sexual appeal. You have enough talent that you don't need to let the music business make a prostitute of you. Please in future say no when you are asked to prostitute yourself.

Furthermore pointing out,

Whether we like it or not, us females in the industry are role models and as such we have to be extremely careful what messages we send to other women. The message you keep sending is that it's somehow cool to be prostituted... it's so not cool, Miley. It's dangerous. Women are to be valued for so much more than their sexuality

(Bang Showbiz, 2013).

The initial letter has since been replaced as the dialogue continues. At the time of writing, the official Sinead O'Connor website detailed a fourth letter in response to the less favourable reply distributed through the media by Cyrus (O'Connor, 2013). According to O'Connor's response, Cyrus had responded to her "motherly concern" by attacking and deriding the older woman via reference to her past experience of mental illness (O'Connor, 2013). The ongoing public dialogue between the two women exemplifies feminist assertions of the way in which feminism is deliberately, forcefully and effectively undermined.

## *Sexuality in music videos*

Wright (2009) describes music videos as portraying “a one-sided, sexist, and dehumanizing view of female sexuality through regular portrayals of women as decorative sexual objects” (p. 188). Music videos have often been criticised for a preponderance of sexual imagery (Frisby & Aubrey, 2012; Ward, Hansbrough, & Walker, 2003; Wright, 2009). Of particular concern are stereotypical gender portrayals which cast women in inferior and derogatory positions relative to men. Wallis (2010) performed a content analysis of lead singer/performer gender portrayals in 34 popular MTV and MTV2 music videos. The results of this study are aptly summed up in the discussion, which reads:

...despite women’s gains in equality in the real world, and despite hopes for less stereotypical gender representations in popular culture, in the realm of music videos women are still depicted as more fragile and thus in need of the protection of men (p.168).

Female performers were found to frequently display overt sexuality, consisting of provocative clothing, suggestive dancing, sexual self-touch and sultry looks. Despite only finding partial support for female subordinate behaviour and male aggression, the study nevertheless concluded that “institutionalised sexism” is rampant in music videos (Wallis, 2010).

Turner (2011) also looked at sexual objectification of black and white characters in music videos. Two studies were conducted in order to compare the sexual content of standard videos with an uncut (uncensored) music programme aired on a US television network. However, it is notable that this programme has since been cancelled. Unsurprisingly, 95% of the uncut videos contained sexual content. These videos were described as “borderline pornography.” They contained significantly more displays of sexual behaviours such as prostitution, aggressive sex and exhibitionism than mainstream videos. Homosexual acts were more prevalent in the uncut videos; however these all portrayed lesbianism solely to cater for the voyeuristic fantasies of male viewers. Similar results to previous research were found for disparities between black and white female and male characters in terms of sexual objectification. Of the mainstream music videos, 58.5% featured some sexual content. Although the uncut

show is discontinued and was previously only shown on an American station, the videos are still popular on sites such as YouTube (p. 183). Additionally, they receive occasional airtime on NZ music video channels, such as Juice TV and C4. Therefore, these videos are accessible to, and likely viewed by NZ consumers.

The very existence of 'uncut' music videos is concerning. Evading the general censorship requirements, they consist mostly of nude (usually surgically enhanced) female adornments to the male lead singers. Thus they are played in the late television time slots and on the internet. However, censorship for general viewing usually consists of the same women wearing scant bikinis. This practice suggests the already overt objectification of women is not sufficiently satisfactory for the producers or male musicians, as they strive to emphasise the point with full female nudity.

As Turner (2011) argues, exposure to this type of material can perpetuate sexist (and racist) attitudes. Drawing on Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Turner asserts that consumption of media such as this has the potential to directly influence young people's beliefs and behaviours. In line with Turner's reasoning, it is argued that vicarious learning takes place whereby young viewers essentially learn via observation, to adopt the values and behaviours portrayed in the music videos (and other forms of entertainment media).

Contrary to the content analyses thus far reviewed, an earlier study by Kalof (1993) examined the audience's reception to notions of gender and sexuality. This research looked at respondent descriptions of the portrayal of feminine and masculine images in the Michael Jackson music video, "the way you make me feel." Participants were 80 young people aged 13-22 years. Kalof (1993) found the social construction of femininity varied according to gender, with the most significant differences relating to gender, sexuality and power. Conversely, there was little difference in interpretations of masculinity displayed. With regard to interpretations of the female image, it was found that 26% of female participants described the woman as vulnerable and weak, whereas only 6% of male participants shared this view. Males were twice as likely to see the video woman as teasing or playing hard to get (35%) as females (18%). There was also a difference in perceived control, with 29% of females seeing the woman as powerful or in control, compared to 15% of males. Perhaps more valuable than the numbers were the comments captured by this research, with one female participant noting the woman in the video, "reminds me what I'm supposed to look like when I go out and what pleases men" (p. 644). In comparison a male participant concluded the woman in the

video was, “less powerful and had no control....If you buy her long enough she will eventually give in” (p. 645). Furthermore, one participant commented the male image, “goes after what he likes and shows the women how much he is in control” (Kalof, 1993, p. 645). Comments such as these suggest participants are engaging in an active process of meaning making with the video messages which has the potential to affect their own lives. The next section looks at the extent to which this does occur.

### *Adverse effects on viewers*

In relation to issues of power and control, Aubrey, Hopper, and Mbure (2011) sought to find out whether short term exposure to video clips that sexually objectified women would increase men’s attitudes toward, and beliefs about sexual aggression. The authors’ hypothesised that “priming” would occur, in which viewing of sexually objectifying clips would activate stereotypical schemas of women as sex objects. They further posited that once activated, this schema would lead to an attribution of blame toward women and away from men for the responsibility of sexual aggression. An important point made by the researchers is that although music videos only constitute one potential influence on attitudes, and other factors such as personality, life experience and political orientation are more influential; when added to the vast array of other media types such as pornography, men’s magazines and video games this combination becomes more potent. The results found support for the hypothesis that sexually objectifying music video exposure primed young male participants’ adverse sexual beliefs and tolerance for interpersonal violence. They also found a marginally significant priming effect for disbelief in the legitimacy of sexual harassment. Despite their relatively small sample size of 85 participants, this study has important implications for understanding the impact sexually objectifying media has on young men’s attitudes and beliefs toward women.

As argued, the effects derogatory portrayals of women have on young men are but one aspect of concern. The inferior positioning of young women has the potential for numerous adverse effects. For example, the portrayal of the feminine ideal in music videos has implications for young women’s body image. Tiggeman and Slater (2003) examined the impact on 18-30 year old women’s state-based mood and appearance satisfaction after viewing music videos containing thin, attractive women. They found that short-term exposure (15mins) caused an increase in body dissatisfaction, with

participants reporting they felt fatter, less confident, less physically attractive and less satisfied with their bodies.

A similar study by Bell, Lawton and Dittmar (2007) sought to investigate the effects of short-term (10 mins) exposure to music videos on young women's affect, body image and self-esteem. They conducted an experiment involving three conditions: visual, auditory and control. Participants in the visual intervention watched three music videos depicting popular female groups who epitomise the "thin ideal" of feminine body type. The auditory group listened to these same songs without the accompanying visual component and the control condition involved a neutral word task with no music. Participants' trait affect, body satisfaction and self-esteem were assessed prior to, and following the intervention. As expected, those who viewed the idealised images of femininity displayed in the music videos experienced significantly higher body dissatisfaction than those who did not. Furthermore, self-esteem did not moderate this effect. As the authors' point out, these results were found after only 10 mins exposure, yet most adolescents are regular consumers of this type of media. This point is emphasised by the 4 hours of music video viewing reported per week by this particular sample. Therefore, even if the effect on body dissatisfaction is transitory, it is likely to be invoked often.

Quigg and Want (2010) were also concerned with the influence of music videos on young women's self-esteem. Arguing that constant exposure to the thin ideal and sexual objectification can enhance appearance dissatisfaction, they sought to investigate whether an intervention could mitigate the effect this has on young women's self-perceptions. This study is relevant in the current context firstly because it recognises the prominence and influence of music videos in the lives of young women and secondly because it considers ways to counteract negative effects. The researchers utilised social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) to explain the way in which viewing can induce image dissatisfaction. Social comparison theory posits that people compare themselves to others in order to gauge their own achievement. If the comparative other is only slightly more successful or desirable, the person is unlikely to experience any adverse effects. However, if there is a vast difference between the person and the model of comparison (as in extraordinarily attractive women) this can result in a negative evaluation of self. The researchers reasoned that providing an intervention to emphasise the unrealistic nature of the models portrayed would serve to diminish any negative effects. The selected intervention was an advertisement by the Dove brand which was

part of their “campaign for real beauty.” The commercial consists of the process taken to transform a model from barefaced to billboard, including Photoshop enhancement. As Quigg and Want state, “the commercial exposes the unrealistic and artificial nature of media portrayals of women and aims to discourage viewers from engaging in social comparison with such idealised portrayals” (2010, p. 136). As expected, the researchers’ found that participants exposed to the music videos and the intervention commercial were more satisfied with their appearance than those exposed to the music videos and control commercials. Consequently, the intervention was successful in mitigating the negative effects on women’s self-perceptions. However, it was also noted that participants exposed to both control television and control commercials had higher appearance satisfaction than those exposed to music videos and control commercials. Therefore, appearance satisfaction was highest when the process of social comparison was not primed. However, it should be noted that while this study demonstrated support for the selected intervention, this consisted of a still picture, whereas music videos contain models in motion. An intervention which showed the manipulations used in music videos may have increased the counteractive effects more. In summary, the research reviewed demonstrates that both females and males are adversely affected by the messages presented in music videos; however the balance of power is clearly in favour of males. The next section briefly looks at how this contribution ties into wider meaning for young women.

### *Young women’s voices*

While attempts to introduce interventions to counteract negative effects of exposure to the ‘thin ideal’ appear to be successful, the position is taken that they should not be necessary. As argued, the masculine hegemony has capitalised on women’s increased freedoms to create a paradox of feminine identity. This is evidenced in the proliferation of contradictory messages which have been injected into the collective consciousness of women via the mass media, of which the primary aim is to induce neuroticism and discontent. The superficiality of apparent support for female empowerment, when coupled with unending critiques of every aspect of femininity results in a double-edged sword. This confusion of identity is emphasised in discourse analyses of young women.

A NZ study by Jackson and Cram (2003) analysed the conversations of young women between the ages of 16-18 years in order to understand the way they negotiate heterosexuality through agency and resistance. The key conclusion they drew was that young women disrupt, challenge and provide alternatives to the sexual double standard defined as “an active, desiring sexuality (which)...is positively regarded in men, but denigrated and regulated by negative labelling in women” (p. 113). However importantly, demonstrations of agency and resistance were voiced individually as opposed to collectively, and somewhat lacking in conviction.

This finding provides an apt example of the effect of the backlash. Despite a desire to resist oppressive restraints on their sexuality, young women are nevertheless reined in by the masculine hegemony. If real change is to be evidenced, women need to feel able to confidently engage in a culture of solidarity and mutual support. The first step toward achieving this is a better understanding of the unique position young NZ females inhabit. As argued, popular culture, (utilising music videos) is a valuable avenue with which to explore perspectives and seek inspiration for intervention. Currently there is a dearth of local and international research in this area.

### ***Summary of arguments and the current study***

In summary, a rise in binge drinking among young women is evident in NZ (McPherson et al., 2004). Reasons for the increase are multifaceted and prior research has found contributing factors to include: legislation, access, marketing and culture (Lyons & Willott, 2008; McCreanor, Lyons, Griffin et al., 2013; McEwan et al., 2013; McEwan et al., 2010; McPherson et al., 2004). Young women themselves report they consume alcohol for fun, sociability, relaxation, self-medication, taste and gender equality in addition to unintentionally drinking too much on occasion (Carpenter et al., 2007; Lyons & Willott, 2008; Montemurro & Clure, 2005; Rolfe et al., 2009). It has been argued that to understand young women’s perspectives research should necessarily involve their voices. The world for contemporary young females is immersed in seemingly endless tensions and contradictions (Frisby & Aubrey, 2012). Despite messages of female empowerment permeating popular culture, women are still unequal in comparison to men. Faludi’s (1991, 1992) backlash theory underpins this research and it has been argued that evidence of a backlash against feminism is evident throughout contemporary NZ culture. One of the areas in which this is most prominent

is the music industry, which occupies a large part of youth popular culture. A thorough search of the literature found only one known NZ study of music videos however this was a content analysis and no audience reception studies of music videos were found. As has been argued, research from an audience reception perspective provides an important and valuable insight into how the dominant messages portrayed in popular culture are received.

Therefore, the current study seeks to explore popular youth culture, namely music videos, to understand the ways in which young women engage with and understand such media and the role it plays in drinking cultures and female identity. The research utilises three recent popular music videos to stimulate discussions surrounding gender, identity and alcohol consumption. The research approach is particularly focussed on the perspectives of young NZ females due to the recently identified rise in binge drinking among this population. The study aims to address the following questions:

- 1) How do young women interpret the messages portrayed in these music videos and do they accept/reject/resist these messages?
- 2) How do they do this?
- 3) How do young women talk about the way the videos and messages make them feel?
- 4) How do young women talk about drinking cultures after viewing these music videos?

# Methodology

## *Research approach*

Social constructionism is a theoretical orientation which stands in opposition to positivist and empiricist assumptions about knowledge. It asserts that knowledge is not realised by objective observation, as such an external objective reality does not exist. Rather, social constructionism posits that meaning making is a dynamic process, which is reflective of our perceptions of the world. Such perceptions will vary according to the social, cultural and historical context with which the person or persons are situated. Social constructionism sees knowledge as being constructed between people, primarily through language. Therefore, language is “a form of social action” (Burr, 1995, p. 7) which reflects the continual creation of knowledge.

Discourse analysis is a methodology that stems from social constructionism. A discourse can be defined as, “a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events” (Burr, 1995, p. 48). Thus there may be many different discourses associated with one object, event or person. Discourse analysis seeks to identify, understand and describe the construction of knowledge in this way. In aligning with a social constructionist perspective it is recognised that the construction of discourses will be influenced by all those involved in the social interaction. Therefore, the researcher will inevitably affect this process, as described further under the “reflexivity” heading below.

## *Research design*

This research involved friendship groups, which are essentially focus groups comprised of participants who are friends. The friendship group format was the most pertinent option for this type of qualitative research as it encourages a relaxed engaging atmosphere which draws on shared relationships, experiences and meaning making. The familiarity with which prior friends interact was expected to produce a relatively free-flowing conversational style, which was considered less likely amongst a group of strangers.

Music videos were used as prompts for the discussions due to their relevance to popular youth culture. The three music videos utilised were chosen for their inclusion of

feminine portrayals (with two out of three performed by female artists) and a focus on female binge drinking. The video viewing was expected to stimulate dialogue involving the specific music videos in addition to providing a platform for further discussion of femininity, female drinking and youth popular culture.

### ***Recruitment***

Participants were all recruited through the personal contacts of the researcher. The inclusion criteria sought English-speaking females aged between 18-25 years of age. Initial contact was by phone, email or Facebook message and followed up by provision of the initial participant research invitation. The research invitation briefly described the purpose of the study along with a researcher introduction, an outline of the participants' role in the research; confidentiality and consent information (see Appendix A). The invitation also included the notification that the groups would be audio and video recorded and that participants would receive a choice of a \$30 music or petrol voucher as a thank you for their contribution. These initial participants were asked to recruit between 2 and 5 friends to participate in a friendship group. Each of these referred friends was provided with a friend participant invitation which included the above information.

### ***Participants***

Recruitment resulted in 12 participants in total, aged between 21 and 25 years. All resided in Auckland, NZ. These participants made up 4 friendship groups with 3 participants in each. The composition of each group is detailed in Table 1.

*Table 1.*

*Focus group composition*

	Pseudonym	Age	Ethnicity/nationality	Occupation
Group 1	Julie	23	Indian/SA	Psychology student
	Alexis	23	Indian/SA	Early Childhood teacher
	Natasha	22	Indian/NZ	Early childhood teacher
Group 2	Thelma	25	NZ Euro	Clinical psych student
	Sharon	23	Samoan/NZ Euro	Clinical psych student
	Ingrid	23	NZ Euro	Clinical psych student
Group 3	Margaret	22	NZ Euro	Student/waitress
	Hillary	21	NZ Euro/Maori	Broadcast monitor
	Jessica	22	SA	Broadcast monitor
Group 4	Mel	22	Dutch/Maori	Full time carer
	Tonya	22	Cook Islander	Retail assistant
	Lynda	22	Samoan/Maori	Stay at home mother

***Procedure***

The original research location was the Massey University Albany campus. However after a request from the initial group to hold it at a more convenient home location, each group was given the option of indicating their preferred location. Group one held it at a participant's home address, group two at the Massey Albany campus, group three at a participant's home address and group four at the researcher's home address. Each location was comfortable and provided an adequate, relaxed environment for the purpose of the research. The groups took place between July and September, 2012.

Snacks and non-alcoholic beverages were provided to aid in the creation of a relaxed atmosphere conducive to free-flowing discussion. Each group began with introductions and an explanation of the study. Confidentiality and the collection of demographic information were explained and participants were given an opportunity to

ask questions. Each participant then selected a pseudonym before signing confidentiality and consent forms (see Appendices B and C). Demographic information was then collected before the equipment was set up, which included a laptop to play the music videos, video and audio recording devices. The three music videos were then played, with printed lyrics being handed out for reference at the conclusion of each. A list of prepared questions were asked about participant reactions, thoughts and feelings following each video and a set of separate questions about all three videos and participant's own drinking habits completed the discussions (see Appendix D). Finally, participants were given support information sheets (see Appendix E) before being thanked for their time.

The discussions varied greatly in length. The first group (the researcher's first facilitation of a focus group) was of a much longer duration than the remaining groups at 2 hours 24 minutes in total. As this was significantly more time than was expected by both the researcher and indicated to the participants, an effort was made to ensure subsequent groups were shorter. This was achieved by removing similar-type questions and redirecting the conversation when it deviated too far from the topic. Therefore, the duration of group two was approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes, group three was 1 hour and 15 minutes and group three the shortest at 1 hour.

Alongside the questions asked of participants' regarding the video clip viewing, were questions about their own drinking behaviours such as whether they drank alcohol, how often, with whom and where. Typically participants' drank with friends and boyfriends however group four mentioned beginning drinking with family at home. Commonly reported places to drink were at friends' houses, clubs and bars. Most participants also stated they drink with dinner. Responses to the consumption query ranged from none at all to weekly binge drinking. These results are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2.

*Participant alcohol consumption*

Group	Pseudonym	Consumption
1	Alexis	4-5 standard drinks and a few shots once a month
	Natasha	1 standard drink and 2 shots once or twice a month
	Julie	5 standard drinks and 1-2 shots once or twice a month
2	Thelma	5-6 standard drinks once every 2 months
	Sharon	5-6 standard drinks once a week
	Ingrid	5-6 standard drinks occasionally
3	Margaret	9-10 drinks once a week
	Hillary	1-2 drinks a week and 1 bottle of vodka once a month
	Jessica	2 drinks on occasion with dinner
4	Mel	1-2 cans of Smirnoff every 2 months
	Tonya	A 6 pack of RTD's and 3-4 shots occasionally
	Lynda	1 glass of wine once every 3 months

***The music videos***

“Last Friday Night” by Katy Perry:

Katy Perry is a female solo artist, whose album “Teenage dream” resulted in five number one singles setting a new international record among living artists (Vena, 2011). It is from this album that the song, “Last Friday Night” stems. In NZ, Last Friday Night (TGIF) reached number four on the top 40 singles chart (music.net.nz, n.d.). The song lyrics refer to binge drinking, alcoholic blackouts, risky sexual activities and breaking the law. The music video does not completely align with the song lyrics as the setting involves an American college house party with Katy Perry initially playing a ‘geek’ role who is transformed into a popular beauty after receiving a makeover. The music video is intended to be humorous; an element which is also not in keeping with the lyrics. The chorus, which chants TGIF (thank god it’s Friday) became a popular acronym in youth culture with young people using it to refer to a sense of relief at the end of the work/study week in social media and mobile communications.

“Patron Tequila” by The Paradiso Girls:

The Paradiso Girls are a music group consisting of five females: Chelsea Korka, Aria Crescendo, Lauren Bennett, Kelly Beckett and Shar Mae Amor. They originate

from the USA, France, the UK and the Philippines however were signed to an American record label, Interscope Records. It is believed the group have now disbanded (Paradiso Girls, n.d.). The song “Patron Tequila” which features artists Eve and Lil John was released as a single in 2009. Although the song was popular internationally and on NZ radio and the video site YouTube, there is no record of it achieving Top 40 chart success. The song lyrics describe and promote binge drinking and smoking marijuana (bud) with the chorus of the song explicitly stating, “by the end of the night I’mma have you drunk and throwing up.” The music video is mostly in alignment with the lyrics of the song as the predominant setting is in a nightclub however there are no depictions of the negative aspects mentioned, such as throwing up or smoking marijuana. Other scenes interspersed with the main setting show each group member flirting with a male character in places such as the bus stop and service station. Much of the video involves the Paradiso Girls performing choreographed dance routines in a suggestive manner.

