

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.

**ALTERNATIVE ARTICULATIONS: A POST-
STRUCTURALIST READING OF A PROGRAMME TO
CHANGE NEW ZEALAND'S DRINKING CULTURE**

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in
Sociology
at Massey University, Albany
New Zealand

Shannon Te Ahu Hanrahan
2006

Abstract

The field of alcohol regulation has been highly influenced by the *new public health* and its diverse attempts at influencing the conduct of individuals and populations to reduce alcohol-related harm. Dominated by objectivist and rationalist approaches, the new public health often fails to account for the critical role of knowledge, power and language in the construction of alcohol-related harm as an issue of governance. It is in response to the hegemony of the new public health approach, and the internal limit points of this discourse, that alternative understandings of the field of alcohol-regulation emerge.

This study conducts a post-structural reading of one of those alternative understandings, that of the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand's (ALAC) programme of work known as the culture change programme. Employing the work of Michel Foucault, and in particular, his work on the art of government ("governmentality"), the thesis poses the question: how does ALAC negotiate the tension between those techniques and strategies that compel and coerce individuals and those regimes and frameworks of self-regulation that are calculated to guide individuals' behaviours?

ALAC's attempt to govern the field of alcohol-regulation through its relationships with external agencies is examined for answers. Using the post-structural discourse theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, this study examines ALAC's construction of the field of alcohol regulation, and its attempts to influence and engage external agencies in the culture change programme.

The findings indicate that ALAC's liberal conceptualisation of the social world does not account for the struggles over meaning that play out through its relationships with external agencies. The study suggests that if ALAC were to reconceptualise its view of the world as an 'open social system,' where meaning is relational,

contextual and historically located, a new set of tools becomes available for understanding the future prospects of the culture change programme.

Acknowledgements

Kia tangi te uru, e whai ake nei te Toro

Acknowledge the emergence above the horizon to blaze a pathway of knowledge

I would like to thank my thesis supervisors Warwick Tie and Paul Spoonley. Thank you for your ongoing guidance and continued belief in my ability to finish this thesis.

Thank you to those that contribute to Massey University's scholarship fund. Your financial donations are gratefully appreciated.

This research would not have been possible without the help, assistance and encouragement of the staff at the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. Thank you for the support in growing the pool of evidence.

To Kim, for all the time I spent in my office. Thank you for being so understanding. And to my whānau and friends - this has been a long time coming.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of Figures	vii
Chapter One: Introduction – A question of the exercise of power	1
1.1. The State and the exercise of power	3
1.2. A programme to reduce alcohol-related harm. The Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC)	6
1.3. Challenging the dominant paradigm – Post-structuralism	9
1.4. This thesis	11
1.5. The role of the analyst	13
Chapter Two: Theoretical considerations – The art of government	14
2.1. The exercise of power	15
2.2. Sovereignty	16
2.3. Disciplinary power	18
2.3.1. The body	19
2.3.2. Power	20
2.3.3. Knowledge	21
2.4. The art of government	23
2.4.1. Raison D'état – Reason of State	26
2.4.2. Liberalism	28
2.4.3. Neo-liberalism	30
2.4.4. The rise of the responsible individual	31
2.5. Implications for this thesis	
Chapter Three: Mapping the mechanics: Methodology and method	36
<i>Part One: Methodological overview</i>	36
3.1 Closed systems – Positivism and empiricism in public health	38
3.2 Beyond closed systems – Post-structuralism	41
3.3 Mapping the mechanics of discourse – Laclau and Mouffe	43
3.4 The practice of discourse analysis – Key terms	48
3.4.1 Elements that dislocate meaning	51

