

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.

**Masculinity and alcohol in postfeminist
popular culture: Teenage boys consume
music videos**

**Samuel Lindsay
2015**

Masculinity and alcohol in postfeminist popular culture: Teenage boys consume music videos

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

Master of Arts

In

Psychology

At Massey University, Wellington, NZ

Samuel Lindsay

2015

Abstract

Within a highly liberalised New Zealand market, excessive alcohol consumption by young men remains concerning for its relation to a raft of poor health and social outcomes. Various media formats construct alcohol consumption as desirable through gendered discourses, particularly the music video. Music videos are easily accessible through online platforms, are aimed at teenage audiences, and are increasingly linked to the alcohol industry. This research explored first, how masculinity and alcohol consumption are constructed within four mainstream pop music videos and second, how young teenage boys talk about these music videos after viewing them. Critical multi modal discourse analysis was employed to analyse the lyrics, music and visual content of the music videos, and discourse analysis to examine the talk of eleven boys, aged 13-14. The boys were recruited from a co-educational urban secondary school in New Zealand. The videos constructed discourses of provision, extreme consumption, and various forms of freedom and together they offered specific subject positions, including the playboy and female objectification. These findings are discussed in terms of post-feminist capitalist culture and hegemonic masculinity. The teenage participants took up the discourses constructed in the videos but in both resistant and accepting ways. They drew on discourses of enjoyment, animalistic/biological, feminist, and moral/ health discourses, and employed several discursive strategies to position themselves as critics of the popular culture that the videos represented. However, discrepancies and contradictions within the boys' responses were found. These included the use of a 'slut' discourse, as well as a discourse of women's enjoyment, to accept the objectification of women in the videos. Although the participants largely rejected alcohol as bad through a moral/ health discourse, certain acceptances of the artists' authenticity, the videos' visual content, and minimisations of alcohol content suggested ways in which alcohol might be accepted. The findings are analysed and discussed in relation to issues of post-feminism and hegemonic masculinity theory. Potential future directions and implications are explored, such as more sophisticated media interventions targeted at the complex ways in which powerful post-feminist and hegemonic discourses obscure their operations.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, thank you to my supervisor, Prof. Antonia Lyons, for reading all my many words, and your invariably insightful comments in response. Thanks for your patience, positivity, helpful suggestions, and good humour. Your encouragement helped a lot, and I feel truly lucky to have had the benefit of your supervision.

Thank you to the participants who volunteered their time and talk for this project. Your level of insight is valued; and your critical perspectives are encouraging.

Sophie, thanks for being so understanding and helpful throughout the whole time.

To little Rose, thanks for being an endless source of laughter and inspiration.

And thanks to my family, Ali, Jasper, Alicia, Ben, and particularly Dad and Joe - for being excellent masculine exemplars! I couldn't have done it without you.

Thanks to anyone else that helped me get this done! You know who you are...

Table of Contents

<i>Chapter One: Introduction</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Historical overview of alcohol in NZ</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Vested interests</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Youth Drinking</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Chapter Two: Masculinity and alcohol</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Hegemonic masculinity</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Criticisms and modifications</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Drinking as masculine practice</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Context and complexity</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Post-feminism and the heterosexual matrix</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Hegemonic femininity</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Chapter Three: Music videos, alcohol, and masculinity.</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Alcohol in music</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Do music media influence youth drinking?</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>The Youtube revolution</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Big business</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Genre, meaning and legitimacy</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Power: from video to viewer, and back again</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Summary: Chapter three</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Stage one research questions</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Chapter four: Critical multimodal analysis of four popular music videos</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Selection of videos</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>The four music videos</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Timber</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Wild Ones</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Sorry for Party Rocking (LMFAO)</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Hangover</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Analytical approach</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>Analytic procedure</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Stage One Results</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Provision</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Extreme consumption</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Freedom</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Alcohol as facilitator of freedom</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Alcohol as facilitator of sexual freedoms</i>	<i>45</i>
	<i>iii</i>

<i>Dominant positions created across discourses</i>	47
The playboy	47
Women as objects	51
<i>Gender conceptualisations: Post-feminism, new sexism, ironic lads, and hybrid masculinities</i>	54
Post-feminism, new sexism	54
Ironic lads	56
Hybridisation: metrosexuality	58
Hybridisation: race, authenticity, and gangsta-masculinity	59
<i>Summary: Spectacular consumption</i>	61
<i>Chapter five: Reception of the videos by teenage boys</i>	64
Research approach	64
Recruitment	64
Groups and Participants	65
Procedure	67
Ethical considerations	67
Reflexivity	68
Analysis of focus group data	69
Findings	69
<i>Enjoyment</i>	70
<i>Animalistic/ biological discourse</i>	74
<i>Feminist discourse</i>	82
<i>Slut discourse</i>	84
<i>Moral and health discourse</i>	87
<i>Chapter six: Discussion, limitations and future directions</i>	92
Discussion	92
Limitations	96
Implications and future directions	97
<i>References</i>	99
<i>Table 1: Focus group composition</i>	65
<i>Appendix A: Shot breakdown extract for multimodal analysis</i>	115
<i>Appendix B: advertisement for school notices</i>	120
<i>Appendix C: parent consent form</i>	121
<i>Appendix D: focus group confidentiality agreement</i>	122
<i>Appendix E: Parent information letter</i>	123
<i>Appendix F: Participant information brochure</i>	125
<i>Appendix G: interview schedule</i>	127

Appendix H: Ethics Approval

128

Appendix I: Transcription guidelines

129