“Hot Mess” by Cobra Starship:

Cobra Starship is a group consisting of four males and one female: Gabe Saporta, Ryland Blackinton, Alex Suarez, Nate Novarro and Victoria Asher. Saporta is the lead vocalist whilst the others play various instruments and provide backup vocals (Cobra Starship, n.d.). The song “Hot Mess” comes from the album of the same name. The single occupied the last position of the NZ top 40 for a week upon its NZ release. The music video contains depictions of drunk women stumbling around city streets at night, often alone. The four male group members are seen wearing boiler suits and driving a van with the words, “Cobra clean up crew” painted on the side which they use to clear the city streets of the drunk women. The women are shown enjoying themselves with the group in the van which has a party-like atmosphere. However there is a mattress in the back which the women are at various times lying on and one woman takes over the driving whilst obviously intoxicated. The music video is in keeping with the song lyrics which assert, “you’re a hot mess and I’m falling for you,” continuing with, “you’re a hot mess and I’m lovin it, hell yes.”

### ***Transcription***

The discussions were transcribed by the researcher using a basic transcription guide by Silverman (2001, see Appendix F). The use of audio and video recordings aided in the accuracy of transcriptions and provided a backup for possible equipment

failure (which occurred with group one where the video recorder stopped working partway through). This approach yielded relatively full transcriptions however there were occasional gaps due to multiple speakers talking at once, and a number of possible hearings which were indicated as per the notation guide. All transcribed discussions utilised the selected participant pseudonyms and reference to other named people and identifying information such as workplaces were removed. Participant confidentiality was prioritised and the recordings deleted immediately upon completion.

### *Analytic procedure*

The transcripts were read and re-read with the aim of identifying both common codes and overarching themes. The process of identifying codes was exhaustive as it was done manually by highlighting sections of text and distinguishing each code according to similarities and differences. Rather than producing detailed descriptions of each code at this initial point, notes were jotted on the printed transcripts and the suggestions of Braun and Clarke (2006) were utilised as guidance. An inductive approach was employed at this stage, with the research questions later used to guide the discursive analysis.

This yielded a total of 46 codes which were termed “common codes” and 19 miscellaneous codes. The common codes were selected for their repeat mention either across or within groups (see Appendix G). The miscellaneous codes included group-specific summaries of the combined video clip messages, with the remainder selected for their pertinence to the topic (see Appendix G). Separate computer files were created and categorised according to the group responses to each music video and a final file which included responses to all the videos and participants’ own drinking habits. This resulted in 16 separate files which contained all the data from the entire group transcripts. Some initial themes that began to emerge concerned normality, younger age drinkers, femininity, and gender relations. A full thematic map was not produced as this data were then subject to a discursive analysis.

A range of literary guidance was utilised to aid in this aspect of the analysis (Johnstone, 2008; Widdowson, 2007; Willig, 1999; Wood, 2000). The process of identifying the key discourses was time consuming, due to learning discourse analysis and identifying a multitude of possible discourses. The selection process firstly focussed on similar and repeat mention of words and tropes within and across groups. Subject

positioning was the second key indicator as the excerpts selected were generally in concordance between groups. Thirdly, with the study questions and the wider topic in mind careful attention was paid to instances of emotive word use and speech indicative of emotion or lack thereof as evidenced by emphasis, repetition within a sentence or paragraph, lengthy ensuing discussion or an absence of expression and explanation. Finally, tensions and contradictions were noted as differentiating factors for each of the discourses. Initial discourses were reconfigured and replaced as the most salient discourses were realised. Once identified, a description was drawn up of each. All corresponding excerpts were placed under the headings of the four main discourses. These were: the contemporary feminist, the gender inequality, the female objectification and the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourses. Each of the excerpts was then evaluated for their direct relevance to the discourse as a whole and the strength of their association with other excerpts. This process enabled the data to be reduced to provide a more succinct summary of the main aspects of each discourse.

### ***Ethical considerations***

Ethical considerations for this study were guided by the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (Massey University, 2006). The ethics flowchart indicated that a low risk ethics notification was sufficient and after supervisory consultation and a peer review a low risk application was submitted and approved (see Appendix H). The main considerations related to: confidentiality and informed consent, use of recording devices, data storage, potential for harm, and cultural considerations for Maori participants.

All participants were provided with a research invitation prior to consenting to the study (see Appendix A). Participants were encouraged to ask questions at any stage of the research process. A verbal explanation of the research was provided at the beginning of each friendship group gathering and confidentiality and informed consent forms signed before commencing the research (see Appendices B and C). As mentioned previously, participants selected pseudonyms which were used on all transcripts. Any other identifying information mentioned in the recordings such as workplace names, was excluded from the transcriptions.

The only linking information was provided on the confidentiality and consent forms which were sent by courier to be securely stored at Massey University. The audio and video recordings were transferred to a double-password protected computer while transcription was taking place and deleted immediately upon completion.

Although the topic was not expected to induce any more harm than would be otherwise encountered in daily life, it was recognised that individual participant reactions may vary according to their personal experiences. Therefore, all efforts were made to ensure the discussion did not provoke distress by redirecting the conversation if deviating from the topic. Furthermore, support information containing contact details for a list of social service agencies was provided to participants at the conclusion of each group (see Appendix E).

The research was not specifically aimed at Maori participants however in anticipation of any participants identifying as Maori it was decided the individual participants would be consulted on whether they would like any specific provisions or inclusions. One possible expected protocol was karakia to open or close the session or to bless the food. A Maori cultural advisor agreed to be available if required. Unfortunately although three Maori participants took part in the study, only afterwards did the researcher realise they had not been asked about cultural considerations. Thus they were all contacted with an apology and queried whether there was anything that could be done subsequently. All three participants were accepting of the apology and stated that nothing further was required.

### ***Reflexivity***

As mentioned, the social constructionist epistemology recognises the inextricable influence of the researcher as part of the social process of meaning making. This consideration underpins every aspect of the research, including the selection of the topic, research question, recruitment and interaction with participants, data analysis and interpretation of the results. Therefore, I follow with an acknowledgement of my own position, background and interest in the topic.

I am a 33 year old, female Masters in Psychology student with an interest in both clinical and social psychology. I am a New Zealander of mixed NZ European and Fijian/Indian ethnicities. Despite having had no prior study of feminist topics I have always considered myself a feminist. I hold concerns for what I consider to be

unrealistic, sexualised and therefore sexist representations of femininity in the media and popular culture and the impact this type of role modelling has on women and girls of all ages and backgrounds.

My selection of this topic initially stemmed from an alignment with the prior research done by the larger Marsden funded Drinking Cultures research which, “explores how young people in Aotearoa/New Zealand are using social technologies (e.g. mobile phones, Facebook) within their drinking cultures” (see Drinking Cultures, n.d.). This topic appeared to fit well with my professional background working extensively with troubled young people and my current position with adults in a co-existing disorders drug and alcohol rehabilitation residential facility. My expansion of the topic to incorporate femininity with binge drinking in popular culture arose from reflections on my own reaction to one of the music videos I chose for the study- the Cobra Starship video, which was one of shock and anger, coupled with a questioning of how this was received by other young females in society. My own strong feelings on the subject have undoubtedly influenced the way I have framed questions and my analysis of the results.

I chose to select female participants for two reasons: firstly, I believed it important to specifically hear the young women’s voices on this topic concerning them and secondly, I had completed readings for another paper which looked at power displays in mixed gender groups and found various compositions of male/female groups affected the amount of power displays exhibited compared to female only groups (Karakowsky, McBey, & Miller, 2004).

During the friendship groups I resolved to withhold my own opinions, filter my reactions and to be particularly conscious of even minimal responses which may be taken to indicate agreement with the views constructed. Nevertheless, I undoubtedly exhibited both subtle and overt signs at times of agreement and disagreement. My position in relation to each of the groups would also have impacted on the direction of the conversations and the depth of the discussions. For example, the postgraduate psychology group mentioned “informed consent” in their explanations which draws on my status as a peer and the shared understanding this assumes. Conversely, group three explained the popular youth television shows they referred to as a context for the discussions, and the slight age gap meant I was unfamiliar with their examples. At a more general level, my position as a female researcher of a similar age would likely have prompted more frank discussions than a male researcher might have achieved.

Example of this are the body image concerns expressed, the supposition of male intentions and behaviours, and the discussions of sexual assault and female vulnerability.

From my own perspective, my interactions with the participants, reading of the data and analysis of the results would be influenced by the multiple positions I hold. For example, my gender and identification as a feminist would have made me more keenly aware of and sympathetic to signifiers of female objectification and inequality in comparison to males. My postgraduate psychology student status would have influenced the way I analysed the data, for example prioritising systemisation over expression in some cases. Finally, the entirety of my positions have certainly driven my selection of the topic, (feminist backlash, binge drinking) participants, (young females) questions, (messages about femininity, drinking cultures) analysis, (discourses relating to gender relations and experience) and conclusions (specific to the NZ context).

# Results

All participants indicated they watch music videos on occasion. Although they had not all seen the three music videos played, they were mostly familiar with the songs. Reactions to the individual videos varied however there was a general dislike of the Cobra Starship song, with participants noting it contained rape connotations. The discussions of this song ranged from perceiving it as humorous due to similarity with real life behaviour to descriptions such as “glamorised drunkenness” accompanied by concern over female vulnerability. Participants often voiced the worry that males would emulate the predatory behaviour portrayed in the video clip.

In contrast, almost all the participants indicated a liking for the Katy Perry video. Although this song was generally seen as fantasy, its appeal was multifaceted. It incorporated humour with a story, (described as a mini-movie) a catchphrase and capitalised on viewers’ emotional relief at the end of the work/study week. The popularity of this song and its acronym TGIF from the song chorus “Thank God it’s Friday” was mentioned frequently alongside discussion of its reach into multiple realms of youth culture, including Facebook and advertising campaigns. Group one’s Alexis emphasised the power of entertainment media when she concluded the song has “actually made a huge impact on society and just on our daily life.”

There were differing reactions to the Paradiso Girls video, with half the participants liking it and half disliking it. This song was described by one participant as “fun and upbeat” however participants generally agreed that the women were portrayed in an overly provocative and objectified way. As a result, all participants believed the video clip catered to a male audience.

As mentioned, a discourse can be defined as, “a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events” (Burr, 1995, p. 48). Thus there may be many different discourses associated with one object, event or person. This study identified four main discourses, these were entitled: the contemporary feminist, the gender inequality, the female objectification and the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourses. Each of these discourses will be explained in detail below.

### *The contemporary feminist discourse*

This discourse constructed women as agentic, making conscious choices regarding identity, self-presentation, behaviour and consumption. There was an emphasis on self-awareness in terms of knowing one's limits with regard to alcohol consumption and clear boundaries in relation to appropriate clothing. As such, young women were seen to be actively choosing to be responsible or irresponsible, subtly sexy or scantily clad and therefore promiscuous. An occasional loss of control whilst drinking was regarded as acceptable, normal and fun; provided safeguards were in place such as having a sober friend present. Finally, themes of gender equality were found throughout the discussions, with this construction often taking on a literal meaning.

Discussions involving the women in the video clips indicated a general consensus for preferring the Katy Perry video over the Paradiso Girls clip. Katy Perry was commonly described as being non-stereotypical compared to the generic sex appeal portrayed by the Paradiso Girls. References to other artists were made throughout the discussions with Beyonce being most frequently cited for comparison. However, constructions of acceptable femininity varied across groups as indicated by the three excerpts below:

SN: Oh cool. Um so what do you think of the artist- Katy Perry?

Natasha: She's cool. She's really, she goes um you know? Out of the stereotype, of the stereotypical you know?

SN: =[artist..]=

Natasha: =[Singer. Yeah, yeah.]

SN: How does she do that?

Natasha: By being different like everyone else tries to be normal but she like wears braces and= (...)

Alexis: [Yeah] (that's) a bit like Lady Gaga like you know, imitating those= (...)

Julie: I was thinking the same thing.

SN: Oh okay, so so in what way do those two act differently from mainstream artists?

Natasha: They step out of the box. They do=

Julie: =[Like they don't just wanna look hot]

Natasha: Yeah.

Julie: on stage and stuff. They wanna look yeah different. It's so bright and colourful compared to like maybe a Beyonce video where she's dressed up all sexy and stuff.

**Excerpt 1, Group 1: KP song**

In this excerpt, each of the young women co-construct points of difference which validate their preference for non-stereotypical female performers. Katy Perry is deemed “cool” due to her opposition to sex stereotyping, which Natasha refers to as being “different.” Alexis’ mention of Lady Gaga is supported by Julie, which appears to complete the discussion from the participants’ perspective. At the interviewers probe they elaborate, with Julie stating “they don’t just wanna look hot” which implies this is a contemptible position. She follows with, “they wanna look yeah different” before referring to the typical “sexy” style of Beyonce as a comparison. This indicates a preference for originality and creativity over conventional depictions of sexuality. Accordingly, this excerpt functions as a way to endorse the notion that female identity entails more than sexuality. Group one utilised Beyonce as an example more than once as indicated below:

SN: Yeah. Oh cool, any other thoughts on that song in particular?

Natasha: No, just cool. It is good that it was funny, a lot of=

Alexis: =It’s not serious.

Natasha: [Yeah].

Alexis: [so it’s not like a full on Beyonce where there’s dancing]. (...)

SN: When you say Beyonce, is it just the dancing that you were referring to? Like=

Alexis: =Yeah, yeah yeah, like the booty booty whatever.

#### **Excerpt 2, Group 1: KP song**

In this excerpt, Alexis’ description of the “full on” Beyonce clip with an emphasis on the word dancing demonstrates the disdainful way the young women view the promotion of sex appeal. This echoed a common theme throughout the discussions where “just dancing” was derided as the sole source of entertainment value. Video clips containing just dancing were deemed to breach boundaries of acceptable femininity by their objectification of women and the implication that they cater to a male audience. The portrayal of women as objectified and subordinate to males was contentious for its very notion to some as the discussion below illustrates:

Thelma: (4) They’re not really portrayed as anything but sexualized. They’re not really talented or interesting or anything like that, but it’s a music video, I mean, it’s supposed to be about music.

Sharon: And not very like, they’re kind of portrayed as like subordinate or like, yeah like it’s just like, they’re dancing in a club like people are buying them drinks. It’s just the

whole song is very demeaning, like I don't know I keep talking about Beyonce because I love her=

{laughter}

Sharon: =But like compared to her songs which is kind of like the same genre, um, like hers send a way better message than that song about girls and stuff.

Ingrid: Well she's all about=

Sharon: [like girls power]

Ingrid: =girl power, and strong women.

Sharon: [yeah]

Ingrid: And she portrays that in her songs, and her, this is like the opposite, basically.

### **Excerpt 3, Group 2: PG song**

Here, although Thelma agrees with the suggestion that women are portrayed in an entirely sexualised way, she counters with the comment about music videos which indicates concern with the notion of gender inequality. Sharon's response, though tempered with "hedged" (an expression to reduce the level of certainty that is claimed- Johnstone, 2008, p. 139) nevertheless upholds her position that these portrayals are not acceptable and suggests alternative depictions are possible. Perhaps most evident is the distinction between the way Beyonce is constructed in group one's extract above compared to group two's construction of her here. Group one's construction appears to concentrate on visual depictions of Beyonce as overtly sexual whereas group two's mention of "message(s)" demonstrate a post-feminist version of empowerment, concerned with catchphrases such as "girl power" and "strong women." Interestingly, this differing focus resulted in group two interpreting Beyonce's songs in the polar opposite way to group one. Such tensions were commonplace throughout the discussions and an individualistic construction was often drawn on in explanation of inconsistencies. In the excerpt below, group two elucidates this agent position:

Thelma: [Yeah I think sometimes you can read too much into these things, like people say oh like magazines encourage anorexia, when there's no evidence for that, it's the girls that like choose to pick it up and choose to plaster it all over their walls, that have a problem=

SN: [Mmm]

Thelma: =Ah but like there's no actual evidence that just having that stuff in society increases eating disorders and it might be the same with music videos that, portraying girls as promiscuous doesn't actually make us think ohh it's glamorous to be promiscuous, but maybe if I had a tendency to be like, what, what should I look like? and then I was searching the media for it, and then I clung on to that image, then it would be, problematic? (...)

Ingrid: =(...) I think it's just, if you're searching- yeah like you said, if you're searching for something, it's quite easily, easy to just blame, things that are highly visible. But there's often a lot of things that are sort of underlying. Like you said, I wouldn't look at that and be like, oh yeah, great, that's what I'm gonna do this Saturday night=

Thelma: [mmmm]

Ingrid: =but yeah, if I was, (2) searching for a new identity=

Thelma: [Yeah]

Ingrid: =I might be like, yeah okay I'll try, getting really drunk and see, if that loosens me up and, makes guys think I'm, hotter or whatever, more interesting.

#### **Excerpt 4, Group 2: CS song**

Here, Thelma introduces a hypothetical scenario of fragility, which minimises the potential threat of the music video depictions. Her stress on “choose” shows she is constructing females as agentic. By referring to the amount of exposure to the images in her comment “plaster it all over their walls” she is emphasising her point. When she goes on to say that “there’s no actual evidence” (that music videos portraying promiscuous girls) makes them think “it’s glamorous to be promiscuous” she is interpreting the line of questioning as suggestive that it does and consequently voicing resistance to this idea. Furthermore, her accent on “searching” and “clung” coupled with personal pronoun use is indicating her agency in making identity choices. Ironically, Thelma’s agent positioning is used to blame those with eating disorders for their plight which discounts any association between media depictions of women and health behaviours. However, Ingrid then continues with the comment, “makes guys think I’m hotter or whatever” which indicates less surety about what “guys think.” This turn signals a more passive approach as the scenario entails being “really drunk” in order to be uninhibited and potentially more attractive to the opposite sex.

This group often voiced resistance to the notion of gender inequality despite their recognition of its existence within the opposing discourse, as evidenced below:

Thelma: Um, so I think like it's probably, not the best way to portray, women but also, like that jock wasn't exactly portrayed nicely and neither was the geek guy so=

Sharon: =Yeah no-one was really=

Thelma: Yeah no-one was really.

Ingrid: [(yeah and) they all had]

Thelma: ( ). It was just a piss take, yeah the whole thing's just a bit of a piss take so, yeah.

#### **Excerpt 5, Group 2: KP song**

In this excerpt, the comparison with the portrayal of men is used to reinforce the construct of equality. The explanation that it is a “piss take” places this video clip within the context of light-hearted entertainment which consequently leads to the rejection of further serious consideration of the character portrayals. This dismissive conclusion allows the women to reject the perceived implication that consumption or enjoyment of music videos equates to endorsement of gender inequality.

Constructions of an acceptable feminine identity often established limits for presentation and behaviour, with divisions between sexy and slutty being made particularly with regard to clothing. Group one’s discussion of the Katy Perry song draws on their shared understanding of an enjoyable and desired level of sex appeal below:

Alexis: [There’s also that little bit of, uh sex uh, sex appeal. Which, adds to it]

SN: Yeah.

Natasha: Mmmm.

Julie: [yeah].

Alexis: [But, but not over the top.]

Natasha: [yeah].

Alexis: [where you’re like]=

Julie: =[where you’re really]=

Alexis: =( ) I’m over that.

Natasha: Yeah.

**Excerpt 6, Group 1: KP song**

As this discussion continued, the women described how they see clothing and appearance as signifying an increased maturity:

SN: So can you say how the portrayals are similar to young women in everyday life after her transformation?

Julie: Yeah the heels thing, the makeup=

Natasha: =Mmmm

Alexis: As you grow up, I guess.

SN: So you see it as growing up? Going from the braces and the glasses to... heels and a tight dress?

Natasha: Yeah.

Alexis: Yeah.

Julie: I had braces=

Natasha: =Mmmm

{laughter}

Julie: Now I wear heels and a tight dress {laughter}

Julie: But I=

Alexis: =[You're shedding the outer layer, sorta thing]

Julie: Yep and being, who you are inside.

Natasha: Yeah

Julie: [Getting that, party animal out]

#### **Excerpt 7, Group 1: KP song**

In this excerpt, a feminine identity is inextricably linked to external presentation. As participants draw on their own experience of growing up as related to clothing and shoes they emphasise the importance of displaying visual indicators of maturity to others. Alexis' comment about "shedding the outer layer" sees this as a literal shedding of clothing which is incorporated into identity. This metamorphosis into a "party animal" alludes to drinking, dancing and sexual relations. Thus, partying is deemed representative of growing up and clothing equals identity. The same group later voiced resistance to the Paradiso Girls video clip depictions and societal pressure to conform to a manufactured reality:

SN: Oh cool. Um and what do you think personally about the way young women are portrayed in this song?

Julie: (9) Mmm,

Alexis: [Easily influenced]

Julie: Yeah, that's true=

Natasha: =Have no boundaries. (...) =And no limits. (...)

Julie: =Not very feminine.

SN: Not feminine?

Julie: Well, the stereotype of what a female should be like, it's not=

Alexis: =Yeah, to get attention.

Julie: Yeah. You don't need to drink and get drunk to get someone's attention, that shouldn't be a ( )= (...)

SN: So it's kind of sexist, do you see it as sexist?

Julie: Yeah, somewhat sexist.

Natasha: It's sort of a conforming video, where they're all conforming to all, you know? (...) But umm, yeah society's view=

Julie: [Yeah of what Friday night maybe should be like] (...) If you're not doing that, you're not having fun.

#### **Excerpt 8, Group 1: PG song**

Natasha's mention of no boundaries or limits implies that there is a shared understanding of what constitutes an acceptable way to portray oneself, which has been breached. The use of the words "should" when coupled with "the" as a precursor to stereotype, is a way of distancing the speaker from the notion. Although this distancing occurs throughout much of the excerpt, there is an acknowledgement of the pressure to conform to normative definitions of "fun" which Julie alludes to with her final comment. The groups' explanation that a stereotype of femininity compels women to get drunk for attention initially appears somewhat complicated. However, by highlighting this interpretation and specifying it as a stereotype and society's view, Natasha is resisting the implication that others define what femininity means to her. Thus it appears the young women are resisting both the traditional definition of femininity and this newly promoted definition of femininity in favour of their own, as yet undefined meaning. Essentially, this excerpt demonstrates a rejection of the video messages portraying this new definition of femininity and functions as an assertion of individuality and freedom of choice. Group two mimics this constitution of an acceptable feminine identity by contrasting the Hollywood-ised nature of the Paradiso Girls with women in real life below:

SN: Mmmm. (3) So do you think they way they're portrayed is similar to young women in everyday life, or not?