<i>Part Two: Data gathering and sources of data</i>	53
3.5 Semi-structured interviews	53
3.6 Interview instrument	55
3.7 Textual	56
3.8 The analysis of data	59
3.8.1 The analysis of government	59
3.8.2 The analysis of barriers to engagement	59
3.8.3 The analysis of the condition of dislocation	60
Chapter Four: The analysis of government	61
4.1 ALAC's construction of alcohol as a governance issue	61
4.2 Culture change – the articulation of new concepts	65
4.3 Establishing a hegemonic position	71
4.4 Summary	74
Chapter Five: The analysis of barriers to engagement	76
5.1 ALAC's hegemonic intervention	77
5.2 Antagonising conditions	79
5.3 Constructing logics of equivalence and difference	85
5.4 Summary	94
Chapter Six: The analysis of the condition of dislocation	97
6.1 The threat of alternative articulations	99
6.2 Ontological limitations	103
6.3 Summary	109
Chapter Seven: Reflections & considerations	110
7.1 Liberalist and rationalist understandings	111
7.2 Moving forward: governance of open systems	122
7.3 Theoretical considerations and future trajectories	126
Bibliography	132
Appendix A: MUHEC application	138
Appendix B: MUHEC approval	153
Appendix C: Introductory email to participants	154
Appendix D: Interview instrument	155
Appendix E: Information sheet	157
Appendix F: Interview consent form	159
Appendix G: Consent form for the release of recorded transcript	160

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: A programme to change New Zealand's drinking culture	33
Figure 5.1: Key concepts (moments) within the discourse articulated by ALAC	77

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION – A QUESTION OF THE EXERCISE OF POWER

According to Nietzsche, the State is

The coldest of all cold monsters... [it] lies in all language of good and evil; and whatever, it says, it lies – and whatever it has, it has stolen... only there, where the State ceases, does the man who is not superfluous begin...

'Where is that next drink taking you?'

'Smoking? – Then think again!'

'If you don't have a rubber, then no hubba hubba!'

Neo-liberal society is saturated with messages calling individuals to act. The health of the body and populations are key themes that permeate modern social life. From messages on limiting dietary fat intake or the need to practice safe sex, modern life is characterised by messages inviting individuals to take charge of their actions and to act in particular ways. In this milieu of modern healthy life, old projects are replaced by new programmes which promise to 'fix' the 'problem.' Central to these calls is the idea that people must take responsibility for limiting certain 'risks' and 'harms' associated with modern life and the wider environments in which they live.

Whether the invitation is to consume the latest 'healthy' product or to increase physical activity, many of these messages place the locus of responsibility on the individual. This free-thinking, rational-acting subject is called or interpellated into a system where s/he is expected to manage the risks associated with modern life and to exercise her/his 'free-will' accordingly to reduce this risk. This responsible individual is invited to actively participate in a system in which

everyone is called upon to act and play their part in creating a healthier, more sustainable society (Petersen & Lupton, 1996).

The concerns, programmes, and projects that focus on enhancing the health and wellbeing of populations are articulated through specific bodies of expert knowledge and action known as the *new public health*. This field of action takes the population as its focus and aims to shape the environment – in its widest sense, so as to include psychological, social, and physical elements that impact on the lives of individuals – with the purpose of enhancing the health and wellbeing of a population. The scope and reach of those elements that constitute the expertise-driven field of the new public health leave very few areas of personal and social life untouched. The new public health discourse is different however from the ‘old public health’ in that it is less about the management of ‘pathology’ – of the dangerous or unhealthy individual - and more about the management of the ‘risk’ associated with populations and groups of populations (Castel, 1991). The rise of the discourse of risk, supported by key concepts such as responsibility and the individual, interpellate subjects into a system of increasing self-responsibility. In all settings, private and public, individuals cannot escape these calls to action but rather are expected to identify particular risks and act accordingly in ways to manage these.

To date, there has been very little critical analysis of the underpinning philosophies and associated practices of the new public health. The growth and scope of those issues that fall under the umbrella of the new public health – such as ‘smoking cessation’, ‘problem-gambling’, ‘sexual-health’ and so forth – have increased the potential for experts to intervene in the private lives of citizens (Lupton, 1999a). Central to the discussion of the new public health, is the role of the State – and in particular the sovereign, legislative arm of the State – in shaping and supporting the health of the population. According to then-Health Minister Annette King (2005), a legal framework to organise the efforts of society for public health objectives is fundamental in the effort to mobilise populations for specific outcomes – in this case, a ‘healthier’ population. There is much debate about the role of law in shaping public health

outcomes and about the potential constraints on the freedoms and ‘rights’ of individuals that occur as a consequence of using law in this way. This problem of power and the regulation of freedoms have been central to debates surrounding modern Nation-States ever since their inception. How does the State work with those whom it seeks to govern and influence without overtly imposing its own will upon them? A central problematic of liberal forms of governance is this exercise of political power in a manner that incorporates the needs and aspirations of the citizenry without erasing their freedoms.

1.1 The State and the exercise of power

The exercise of political power, its form and location within the modern Nation-State is the topic of much debate and scholarship. This thesis steers away from a State-centred notion of the exercise of political power, in which an institution such as the State is seen to possess power at the expense of others, arguing that the exercise of political power in modern social life is multifaceted. To focus purely on the State as the pre-eminent force in the exercise of political power is to ignore the profusion of shifting alliances between diverse authorities within society that seek to govern a multitude of facets of economic activity, social life, and individual conduct (Rose & Miller, 1992). Reflecting on the multitude of disciplines and fields of expertise that contribute to the new public health as a site of governance – epidemiology, bio-statistics, psychology and so forth – that sit outside the realm of the State, this thesis argues that the exercise of power in late modernity is more complex, entailing the assemblage and application of technologies that might be employed to influence individuals.

Drawing on the works of French theorist Michel Foucault, this thesis relocates the State within a broader discussion on the *problematics of government*. Foucault suggests (1978) that the traditional concepts that organised our thinking on power cannot adequately account for the exercise of power in modern social life. For Foucault, late modernity is characterised by a displacement of regulation from the ‘science of police’ to a range of agencies that seek to act on ‘civil society.’ The space that is civil society can be likened

to an object of government that Nietzsche alludes to in the opening quote – that is, a space that is “free” from the imposition of the State and where individuals are “liberated.” For Foucault, the political ideology of late modernity, that is neoliberalism, advocates less government in the sense that the size of the institutional State should diminish, but more governance in terms of supporting the organising effects of agencies in civil society that actively influence the conduct of individuals. It is here that Foucault provides a valuable insight into the problematics of government. This involves identifying and analysing the exercise of power in its array of organisations, rationalities, technologies that seek to influence the behaviour of individuals. For Foucault, any exercise of power is intricately linked to knowledge about a population, and to those disciplines that are associated with the calculative study of that particular object of government.

Public health expertise exemplifies the type of governance through which neo-liberal societies function, with its reliance upon the use of expert knowledge for shaping the thoughts and actions of subjects such that those individuals might be influenced to conduct their lives in ways that produce particular health outcomes. To rephrase the point, the new public health embodies regimes of power and knowledge that survey, regulate, and maintain individuals in ways that promote the existence of the social body as a whole (Petersen & Lupton, 1996:3). It includes a range of professionals and organisations such as health promoters, epidemiologists, health researchers, economists and a range of others whose work measures, monitors, regulates and improves the health of populations. The new public health as a discipline has attracted some strenuous critique pitched at the level of morality regarding how particular lifestyles come to be defined as ‘unhealthy.’ However, notwithstanding this critique, the new public health comes to represent the rational, calculative and ‘scientific’ embodiment of organisational practice wherein the knowledge/power couplet is mobilised so as to make people’s lives ‘better’ and ‘more enjoyable.’ Inherent in this project is the idea that, through science, individuals’ lives can become ‘better,’ or lived in a way that enhances ‘wellbeing.’ Questions concerning what constitutes better or enhanced wellbeing, who defines this, on

what terms, and for what purpose, are often left out of the critical debate around the social value of the new public health.

Foucault (1978) maintains that the welfare of population and the enhancement of its role performances in particular, have become key to the exercise of modern political power. This exercise of power has achieved preeminence over other models during the last two hundred years and has led to the emergence and proliferation of a complex range of apparatuses and knowledges pertaining to government, concerning how this enhancement is achieved, the means of its exercise, and the constitution of those through which power is exercised. For Foucault (as cited in Rose & Miller, 1992:174), this kind of study comprises an *analytics of power* which seeks to identify certain ways of "thinking and acting embodied in all those attempts to know and govern the wealth, health and happiness of populations." This analytics of mentalities and rationalities by which government is achieved is called 'governmentality.' According to Rose and Miller:

Government is the historically constituted matrix within which are articulated all those dreams, schemes, strategies and maneuvers of authorities that seek to shape the beliefs, and conduct of others in desired directions by acting upon their will, and the circumstances of their environment. It is in relation to this grid of government that specifically political forms of rule in the modern West define, delimit and relate themselves. (1992:175)

For Foucault, rationally derived knowledge promotes the idea that the object of governance can be calculated and scientifically managed. Authorities or experts come to employ a range of diverse attempts at influencing conduct often using competing tactics of education, persuasion, inducement, incitement, motivation and encouragement (Cohen, 1989). This approach underpins the new public health.