Thelma: {laughs} No.

Sharon: {laughs} No.

Ingrid: No, again, like it's very Hollywood-ised.

Sharon: [yeah]

Ingrid: And like, ( ) and, just ridiculous as well. Like, (what are) their jobs?

Sharon: {laughs}

Ingrid: You know, like there's no, (2) that's sort of, all they're portrayed as being, like you said no talent really, just- a body=

Sharon: [Mmmm.]

Ingrid: =But like a good looking body basically.

#### **Excerpt 9, Group 2: PG song**

In this excerpt, the immediate and forceful response indicates relatively strong emotions. The artists are seen to be constructed as objects and deemed unrealistic as evidenced by the pejorative "Hollywood-ised" description. Here the activation of a real women construct is imbued with the connotation that women in everyday life have jobs

which require substantially more talent than the demonstration of sex appeal, thus sex appeal alone does not constitute talent. Such resistance was not universal, as the discussion from group four indicates below:

Tonya: =and just, it's different to the other clip, like that one was (almost) more innocent, like teenage, generation but this one is just=

Lynda: [slutty]

Tonya: =yeah. Makes you wanna dress up half naked, go clubbing with heels on and makeup just go drinking till you throw up, kinda thing yeah. Just listening and like watching it, yeah.

SN: Yeah.

Mel: It's like one of those nights where you just wanna, get drunk, hook up with someone and=

Tonya: [yeah]

Lynda: [yeah]

Mel: =go to bed.

{laughter}

Tonya: Yeah. (Go see your hook up).

SN: So the song makes you feel like that?

Tonya: Yeah, just watching it.

Mel: Yeah, I was thinking when I was watching it some of those girls probably got laid after this.

{laughter}

**Excerpt 10, Group 4: PG song**

In this excerpt, the word “slutty” is used however this is not in the typical negative fashion; instead it is used in a way that points to an active and unapologetic sexuality. The links between revealing clothing and shoes, makeup, alcohol consumption and sex are discussed as if entirely expected. The conversation positions participants as purposeful and constructs the video’s portrayals as normative and positive. This ready self-positioning indicates an acceptance of sexual freedom that is likely enhanced by the all female group composition. The construction of women as possessing an active, desiring sexuality allows the uptake of a feminine identity which is defined by the coupling of the formerly typical male slang terminology of “get(ting) laid” with contemporary gender neutral terms such as “hook up” and “one night stand” (as indicated in the excerpt below):

Mel: Very. (3) Just pretty much, one shh- like, one night stand, kinda thing=  
Lynda: =yeah it's one of those kind of videos=  
Mel: =one of those kinda videos that you'd pretty much go off and have a one night stand while you, while you're drunk with all your mates and=  
SN: Yeah  
Lynda: =just slip away=  
Mel: =yeah, just quietly slip away ( )  
{laughter}

**Excerpt 11, Group 4: PG song**

Throughout the discussions casual sexual encounters in association with drinking were considered normative. Similarly, hangovers and blackouts were referred to in a relaxed manner however positioning in terms of these behaviours varied across groups. Group three incorporates each of these possible outcomes in their discussion below:

Margaret: Yeah I think it's cause, it's just cause they've made the video clip so dramatic, and unrealistic so it is hard to. Maybe elements of everyday life, but=  
Hillary: =yeah that exaggerated parts of things we do, like=  
Margaret: [yeah]  
Hillary: =we wake up, feel sick, can't remember what we did the night before, maybe, you hooked up with a guy or something I don't know=  
Margaret: {laughs} Yeah ( ).

**Excerpt 12, Group 3: KP song**

Here, Hillary and Margaret co-construct drinking to excess and the associated behaviours and outcomes as entirely commonplace. Hillary readily places herself and her friends within this context of normality. At other times, participants were hesitant to position themselves within this construction of a normal youth binge drinker as indicated by the comments by group one below:

Julie: No, I don't know like when I go out, I feel I'm pretty, in control like obviously I've had days where I've had too much and=  
Alexis: =[but there's always been somebody around ( )].  
Natasha: [Mmmm]  
Julie: [Yeah, who was sober]

**Excerpt 13, Group 1: CS song**

In this excerpt, Julie's personal pronoun use initially stems from a position of agency however she then uses the word "pretty" as a hedge. Alexis' interjection of "but there's always been somebody around" serves to introduce a justification for these occasional times of having too much. Thus she implies when a sober friend is present, safety is not compromised by being intoxicated. Natasha's agreement reinforces the support provided. This allows Julie to expand on her earlier statement as she aligns with a socially acceptable agentic position. Therefore, although this group saw binge drinking as normal, for their group of friends it was dependent on the proviso that others were available to care for them.

As mentioned, a significant proportion of the discussions across groups were concentrated on clothing choices of the female artists. Group two discusses the implications of clothing as this translates to real life in NZ:

Sharon: [But I think the whole dress codes like an American thing like you even see on Jersey Shore like they're normal, well, they were before they became, real famous.

They were supposedly normal people and they wear clothes like that out.]

Thelma: [yeah]

Sharon: [whereas you would never, well, I highly doubt you would see anyone in New Zealand wearing that, out.] (...)

Thelma: Well if, if they do, then like, they're seen as being really trashy.

Sharon: [Yeah]

Thelma: Like I, when I look around cause I live on K'Road, like if we get home at 1 or 2, then I will see people dressed like that. But I assume that they're either prostitutes or like people that are just are out to get some.

#### **Excerpt 14, Group 2: PG song**

In this excerpt, Sharon initially likens the artists to young actors, positioning them within an American context. This allows her to distance herself from the way they are portrayed. Therefore, despite the artists' potential role model status, the immediate influence of peers in NZ society is considered a much more important gauge of appropriate attire. This highlights the significance of aligning with a socially acceptable NZ feminine identity. Thelma's response then constructs an undesirable 'other' feminine identity. Those who embrace this type of "trashy" femininity are wholly defined by their clothing, which serves to signify their desire for sex to others. In Thelma's account, these others who advertise their sexual availability are on par with

prostitutes; which is imbued with negative connotations. This discourse functions as a rejection of the hypersexual femininity depicted both in the video clip and modelled by others, and serves to maintain the positioning of the groups participants as somewhat morally superior.

In summary, the contemporary feminist discourse favours an agentic position for both participants and other women. It carries strong notions of individuality, affording each woman the freedom and ability to consciously choose her identity, self-presentation, behaviour and consumption. The excerpts which illustrate this discourse function as a way to distance these young women from traditional patriarchal definitions of femininity which see women as ‘the weaker sex.’ Simultaneously, it shies away from contemporary extremist sexualised versions of femininity (such as those portrayed in the music videos) and the associated negative connotations. The individualistic focus allows young women to define their own version of femininity according to their personal preference and experience.

### ***The gender inequality discourse***

This discourse was concerned with an imbalance between genders which permeates popular culture and contemporary society. A literal interpretation of equality was used often resulting in women being deemed inferior. This prompted frustration which was not assuaged by reflections on female attempts to alter the status quo by behaving in ways similar to males. The catalyst for these frustrations appeared to be the absence of an alternative definition of equality which empowers the female position; leading to a reliance on direct comparisons. Elements of competition arose when the women discussed gender relations in these ways. The salient comparisons which emerged in relation to the video clips were sexual objectification and physical attractiveness; and participants discussed male attention to alcohol consumption levels and female attire in their own lives.

In considering all three video clips, group two’s Sharon commented:

Sharon:="I think as well like the sexualized like all of them portrayed girls as like sexual, beings and like, ahem, like the imbalance in power, like in all of them it was kind of like the girls who were trying to get the guys attention, you know?"

**Excerpt 15, Group 2: all songs**

This excerpt contains two main points. Firstly, the portrayal of girls as “sexual beings” either implies that males are not portrayed in the same way or the music videos are not in keeping with more conventional representations of women. Secondly, the women are deemed inferior as they “try” to “get the guys attention.” Thus, far from a reciprocal interaction, the females are seen to be competing for male attention via sex appeal. In this way, as Sharon states, the male status is elevated in relation to women. This is a notable construction considering that two of the three video clips are by female artists. Echoing Sharon’s sentiments, the other participants in her group engage in a literal comparison of the overt sexuality displayed in the video clips:

Thelma: The thing that annoys me about it is that you never see men doing that kind of thing. Like you never watch a=

Ingrid: [Magic Mike]

Thelma: =Well, Magic Mike is an exception and like=

Ingrid: [and that’s why it’s so popular cause it’s the first one ever.]

Thelma: =Yeah, and like that’s such a, a different kind of thing but in Hip-hop music like it’s always, women that are like, kind of subjected to, what the lyrics are telling them to do. Like, guys might be getting drunk but it’s, it’s women that are told to dance, and like, objectified in that way. And you never hear about the same thing happening with men=

SN: [Mmm.]

Thelma: =And I think that’s, that’s really not a good message to send yeah=

SN: [Yeah]

Thelma: =Yeah, it’s a power imbalance.

#### **Excerpt 16, Group 2: PG song**

In this excerpt, Thelma’s assertion that you “never see men doing that” constructs gendered portrayals as unequal. Ingrid’s interjection of Magic Mike refers to a recent movie about male strippers which (arguably) objectifies the male characters (see Greco, 2012; Hubbard, 2012; McK Feminist University, 2012). In this way, gender equality is constructed in literal terms whereby the objectification of women is countered with the objectification of men. However, rather than swaying Thelma’s position, this supported her construction by emphasising the uniqueness of this example. The words “subjected” and “objectified” support Thelma’s conclusion that a “power imbalance” exists. However, Thelma’s explication of female oppression as arising from

the hip-hop genre enables an opportunity for resistance as this type of categorisation can be explained as a bias of that particular musical genre.

In the excerpt below, group one explains why the video clip for an all-female group does not appeal to them as young females.

SN: Yep, okay. So even though you relate a lot to the lyrics, um, you think the video clip is targeted more towards=

Alexis: =[males]=

SN: =male audience

Julie: [yeah]

Natasha: [yeah.] Cause there's not many guys in there that are=

Alexis: =[((Hmm) attractive)].

Natasha: [Yeah]

{laughter}

Julie: ( ) is not attractive.

{laughter}

Alexis: The last one, he had a six pack out and I mean= (...) [You don't wanna see a guy holding a drink]. (...) Especially if it's Lil John.

#### **Excerpt 17, Group 1: PG song**

In this excerpt, gender inequality is referred to in terms of physical attractiveness. The video clips entertainment value is gauged by the characters appeal to opposite sex viewers. The comment “you don't wanna see a guy holding a drink” emphasises the stationary role played by the male characters. Thus, in contrast to the female characters who are dancing, the male position as viewers rather than subjects is emphasised. The young women employ a literal comparison with regard to gender equality. In this way, unrealistically attractive male is equal to unrealistically attractive female. The participants' failure to consider a more realistic, less sexually provocative portrayal of femininity emphasises the dominance of appearance ideals in popular culture.

Group three similarly defined equality by direct comparison with male behaviour, expanding this construction to include alcohol consumption:

Margaret: [I think guys like it when girl-when girls can keep up with them though]

Hillary: [=but she's not keeping up]

Jessica: [Yeah, I think they]

Margaret: {laughing} Huh?

Jessica: I think they were taking the piss out of those girls. Like oh she's falling over, get her. And it was, I don- I really don't like that video because, it just made me think of rapists.

**Excerpt 18, Group 3: CS song**

In this excerpt, Margaret's construction of gender equality equating to similar consumption levels encounters tension with Jessica's construction of a definite power imbalance between the genders. Jessica's construction positions the women in the clip as vulnerable and the men powerful, opportunistic and predatory. While seemingly intending to speak from a position of agency, Margaret actually takes up a subject position as she infers a male view as guidance for female behaviour. Separately and together, both views illustrate the impossibility of inhabiting a contemporary feminist position. Margaret's comment alludes to the commonly cited interpretation of gender equality as literally being capable of anything men can do, including consuming the same amount of alcohol despite physiological differences and Jessica emphasises the women's inferior positioning by her reference to rape.

Group one also discussed alcohol consumption according to gender, contrasting the pervasive societal expectations:

Julie: [for guys doing it it's normal. If we, if all the chicks in that video were replaced with guys it would be so normal like, guys are allowed to drink]

Natasha: [Yeah]

Julie: [and they, should be drinking to be manly].

Natasha: [Mmmm]

Julie: [girls shouldn't because we're so, we should be feminine] Like mmm, yeeeah to a certain point, that's true, but then again we should be equal.

**Excerpt 19, Group 1: CS song**

Here discourses of traditional masculinity and femininity encounter tensions with a contemporary feminist discourse. The women's talk indicates a resistance to pervasive patriarchal views as evidenced by their emphasis on usages such as "allowed to," and "should." In considering these contradictions, a discourse of gender inequality emerges. The young women continue their discussion below:

Alexis: Yeah. I agree with that too because, my boyfriend drinks a hell of a lot, whereas I could have two and that's me done. (...) Like he can go through like a whole box and a half. (...) And I'll just be like, well if you can do it, I'm gonna do it.

{laughter}

Natasha: Nek minnnit.

Alexis: [I don't but if I did I would end up like that, pretty fucked but, he can do it and he's still walking fine]

Natasha: Mmmm

Alexis: So we wanna also=

Julie: =[Yeah we try to]=

Alexis: =[be equal and stand up]

Julie: We're always trying to out, not out drink guys but we're like, oh yeah if you can do that I can do that too. (...)

SN: So you feel like as young women nowadays you should be equal and kind of um, should be able to match guys drink for drink but can't quite do it=

Julie: =Yeah. Yeah like we know we can't do it, well I know I can't do it, but we can still try and be, big shot and be like, oh yeah, you can do that I'll do that. (...) You have a shot of that I'll have a shot of that. {laughter}

#### **Excerpt 20, Group 1: CS song**

In this excerpt, gender equality is interpreted literally, by using male consumption as a direct comparison. Due to this interpretation, gender equality is deemed a state yet to be realised. Despite noting that the intention is to match guys drink for drink as opposed to out-drinking them, this type of equality is constructed as containing a competitive element. Frustration at being unable to achieve this definition of equality is also apparent. Again, noticeably absent is any recognition of the physiological differences between males and females, as is the lack of adjustments or allowances made for this. Furthermore, the discussion fails to consider the implications of female motivations to move toward male behaviour rather than the opposite. However, despite the neglect of such considerations, the discussion stems from a position of agency as the desire to consume is framed in terms of a personal choice. Group three articulates a slightly different position in their consideration of the same topic below:

Hillary: I've like been analyzing all this, this to do with this whole subject myself recently, in like an essay I wrote so I gue- I think I've got too much of like the analyzing side of it in my mind.

SN: Yeah.

Hillary: Like all the background of why we're drinking too much and everything. And it's, the, female drinking culture is one of the biggest changes I've noticed. Cause I even remember when we were in the younger years at high school, it was still the guys getting- drunker, than the girls. And my older brothers, in their days it was always like the guys getting real drunk with beer and stuff but now the girls, it's like cool to out-drink the guy=

Margaret: [Mmm.]

Hillary: =and the guys will be like, whoa she's holding her piss really well, like what a good bitch=

Jessica: =Yeah. If you can keep up with them=

Hillary: =yeah, and that's what='

Jessica: =and if you dare it's like whoa=

Hillary: =it's really bad=

Jessica: =yeah.

### **Excerpt 21, Group 3: all songs**

Here, the situation of females drinking more than males is constructed as being driven by males. Hillary literally takes on a male persona in demonstrating this, using the slang masculine terminology of "holding her piss really well" and referring to the female as a "bitch." Hillary's adaptation is so familiar that none of the other young women protest at her usage of the word "bitch" to refer to women. Aside from the gender inequality evident in the easy and ready use of such derogatory language, the remainder of the conversation demonstrates the negative way in which a competitive drinking environment is viewed. Therefore, the young women are demonstrating resistance to the practice of using male consumption as a direct comparison for female drinking, whilst still placing women in the subject position.

In teasing out the competitive aspect of drinking that occurs with males, the interviewer queried group one on whether it would be different if they were out with a group of girls and they responded:

Natasha: Yeah

Julie: Yeah, yeah. With girls, if you go out for a girls night=

Alexis: =[it's usually more.....low key]

Julie: [it's more, not, usually more social...more socialising and having, good time, not being, drunk drunk].

Alexis: And then with some girls as well it's just getting the attention of a guy. That's it, it's just wanting that attention. As well.

SN: Yeah. So they drink more to get that attention, is that what you're saying?

Alexis: Some can. Some can and like, guys know with more drinks they get more tiddly and more willing. (...) But some girls, they know their limits.

**Excerpt 22, Group 1: CS song**

In this excerpt, drinking with girls is constructed as a relaxed, fun activity. This is contrasted with elements of competition that arise when drinking in mixed gender groups. There are two key aspects mentioned. Firstly, from the female perspective, the presence of males prompts competition for male attention which prioritises the male position. Secondly, the drinking environment gains intensity when drinking with males, as the implication is that males prompt heavier drinking. Alexis's choice to focus on female attention seeking behaviours illustrates the importance of this point for her. As she explains her point she introduces the implication that "some girls" drink more as an indication of sexual availability to males. However, her shift to the male response to this increased "willing(ness)" contains elements of being advantageous. This quick, subtle shifting of positioning frames such girls as doubly negative: initially for their brash approach to the opposite sex and then for their apparent naivety at being taken advantage of. Her conclusion that "some girls, know their limits" implies she is positioning herself within this description. This discourse initially appears to emphasise the agentic nature of women, as the act of getting drunk for the attention of males is deemed equally purposeful to exhibiting constraint while drinking. However, the actual outcome of being taken advantage of by males introduces something of a dichotomy which indicates activation of the "gender inequality" discourse.

Much like drinking, clothing choice was constructed as somewhat of a balancing act, with negative motivations being inferred on those who do not display "limits." The young women of group two discussed male attention to female self-presentation:

Sharon: [I think that it's, like it's, New Zealand like I think if a guy saw a girl dressed like that in New Zealand they wouldn't be like oh, she's hot, they'd be like, ooh she's a whore.]

Thelma: [Yeah.] {laughter} I won't go near that.

Sharon: But like, yeah cool in New Zealand would be like, someone who looked, nice=

Thelma: [Mmmm]

Sharon: =like, short skirt in town but not like that. You know? Like, I don't know=

Ingrid: =I think New Zealand is quite, a lot more conservative than, the states as well=

(....)

Sharon: Yeah, so (I guess) definitely an American thing.

### **Excerpt 23, Group 2: PG song**

Immediately apparent in this excerpt is the use of the derogatory term “whore” to describe a woman who is scantily dressed when the young women take on a male perspective. When Sharon explicates the boundaries of appropriate attire her mention of a short skirt indicates a desire for heterosexual attractiveness whilst circumventing the scrutiny of others. Self-presentation is constructed as an important signifier of internal motivations and clothing choice places one in a tenuous position which is subject to much critique. This excerpt demonstrates the thin line between what constitutes sexy and attractive, versus “whore(ish)” and unattractive according to a male definition. It also highlights the subject position of women by the importance of male opinion on female attire and the young women’s failure to challenge the “whore” description based on clothing alone. Finally, Sharon’s summation that it is “definitely an American thing” is evidence of resistance to the overtly sexualised images of femininity projected by the Paradiso Girls video clip.

In summary, the gender inequality discourse emphasises women’s inferior positioning in relation to men. It highlights the tendency to define equality by comparing women directly to men and the tensions this definition creates. In general, this discourse places participants, the women in the music videos and those in wider pop culture in an inferior subject position. However, group one indicated a brief shift of positioning when they discussed their desire to consume an equal amount of alcohol to men. This discourse functions in two ways. Firstly, it illustrates the women’s frustration at the lack of an alternative definition of equality. Secondly, it enables the women to categorise both the women in the videos and similarly objectified women in other media as ‘the other’ thus distancing themselves from this type of woman.

### *The female objectification discourse*

Participants drew on this discourse to construct media representations of women as exploitative, objectifying and unrealistic. Participants contrasted the way in which women are presented- as sexual objects for male enjoyment with the way men are portrayed- as viewers or consumers of female sex appeal. Two of the groups noted that hip-hop and rap were more objectifying than other musical genres. Reference to sexual assault and female vulnerability were prevalent throughout the discussions. The introduction of ‘stripper poles’ into many nightclubs was described by one group as a form of marketing which contributes to an element of danger and invoked reference to drink spiking. Participants unanimously interpreted the music video portrayals of women as derogatory, and for two of the four groups the video clip viewing prompted body image concerns.

The young women in group three were unified in their conclusion that the Paradiso Girls video portrayed women in an entirely derogatory way:

SN: Cool, um so can you tell me how this song portrays young women and why?

Hillary: Um, like they're a piece of meat=

Margaret: [objects]

Hillary: =yeah, objectified.

Jessica: [yeah objectified].

Hillary: Um, like it's okay to, be- slutty=

Margaret: =and drink. And spew.