The field of alcohol regulation has been highly influenced by the new public health and its diverse attempts at influencing the conduct of populations to reduce alcohol-related harm.

Dominated by objectivist and rationalist approaches, it often fails to account for the critical role of knowledge/power and language in the construction of alcohol-related harm as an issue of government. It is in response to the hegemony of this approach, and the internal limit points of the discourse, that alternative understandings of the field of alcohol regulation emerge.

1.2 A programme to reduce alcohol-related harm. The Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC)

The Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC) represents a key 'governmental' apparatus that employs a range of strategies and tactics to influence the behaviour of the population in a way that seeks to reduce alcohol-related harm. Established in 1976 under an Act of parliament, ALAC was set-up following a report by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Sale of Liquor. As a Crown Entity, ALAC (2004:3) currently aligns with the government-of-the-day's objectives and goals in reducing alcohol-related harm but has a measure of independence from those goals. Section 1A of the Alcohol Advisory Council Act 1976 ALAC states that the purpose of ALAC is:

.. the encouragement and promotion of moderation in the use of liquor, the discouragement and reduction of the misuse of liquor, and the minimisation of the personal, social, and economic harm resulting from the misuse of liquor.

Identified in the *Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand 2002 – 2007 Strategic Plan*, the primary goal of the agency is encapsulated in the single statement *more moderation and less harm*. According to Statistics New Zealand (2005), New Zealanders drank 29.25 million litres of pure alcohol; that being 9.19 litres (of pure alcohol) for every person 15 years and over. This in itself is not 'problem' for ALAC, with the per-capita amount falling within World Health

Organisation (WHO) guidelines. The ‘problem’ is defined by ALAC most clearly in its advertising tagline - *it’s not the drinking, it’s how you drink* – that is the injurious effects that can follow from particular patterns of alcohol use, not through alcohol-use itself.

ALAC (2006a:3) suggests that New Zealand is a society in which many people tolerate drunkenness and as a result, many current drinkers appear to exercise little self control. ALAC’s programme of work represents an attempt to reduce the harms associated with high per-occasion consumption by reducing the number of standard drinks that New Zealanders consume on any one drinking occasion.

In developing an approach to achieve this outcome, ALAC has embarked on a programme identified as the culture change programme. This programme embodies the totality of ALAC’s work programme and represents the latest in a range of projects which have sought to reduce alcohol-related harm in New Zealand. The culture change programme is mobilised around the organising idea of ‘harm minimisation.’ For ALAC, this idea acknowledges that alcohol is a legal-product with particular harms associated with its misuse. The challenge is to minimise the harms associated with the misuse of alcohol, or the harm as defined by ALAC, relating to high-per occasion alcohol consumption or intoxication.

Whilst ALAC may be the lead agency of the culture change message, many of the goals identified within the programme are undertaken by other agencies. According to ALAC:

Since its creation in 1976, ALAC has built relationships with those involved in the alcohol sector and ensuring that the New Zealand public, and the health sector in particular, have the most up-to-date information on alcohol, its use and its effects. This collaborative and cooperative approach remains a key focus of all ALAC initiatives. (ALAC, 2002a:6)

The culture change programme offers the promise of a multi-strategy approach to reduce alcohol-related harm, with three pillars – ‘supply control,’ ‘demand reduction,’ and ‘problem limitation.’ According to ALAC (2005a:6), supply control strategies focus on achieving enforcement of compliance with, and improvements to the Sale of Liquor Act, parents’ programmes, and policy measures such as tax/price, outlet density, advertising and purchase age. Demand reduction strategies focus on achieving culture change outcomes by persuading communities and individuals to make better choices about their alcohol consumption. Problem limitation strategies focus on the group of dependent and hazardous drinkers who need support and assistance to reduce or stop their drinking.