#### **Excerpt 24, Group 3: PG song**

The “piece of meat” description in this excerpt illustrates the dehumanising way this group considers the Paradiso Girls portrayals. As the young women expand and solidify Hillary’s initial statement they indicate resistance to messages promoting overt sexuality and drinking to excess. Group two similarly saw the Paradiso Girls video as entirely concentrated on the women’s sex appeal:

Ingrid: [Although they're a little bit better.] But they're all like, you know there's a huge focus on what they look like they're all, really good looking girls, amazing bodies and that's kind of the focus?

SN: Mmmm.

Ingrid: Not the song, not the singing.

Sharon: They probably can't even sing.

Ingrid: Probably not.

Thelma: Yeah. [But maybe it would, appeal more to males.]

**Excerpt 25, Group 2: PG song**

By invoking reference to the artists' voices and song the participants are introducing a contrast between appearance and material (the song). In this way, the presumed purpose of the video clip as a vehicle for promotion of the music is deemed secondary to the promotion of female appearance ideals. The suggestion that it would "appeal more to males" constructs men as relatively superficial in that their appreciation of sex appeal outweighs the demonstration of talent in evaluating entertainment value. The discussion continues below:

Sharon: It obviously sells.

Ingrid: Yeah, again it's just like a recipe for=

Sharon: [Yeah]

Ingrid: =that they just follow and they know that it works so why, like don't fix what ain't broke.

Sharon: Mmmm. (2)

Ingrid: Like it's just easy. They know that it works=

Sharon: [Yeah]

Ingrid: =They could produce it in a day. Like all they need is a couple of scantily clad women to dance around, some other people to be in the bar, it doesn't require any props or anything you know, it's just=

Sharon: =and probably like cause those girls like they're not very well known they probably don't have enough money to make a ( ) like Beyonce's video clips even though she's half naked as well like hers kind of have more of a story to them and, better dancing and stuff. Like more interesting to watch than that thing.

**Excerpt 26, Group 2: PG song**

In this excerpt, the notion that sex sells is invoked. Female sex appeal is constructed as a 'recipe' in a tried and true marketing mix. It is expected, normative, and its failure to elicit strong emotional reactions is indicative of the relative insignificance with which it is considered. Ingrid's statement that "all they need" in reference to "scantily clad women" serves to depersonalise the artists, constructing them as entirely submissive. However, Sharon's response shifts this passive construction of the artists to a more agentic stance by her comment regarding "those girls" and their

own financial position, as opposed to that of the music producers. Despite this shift, Sharon's acknowledgement that Beyoncé's video clips also depict her as "half naked" when introducing her as a comparison, fails to effectively counteract the construction of women as objectified.

Group four's assessment of the Cobra Starship video contained subtle differences in the way the women were constructed:

SN: (...) Okay, so how would you describe that song?

Mel: Dangerous.

Tonya: Yeah, like, oh, just makes the girls look stupid=

Mel: =yeah it does, stupid.

Lynda: I couldn't even really hear the lyrics. All I heard was hot mess.

Tonya: [hot mess, mmm]

Mel: They're pretty much putting themselves in a vulnerable position.

Tonya: Yeah, like to get that wasted and, to get thrown out- the club=

Mel: =and then someone just comes along and picks them up. Kind of, stupid situation to put yourself in.

SN: Yeah. (7) Okay so how would you describe the video clip?

Lynda: Stupid.

Mel: Stupid.

{laughter}

Tonya: Yeah.

Mel: Looks, um makes girls look very stupid.

**Excerpt 27, Group 4: CS song**

In this excerpt there is a clear division between how the women are portrayed versus their expected behaviour. The comment that it "makes the girls look stupid" shifts the responsibility for these depictions away from the female characters thereby implying either the male artists, producers or both are in control of the way the women are portrayed. In one way the female characters are positioned as agentic- as they are deemed to "put themselves" in that position, whereas in another way they are subjects as others dictate the way they are portrayed.

One of the ways in which avenues for acceptance of the video clips messages were opened was by comparison with more extreme displays of sexuality. Group two discusses the way women are portrayed in the Katy Perry video below:

Sharon: Yeah. I didn't think they were portrayed that badly, like, some video clips are way worse, at least she was actually wearing clothes.

Thelma: Mmmm. At least she wasn't like, ho dancing on the floor, while some rapper just stood back and watched her.

Sharon: {laughter}

Thelma: Yeah, shake it. That didn't happen so that's quite good.

Ingrid: [I think, we've seen worse]

Thelma: Yeah.

Ingrid: We're conditioned to see worse. It's like, if you showed this to people in the 60's they probably would have had a heart attack.

Thelma: {laughter}

Ingrid: But, we're just like, mmmm at least they're not- having sex on the video.

**Excerpt 28, Group 2: KP song**

In this excerpt, participants describe a type of habituation to overtly sexualised images. By drawing a comparison with an imagined, more offensive video clip they are able to explain and justify their acceptance of the way women are portrayed. In this way, participants are positioning themselves as subjects, as the norms from greater popular culture are used as a reference point to evaluate and define an acceptable femininity. From this basis, they consider the Paradiso Girls video clip. In the excerpt below, Ingrid is minimising the objection Sharon has raised to the way women are portrayed:

SN: Yeah, so how would you describe the video clip?

Ingrid: Um

Thelma: [Typical].

Ingrid: It wasn't that offe-um I thought it was gonna be more offensive than it was?

Sharon: It's really sexualized, like girls wearing, near-nothing.

Thelma: [But they weren't like, grinding on each other.]

Ingrid: [Yeah, that's what I thought, that's what I mean like I, I expected that, but it didn't actually sort of eventuate like they were dressed, pretty scantily clad but not (2) too bad and their dancing wasn't too- sexual. It was just, you know they were just sort of, dancing while they sang.

**Excerpt 29, Group 2: PG song**

As the discussion wore on, the young women concluded with similar sentiments, as demonstrated below:

Sharon: It's compared to the Katy Perry one, I just think it's silly like, it's not very creative they didn't think about it they're just dancing like there's no story.

Ingrid: =They're just using their bodies to, sell their song which is pretty crap. And, that's about the extent of it.

Sharon: Yeah it was just a boring video clip, like it's just another rap video of, half naked girls dancing. Nothing really to it, yeah.

**Excerpt 30, Group 2: PG song**

In this second excerpt, Sharon is required to downplay her initial objection in order to smooth out the social interaction as her strong response was not mimicked by the other participants. She does this by using the lesser word, "silly" as opposed to the bold statement that "it's really sexualised." Ingrid continues to use language which serves to minimise the object being constructed, thus resisting the implication that boundaries of acceptable femininity have been breached. For Ingrid, this position allows her to deflect any uncomfortable feelings regarding female objectification, which has the effect of silencing Sharon's concerns.

The young women in group one were less dismissive as they enthusiastically engaged with the topic. This may reflect their indicated preference for hip-hop music in addition to two out of the three participants being early childhood teachers who regularly voiced concern over media role modelling to children. They discuss the Paradiso Girls video below:

SN: Yeah. So what do you think of the images in the video clip?

Natasha: Sex appeal really.

Alexis: Even if you look at like the camera, shots of it. The, the camera shots of are of like, there and there. The close-ups. (...)

SN: So of the breasts and the booty?

Alexis: Yep.

Julie: Yep.=

Alexis: =rather than.... I don't know, {laughter} there's nothing else really to, to look at {laughter} in the song.

SN: Yeah. So, the images are mostly focussed on the women's, sex appeal?

Alexis: Yep.

Natasha: Yeah. And just getting drunk. (...)

Julie: [or the guys, yeah the guys drinking, and looking at all the girls]

**Excerpt 31, Group 1: PG song**

In this excerpt, it is apparent participants' have paid close attention to visual indicators of power and subjectivity, as demonstrated by Alexis' response about camera shots and close-ups. She refers to "there and there" to indicate the breasts and the buttocks followed by the comment that "there's nothing else to look at." This demonstrates how the music video producers objectify women by portraying them as a collection of body parts rather than a whole person, and Alexis' reference to this practice shows her awareness of the effects of this. The final comment by Julie emphasises the performative stance of the women, positioning them as a target of the male gaze. This excerpt suggests the women are in an inferior position as they seek the approval of the male audience. In contrast, the position of the males as both viewers and consumers indicates a relaxed and assured stance which implies both superiority and control. As the conversation continued, the young women echoed a common response with regard to the portrayal of women:

SN: So um, what do you think about the way young women are portrayed in this song?

Alexis: (Poorly).

Natasha: Yeah really slutty, mmm. Not shy.

SN: Yep.

Julie: [(that it's okay)]

Natasha: [(just like they're drinking)]

Alexis: (To act) like a stripper.

Natasha: Yeah. {laughter} Hooking up and stuff you know.

Alexis: Yeah. Cause there's also the ( ).=

Natasha: =So not shy to do it and stuff. Confident. (...)

Julie: =Lack of self respect really.

**Excerpt 32, Group 1: PG song**

In this excerpt the young women construct the portrayal of women in the video clip as "slutty." Alexis' immediate response that women are portrayed "poorly" indicates her disagreement with the depictions while setting the tone for the following comments. Natasha's explanation of "really slutty" followed by "not shy" alludes to the assertive way the Paradiso Girls are shown approaching males in the video. Clearly for the young women in this group, the act of flaunting one's sexuality and further acting on this, as in "hooking up" is distasteful. Sexual confidence in this context is equated with a lack of self-respect. The construction of the women as "slutty" is likely based several elements of the video; the women engage in sexually suggestive dancing, they

are scantily dressed, they are shown flirting with a single male and the song is about drinking alcohol and ‘throwing up.’ Essentially, this excerpt functions as resistance to the artists’ self-objectification. As the discussion continued, group one explained how these constructions of femininity seep into real life:

SN: (...) Can you tell me how these portrayals are similar to young women in everyday life or if they’re not, why not?

Alexis: I think they are. Because, like, was there a pole in there? {laughter} Cause it sure looked like it. Like, stripping= (...) It’s, I don’t know how to say it but, yeah, its okay now to dance like that, I mean there’s poles in clubs now in just like a general, normal club you’ll see, a pole in there.

SN: [yeah]. Stripper pole. (...)

Alexis: So, girls go out now=

Julie: =[do the same thing]

Alexis: do the same thing. (...) As they’re watching this it’s playing in their head and it’s the, it’s okay now like you know I’ve seen this and= (...)

Natasha: But they’re making it into a positive thing, like a lot of my friends do pole dancing for exercise.

### **Excerpt 33, Group 1: PG song**

This excerpt constructs stripper-like dancing as currently undergoing a process of normalisation. This process is seen to initiate with the message that pole dancing is acceptable by its use in music videos which is then supported by nightclub owners’ placement of the poles in their clubs and eventually becomes embedded into culture as a form of exercise. Participants construct themselves as relatively self-aware and wary of the nightclub owners’ motivations that they are able to actively resist this process, however suggest that others lack the same level of foresight. There is an element of derision projected onto these others as evidenced by Alexis’ statement about girls who “go out” to “do the same thing.” Like many of the excerpts, women are positioned as both agent and subject. The conversation progressed with participants highlighting the difficulty in distinguishing exercise, which is healthy and positive, from self-objectification. They then turned to repercussions of self-objectification as they translate to real life experiences:

SN: And is that a good thing?

Alexis: I don’t think so because attention can get you into trouble quite often.

SN: Yeah. What sort of trouble?

Alexis: Any trouble. Like, fights in clubs, and=

Natasha: =[boys]=

Alexis: =I think um, slipping drugs into girls' drinks quite often now, it's becoming, quite common.

SN: Yeah.

Alexis: Yeah rapes, any sort of trouble it just gets worse and worse I think. (...) [Yeah especially like with the the clubs having poles and that like Globe has one, and I would never go there now because, I've been there and I had um, my drink spiked. I would never go there, because of that. Everybody tells me, well, that's what's happening now, at that club. So quite often nobody goes there, quite often you wouldn't see like, a respectful sort of girl, go there.]

**Excerpt 34, Group 1: PG song**

In this excerpt, attracting attention is considered negative due to potentially troubling repercussions. Alexis provides an example from personal experience of having her drink spiked which demonstrates the importance of this point for her. Based on her experience she expresses the rationale that those who choose to attract attention regardless of the risks are not “respectful girl(s).” Alexis’ construction implies that she is positioning herself within the respectful girl category. In order to occupy this position, she asserts that she “would never go there” implying a newfound awareness and consequent behaviour change. This position allows Alexis to retain a moral superiority whilst explaining her own victimhood.

As the discussion concluded, the focus shifted to a consideration of the nightclubs motivations for providing stripper poles:

Julie: And, that club was like there weren't many people it was a Saturday night there weren't many people but they have two stripper poles there. And no-one was using it except=

(...) =Oh there was like this random girl but she, I think that she, she knew what she was she wasn't just acting. (...) She wasn't a normal person wanting to act like a stripper she probably did it for exercise or whatever. (...) But they are trying to promote it maybe.

Natasha: Yeah

Julie: Bring in...people. Attract crowds.

**Excerpt 35, Group 1: PG song**

In this excerpt, the provision of stripper poles in nightclubs is constructed as a marketing strategy to encourage patronage and provide entertainment. Unlike Alexis's earlier comments, this construction places the patrons in the unsuspecting subject position (as indicated by the reference to the "random girl" engaging in a sole performance based on her exercise regime), whilst the nightclub owners are deemed purposeful and thus agentic. This shifting of responsibility allows participants to explain the way in which they and others can be manipulated into participating in self-objectification.

Each of the groups mentioned the inherent vulnerability of being female in relation to rape and sexual assault. While most participants expressed a clear dislike for the Cobra Starship video due to rape connotations, others were less affected by the undertones choosing to focus on other elements of the song. Describing this video as depicting "glamorised date rape," group two voiced strong objection to portrayals of women promoting a "sexualised drunkenness:"

Sharon: I don't know. Maybe it sends the message that being wasted is, like boys find wasted girls hot, I don't know, I don't think that's true. But, it kind of sends that message.

SN: Mmm.

Ingrid: Like it just glamorized the whole thing, like when she was on the bed in the, van, supposedly wasted, she looked pretty happy and like was just sort of writhing around, like oooh I'm really enjoying this=

Sharon: [yeah]

Ingrid: =it's almost sexualized in, like, sexualized a whole lot of dr- being really really drunk=

**Excerpt 36, Group 2: CS song**

Here, participants have clearly identified the mixed messages projected by the video clip. Sharon's immediate disagreement with the message that "boys find wasted girls hot" is echoed by Ingrid as she notes the portrayal of "glamorised" drunkenness. Ingrid's emphasis on being "really drunk" shows that for these young women, sexual appeal is inconsistent with the state of extreme intoxication. As the discussion continues, they explain how this message is incongruous with real life events:

Ingrid: It would. People would be like oh no look you can see her G-string, and she's got vomit everywhere. It's really, a guy would not be like ooh yeah.

Sharon: (Though) some sicko's would be.

Thelma: [yeah]

Ingrid: [Yeah exactly. Probably the person that slipped them the date rape drugs.]

**Excerpt 37, Group 2: CS song**

Rejection of the message of glamorised date rape is evidenced here, where participants contrast the reality of extreme drunkenness with the videos portrayals. In this excerpt, female intoxication is constructed as an undesirable, unattractive state likely to invoke ridicule. Ingrid's comment that "a guy would not be like ooh yeah" infers a male perspective which is in line with this construction. Sharon's response then causes a differentiation between perceptions of the average "guy" and other "sickos." These firmly established boundaries construct the videos portrayal of women as negative and non-normative, which supports their rejection of such messages.

For groups two and four, the video clip viewing led the discussion toward the effect of stereotypical portrayals of femininity on them personally:

Sharon: I think um, like the drinking and bud and stuff doesn't really influence me but I think every- well my opinion like body image affects girls of all ages=

Thelma: [Mmmm]

Sharon: =Well it affects me still.

Ingrid: Yeah. I did notice that they all had really amazing bodies.

Sharon: [Yeah]

Thelma: [Yeah.]

Ingrid: I was like, oh fuck.

{laughter}

Ingrid: It crossed my mind, I wonder how much that girl weighs?

Sharon: Yeah.

Thelma: [And how much is that photo shopped?]

Ingrid: And I very much doubt that she's filling up on Margarita's=

Thelma: [Yeah, she (hasn't drunk any)] (...)

Ingrid: [=and Patron because they would be a lot of calories].

**Excerpt 38, Group 2: PG song**

In this excerpt, the young women allude to feelings of insecurity arising from comparisons with the perfectionist nature of the women portrayed. The mention of the women's "amazing bodies" immediately prompts an analysis of weight as the critical indicator, and the requirements to maintain this body image. Thelma's querying of "how much is that photo shopped?" is suggestive of resistance to such standards as she pointedly introduces the reality of technical enhancement contributing to the idealistic portrayals presented for consumption. The final comments highlight the discrepancy between apparent consumption of the Patron Tequila beverage marketed in the song and actual physical form. When the discussion returns to weight concerns, Thelma expands her description of the tricks and tools of the media as indicated in the excerpt below:

SN: Mmm, so how does that song and clip make you feel?

Sharon: Like I don't wanna eat all this food.

{laughter}

Ingrid: [Yeah, I'm gonna go for a run.]

Thelma: [I don't know, I think like, to me, I actually don't think they look like that in real life. I think that, someone's come along with a spray tan machine]

Sharon: [yeah, true]

Thelma: [and drawn some abs on and you know everything's done to be extremely flattering]

Ingrid: [I don't, I don't doubt that they have amazing bodies, but they've also got a lot of makeup on, you know, that's their job to look like that.]

Sharon: [Photo shopped].

Ingrid: [you know, they wanna become famous so they're not gonna be, slouching round on the couch eating cake.] (2) So they're gonna be, working, really hard to keep up that image.

Thelma: [But they're also probably really grumpy, cause they're hungry.]

Ingrid: Probably.

#### **Excerpt 39, Group 2: PG song**

This excerpt demonstrates the anxiety inducing effect of social comparison on the young women after viewing the 'thin ideal' type of appearance embodied by the Paradiso Girls. Again, two of the three young women find resistance to the video portrayals initially difficult. Importantly, rather than being swayed by their comments, Thelma continues to position herself as savvy and somewhat unaffected as evidenced by her explanation of additional image enhancing media tools. Sharon appears to be pondering this, whilst Ingrid reverts back to her original concern. The subsequent

comments support the stance that attainment of the thin ideal is strenuous, and physically and emotionally draining. Ingrid's explanation is concerning for her assumption that to become famous the female artists are required to subscribe to the thin ideal and therefore are unlikely to be "on the couch eating cake." The matter-of-fact way in which she points this out and the ready acceptance of her comment illustrates how deeply ingrained female appearance ideals are. Later in this interview Sharon remarked, "...that's what I expect them to look like, if I saw a fat girl in a music video I'd be pretty shocked." With the exception of Thelma, the young women position both themselves and the female artists as subjects.

The discussion of group four shared similar sentiments, as indicated below:

SN: (5) Okay, can you tell me a bit about how the song and clip makes you feel? (...)

Tonya: Probably random but, um, just made me wanna go to the gym cause they're like fit.

{laughter}

Mel: [get that body]

Tonya: Like you know you get that hot body like that you know like, yeah.

{laughter continues}

SN: Yeah.

Mel: Get your workout on.

Lynda: Oh that's what I don't like about that one.

SN: You don't like?

Lynda: Um, it's very, like stereotypical. (...)

Mel: Mind you would you wanna see a fat girl go "yeah" in those clothes?

Lynda: Not really, but, you know.

Tonya: They should put more clothes on even though their outfits are hot.

**Excerpt 40, Group 4: PG song**

In this excerpt rather than defining an actual emotion, the young women leap to a desired action. It is clear they too have engaged in an immediate social comparison and found their evaluations of self lacking. Lynda's failure to agree with the other two, coupled with her interjection about the "stereotypical" nature of the clip, suggests she is initially better able to resist the thin ideal depictions. Mimicking Sharon of group two's comment, Mel's counter about a "fat girl" in "those clothes" emphasises the potency of dominant female appearance ideals -the implication being that this would be distasteful.

Ultimately, Mel and Tonya's failure to challenge the perfectionist ideals presented has the effect of dampening Lynda's concerns as her final comment indicates a more placatory stance.

To summarise, the female objectification discourse illustrated how pop culture messages flood into everyday life. Group one providing the example of how stripper poles are now a feature in "normal" clubs and exercise routines. The objectification of women was seen as an easy and effective way to market products (particularly alcohol), make money and promote stereotypical standards of beauty. Exposure to the 'thin ideal' induced social comparison in some participants, which led the discussion toward diet and exercise considerations. The women in the music videos were positioned as subjects. This positioning functioned as a way for participants to resist the "slutty" portrayal of femininity contained in the videos and the female vulnerability invoked by rape connotations. Participants initially positioned themselves as agentic, yet this position shifted on occasion, such as when the notion of self-objectification occurred and when comparisons with the thin ideal were primed. The main function of this discourse was to express disagreement with the idealistic way in which women are portrayed.

### ***The normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse***

All participants constructed alcohol consumption in terms of a normal phase of development. Excessive consumption or binge drinking was seen to be part of a necessary process in both discovering identity and understanding consumption limits. This discourse was constructed from a position of reflection as most participants firmly placed themselves as having moved beyond this phase to their current position of self-awareness. Despite the notion of a purposeful process for themselves, participants often emphasised the naivety of teenage experience of this time. As such, teenagers were seen to be more vulnerable to the influence of marketing and the media and more likely to be the target of alcohol marketing campaigns. There was a clear differentiation between the teenage years and young adulthood; with participants describing their own drinking in terms of knowing their limits, exercising boundaries and having control.

Group one discusses the normalisation of binge drinking in their response to the question, “what do you think about the way young women are portrayed in that song?” below:

Alexis: But like, I guess at a young age you don't really, think about that, think about the consequences, think about, all of this, or look at the words, you just, ooh fun, yay, boys. (...)

Natasha: It's giving girls. (...) And boys, both of them wrong ideas, yeah.

Alexis: [Yeah]

Julie: Those innocent boys and girls out there what are they watching.

Alexis: Yeah but in society it's just become okay.

Natasha: [Mmmm]

Alexis: it's just become normalised. Just yeah, it's just okay now, to do that. But, it's, I think it's um directed to a younger age group whereas the older one's they're just like, oh yeah that's fun, that's crack up because I've been there? Done that. So, oh yeah and you can just brush it off sort of thing whereas a younger, a younger girl or guy would just be like, oh wow.

Julie: [Is that what I should be doing?]

Alexis: Yeah, that looks fun. That would look cool you know.

Julie: Let's try that.

Alexis: Yeah, that would be a good story.

**Excerpt 41, Group 1: CS song**

Here, despite the question being directed at Alexis and her friends who were 22 and 23 years old, Alexis's interpretation orients toward those younger than herself. She implies that at her age (23) she is more likely to consider consequences than when she was younger. Natasha's mention of role models and giving them “wrong ideas” constructs herself as sufficiently mature, experienced and able to view media more objectively and draws on notions of morality. This stance is supported by Alexis when she states the ability to “brush it off.” Notably, all three participants included boys in their constructions of this behaviour being emulated in real life, which demonstrates the reciprocal way they view gender relations. These associations were likely prompted by the overt female vulnerability and male dominance portrayed in this particular video clip.

Group four similarly saw the portrayal of drunkenness as normal for both genders however the nature of the video clip prompted further comment that expected behaviour is not always equivalent across genders:

Mel: They are. Because, you could ask every girl in New Zealand they'll probably tell you they've all had a moment like that. Where they've just been so drunk they don't know what's going on=

Tonya: [yeah]

Mel: =I think that it's just a normal phase, now because like. Even guys get that drunk, but, I don't think girls pick them up off the side of the road.

**Excerpt 42, Group 4: CS song**

Here, binge drinking is situated within a NZ context and constructed as a “phase” for both genders. This notion of a phase indicates a temporal position that, once overcome is unlikely to be revisited. Mel's final comment also alludes to a fundamental inequality between genders. Although both genders may become inebriated, male exploitation of females in this situation is considered more likely than the reverse. Group four continue their explanation of the normal phase of binge drinking below:

Mel: ( ) I think it's just normal. And I think the sooner someone, uh the sooner a girl, or the guy that goes through that phase, you know the sooner they realize that they don't wanna be that drunk anymore. {laughs}

SN: Yeah.

Mel: Cause you just look ugly when you're that drunk. Everything about you is, I mean (2) who wants to be the girl known as- the one on the ground?

SN: Yeah

Tonya: Or that drunk chick that like fell over in the clubs and spewed up everywhere and ( )

Mel: Yeah like, cause like, even random people will just walk up to you and be all, oh my god you're that drunk girl=

Lynda: [yeah]

Tonya: [yeah, oh shame]

Mel: =and you're like ohhh. It's just embarrassing. (...)

Mel: But it happens, it's not, it shouldn't be normal but it is, pretty much.

**Excerpt 43, Group 4: CS song**

In this excerpt, individual experience of binge drinking is constructed as an inevitable process. Progression through this phase may be accelerated by sufficiently

negative outcomes. Importantly, Mel's immediate response involves appearance concerns. Her use of the word "ugly" demonstrates the primacy of this over considerations of possible detrimental effects on health. This comment highlights the importance placed on young women to maintain an outwardly acceptable appearance regardless of the individual's state or circumstance. Thus for these young women, the stigma of public humiliation following drinking to the point of vomiting is deemed a significant enough behavioural deterrent. Group one takes up this construction below:

SN: So, it's kind of, a realistic portrayal of young women=

Alexis: =[yeah because I think about it like when I was 18 like]=(...) [we'd go out on a mission to do that.] (...) [but now, just like how, how stupid was I to do something like that? Like, what was the point of it all?] It didn't get me anywhere but in trouble. Pretty much. (...)

Natasha: It's your exploring ages.

Alexis: And it's portrayed so you wanna be like that so like, even with the Katy Perry you wanna go out and have fun cause that's what you're seeing, that's what's being played in your mind being put into your life like through TV through movies, everything. In society, it's, that's the norm. So you'd want to do that. But, looking back at it now, it was pointless really.

Natasha: And now we've been there done that= (...)

Alexis: [and even though you were warned off]= (...)

Julie: [yeah, you don't know your limits either]

Natasha: [yeah, no boundaries, nothing]

Alexis: [yeah ( )] Yeah, like if you=

SN: =[So a few years of drinking experience you=]

Julie: {laughter} =[Yeah]

SN: [kind of got to a point where you now realise no, I don't actually need to get drunk and throw up?]

Alexis: Yeah.

Natasha: No, yeah. And you know your limits now.

Julie: You don't want to throw up you want to just be on=

Alexis: =[a good buzz. To enjoy the night and]

#### **Excerpt 44, Group 1: PG song**

In this excerpt, the young women again imply that purposeful intoxication is the domain of a younger age group than themselves. In reflecting on their own lives they construct this phase of consumption as unrestrained; whereby the intention is to "go out on a mission to do that." Drinking at this age is described in terms of experimentation

and exploration and framed within a context of normality. Alexis' brief mention of being "warned off" illustrates the apparent insignificance of cautionary messages about drinking to excess heralded by those such as parents and the government in relation to contrary ubiquitous messages from the likes of popular culture. The ability to resist messages of conformity surrounding sociability, fun and gender scripts at their current age is again attributed to personal experience. The development of "limits" and "boundaries" constructs this personal awareness as something which is able to be monitored and confined.

The social pressure to conform to societal standards of normality was frequently seen to be more prevalent in the teenage years as opposed to early adulthood. Group two contrasted the tensions encountered in the teenage years with adult social interactions:

Sharon: I think for youth as well like it's cool. Like you're cool if you drink, whereas for our age like, I'm not gonna be like if you don't drink oh you're not cool you know=

Thelma: =yeah=

Sharon: =but if, when you're younger it's, the cool thing to do.

Ingrid: Mmm and if someone's not drinking (they're) like oh, and if you're like, oh I've got an exam the next day people are like, oh, who cares?=-

Sharon: =yeah=

Ingrid: =just, you know? Get over it, go hungover.

Sharon: Mmm

Ingrid: I know.

SN: Is that for younger people you're talking about or your age group?

Sharon: High school=

**Excerpt 45, Group 2: all songs**

In this excerpt, the repeat mention and emphasis on the word "cool" alludes to the importance of aligning with others' assessments initially however denotes a level of sarcasm which implies a decline in importance with increasing age. This suggests peer pressure and popularity are more important in the teenage years. The entrance to early adulthood was constructed as a time of increased confidence and individuality. Therefore, the young women indicate an age-related shift from subject position when younger to agent position as one enters adulthood. At times participants appeared on the brink of contextualising themselves as normal youth drinkers as indicated below:

SN: (5) Cool, so can you tell me about how these portrayals are similar to young women in everyday life?

Mel: (5) It's the weekend. It's just your average weekend. Pretty much you see women, it's not unusual to see your girl mates drunk on a Friday night=

Lynda: [Mmm]

Mel: =and doing crazy stuff and just driving around doing random stuff= (...) It's just normal.

Lynda: I think every, like every woman has that phase, like has gone through that=

Tonya: [yeah]

Lynda: =at one point in (her life).

Tonya: Like everyone goes through that phase at the age, yeah.

**Excerpt 46, Group 4: KP song**

In this excerpt, once again there is recognition that the behaviour is both familiar and normal, yet a hesitancy to fully identify with it at this point. This is evidenced by the reference to “seeing girl mates” rather than being with girl mates and to having “go(ne) through” that phase “at the age.” This positioning allows the participants to resist ownership of problematic youth drinking and minimise the importance of the topic. Group one reiterates this position below:

Alexis: I think there's a part in the song that it was like, um, like girl where's your drink and then we're going all=

Julie: =We're going all get drunk tonight {laughter}.

Alexis: Hey girl I got bud we can all get T, uh, totalled.

Julie: [totalled].

Alexis: Totalled tonight. By the end of the night I gonna have you drunk and throwing up. So that's how it portrays girls especially nowadays like girls go out to get that that drunk that they actually throwing up and you quite often see it. (...) Young girls on the side of the road.

Natasha: Not responsible and=

Alexis: =Yeah.

Julie: Yeah. Yeah or lock themselves in the bathroom for the ( ) throwing up, you can hear them throwing up.

**Excerpt 47, Group 1: PG song**

Here the video clip is seen to be a reflection of real life. Alexis' mention of “quite often see(ing)” girls getting drunk and throwing up illustrates her point. There is an emphasis on the planned nature of the act of getting drunk and throwing up. The

construction of these girls who deliberately go out to get drunk and throw up as youth serves to distance the participants from such purposeful drunkenness.

The question of “how would you describe today’s youth drinking culture?” was put to group two and they responded with the words “insane,” “dangerous” and “out of control.” The emphatic nature of this response was mirrored in many discussions across groups. Likewise, the notion of limits was invoked often with participants implying they are more capable of limiting their alcohol consumption compared to teenagers. In line with this construction of the youth drinking culture relating to the teen age group, group two continues below:

Sharon: [Like that boy who died from like drinking a 40 of vodka. Like what were you thinking?]

Thelma: [uninformed]

Ingrid: [Yeah I, yeah I was just gonna say that. No idea of how much you can safely drink=]

Thelma: [Mmmm]

Ingrid: =because the emphasis is just, the more you drink, the better time you’ll have= (...)=but there’s no, person saying hey if you drink a whole bottle of vodka you’re gonna get really really sick and probably die.=

Thelma: [Mmm]

Ingrid: =because you’re- 60 kilos, and a 15 year old boy. Or, you know? So there’s no, you don’t grow up drinking, you’re suddenly like allowed to and then=

Thelma: [yeah then you get access to it]

**Excerpt 48, Group 2: all songs**

In this excerpt, the discussion around amount, body size and age coupled with the word “safely” serves to demonstrate participants’ awareness of the logistical considerations required to drink responsibly. Thus participants construct themselves as mature, knowledgeable and able to make conscious decisions regarding drinking. The introduction of youth to drinking is constructed as an immediate and forceful occurrence, which is complicated by the ability of under 18 year olds to access alcohol despite a legal purchase age of 18. The final comments imply that a more gradual initiation would be beneficial. Group one voiced similar concerns about youth drinking, expanding their initial discussion from those younger than themselves to include the

potential for music to be a subconscious influence on their current behaviour as detailed below:

Alexis: Cause you see it at such a young age= (...) And it's okay at that age then it's okay at that age then it's okay at that age. (...)

Natasha: Cause at that age they don't know so, you know, much.

Alexis: They don't have, meaning, behind it but still. (...) Once they come to realise it. (...) Burned into their minds, and, they'll live by it.

SN: So you think they, end up internalising those messages?

Natasha: Mmmm

Alexis: Cause, I mean there's heaps of studies about, like what goes on in the brain and what influence music and, movies and, music videos have. Cause it's, playing in your mind. Like they say that, Mozart or something cause you've played that music it reflects, a certain part of your brain in remembering.

Julie: Yeah they say you should play it like, in the background while you're studying and...

Alexis: Yeah. Whereas you play this and= (...) because there's no, words to, to Mozart and stuff, you're remembering more or something. I don't study the brain and stuff but I know about research but, yeah, listening to this music, would of course have a different effect. Cause, it's playing in the back of your mind so it's there. (...) While you're studying and stuff, it's playing in your mind like oh, I'm stressed. What's gonna help me calm down? A drink. (...) What's gonna help me, relax? Going out, dancing, having fun, that's what I need now, I'm stressed. I need to relax. (...)

Natasha: Yeah. Not go to bed.

SN: So uh, the messages you think are generally targeted at the younger, bit younger=

Alexis: =[yeah like, ( )]

SN: More younger than you, they still aren't affecting, you, you kind of internalise them without thinking about it?

Natasha: Subconsciously, yeah. (...)

Natasha: =it's all about you know, sex and=

Alexis: [alcohol]

Natasha: =alcohol and then I get in trouble for not being a good role model. But it's everywhere.

#### **Excerpt 49, Group 1: all songs**

In this excerpt the ubiquitous nature of entertainment media is constructed as an inescapable part of life. Thus participants take up a passive position as they construct themselves as being subjected to these messages which are then stored in the subconscious mind. Although the discussion appears to begin with a distancing from the

participants own age group, this position shifts to include participants as Alexis expands her explanation. Alexis' example of studying alludes to an increased susceptibility for these messages to be activated when under stress. In this way, the counterproductive message of going out and consuming alcohol as opposed to "go(ing) to bed" predominates. This group went on to discuss the prevalence of alcohol in society and the ease of access to it:

Alexis: Cause yeah I'd love to have kids but I don't wanna deal with that. I really don't I'm just like nah. Um and they'd know that I don't want to, I don't want my kids to experience that and the way society's going I think, what do you think it's gonna be like when we have kids and they're at that age. (...)

Natasha: Can't confine them though, because it's, just everywhere. And they're gonna find, alcohol and stuff.

Alexis: [no matter, what laws and stuff are in place]

Natasha: Yeah, doesn't stop any.... Yeah, like you can still get your friends to buy alcohol. Even if they're (underage) all good.

**Excerpt 50, Group 1: all songs**

In this excerpt, Alexis constructs youth drinking as a type of snowballing issue. "It's everywhere" emphasises the subject position they take up when considering possible future roles as parents. Access to alcohol is constructed as ubiquitous throughout the excerpt, a situation which is deemed unlikely to change in the future. Thus they conclude both parental influence and the law to be ineffective in preventing underage youth from accessing and consuming alcohol.

In the final excerpt, the question of how the songs and video clips are relevant to the today's youth drinking culture was put to group three participants and they responded:

Hillary: =they all portray drinking as fun=

Margaret: =yeah, yeah they do.

Hillary: =fun, normal, cool.

Jessica: [it's hard to find a video that's not about drinking nowadays]

Margaret: Yeah.

Hillary: Yeah, that's true. [Are all songs]

Margaret: [Product placement. Even if it's not about drinking there's alcohol involved.]

Jessica: And it's always like, people that, kind of look like they're our age=

Hillary: [yeah]

Jessica: =but then it's aimed at kids.

Margaret: Yeah. (2)

**Excerpt 51, Group 3: all songs**

This excerpt emphasises the dominant nature of alcohol related media. The mention of product placement followed by the explanation of its intention when coupled with the groups' status as media students constructs them as particularly media savvy. The underlying implication is that this enables them a greater ability to dissect and resist dominant portrayals. Thus, younger viewers are deemed to be the intended targets of the alcohol industry.

In summary, the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse presented binge drinking as a temporal, yet necessary phase which young New Zealander's progress through before entering young adulthood. This discourse saw participants construct themselves as agentic, whilst positioning younger females and males as subjects. This discourse essentially functions as a way for participants to distance themselves from the wider societal discourse of problematic young binge drinkers. It also serves to differentiate between the teenage and young adult years, thus demonstrating participants' superior status in terms of maturity and ability to learn from experience.

## Discussion

This study aimed to build on prior knowledge by seeking to understand the ways in which young women engage with popular culture. The core areas of interest were young women's interpretations of gender, identity and alcohol consumption following the viewing of music videos. Three recent popular music videos were used to stimulate friendship group discussions. Discourse analysis identified four key discourses that the young women participants drew on in talking about these videos, namely the contemporary feminist, the gender inequality, the female objectification and the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourses.

The contemporary feminist discourse emphasised individualism and personal choice with regard to identity, self-presentation, behaviour and consumption. Participants positioned themselves and other women as agentic. This focus held that young women were choosing to be sexy or slutty, responsible or irresponsible. A loss of control as a result of drinking was considered acceptable, normal and fun, however such occasions were rationalised as happening only with safety nets in place, such as having a sober friend present. The gender inequality discourse emphasised an imbalance between genders. The female participants demonstrated a tendency to make direct comparisons with male behaviour, which consequently found females lacking. Particularly notable was the absence of an alternative definition of equality and the competitive elements which arose when defining equality in this way. The female objectification discourse constructed the portrayal of women in popular culture as exploitative, objectifying and unrealistic. The women in the videos were seen to be mere sex objects provided for the consumption of men. It was noted by some that hip-hop and rap are more derogatory than other musical genres. Themes of female vulnerability and sexual assault were prominent. Participants' talked in depth about how hyper-sexuality is incorporated into everyday life by the provision of stripper poles in nightclubs and for some participants, the videos prompted body image concerns. Finally the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse constructed binge drinking as the domain of the teenage years, bar the occasional indulgence as one entered young adulthood. In general excessive alcohol consumption was constructed as an inevitable phase through which young people progressed as they realised both their identity and their personal limits. Thus, excessive alcohol consumption was often referred to in the past tense with participants recounting stories of their teenage years.

The following discussion considers the results in terms of the research questions, and links findings to prior research and theorising. The results are then considered specifically in relation to Faludi's (1991, 1992) feminist backlash theory which underpins the current study. Following this, the study's limitations will be acknowledged alongside some reflections on the research process, and finally future research directions will be considered in light of the findings.

***How do young women interpret the messages portrayed in these music videos and do they accept/reject/resist these messages?***

Each of the discourses shows the young women interpreted the video clip messages in different ways. Essentially, aspects deemed positive were embraced, and the less favourable messages resisted or rejected. In the contemporary feminist discourse, the young women drew positive interpretations from some of the music video messages and consequently accepted them as defining the position of women today. Conversely, examples of resistance to some of the messages were evidenced with the notion of gender inequality, the construction of the 'other' woman, and the message that binge drinking is entirely fun. Furthermore, outright rejection of several elements was apparent when the themes of male dominance, date rape and the implied message that drunk women are sexually appealing were considered. Furthermore, female objectification was deemed unacceptable in the absence of comparable male objectification.

The themes of agency, sexual freedom and gender equality which permeate the contemporary feminist discourse speak of an untroubled new femininity. For these young women, identity is an exercise in choice. For some, they may choose to pursue higher education; it is a given that they may partake in the unrestrained culture of youth drinking; and just like their male counterparts can enjoy casual sexual liaisons if so desired.

At first glance, it appears the contemporary feminist personifies gender equality. These young women are free, purposeful, unrestrained. However, once the equally strong themes of "limits," "boundaries" and "control" and avoidance of the "slut" figure are considered, this position becomes decidedly more constrained. A type of "self-policing" is made apparent (McRobbie, 2011). The strong individualistic and

competitive focus signifies an absence of female collectivism as the young women construct an undesirable 'other' feminine identity (McRobbie, 2011). Yet as harshly as they judge other females, they must also avoid the judgement of others- they are on their own.

This discourse most closely resembles postulations of neo-liberal selves as emerging from a neo-liberal society (see Giddens, 1991, 1998; Rose, 1999). The concept of neo-liberal selves has at its core an infatuation with individualism which is in almost direct opposition to traditional ideals of family, society and the state (Adams, 2003; Giddens, 1991; Francis & Skelton, 2008). There is an emphasis on freedom of choice which purportedly promotes greater individual autonomy and prosperity (Giddens, 1994; McDowell, 2004). The achievement of such necessarily involves competition at an individual and societal level (McDowell, 2004). The neo-liberal individual is understood "...as having been completely freed from traditional ties of location, class and gender and to be completely self-produced" (Walkerline, 2003, p. 240). As a result of neo-liberalism, citizens have now become consumers (McDowell, 2004).

The neo-liberal self position as demonstrated in the contemporary feminist and the other discourses in this study contains many objectionable qualities. As Baker notes, neoliberal subjectivity ignores social disadvantage and structural inequalities resulting in "...the demonizing of dependence, an illusory sense of autonomy, personal responsibility for avoiding vulnerability and extensive self-surveillance" (2010, p. 187). These consequences are evident in the detachment exhibited in the contemporary feminist discourse. Such assumptions of equality and determined selfhood ultimately contribute to a disintegration of social conscience.

### ***How do young women negotiate messages portrayed in the music videos?***

The young women employed a range of discursive strategies in demonstrating their acceptance, resistance or rejection of the video clip messages. Some examples consisted of the construction of the other woman in order to resist and explain alternate versions of femininity, the categorising of those who promote date rape as abnormal, and distinguishing themselves from the younger teenage group and male positions.

Acceptance of the positive aspects of the contemporary feminist discourse was countered by participants' resistance to the hypersexual version of femininity portrayed

in the music videos. The way in which they did so was to use the heavily imbued slut label to define women who were deemed to be breaching boundaries of acceptable femininity. Throughout this and the other discourses the distinction made between slutty and sexy was definitive. Jackson and Vares (2011) found similar sentiments with their study of pre-teen NZ girls who used the term slut as a way to resist the type of hypersexual appearance embraced by music artists such as the Pussycat Dolls and Miley Cyrus. Jackson and Vares (2011) note that this may be deemed a positive marker of boundaries for young females however caution it may also recreate previous gender binaries. The concern is that with popular culture continuing to push the boundaries of appropriateness, what may be unacceptable to young women today could be tomorrow's most fashionable trend. With this in mind, it is apparent that choice, freedom and agency as arising from a neoliberal perspective are more about the dominant cultural messages than true personal autonomy.