Importantly, the culture change programme also departs from a range of ‘traditional’ approaches employed by ALAC in the past to reduce alcohol-related harm. As an example, in the 1980s ALAC used strategies associated with traditional public health model approaches that emphasised the role of legislation in reducing the availability of alcohol. This drew a certain amount of criticism by parliamentarians as this was considered to be contrary to the government’s policy direction of the day, with the ALAC Council being perceived as ‘anti-business.’ Although ALAC survived the criticism, including an unsuccessful attempt to limit ALAC’s powers (Clifton, 1989), the unfavorable political climate dislocated the role that the traditional public health approaches had held within ALAC’s operation. Alternatively, and in keeping with the neo-liberal political sensibility that had been developing through the 1980s and 1990s, ALAC started to focus on the provision of information and advice that promoted ‘responsible’ drinking. Like the legislative orientation of the traditional public health model, this approach too came to be challenged, and subsequently dislocated: literature emerged which suggested that unless the socio-cultural environment changed in a way that encouraged individuals to make positive health choices, then ‘harmful’ forms of alcohol use would continue (Skøg, 1991; Wild, 2002).

The culture change programme thus materialised in the 1990s as a response to these two lines of criticism, regarding the limitations of both legislation-based

and self-regulatory strategies. In relation to those two approaches, the culture change programme was presented as a ‘new way’ of reducing alcohol-related harm. The ‘new way’ came to use many of the key concepts found in the former approaches but did so through overlaying them with a new brace of concepts including those of ‘culture’ and ‘partnership.’ Thus, the culture change programme has emerged as the latest of ALAC’s work programme, seeking to create a society where the harms from the misuse of alcohol are minimised.

1.3 Challenging the dominant paradigm – Post-structuralism

Much of the research and scholarship on the harms associated with alcohol use has taken the metaphor of pathology as its organising principle. Perhaps the most easily recognized approach associated with this is epidemiology, a field that identifies and gathers data on people’s health-related practices, beliefs or behaviours. Another dominant approach has been the interpretative phenomenology, a tradition that seeks to identify ‘lived’ and ‘authentic’ experiences of health and illness. According to Petersen & Lupton (1996:x), these approaches, underpinned as they are by orthodox epistemological commitments that restrict analysis to the interpretation of observable phenomena, have tended to uncritically advance the new public health agenda.

While recognizing the contribution of such work, in terms of informing the development of public health issues, this thesis aims to add to the growing body of research that provides a post-structuralist reading of contemporary public health issues. Although still a limited field, the most visible proponents of such an approach are Alan Petersen and Deborah Lupton in their use of Foucault to analyse, and produce alternative readings, of the public health field. In adopting a post-structuralist approach, this thesis contributes to research and literature that deliberately stands outside of the positivist epistemological tradition that tends to be drawn upon by public health researchers. A post-structural approach challenges the objectivist and rationalist techniques in disciplines such as epidemiology, biostatistics, health promotion, health economics and demography, by recognising that all knowledge is related to the exercise of

power. Such an approach also recognises that all knowledge is contingent and the language or discourses that are employed in the field of public health are not merely a reflection of a pre-existing reality but are equally constitutive of the social world in which we live. Furthermore, a post-structuralist approach maintains that language, knowledge and power interrelate to construct, reconstruct and constitute the ways in which we understand ourselves, our bodies and the social and material world we inhabit (*ibid*:x).

There are a number of unique insights provided by a post-structural analysis. In addition to emphasising the political dynamics involved in the construction of knowledge, and of the role of discourse in the construction of social reality, post-structuralism enables us to consider the internal limit-points of discourse, of that which has the capacity to dislocate. Discourse theorists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe provide a particular form of post-structuralism that offers an alternative reading of the emergence of new projects that seek to transform the health of populations. Laclau and Mouffe introduce the 'condition of dislocation.' Dislocation arises when a discourse gives rise to an object or sets of objects that cannot be integrated into its system of meaning. New political frontiers and imaginings emerge to fill the space created from the collapse of the former discourse. The new discourse that emerges, however, is never fully formed, itself containing internal contradictions that might be exposed by competing interests.

Laclau and Mouffe argue it is the condition of dislocation that propels social relations forward in a way that allows new frontiers or discourses to emerge, each of which has the potential to capture the hearts and minds of individuals through the promise of new solutions. This thesis posits that the culture change programme is this new frontier within the field of alcohol regulation, emerging from the dislocation of past 'public health' and 'individual choice' discourses. It remains vulnerable to those former discourses, however, insofar as they still organise the work programmes of other agencies within the field of alcohol regulation (in the 'public health and 'industry' sectors, respectively).

This thesis commences from the position that the culture change programme represents an attempt to govern the space of alcohol regulation that has been dislocated. In the process, the culture change programme is positioned by ALAC to be that space within which alcohol regulation occurs. In order to succeed, ALAC must actively engage external agencies in its programme of work. However, the new ALAC discourse of culture change, like all discourses, is subject to challenge from both external and internal sources.

1.4 This thesis

This thesis takes a public health issue – alcohol-related harm – and considers it within a post-structuralist framework that highlights the role that dislocation plays in the discourses of agencies, and of the political implications that follow for those agencies when their perspectives are dislocated.

The thesis also positions the issue of alcohol-related harm, and of ALAC's culture change programme in particular, as a problematic of government – that is how power might be exercised to most effectively influence the behaviour (or in Foucauldian terms 'control the conduct') of self-authorising individuals. The thesis seeks to do this by discussing the culture change programme in relation to Foucault's writings on governmentality. He maintains that the 'art of government' involves a persistent tension between techniques and strategies that compel and coerce individuals to act, and regimes and frameworks that guide the self-regulating capacities of politically liberal subjects. ALAC's culture change programme attempts to negotiate this tension by seeking to influence the behaviour of individuals through both a range of 'governmental techniques' that compel particular standards of behaviour through the application of the law, and the provision of information whose goal is to set individuals' capacities to make their own choices within particular 'normative boundaries.' These techniques are not always the responsibility or role of ALAC to deliver. As a consequence, ALAC has identified that it must seek to 'work with' other organisations that are responsible for the application of these various governmental techniques. Moreso, however, it must seek to influence

the conduct of those agencies such that its culture change version of harm-minimisation is put into effect. It is these attempts by ALAC to work with, influence and shape the conduct of other agencies for a particular outcome, that is the focus of this thesis.

The post-structuralism of Laclau and Mouffe employed to develop the above analysis suggests that the process of 'working together' always creates struggles over meaning. This reflects the inherently 'open' and 'political' nature of the social world, of the manner in which normative discourses work by excluding other ways of understanding the social world. On the face of it, and within a politically liberal construction of the social world, agencies attempt to develop shared meanings of key terms via the discursive structures they each inhabit. Within such endeavours, the discursive landscape comes to be characterised by words such as 'partnership' and 'shared outcomes', which reflect the intent of working together. However, this intent to partner will also involve struggles over the meanings of core ideas upon which the positions involved pivot, and around attempts to 'fix' particular understandings of the social world.

With discourse being a primary site of this political struggle, and in seeking to achieve the outcome of more moderation, less harm through its culture change programme, ALAC has had to actively engage other important agencies within the field of alcohol regulation and, then, to engage in the struggles that have ensued over the meaning of those terms.

With these points in mind, the purpose of this thesis emerges as being threefold. Firstly, the thesis interprets the ALAC culture change programme within a Foucauldian framework. Key to this interpretation is the situating of the culture change programme, and of ALAC's partnering agencies, within a discussion regarding the exercise of governmental power. Secondly, the thesis identifies the resistances and synergies that emerge in response to ALAC's attempts to actively engage external organisations in the culture change programme. Finally, this thesis focuses on analysing ALAC's ability to address resistance.

1.5 The role of the analyst

A central tenet of discourse theory is that there is no ‘objective’ position from which to examine or analyse discourse. This is because the discourse analyst is always internal to the symbolic structure. That is not to say that discourse analysis is awash with nihilistic relativism but rather there are no essential claims to truth as all truth, morality and ethics are constructed through discourse (Rorty, 1989; Mouffe, 1996). The discourse analyst is always a part of a particular discourse that provides a set of relatively determinate values, standards and criteria for judging something to be right or wrong, good or bad (Torfing, 2005:19). In reference to the position of the analyst, I was formerly an employee of ALAC. This position thus provides a particular perspective in the analysis and construction of this thesis given that I was privy to many internal discussions that have assisted in shaping a particular understanding of the construction of alcohol as a public-health issue. Also, as a former employee of ALAC, I have an interest in reflecting on the business of the organisation. This is because I continue to work in the wider alcohol harm-minimisation field and therefore have an ongoing relationship with ALAC. Personally, I continue to support the general objective of reducing alcohol-related harm and of ALAC’s culture change programme. In concluding, Jorgensen & Phillips maintain:

Under all circumstances, the product of this research – the specific discourse analysis, for example is a kind of political intervention: a contingent articulation of elements which reproduces or challenges the given discourses in the never-ending struggle to define the world.
(2002:49)

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS – THE ART OF GOVERNMENT

...governing people is not a way to force people to do what the governor wants; it is always a versatile equilibrium, with complementarity and conflicts between techniques which assure coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself.