Gill (2007) puts forth a good point about the "illusory sense of autonomy" (Baker, 2010) by asserting a more in-depth understanding of choice and agency is required in order to make claims of autonomy in a post-feminist, neoliberal society. As Gill notes, context is important and young women's (clothing) "choices" are obviously influenced by the hyper-sexualised culture of modernity which they inhabit. This culture is one in which clothing choices are imbued with assumptions surrounding intention, character, morality and sexuality. Thus, this definition of agency is undeniably restrictive due to the societal emphasis on young women's bodies and by extension, clothing choices. The way in which participants themselves take up a derisive view of those embracing the "trashy" femininity depicted in the videos illustrates the constrictive reality of autonomy for the contemporary female. From this stance, assertions that more revealing attire signifies growing up is complicated. In line with Gill's (2007) reasoning, it is unlikely to be coincidental that young women 'choose' attire which so closely aligns with current fashions. It is undeniable that people are influenced by the culture in which they live.

The young women also attempted to resist the message of gender inequality in favour of gender equality in their discussions, drawing on a gender inequality discourse. Numerous aspects of this discourse replicated prior research findings. For example, the literal interpretation of equality which sees the ability to match males drink for drink mimics that described by Young and colleagues (2005) of "using male drinking as a yardstick." An increase in women's drinking as opposed to a decrease in men's drinking

to explain similar consumption levels was also noted by McPherson et al. (2004) and described as a “gender convergence” in alcohol consumption. This latter definition was evidenced by some participants, who discussed matching and surpassing the consumption of male peers. Content analysis of newspaper coverage concerning female drinking has been found to contain similar elements of competition, with female consumption being “(unfavourably) judged and evaluated” (Day et al., 2004, p. 171).

While Young and colleagues (2005) concluded in their earlier research that for female participants “drinking like a guy” was related more to an emphasis on heterosexuality as opposed to a demonstration of equality, this research found several similarities with the Young et al. study. Firstly, many participants reported male peers encouraged heavier drinking. Secondly, they described a male attentiveness to the amount drunk. Thirdly, this type of encouragement and attention was not present when drinking in female peer groups. As such, descriptions of female-only nights out were framed in more relaxed terms such as, “low key” “social” and “having (a) good time.” Unlike Young and colleagues (2005) conclusion, participants described their attempts to “drink like a guy” as an assertion of gender equality. The activation of the gender inequality discourse when these participants realised they were unable to “be equal and stand up” by consuming equal amounts to male peers is problematic.

For most young women, matching (excessive) male consumption is an unrealistic goal which will see them fare worse than their male counterparts. Resultant evaluations of self as not being “equal” and therefore lacking are potentially damaging. These results suggest firstly, young people of both genders need an awareness of the differing effects of alcohol consumption and tolerance amounts according to gender. Secondly young women need to feel confident in voicing this knowledge, thus resisting pressure to engage in an uneven competition. Thirdly an alternative definition of equality which empowers rather than hinders the female position would be beneficial.

The way in which participants demonstrated attempts to resist the message of gender inequality was to counter with the objectification of men. A key feature of the gender inequality discourse was the way participants discussed how gender portrayals in the music videos and in popular culture favour male dominance. The construction of women as sexualised and subordinate intersects with the third discourse- the female objectification discourse. However, the relevance of this construction in the current discourse was its use by participants to demonstrate how they construct equality (literally) thereby emphasising the inherent *inequality* in the way women are portrayed

in much popular media. Participants illustrated the flipside of a post-feminist version of empowerment which is exhibited by wearing little clothing and behaving in an overtly sexual manner. Rather than being seen as empowered, the women are constructed as somewhat desperate in their attempts to use their sexuality to capture male attention. In this way, female sexuality is constructed as a cheap, easily dismissible commodity.

Interestingly, despite the position occupied, participants showed surprisingly little emotion at the objectification of women; again utilising a literal definition which promotes male objectification as a solution. It is notable that the act of objectifying women has become so commonplace that for these young women the immediate counter to this practice is to endorse its replication with the opposite sex, rather than protest at objectification itself. This is likely due to the conflicting messages of post-femininity that exhort a sexualised culture under the guise of empowerment. Female *self*-objectification is also likely to contribute strongly to the message that it is acceptable, even desirable and positive to reduce a person's worth to their sex appeal. This echoes the findings of Bragg and Buckingham (2009) where participants promoted an "equal opportunities sexism" (p.133) whereby semi-nude male images are more widely distributed as opposed to addressing the objectification of women.

Similar to gauging equality according to alcohol consumption levels, the comparison of objectification according to gender is potentially damaging to both genders. The act of dehumanising people by reducing them to sex objects does little to empower either sex. Much like the responses surrounding alcohol consumption, this definition of equality lacks an alternative. The immediately obvious alternative is that neither males nor females are portrayed in a dehumanising way; and that popular media provides healthier, more realistic portrayals of femininity and masculinity which illustrate diversity, reciprocity and respect in gender relations.

### ***How do young women talk about the way the videos and messages make them feel?***

In drawing on the female objectification discourse, the young women interpreted the music video portrayals as objectifying and unrealistic, and they attempted to resist such messages. This discourse also highlighted a contrast between a relative lack of emotion at times, with expressions of appearance dissatisfaction which affected current behaviour.

The female objectification discourse echoes much prior research. The construct of women as portrayed in music videos as objectified has been found in many previous studies (Arnett, 2002; Dixon, Zhang & Conrad, 2009; Frisby & Aubrey, 2012; Wallis, 2011). In addition, numerous studies have found hip-hop and rap to be more objectifying toward women than other genres of music (DuRant et al., 1997; Frisby & Aubrey, 2012; Jones, 1997).

As indicated, participants of the current study recognised and objected to the Paradiso Girls self-objectification (see excerpt 9). Self-objectification in female artists' music videos has been found to be normative (Frisby & Aubrey, 2012). Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory is relevant in this context. Objectification theory is a comprehensive explanation of the way in which the sexual objectification of women in society has become normalised to the extent that women internalise an external view of their own bodies and incorporate this into their self-concept. It posits that women are continuously evaluating themselves according to dominant societal ideals which favour a (predominantly Western) male perspective on female attractiveness and consequently present themselves in a way which aligns with this. Thus, women are taught to see themselves as sex objects (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Indeed the female participants of this study described a habituation to the sexualisation of women to the extent that it was received with relatively little emotion and failed to elicit much comment.

The young women were not completely unaffected however, as two of the four groups discussed the thin ideal depictions. Bell et al. (2007) have previously found exposure to the thin ideal female body type as portrayed in popular music videos to have an anxiety inducing effect on participants which equated to an increase in body dissatisfaction. Although appearance satisfaction was not directly assessed following the music video viewing in the current study, it was evident the videos prompted discomfort for some of the participants. Comments about weight, diet and exercise characterised several discussions, indicating how quickly such idealised portrayals can exert negative effects on viewers.

Another key aspect of this discourse was the prominence of female vulnerability and sexual assault themes. As noted, the Cobra Starship video prompted many of these associations due to its depictions of drunk, stumbling women who were picked up by the artists and placed in a truck. Previous research has found that drunk women are commonly portrayed as "...at least partially responsible themselves for attracting abuse from men" (Day et al., 2004, p. 174). This view has been criticised for its contribution

toward “rape myth acceptance” (Abbey & Harnish, 1995; Day et al., 2004). There were elements of victim-blaming by participants, who positioned “attention-seeking” girls as knowingly going to clubs in which drink spiking is rife and stripper poles are present. However, this was inconsistent, with other participants discussing “sickos” giving drunk girls date rape drugs. These contradictions speak of multifaceted tensions surrounding young women’s conceptions of self (and other women) in a constantly changing, hypersexual contemporary society.

Despite these differing positions, all participants made a clear distinction between an acceptable feminine identity and an undesirable other femininity. This positioning replicates that found in the contemporary feminist discourse and other research (e.g. Griffin, Szmigin, Bengrey-Howell, Hackley, & Mistral, 2012; Lyons & Willott, 2008). It illustrates the pervasiveness of Madonna/whore constructions of femininity and ultimately signifies the dearth of alternate versions of femininity available to young women today.

### ***How do young women talk about drinking cultures after viewing these music videos?***

Participants discussed drinking cultures after viewing the music videos in a way that suggested resistance to the position of a normal youth drinker, drawing on a normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse. Much of the discussion from which this discourse was constructed replicated the findings of previous research. Some participants described a type of “determined drunkenness” which mimics that found by Measham and Brain (2005) where the intention of a night out is to get drunk in the first instance as opposed to other motivations such as to socialise or attend an event. However, despite research indicating that young people aged 16-25 years are more likely to drink excessively when compared to the rest of the population, participants in the current study were hesitant to take up the position of a normal youth drinker (MOH, 2009; Wells et al., 2006). It was notable that when the positioning turned to participants’ current drinking, they defined this according to “limits” and “boundaries,” indicating a level of awareness and self-control that was previously absent in their younger years.

This type of “controlled loss of control,” (Measham, 2002) has commonly featured in young people’s drinking narratives (Measham, 2002; Measham & Brain, 2005; Szmigin et al., 2008). It has been termed “calculated hedonism” by Szmigin et al.,

(2008) who purport this to be a more apt description than “binge drinking” due to its focus on pleasure and the practice of managing consumption at a desired level of intoxication. Participants in the current study alluded to such a state throughout the discussions. Much like the participants in the Szmigin et al., (2008) study, this demonstrates a tendency to frame their own drinking in positive terms.

Alongside a desire to avoid the negative connotations associated with the wider societal discourse surrounding troublesome youth binge drinkers, there are several other probable reasons for participants’ resistance to positioning themselves in this way. Firstly, as prior research has demonstrated, young female drinkers are stigmatised more so than young men (Day et al., 2004; DeVisser & McDonnell, 2012; Lyons & Willott, 2008). Gender double standards regarding alcohol consumption have been found to be pervasive. The key features of such relate to an enduring traditional definition of femininity which heralds feminine respectability, concern over physical appearance and weight gain, and fear of sexual assault (DeVisser & McDonnell, 2012). Elements of each of these features were found in this discourse and were additionally evident in the remaining discourses. For example, the focus on limits, boundaries and responsibility likely signifies the activation of traditional notions of feminine respectability (Day et al., 2004). Furthermore, the current study illustrates the primacy of appearance concerns for young women with many discussions featuring references to the social disapproval attached to being a drunk female in public. Therefore, the importance placed on others’ opinions supports the contention that a conventional version of femininity predominates despite contemporary freedoms.

The final likely explanation for resistance is the educational status held by most of the friendship groups. Participants included early childhood teachers, postgraduate psychology students and media students, positionings that may provide a greater awareness of the dangers of binge drinking, or alternatively suggest stronger attempts at impression management, or simply reflect the reality of less leisure time and thus a tighter rein on productivity-compromising activities. Whatever the individual rationale, for these young women invocation of the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse allowed them to reject the message that excessive drinking is entirely positive, as the reality of their personal experiences did not support this construction. Instead, they framed their current drinking behaviours as a careful and considered balance of pleasure, personal responsibilities and potential harm.

### ***The collective discourses and the Feminist Backlash Theory***

The discourses are now considered in relation to one another and the feminist backlash theory. There were numerous findings consistent with the notion of a backlash against feminism. For example, the anxiety-inducing effect of brief exposure to the thin ideal demonstrated how young, intelligent, successful women may have their confidence undermined in minutes. For one group, the effect was such that they declined to eat the snack foods provided for the session. The discourses as a whole demonstrate how young women are convinced of their freedom and equality yet the reality of lived experience contradicts this idealised notion in so many ways.

Initially, the contemporary feminist discourse appears positive. It asserts an agent position for all young women alongside gender equality in the core realms of appearance, behaviour, consumption, sexuality, education and career. However, the focus on autonomy and competition fosters individualistic attributions of blame which neglect existing cultural and systemic inequalities. More so, it discourages female collectivism which ultimately reinforces the status quo. Furthermore, when considered in relation to the discourses of gender inequality and female objectification, the contemporary feminist position becomes immediately untenable. Far from an abundance of choice and opportunity, it is evident that young women must exert an enormous amount of energy complying with the messages of what they ‘should’ be and avoiding what they ‘should not’ be at the expense of what they ‘could’ be. For example, young women should be slim, sexy and attractive. However they should not be slutty. They should drink and have fun. However they should not be drunk in public. They should want and enjoy sex. However they should not appear to be seeking it. Most importantly they should believe they are equal despite a proliferation of evidence to the contrary (Griffin et al., 2012).

When examined in relation to the other discourses, it becomes apparent that the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse operates at a higher level of functioning than it initially appears. Much like a desire to avoid the negative consequences associated with the slutty woman, the young women are seeking to avoid the negative connotations of being “that drunk girl.” What may actually underlie the distancing from what is constituted as ‘normal youth drinking’ may be the realisation as one gets older that despite post-feminist messages of empowerment, the reality of inhabiting a contemporary feminine identity is very different. There are numerous

contradictions, such as marketing portraying drinking as fun, normal and cool which encourage women to be overtly sexy in ways such as writhing around a pole. There are male friends and boyfriends prompting women to drink more, to be “a good bitch” to “hold (...) her piss really well.” However, there is stigma attached to being a drunk woman in public which is not paralleled for male behaviour. There is the ever present fear of drink spiking and sexual assault, and simply being present where alcohol is consumed is deemed an invitation for sexual harassment.

The reality of victim-blaming if one becomes the target of sexual assault was recently highlighted in the NZ media following allegations against the Roast Busters group (NZ Herald, 2013b). This case spurred a mass of heated public debate, a protest against the “rape culture” in NZ and an online petition which received over 100,000 signatures demanding justice for rape survivors and funding for rape support services. The public response to this issue is both a testament to the power of individuals and the media to prompt collective mobilisation in an attempt to effect change, whilst also a sad reflection of the reality of victim-blaming and lack of support for sexual assault victims up to this point.

The purported NZ rape culture further supports Faludi’s (1991, 1992) assertion of a backlash against feminism. The subsequent media coverage of the Roast Busters issue highlighted the depth of misogynistic views held by many prominent personalities such as Jackson and Tamihere who were both forced to (temporarily) stand down from their roles as radio presenters following comments made on air (Harley, 2013). Thus it is unsurprising that the current study of young female voices found elements of victim-blaming in the context of such pervasive societal discourses. As Faludi (1991, 1992) contended, women have been convinced to oppose their own cause.

### ***Implications***

This study produced several important points which have implications for those tasked with improving youth wellbeing. Firstly, the construction of youth binge drinking as normal confirms previous research on the topic. The notion of this period as a “phase” suggests an opportunity for intervention. A review of the current school health curriculum is beyond the scope of this work however in line with the recommendations put forth by one of the friendship groups, it is suggested that high

school students be educated about safe drinking habits as part of school health programmes.

Secondly, alongside assertions of gender equality was the finding that heavier female drinking is often influenced by pressure from male companions. If a reduction in youth drinking is sought, a key avenue for change is education of both sexes on the differing limits and effects of alcohol according to gender. This information may be incorporated into the health classes as suggested above.

Thirdly, it was evident that popular culture often portrays women in ways that have a potentially detrimental effect on young consumers. Positive female role models need to be encouraged and much more attention paid to the portrayal of women and gender relations in NZ media. On a related note, as the current public debate ensues, the rape culture in NZ needs to be challenged. Young people who have been sexually victimised need to be heard. Crucially, campaigns demonstrating consent need to be enacted and support services need adequate funding. Misogynistic views by prominent people need to be continually contested and individuals and agencies need to be held accountable for their failings. Music videos aired on NZ television should be pre-screened for endorsement of rape-supportive messages and the potential consequences of this material needs careful consideration.

Finally, alcohol marketing was found to be a ubiquitous part of youth culture. Participants demonstrated their familiarity with alcohol promotion in numerous ways and emphasised its appeal to the teen age group. The title of the Paradiso Girls song utilised for this research boldly markets the branded liquor, Patron Tequila. Therefore, it is reiterated in line with researchers and health advocates that action needs to be taken to restrict the amount of alcohol marketing in NZ.

### ***Limitations & reflections***

There were some limitations to this research and these are briefly considered alongside suggestions for future research. Firstly, the group discussions did not always flow readily due to two known reasons. One group were more acquaintances and workmates than friends and did not appear to have socialised much outside of this environment. Another group were old school friends of whom it was communicated later had fallen out at an earlier time and not adequately reconnected prior to the group session. A proposed solution to avoid this situation in future is to add the inclusion

criteria clause that participants are “a group of people who regularly socialise together.” This addition would hopefully encourage a more relaxed and inclusive conversational flow which draws more strongly on shared meanings whilst avoiding possible tensions that may have arisen from the two examples provided.

Secondly, the research was necessarily constrained in scope and availability of participants. Approximately three quarters held a university degree and a quarter were completing postgraduate qualifications. A wider range and number of participants with differing education and income levels would be more representative of the population group. Mixed gender groups would also be likely to produce different results, as would male versus female groups. It would be interesting to investigate whether the constructions found in this research are supported by young males or whether the responses would be altered in mixed gender groups.

Thirdly, during the friendship group process it was apparent that some questions appeared repetitive to participants as evidenced by brief periods of fatigue and inattention. It would help to reduce the number of questions for future groups by focussing on the most salient ones. In addition, exposure to the thin ideal as depicted in the video clips caused some participants to decline the cakes and biscuits on offer which contradicted the intention of the researcher to encourage relaxed participation. Research with the potential for such reactions should ensure healthier snacks are provided.

With regard to the music videos selected, the choice of three appeared adequate as less would have been unlikely to fully answer the study questions and more would likely have been too time consuming, causing participants to lose focus. However, participants appeared more engaged when they were familiar with the song and able to draw associations with other elements of popular culture as a result. The popularity, age and importance of the song in their own lives often prompted further discussion. Therefore, future work would fare well to select songs according to their recent popularity in addition to relevance to the topic.

My own role as a postgraduate psychology peer and researcher likely constrained some participant responses due to sensitivity around alcoholic consumption and the contrast with expectations of academic respectability. Similarly the presence of a video camera was obviously prominent for some participants, which may have contributed to an element of restraint. Proposals to alleviate these issues are to refrain from selecting academic peers as participants and not to include video recording. On a related note, the participants who chose to hold the groups at their home locations had

fuller discussions than those at the other locations, which suggests' they felt more relaxed. If possible, research should be held in participants' home environments.

Finally, although emotions were evident from the discussions, they were not often specifically stated despite the questions asking, "can you tell me a bit about how this song and clip makes you feel?" and "what is it about it that makes you feel like this?" A rephrasing of the questions or further questions on emotions may have helped the analysis. For example, the question, "if you think about the emotions this song prompts, could you define what they are?" or similar may have resulted in more emotive descriptions. A pilot study could assist in refining this in future.

### ***Future Directions***

There are numerous possible areas for further research. Importantly, there is a dearth of NZ research concerning music videos. It is suggested that more research is undertaken from an audience reception perspective on music videos to better understand young New Zealander's responses to this material and the effect it has on youth culture and gender identity. The most relevant study found in relation to the current thesis was the aforementioned UK research, which examined constructions of contemporary femininity in a culture of hyper-sexualisation and intoxication (Griffin et al., 2012). Although many common themes were evident between the UK study and the current thesis the former study did not include music videos as part of popular culture. Furthermore, despite similarities between NZ and UK popular youth culture, it is important for knowledge to be locally derived. It would also be beneficial for additional content analyses to be conducted which compare the amount of alcohol related and sexual imagery in NZ music videos versus international music. As mentioned, there is currently only one known NZ study of music videos, which was a content analysis that found international music to be significantly higher in alcohol content than NZ videos (Sloane et al., 2012). Although this study produced important findings, its most recent data was from 2010 and sexuality was not included in the analysis.

It is asserted that music videos as a core part of popular youth culture are particularly salient in considerations pertaining to alcohol marketing restrictions and proposed legislation. As such, videos which actively promote an anti-substance use message such as that mentioned by NZ artists, All My Brothers (2012) should also be utilised for audience reception work. Promotion of NZ and international music which

does not glamorise binge drinking and endorses healthy gender portrayals should be prioritised. It is almost an impossibility to police the internet, leaving young people readily able to access material that may be detrimental to their own wellbeing and that of society. However, this should not discourage attempts to change the current culture. If positive depictions are made more prominent, the likelihood of change will increase.

## ***Conclusions***

In summary, this study found support for the feminist backlash theory. In doing so, it demonstrated how a contemporary femininity is immersed in tensions and contradictions. While young women balance strenuous lifestyles including study, work, travel, social relationships, hobbies, household participation and maintenance, childcare, leisure and countless other responsibilities they are simultaneously bombarded with the message that society values their physical appearance above all else. Moreover, their appearance must conform to an increasingly narrow definition of attractiveness. The message is that young women should celebrate and appreciate the equal position they hold in relation to men and ignore the proliferation of evidence which contradicts this position. Young women should consume, consume, consume however since they choose this consumption for themselves they are ultimately responsible for any undesirable outcomes. If another woman happens to have chosen wrongly, she is to assume appropriate responsibility.

The discourses arising from this study illustrate how tenuous this position is. The empowerment referred to by the contemporary feminist discourse clashes with the inherent vulnerability demonstrated by the female objectification discourse. The illusion of equality is contrasted with the stark reality of lived female experience in the gender inequality discourse. The individualism of the contemporary feminist position is counteracted with the social disapproval of extending freedom beyond the teenage years in the normative teenage phase of experimentation discourse. These are but few examples of the numerous ways in which the discourses of the young women in this study express the ambiguity of contemporary femininity. This neo-liberal, post-feminist terrain is unforgiving. It is concluded alongside the views of Griffin and colleagues that the contemporary feminist position is “...almost impossible for girls or young women to inhabit” (2012, p.1). However, as NZ women demonstrated when they lead the world with the women’s vote, change is indeed possible.

## References

- Abbey, A., & Harnish, R. J. (1995). Perception of sexual intent: The role of gender, alcohol consumption, and rape supportive attitudes. *Sex Roles, 32*, 297-313. doi: 10.1007/BF01544599
- Adams, M. (2003). The reflexive self and culture: A critique. *British Journal of Sociology, 54*(2), 221-238. doi: 10.1080/0007131032000080212
- Advertising Standards Authority. (2013, January). *Code for advertising and promotion of alcohol*. Retrieved from: [http://www.asa.co.nz\\_code\\_promo\\_advert\\_liquor.php](http://www.asa.co.nz_code_promo_advert_liquor.php)
- Alcohol Concern. (2008). *Women and alcohol: A cause for concern?* [Factsheet]. Retrieved from: <http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/publications/factsheets/women-factsheet>
- All My Brothers. (2012). Find a way. [Recorded by All My Brothers: Kora, F., Powell, M., Campbell, B., Autonovich, D., Giles, E., Grant, C., & Robbins, M. Featuring Diamond, S., & Adeaze]. On digital single. NZ: Zeal Voice.
- Anderson, P., de Bruijn, A., Angus, K., Gordon, R., & Hastings, G. (2009). Impact of alcohol advertising and media exposure on adolescent alcohol use: A systematic review of longitudinal studies. *Alcohol and alcoholism, 44*(3), 229-243. doi: 10.1093/alcalc/agn115
- Aubrey, J. S., & Frisby, C. M. (2011). Sexual objectification in music videos: A content analysis comparing gender and genre. *Mass Communication and Society, 14*(4), 475-501. doi: 10.1080/15205436.2010.513468
- Aubrey, J. S., Hopper, K. M., & Mbure, W. G. (2011). Check that body! The effects of sexually objectifying music videos on college men's sexual beliefs. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, 55*(3), 360-379. doi: 10.1080/08838151.2011.597469
- Babor, T., Caetano, R., Casswell, S., Edwards, G., Giesbrecht, N., Graham, K., ...Rossow, I. (2010). *Alcohol: No ordinary commodity* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Baker, J. (2010). Claiming volition and evading victimhood: Post-feminist obligations for young women. *Feminism and Psychology, 20*(2), 186-204. doi: 10.1177/0959353509359142
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*.

- Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A., & Walter, M. (1965). Modifications of self-imposed delay of reward through exposure to live and symbolic models. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2(5), 698-705. doi: 10.1037/h0022655
- Bang Showbiz. (2013, October 13). Sinead tells Miley: "Don't prostitute yourself." *MSN New Zealand Ltd*. Retrieved from: <http://www.entertainment.msn.co.nz/article.aspx?id=8733576>
- Bell, B. T., Lawton, R., & Dittmar, H. (2007). The impact of thin models in music videos on adolescent girls' body dissatisfaction. *Body Image*, 4, 137-145. doi: 10.1016/j.bodyim.2007.02.003
- Bragg, S., & Buckingham, D. (2009). Too much too young?: Young people, sexual media and learning. In F. Attwood (Ed.), *Mainstreaming sex* (pp. 129-146). New York, NY: I.B. Tauris & Co.
- Brain, K. (2000). *Youth, alcohol and the emergence of the post-modern alcohol order*. (Occasional paper no. 1). London: Institute of Alcohol Studies.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Briscoes. (2011). [Playboy bath towel advertisement]. Retrieved from: <http://www.briscoes.co.nz/Product/1001230/Playboy-Logo-Bath-Towel>
- British Medical Association. Board of Science. (2009). *Under the influence: The damaging effect of alcohol marketing on young people*. Retrieved from: [http://www.alcohollearningcentre.org.uk/\\_library/undertheinfluence\\_tcm41-1900621.pdf](http://www.alcohollearningcentre.org.uk/_library/undertheinfluence_tcm41-1900621.pdf)
- Buellens, K., & Van Den Bulck, J. (2007). News, music videos and action movie exposure and adolescents' intentions to take risks in traffic. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 40, 349-356. doi: 10.1016/j.aap.2007.007.002
- Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London, England: Routledge.
- Cabinet Office. (2004). *Alcohol harm reduction strategy for England*. London, England: Strategy Unit. Retrieved from: <http://www.strategy.gov.uk>
- Carpenter, R., Fishlock, A., Mulroy, A., Oxley, B., Russell, K., Salter, C., Williams, N., & Heffernan, C. (2007). After 'unit 1421': An exploratory study into female students' attitudes and behaviours towards binge drinking at Leeds University. *Journal of Public Health*, 30(1), 8-13. doi: 10.1093/pubmed/fdm083

- Cashell-Smith, M.L., Connor, J.L., & Kypri, K. (2007). Harmful effects of alcohol on sexual behaviour in a New Zealand university community. *Drug and Alcohol Review, 26*, 645-651. doi: 10.1080/09595230701613577
- Casswell, S. (2004). Alcohol brands in young people's everyday lives: New developments in marketing. *Alcohol and alcoholism, 39(6)*, 471-476. doi: 10.1093/alcalc/agh101
- Casswell, S., & Maxwell, A. (2005). Regulation of alcohol marketing: A global view. *Journal of Public Health Policy, 26(3)*, 343-358. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.jphp.3200040
- Casswell, S., Pledger, M., & Pratap, S. (2002). Trajectories of drinking from 18-26 years: Identification and prediction. *Addiction, 97*, 1427-1437. doi: 10.1046/j.1360-0443.2002.00220.x
- Casswell, S., Stewart, L., & Duignan, P. (1993). The negotiation of New Zealand alcohol policy in a decade of stabilized consumption and political change: The role of research. *Addiction, 88 (supplement)*, 9-17. doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.1993.tb02157.x
- Casswell, S., & Zhang, J.F. (1997). Access to alcohol from licensed premises during adolescence: A longitudinal study. *Addiction, 92(6)*, 737-745. Retrieved from: <http://www.eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=ae4fc7a7-38a5-48ab-bd65-016fd257cddc%40sessionmgr114&hid=107>
- Casswell, S., & Zhang, J.F. (1998). Impact of liking for advertising and brand allegiance on drinking and alcohol-related aggression: A longitudinal study. *Addiction, 93(8)*, 1209-1217. doi: 10.1046/j.1360-0443.1998.93812099.x
- Chen, M. J., Grube, J. W., Bersamin, M., Waiters, E., & Keefe, D. B. (2005). Alcohol advertising: What makes it attractive to youth? *Journal of Health Communication: International Perspectives, 10(6)*, 553-565. doi: 10.1080/10810730500228904
- Cobra Starship. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved November 21, 2013, from [http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cobra\\_Starship](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cobra_Starship)
- Collins, S. (2012, November 14). Girls take lead in teen binge-drinking-study. *The New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=6&objectid=10847267](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/news/article.cfm?c_id=6&objectid=10847267)
- Connor, J., Broad, J., Rehm, J., Vander Hoorn, S., & Jackson, R. (2005). Patterns of drinking and estimates of alcohol-related mortality in New Zealand. *Contemporary Drug Problems, 32*, 527-546. Retrieved from:

- <http://www.eds.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=38&sid=504708f1-634d-4427-b14f-92d518dd9f06@sessionmgr198&hid=107>
- Connor, J., Gray, A., & Kypri, K. (2010). Drinking history, current drinking and problematic sexual experiences among university students. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 34*(5), 487-494. doi: 10.1111/j.1753-6405.2010.00595.x
- Cross, I., & Woodruff, G. E. (2009). Music as a communicative medium. *The Prehistory of language, 11*, 77. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199545872.003.0005
- Day, K., Gough, B., & McFadden, M. (2004). "Warning! Alcohol can seriously damage your feminine health." *Feminist Media Studies, 4*(2), 165-183. doi: 10.1080/1468077042000251238
- De Visser, R. O., & McDonnell, E. J. (2012). 'That's okay. He's a guy': A mixed-methods study of gender double-standards for alcohol use. *Psychology and Health, 27*(5), 618-639. doi: 10.1080/08870446.2011.617444
- Dixon, T. L., Zhang, Y., & Conrad, K. (2009). Self-esteem, misogyny and afrocentricity: An examination of the relationship between rap music consumption and African American perceptions. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 12*(3), 345-360. doi: 10.1177/1368430209102847
- Drinking Cultures, (n.d.). *Drinking cultures info*. Retrieved from: <http://www.drinkingcultures.info>
- Du Rant, R. H., Rome, E. S., Rich, M., Allred, E., Emans, S. J., & Woods, E. R. (1997). Tobacco and alcohol use behaviours portrayed in music videos: A content analysis. *American Journal of Public Health, 87* (7), 1131-1135. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.87.7.1131
- Engels, R. C. M. E., Hermans, R., van Baaren, R. B., Hollenstein, T., & Bot, S. M. (2009). Alcohol portrayal on television affects actual drinking behaviour. *Alcohol and alcoholism, 44*(3), 244-249. doi: 10.1093/alcalc/agn003
- Faludi, S. (1991). *Backlash: The undeclared war against American women*. New York, NY: Crown.
- Faludi, S. (1992). *Backlash: The undeclared war against women*. London, England: Chatto and Windus.
- Feld, S., & Fox, A. A. (1994). Music and language. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 23*, 25-53. doi: 10.1146/annurev.an.23.100194.000325
- Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations, 7*(2),

- 117-140. doi: 10.1177/001872675400700202
- Font Talent. (2013, June 28). NZ ad women still face big salary gap. *Admedia and Fastline*. Retrieved from: <http://www.admedia.co.nz/?p=14354>
- Francis, B., & Skelton, C. (2008). 'The self-made self': Analysing the potential contribution to the field of gender and education of theories that disembled selfhood. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 29(3), 311-323. doi: 10.1080/01596300802259095
- Fredrickson, B. L., & Roberts, T. (1997). Objectification theory: Toward understanding women's lived experiences and mental health risks. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21, 173-206. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.1997.tb00108.x
- Frisby, C. M., & Aubrey, J. S. (2012). Race and genre in the use of sexual objectification in female artists' music videos. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 23(1), 66-87. doi:10.1080/10646175.2012.641880
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Giddens, A. (1994). *Beyond left and right: The future of radical politics*. Cambridge, England: Polity Press.
- Giddens, A. (1998). *The third way: The renewal of social democracy*. Cambridge, England: Polity Press.
- Gill, R. (2007). Postfeminist media culture: Elements of a sensibility. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 10(2), 147-166. doi: 10.1177/1367549407075898
- Grant Thornton IBR. (2012). *Women in senior management*. Retrieved from: <http://www.grantthornton.co.nz/Assets/documents/pubSeminars/IBR-2012-women-in-senior-management.pdf>
- Greco, P. (2012). Why Magic Mike isn't quite a feminist home run. [Review of the movie *Magic Mike*, 2012]. *Vulture.com*. Retrieved from: <http://www.vulture.com/2012/07/why-magic-mike-isnt-a-feminist-home-run.html>
- Griffin, C., Bengrey-Howell, A., Hackley, C., Mistral, W., & Szmigin, I. (2009). 'Every time I do it I absolutely annihilate myself': Loss of (self-) consciousness and loss of memory in young people's drinking narratives. *Sociology*, 43(3), 457-476. doi: 10.1177/0038038509103201
- Griffin, C., Szmigin, I., Bengrey-Howell, A., Hackley, C., & Mistral, W. (2012). Inhabiting the contradictions: Hypersexual femininity and the culture of intoxication among young women in the UK. *Feminism and Psychology*, 1-23. doi: 10.1177/0959353512468860

- Gruber, E. L., Thau, H. M., Hill, D. L., Fisher, D. A., & Grube, J. W. (2005). Alcohol, tobacco and illicit substances in music videos: A content analysis of prevalence and genre. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 37*, 81-83. doi: 10.106/j.jadohealth.2004.02.034
- Gupta, P. B., & Gould, S. J. (1997). Consumers' perceptions of the ethics and acceptability of product placements in movies: Product category and individual differences. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising, 19(1)*, 37-50. doi:10.1080/10641734.1997.10505056
- Hanby, T. (1999). Brands- dead or alive? (Qualitative research for the 21<sup>st</sup> century) The changing conception of brands. *Journal of the Market Research Society, 41(1)*, 7-7. Retrieved from: [http://www.enclave.massey.ac.nz/iii/enclave/record/C\\_Rb1659729;jsessionid=92E25A80E35822AFC1C1826A2142E94?lang=eng](http://www.enclave.massey.ac.nz/iii/enclave/record/C_Rb1659729;jsessionid=92E25A80E35822AFC1C1826A2142E94?lang=eng)
- Hanewinkel, R., & Sargent, J. D. (2009). Longitudinal study of exposure to entertainment media and alcohol use among German adolescents. *Paediatrics, 123(3)*, 989-995. doi:10.1542/peds.2008-1465
- Hardcastle, K. A., Hughes, K., Sharples, O., & Bellis, M. A. (2013). Trends in alcohol portrayal in popular music: A longitudinal analysis of the UK charts. *Psychology of Music, 1-12*. doi: 10.1177/0305735613500701
- Harley, K. (2013, November 11). Willie, JT off-air over Roast Busters comments. *3 News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.3news.co.nz/Willie-JT-off-air-over-Roast-Busters-comments/tabid/423/articleID/320852/Default.aspx>
- Hastings, G. (2009). *"They'll drink bucket loads of the stuff": An analysis of internal alcohol industry advertising documents*. The Alcohol Education and Research Council. Retrieved from: [http://www.aerc.org.uk/documents/pdfs/finalReports/AERC\\_FinalReport\\_0060.pdf](http://www.aerc.org.uk/documents/pdfs/finalReports/AERC_FinalReport_0060.pdf)
- Haywood, L. (2010, June 22). Plunge girl in booze session. *The Sun news*. Retrieved from: <http://www.thesun.uk/sol/homepage/news/article1188911.ece>
- Health Promotion Agency. (n.d.a). *Glossary terms*. Retrieved from: <http://www.alcohol.org.nz/glossary>
- Health Promotion Agency. (n.d.b). *Low risk drinking advice*. Retrieved from: <http://www.alcohol.org.nz/alcohol-you/your-drinking-okay/low-risk-alcohol-drinking-advice>
- Health Promotion Agency. (2013). *Annual report*. Retrieved from: <http://www.parliament.nz/resource/001968156>
- Holmila, M., & Raitasalo, K. (2005). Gender differences in drinking: Why do they still

- exist? *Addiction*, 100, 1763-1769. doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.2005.01249.x
- Hubbard, K. (2012). Not so 'Magic Mike': Are women becoming the men we despise? [Review of the movie *Magic Mike*, 2012]. *Women Well Loved*. Retrieved from: <http://www.womenwellloved.wordpress.com/2012/07/02/not-so-magic-mike-are-women-becoming-the-men-we-despise/>
- Huckle, T., Pledger, M., & Casswell, S. (2006). Trends in alcohol-related harms and offences in a liberalized alcohol environment. *Addiction*, 101, 232-240. doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.2005.01326.x
- Huckle, T., Sweetsur, P., Moyes, S., & Casswell, S. (2008). Ready to drinks are associated with heavier drinking patterns among young females. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 27, 398-403. doi: 10.1080/09595230802093802
- Human Rights Commission. (2012). *New Zealand census of women's participation*. (5<sup>th</sup> census report). Retrieved from: <http://www.hrc.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/web-census.pdf>
- Jackson, S. M., & Cram, F. (2003). Disrupting the sexual double standard: Young women's talk about heterosexuality. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 42, 113-127. doi: 10.1348/014466603763276153
- Jackson, M. C., Hastings, G., Wheeler, C., Eadie, D., & MacKintosh, A. M. (2000). Marketing alcohol to young people: Implications for industry regulation and research policy. *Addiction*, 95(12), 597-608. doi: 10.1046/j.1360-0443.95.12s4.11.x
- Jackson, C., & Tinkler, P. (2007). 'Ladettes' and 'Modern girls': 'Troublesome' young femininities. *The Sociological Review*, 55(2), 251-272. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-954X.2007.00704.x
- Jackson, S., & Vaares, T. (2011). Media 'sluts': 'Tween' girls' negotiations of postfeminist sexual subjectivities in popular culture. In R. Gill & C. Scharff (Eds.), *New femininities: Postfeminism, neoliberalism and subjectivity* (pp. 134-146). Retrieved from: <http://www.ebib.com>
- Johnstone, B. (2008). *Discourse analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Jones, K. (1997). Are rap videos more violent? Style differences and the prevalence of sex and violence in the age of MTV. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 8(4), 343-356. doi:10.1080/10646179709361765
- Kalof, L. (1993). Dilemmas of femininity: Gender and the social construction of sexual imagery. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 34(4), 639-651. doi: 10.1111/j.1533-8525.1993.tb00110.x

- Karakowsky, L., McBey, K., & Miller, D. L. (2004). Gender, perceived competence, and power displays: Examining verbal interruptions in a group context. *Small Group Research, 35*(4), 407-439. doi: 10.1177/1046496404263728
- Lambiase, J. (2003). Codes of online sexuality: Celebrity, gender and marketing on the web. *Sexuality and Culture, 57*-78. doi: 10.1007/s12119-003-10003-9
- Law Commission. (2009). *Alcohol in our lives: An issues paper on the reform of New Zealand's liquor laws* (Issues paper. 15). Retrieved from: [http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/2009/07/Publication\\_154\\_437\\_Alcohol%20in%20our%lives%20-%20Issues%20Paper%2015.pdf](http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/2009/07/Publication_154_437_Alcohol%20in%20our%lives%20-%20Issues%20Paper%2015.pdf)
- Local Government (Alcohol Reform) Amendment Act, No. 121. (2012). Retrieved from: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2012/0121/latest/DLM4925705.html>
- Longhurst, B. (2007). *Popular music and society* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Lyons, A. C., Dalton, S. I., & Hoy, A. (2006). 'Hardcore drinking': Portrayals of alcohol consumption in young women's and men's magazines. *Journal of Health Psychology, 11*(2), 223-232. doi: 10.1177/1359105306061183
- Lyons, A. C., & Willott, S. A. (2008). Alcohol consumption, gender identities and women's changing social positions. *Sex Roles, 59*, 694-712. doi: 10.1007/s11199-008-9475-6
- Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Act, no. 20. (2013). Retrieved from: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2013/0020/latest/DLM4505003.html>
- Mason, C. (2012, November 12). Gender pay gap widens in New Zealand. *The New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=3&objectid=10846854](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=10846854)
- Massey University. (2006). *Code of ethical conduct for research, teaching and evaluations involving human participants*. Retrieved from: <http://www.massey.ac.nz>
- McCreanor, T., Greenaway, A., Moewaka Barnes, H., Borell, S., & Gregory, A. (2005). Youth identity formation and contemporary alcohol marketing. *Critical Public Health, 15*(3), 251-262. doi: 10.1080/09581590500372345
- McCreanor, T., Lyons, A., Griffin, C., Goodwin, I., Moewaka Barnes, H., & Hutton, F. (2013). Youth drinking cultures, social networking and alcohol marketing: Implications for public health. *Critical Public Health, 23*(1), 110-120. doi: 10.1080/09581596.2012.748883
- McDowell, L. (2004). Work, workfare, work/life balance and an ethic of care. *Progress*

- in Human Geography*, 28(2), 145-163. doi: 10.1191/0309132504ph478oa
- McEwan, B., Campbell, M., Lyons, A., & Swain, D. (2013). *Pleasure, profit and pain: Alcohol in New Zealand*. Hamilton, NZ: Waikato Print.
- McEwan, B., Campbell, M., & Swain, D. (2010). New Zealand culture of intoxication: Local and global influences. *New Zealand Sociology*, 25(2), 15-37. Retrieved from: <http://www.eds.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&dis=a32cdda0-cbdd-4238-8795-b5d55c1765d@sessionmgr4004&hid=4103>
- McGee, R., Ketchel, J., & Reeder, A. I. (2007). Alcohol imagery on New Zealand television. *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, 2(6). doi: 10.1186/1747-597X-2-6
- McK Feminist University. (2012). Feminist review: Magic Mike. [Review of the movie *Magic Mike*, 2012]. Retrieved from: <http://mck-feministuniversity.tumblr.com/post/26723931726/feminist-review-magic-mike>
- McPherson, M. (2010). Women in senior management- why not? *Labour, Employment and Work in New Zealand*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ojs.victoria.ac.nz?LEW/article/view/1718/1561>
- McPherson, M., Casswell, S., & Pledger, M. (2004). Gender convergence in alcohol consumption and related problems: Issues and outcomes from comparisons of New Zealand survey data. *Addiction*, 99, 738-748. doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.2004.00758.x
- McRobbie, A. (1999). *In the culture society: Art, fashion and popular music*. London, England: Routledge.
- McRobbie, A. (2000). *Feminism and youth culture*. Hong Kong: Macmillan Press.
- McRobbie, A. (2004). Post-feminism and popular culture. *Feminist Media Studies*, 4(3), 255-264. doi: 10.1080/1468077042000309937
- Measham, F. (2002). Doing gender- doing drugs: Conceptualising the gendering of drugs cultures. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 29, 335-373. Retrieved from: <http://www.eds.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=e63959b7-dc5b-4a5a-a4d4-7dbacf69777a@sessionmgr4005&hid=4110>
- Measham, F. (2007). The turning tides of intoxication: Young people's drinking in Britain in the 2000's. *Health Education*, 108(3), 207-222. doi: 10.1108/09654280810867088
- Measham, F., & Brain, K. (2005). 'Binge' drinking, British alcohol policy and the new culture of intoxication. *Crime Media Culture*, 1(3), 262-283. doi:

10.1177/1741659005057641

Ministry of Education. (2013). Education counts. *Statistics: Retention and achievement*. (Gaining qualifications spreadsheet). Retrieved from:

[http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/tertiary\\_education/retention\\_and\\_achievement](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/tertiary_education/retention_and_achievement)

Ministry of Health. (2009). *Alcohol use in New Zealand: Key results of the 2007/08 New Zealand alcohol and drug use survey*. Wellington, NZ: Ministry of Health.

Ministry of Justice. (2012). Sale and supply of alcohol, *What's changing and when* [Factsheet]. Retrieved from: <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/sale-and-supply-of-alcohol/PDF%20-%20Whats%20changing%20-%20Factsheet%20%2019%20Dec%202012.pdf>

Montemurro, B., & McClure, B. (2005). Changing gender norms for alcohol consumption: Social drinking and lowered inhibitions at bachelorette parties. *Sex Roles*, 52(5/6), 279-288. doi: 10.1007/s11199-005-2672-7

Moselen-Sloog, G. (2013, July 16). Girls drinking to match the boys. *3 News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.3news.co.nz/Girls-drinking-to-match-the-boys/tabid/423/articleID/304991/Default.aspx>

Mosher, J. F., & Johnsson, D. (2005). Flavoured alcoholic beverages: An international marketing campaign that targets youth. *Journal of Public Health Policy*, 26(3), 326-342. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.jphp.3200037

Music.net.nz. (n.d.). The official New Zealand music chart [Top 40 chart information for Katy Perry song Last Friday night]. Retrieved from:

<http://www.music.net.nz/charts/s63934/katy-perry-last-friday-night-tgif>

Nash, K. (2010, June 27). Kids' pole antics just 'a sport.' *The New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10654748](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10654748)

NZ Drug Foundation, Alcohol reform: Let's get it right. (n.d.). *Advertising and the alcohol reform bill* [Factsheet 3]. Retrieved from: <http://www.drugfoundation.org.nz/alcohol-reform>

NZ Herald. (2013a, August 28). Miley accused of racism after 'reckless' MTV show. *NZ Herald*. Retrieved from: [www.nzherald.co.nz/music/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=264&objectid=11115582](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/music/news/article.cfm?c_id=264&objectid=11115582)

NZ Herald. (2013b, November 17). Roast Busters. *NZ Herald*. Retrieved from: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=11158653](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11158653)

- O'Brien, S. (1997). D.I.Y or die: Is there a young feminist backlash in Australia? *Social Alternatives*, 16(4), 26-29. Retrieved from: <http://www.socialalternatives.com/>
- O'Connor, S. (2013). *Open letter to Miley Cyrus*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sineadoconnor.com>
- O'Hagan, J., Robinson, G., & Whiteside, E. (1993). *Alcohol and drug problems: Handbook for health professionals*. Wellington, NZ: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Paradiso Girls. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved November 21, 2013, from [http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradiso\\_Girls](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradiso_Girls)
- Pickard, M., Bates, L., Dorian, M., Greig, H., & Saint, D. (2000). Alcohol and drug use in second-year medical students at the University of Leeds. *Medical Education*, 34, 148-150. doi: 10.1046/j.1365-2923.2000.00491.x
- Primack, B. A., Dalton, M. A., Carroll, M. V., Agarwal, A. A., & Fine, M. J. (2008). Content analysis of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs in popular music. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 162(2), 169-175. doi: 10.1001/archpediatrics.2007.27
- Quigg, S. L., & Want, S. C. (2010). Highlighting media modifications: Can a television commercial mitigate the effects of music videos on female appearance satisfaction? *Body Image*, 8, 135-142. doi: 10.1016/j.bodyim.2010.11.008
- Robinson, T. N., Chen, H. L., & Killen, J. D. (1998). Television and music video exposure and risk of adolescent alcohol use. *Paediatrics*, 102(5), 1-6. doi: 10.1542/peds.102.5.e54
- Rolfe, A., Orford, J., & Dalton, S. (2009). Women, alcohol and femininity: A discourse analysis of women heavy drinkers' accounts. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 14(2), 326-335. doi: 10.1177/1359105308100217
- Room, R., Babor, T., & Rehm, J. (2005). Alcohol and public health. *The Lancet.com*, 365, 519-530. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(05)66681-0
- Rose, N. (1999). *Governing the soul: The shaping of the private self*. New York, NY: Free Association Books.
- Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act, No. 120. (2012). Retrieved from: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2012/0120/latest/DLM3339333.html>
- Shelton, L. (2011, December 17). Liquor store not wanted opposite Newtown School; Community united against it. *Wellington Scoop*. Retrieved from: <http://www.wellington.scoop.co.nz/?p=41240>

- Shuker, R. (2008). New Zealand popular music, government policy, and cultural identity. *Popular Music*, 27(2), 271-287. doi: 10.1017/S0261143008004066
- Slack, A., Nana, G., Webster, M., Stokes, F., & Wu, J. (2009). *Costs of harmful alcohol and other drug use* (Final report). Wellington, NZ: Business and Economic Research Limited.
- Sloane, K., Wilson, N., & Gunasekara, F. I. (2012). A content analysis of the portrayal of alcohol in televised music videos in New Zealand: Changes over time. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 1-6. doi: 10.1111/j.1465-3362.2012.00477.x
- Smith, L. A., & Foxcroft, D.R. (2009). The effect of alcohol advertising, marketing and portrayal on drinking behaviour in young people: Systematic review of prospective cohort studies. *BMC Public Health*, 9(51), 1471-2458. doi: 10.1186/1471-2458/9/51
- Summary Offences (Alcohol Reform) Amendment Act, No. 122. (2012). Retrieved from: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2012/0122/latest/DLM4925805.html>
- Sussman, S., Pokhrel, P., Ashmore, R. D., & Brown, B. B. (2007). Adolescent peer group identification and characteristics: A review of the literature. *Addictive Behaviours*, 32, 1602-1627. doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2006.11.108
- Sutherland, I., & Willner, P. (1998). Patterns of alcohol, cigarette and illicit drug use in English adolescents. *Addiction*, 93(8), 1199-1208. doi: 10.1046/j.1360-0443.1998.93811998.x
- Szmigin, I., Griffin, C., Mistral, W., Bengrey-Howell, A., Weale, L., & Hackley, C. (2008). Re-framing 'binge drinking' as calculated hedonism: Empirical evidence from the UK. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 19, 359-366. doi: 10.1016/j.drugpo.2007.08.009
- Tapaleao, V. (2013, July 11). Locals win liquor store fight. *NZ Herald*. Retrieved from: [http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=10896455](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10896455)
- 3 News. (2007, May 26). Marchers protest number of liquor outlets in Manukau. *3 News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.3news.co.nz/Marchers-protest-number-of-liquor-outlets-in-Manukau/tabid/423/articleID/27736/Default.aspx>
- 3 News. (2012, August 9). Divisions in Labour over marriage equality. *3 News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.3news.co.nz/Divisions-in-Labour-over-marriage-equality/tabid/1607/articleID/264733/Default.aspx>
- Tiggeman, M., & Slater, A. (2003). Thin ideals in music television: A source of social comparison and body dissatisfaction. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 11(5), 48-58. doi: 10.1002/erv.502

- Travis, C. B., Meginnis, K. L., & Bardari, K. M. (2000). Beauty, sexuality, and identity: The social control of women. In C. B. Travis & J. W. White (Eds), *Sexuality, society and feminism* (pp. 237-272). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Turner, J. S. (2011). Sex and the spectacle of music videos: An examination of the portrayal of race and sexuality in music videos. *Sex Roles, 64*, 173-191. doi: 10.1007/s11199-010-9766-6
- TVNZ. (2012, May 2). Alcohol reform plan outlines only 'minor' changes. *TVNZ*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tvnz.co.nz/national-news/alcohol-reform-plan-outlines-only-minor-changes-4860607>
- TVNZ. (2011, February 8). Binge drinking becoming worse among young women. *TVNZ*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tvnz.co.nz/health-news/binge-drinking-becoming-worse-among-young-women-4016445>
- Van Den Bulck, J., & Buellens, L. (2005). Television and music video exposure and adolescent alcohol use while going out. *Alcohol and Alcoholism, 40*(3), 249-253. doi: 10.1093/alcalc/agh139
- Vena, J. (2011, August 17). Katy Perry ties Michael Jackson singles record. *MTV News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.mtv.com/news/articles/1669214/katy-perry-michael-jackson-singles-record.jhtml>
- Walkerdine, V. (2003). Reclassifying upward mobility: Femininity and the neo-liberal subject. *Gender and Education, 15*(3), 237-248. doi:10.1080/0954025032000103178
- Wallis, C. (2011). Performing gender: A content analysis of gender display in music videos. *Sex Roles, 64*, 160-172. doi: 10.1007/s11199-010-9814-2
- Ward, L. M., Hansbrough, E., & Walker, E. (2005). Contributions of music video exposure to black adolescents' gender and sexual schemas. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 20*, 143-166. doi: 10.1177/074355804271135
- Wells, E. J., Baxter, J., & Schaaf, D. (2006). *Substance use disorders in Te Rau Hinengaro: The New Zealand mental health survey: Final report*. Wellington, NZ: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2007). *Discourse analysis*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Willig, C. (Ed.). (1999). *Applied discourse analysis: Social and psychological interventions*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Willott, S., & Lyons, A. C. (2011). Consuming male identities: Masculinities, gender relations and alcohol consumption in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Journal of Community*

- and *Applied Social Psychology*, [wileyonlinelibrary.com]. doi: 10.1002/casp.1115
- Wolf, N. (2002). *The beauty myth: How images of beauty are used against women*. New York, NY: Perrenial.
- Wood, L. A. (2000). *Doing discourse analysis: Methods for studying action in talk and text*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Wright, P. J. (2009). Sexual socialisation messages in mainstream entertainment mass media: A review and synthesis. *Sexuality and Culture*, 13, 181-200. doi: 10.1007/s12119-009-9050-5
- Young, A. M., Morales, M., McCabe, S. E., Boyd, C. J., & D'Arcy, H. (2005). Drinking like a guy: Frequent binge drinking among undergraduate women. *Substance Use and Abuse*, 40, 1532-2491. doi: 10.1081/JA-200048464
- Zeisler, A. (2008). *Feminism and pop culture*. Berkely, CA: Seal Press.

## Appendix A



### **Popular culture: Music, femininity and alcohol Research invitation**

You are invited to take part in a study which aims to explore current youth culture by asking young women to discuss popular music videos containing alcohol.

#### **Researcher**

My name is Shobna Naomi. I am undertaking this research as part of the requirements for my Master of Science degree through the School of Psychology at Massey University.

#### **First step**

The study criteria are that participants are English-speaking females, between the ages of 18-25 years old.

#### **Next step**

If you are interested in taking part, you are asked to enlist 2-5 of your friends who also fit the criteria and are interested in participating alongside you. I will provide you with additional invitation/information sheets to give to these friends. All participants will be given a \$30 music or petrol voucher as a thank you for their participation.

#### **The research itself**

A focus group will be held, consisting of you and the friends who have agreed to take part. As part of the focus group you will watch 3 music videos and I will ask you and your friends some questions about what you think of them. Snacks and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided. The session is expected to take approximately 1-1.5 hours.

The group discussion will be video recorded, and later transcribed (by myself) to text, to ensure the discussion is accurately transcribed. I will keep all participants' personal information confidential. Therefore at the start of the group discussion, I'll ask all participants to select a pseudonym in place of your real name and also to sign an agreement not to disclose any details of the focus group discussion.

#### **Research date & location**

The focus groups will take place July-August at the Massey University, Albany campus at a time and day convenient for all participants in your group of friends.

#### **Confidentiality**

If you agree to take part you will be asked to sign an informed consent form. This will be kept securely at Massey University. No contact information will be kept for friends you refer who elect not to participate.

During the study, the video will be securely stored by the researcher. The pseudonyms you select will be used on the transcript. The video will then be securely stored at Massey University, and accessible only to the researcher and her supervisor Dr Antonia Lyons. No personally identifying information will be used in transcripts, analysis, findings or reports. The video footage and your personal information will be destroyed upon completion of the research process.

### **Support**

There are no adverse effects anticipated as a result of your participation in this research, however should any issues arise you will be provided with contact details for a number of support agencies able to assist.

### **The end result**

Once the research is complete, you will be provided with a summary of the study's findings via your preferred method of contact (email or post). You are welcome to contact me with progress queries at any time.

### **Participant's rights**

Please note: You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded

### **Contacts**

Thank you kindly for your consideration to participate in this research, please don't hesitate to contact either me or my supervisors for any questions you may have:

Shobna Naomi  
Phone: 0211691087  
Email: [shobna@vodafone.net.nz](mailto:shobna@vodafone.net.nz)

Supervisor: Dr Antonia Lyons  
Phone: 09 414 0800 Extn: 62164  
Email: [a.lyons@massey.ac.nz](mailto:a.lyons@massey.ac.nz)

Supervisor: Tim McCreanor  
Phone: 09 414 0800 Extn: 41368  
Email: [t.n.mccreanor@massey.ac.nz](mailto:t.n.mccreanor@massey.ac.nz)

*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact: Professor John O'Neill, Director: (Research Ethics). Ph: (06) 350 5249 Email: [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)*

## Appendix B



### **Popular culture: Music, femininity and alcohol**

### **Friendship Group Confidentiality Agreement**

I .....(Full name- printed)  
agree to keep all information discussed within the focus group on  
Popular culture: Music, femininity and alcohol confidential.

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact: Professor John O'Neill, Director: (Research Ethics). Ph: (06) 350 5249 Email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz*

## Appendix C



### **Popular culture: Music, femininity and alcohol**

#### **Friendship Group Participant Consent Form**

- I have read the invitation/information sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me
- My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time
- I understand that any personal information I provide will be kept confidential to the research and the research supervisor
- I agree to the focus group being video and sound recorded
- I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the invitation/information sheet

#### **Please complete this section:**

Your full name

.....

Your signature

.....

Email address

.....

Date

.....

*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact: Professor John O'Neill, Director: (Research Ethics). Ph: (06) 350 5249 Email: humanethics@massey.ac.nz*

## **Appendix D**

### **Research questions/prompts**

#### **Following each song:**

1. How would you describe this song?  
How would you describe the videoclip?  
What do you think of it?  
What jumps out at you?  
Is there anything you particularly like or don't like about it? Why?  
What do you think of the lyrics?  
  
What do you think of the artist/s?  
What do you think of the images?
2. Can you tell me a bit about how this song & clip makes you feel?  
What is it about it that makes you feel like this?  
Do you think the song & clip makes other people feel that way? Why or why not?
3. Can you tell me how this song portrays young women? Why?  
What do you think is appealing about this? (as in why do they do it?)  
What do you think about the way young women are portrayed in this song?
4. Can you tell me how these portrayals are similar to young women in everyday life? Or if they're not, why not?

#### **Following all 3 songs:**

#### **In thinking about all 3 songs:**

5. What sorts of messages do you think the songs put across?  
Can you tell me about them?  
What sorts of messages do you think the videoclips put across?  
Can you tell me about them?  
Do you think these messages would be the same for all audiences? How might they vary? Can you explain?
6. Can you tell me about your own drinking habits?

Do you drink alcohol?  
How often, how much? Who with, where?

7. How would you describe today's youth drinking culture?  
How do you think these songs & clips are relevant to this culture?

## Appendix E



### Popular culture: Music, femininity and alcohol

#### Support Information

Thank you kindly for your participation in this research. Your time, effort and opinions are greatly appreciated. I hope you enjoyed taking part.

If you have any further questions or would like an update on the progress of the project, please don't hesitate to contact me: 021 169 1087 or [shobna@vodafone.net.nz](mailto:shobna@vodafone.net.nz).

If today's discussion raised any issues for you or you would like further information or support please contact any of the agencies below.

#### **Youthline:**

Phone: 0800 37 66 33

Email/MSN: [talk@youthline.co.nz](mailto:talk@youthline.co.nz)

Free TXT 234

Website: <http://www.youthline.co.nz>

#### **Alcohol Drug Helpline:**

Phone: 0800 787 797

Website: <http://www.easeuponthedrink.org.nz>

#### **Depression Helpline:**

Phone: 0800 111 757

Website: <http://www.depression.org.nz>

#### **Women's Refuge:**

Website: <http://www.awrefuge.org.nz>

## Rape crisis:

Website: <http://www.rapecrisis.org.nz>

*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact: Professor John O'Neill, Director: (Research Ethics). Ph: (06) 350 5249 Email: [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)*

## Appendix F

### Transcription Notation

[	C2: quite a [while Mo: [yea	Left brackets indicate the point at which a current speakers talk is overlapped by another's talk
=	W: that I'm aware of = C: = Yes. Would you confirm that?	Equal signs, one at the end of a line and one at the beginning, indicate no gap between the two lines.
(4)	Yes (2) yeah	Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time in silence in seconds
_____	What's <u>up</u> ?	Underscoring indicates some form of stress, via pitch and/or amplitude.
WORD	I've got ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT	Capitals, except at the beginnings of lines, indicate especially loud sounds relative to the surrounding talk.
{laughter}	{laughter}	Any other significant behaviour – laughter, sighing, intake of breath, etc.
( )	Future risks and ( ) and life ( )	Empty parentheses indicate the transcribers inability to hear what was said.

(word)

Would you see (there)  
anything positive

Parenthesized words  
are possible hearings.

(Silverman, 2001)

## **Appendix G**

### **Common Codes**

- 1: Stereotypical/Typical
- 2: Exaggerated/Not realistic
- 3: American-can't relate
- 4: Not for kids/not good role modelling/bad message
- 5: Funny/Fun
- 6: Movie-like
- 7: Appearance/sex appeal/clothing
- 8: Makeover
- 9: Vomiting, hangovers and blackouts
- 10: Dislike/don't pay attention to lyrics
- 11: Celebrity discussion
- 12: Relatable to real life/own experiences of drinking/going out/own and others binge drinking
- 13: Younger age targeted/more influenced
- 14: Culture differences
- 15: Young women portrayed badly
- 16: TGIF
- 17: Dislike "just dancing"
- 18: Promoting drinking

- 19: Male fantasy/more for guys/male amusement
- 20: Other media
- 21: Makes you wanna go out/get drunk
- 22: Normal
- 23: Marketing
- 24: Drink spiking/sexual assault/vulnerability/stripper poles
- 25: Male attention
- 26: Male redemption at end?
- 27: Sober friends protective
- 28: Older people/parents would be critical
- 29: Equality
- 30: At least it's not violence
- 31: Subconscious/hidden meanings
- 32: Control
- 33: Prompts "slight annoyance"
- 34: Female appearance and body image
- 35: Don't want to associate with people like that
- 36: Photoshopped/airbrushed
- 37: "Fat" women
- 38: Gives guys ideas/People/guys may emulate the behaviour shown
- 39: Katy Perry- Not stereotypical
- 40: Parent's can't curb it
- 41: Consequences
- 42: Videoclips relevant to youth drinking culture
- 43: Ambulance/van/construction/truck?

44: Participants age not influenced

45: Like

46: Access to alcohol

## **Appendix G**

### **Miscellaneous Codes**

#### **Group 1:**

Influences participants

Others would dislike song

Most music about drinking, sex and drugs

Some music not about drinking, sex and drugs

Drink driving portrayed

Parents don't drink the same

Access to alcohol

**Messages:** it's cool/fun to drink/get drunk/female sex appeal/dancing. Girls wanna be like that: anorexia, binge drinking, clothing. Participants go to clubs, bars and the casino  
Youth drinking culture: Sad, disgraceful, getting worse. Underage alcohol purchases

#### **Group 2:**

Doesn't portray young women "that badly"

Doesn't portray either sex well

Other videoclips worse

Expensive drinks- Patron and Margaritas

No evidence that people will replicate this behaviour

**Messages:** Binge drinking is cool. Women as sexual beings. Women as subordinate to men. Messages different for younger and older people. Distinguish age now

from teenagers. Participants go to bars, clubs, at dinner and people's houses to "preload." Youth uninformed about safe amounts to drink. NZ culture of binge drinking

## **Appendix G**

### **Miscellaneous Codes**

#### **Group 3:**

Dislike

Girls throwing up- not guys

Other girls not noticeable

"Just dancing"

Portrayals not appealing

If she's drunk, she's easy

Know it's not good but don't care

**Messages:** Drinking, wearing small clothes and too much makeup is fun. Participants not affected by messages. Youth drinking culture- binge, drink to get drunk, really bad, normal, fun, acceptable, cool. Pop culture is an influence

#### **Group 4:**

**Messages:** drinking, being drunk and promiscuity is cool and okay. Others would think it's normal and fun. Youth drinking culture: bad, worse than when participants were young. Music promotes it. Compare drinking to underage sex

## **Appendix H**



**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**  
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

4 July 2012

Shobna Naomi

AUCKLAND 2103

Dear Shobna

**Re: Empowerment or Covert Subjugation? Young Women's Perceptions of Femininity and Binge Drinking in Popular Music**

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 20 June 2012.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

**A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:**

*"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.*

*If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".*

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

John G O'Neill (Professor)  
**Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and  
Director (Research Ethics)**

cc Assoc Prof Antonia Lyons  
School of Psychology  
Wellington

Assoc Prof Mandy Morgan, HoS  
School of Psychology  
PN320

Assoc Prof Tim McCreanor  
SHORE Centre  
PO Box 6137, Wellesley Street  
Auckland

Prof Sally Casswell, Director  
SHORE Centre  
PO Box 6137, Wellesley Street  
Auckland

---

Massey University Human Ethics Committee  
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Research Ethics Office, Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand  
T +64 6 350 5573 +64 6 350 5575 F +64 6 350 9622  
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz animaethics@massey.ac.nz gtc@massey.ac.nz  
www.massey.ac.nz