Foucault (1993:203)

The above quotation highlights the tentative nature under which the government of individuals and populations can exist. Government comes in many shapes and forms and in Western democratic society, is often closely associated with the locus of power in the modern Nation-State. French Theorist, Michel Foucault presents a broader discussion on the exercise of power that seeks to influence the conduct of individuals. For Foucault, 'the art of government' involves a precarious balance between those techniques and strategies that compel and coerce individuals to act and those regimes and frameworks that have as their goal the self-regulation by individuals of their own behaviours. In this sense, successful government is only made possible by individuals experiencing the exercise of their own 'free-will' in the administration of choices within their lives. 'Freedom', as a problematic of government, emerges as a recurrent theme in Foucault's writing.

This chapter highlights the problematic of government – how it is exercised, over whom, and for what purposes. It takes the work of Foucault and examines the emergence of particular types of power that employ specific mentalities in a bid to influence the behaviour of individuals. This chapter begins by discussing 'sovereign power' best represented in the above quotation by reference to those techniques of coercion. It then briefly looks at the emergence of 'disciplinary power' before discussing the emergence of where rationalities of government (governmentality) through 'raison d'état' and the 'science of police'. Liberalism,

and its modern variant, neo-liberalism, emerge as one of the forms of political power through which governmentality is manifested within western societies. Finally ALAC's culture change programme is located in the terms of this, of Foucault's view on the exercise of power as 'the art of government.'

2.1 The exercise of power

Foucault's work has been drawn on to inform many contemporary discussions on the nature of social existence. His writings can be seen informing many analyses into a range of disciplines which focus on the body, subjectivity, morality, ethics and technologies of government – to name a few. When asked before his death to describe his work as a whole, Foucault asserted that his work should be seen as a 'critical history of thought' also described as a 'history of the present.' Foucault's aim in this 'history of the present' is to emphasise the contingency of modernity by revealing its disorder, discontinuities and the heterogeneity of events and processes that have led to the emergence of particular forms of 'rationalities' and the relations of power with which they are closely associated (Smart, 2002:xiii).

The contingent focus that underpins Foucault's work does not permit it to be easily categorized into a singular school of thought. It is clear in his work that he is keen to dissociate himself from totalizing theories that seek to describe a social existence which is underpinned by an essence or single truth. It is against this background that the writings on governmental rationality should be read.

Foucault describes three distinct types of power that are exercised over populations: 'sovereignty,' the object of which is the exercise of power over subjects within a defined territory; 'discipline,' which seeks to regulate, subdue and order the numbers of people within the territory through the regulation of their bodies; and lastly 'governmentality,' which can be characterised as a focus on the population as a whole, achieved through a shaping of the conduct of individuals. The latter, governmentality, is the exercise of power that is most

adequately represented by a desire to work through subjects. Rather than seeing a historical progression from sovereignty to discipline to governmentality, it must be acknowledged that all three make up the modern exercise of power. According to Dean (1999:15), governmentality and its technical rationalities such as liberalism seek to influence individuals by attempting to define the nature, source, effects and possible utility of these capacities of acting and thinking. Instead of displacing other forms of power, governmentality co-opts and recasts sovereignty and discipline with a focus on the population. In order to understand the art of government, attention should be given to examining all three forms of power. Foucault begins by considering the nature of sovereign power.

2.2. Sovereignty

Foucault's analysis of sovereignty centres around a study of European politics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – sovereign power being described in reference to Machiavelli's treatise on *The Prince*.

Central to Foucault's analysis of sovereignty is the question of political stability and the ability of the Prince to maintain authority over the public. *The Prince* effectively has a transcendent relationship over the principality of which he is ruler. Regardless of how the Prince came to acquire the principality – through violence, treaty or inheritance – this link is artificial: "there is no fundamental, essential, natural and juridical connection between the Prince and his principality" (Foucault, 1991:91).

This external nature of the sovereign in relation to his principality represents a challenge for the Prince – this relationship is fragile and is always under threat. In order to strengthen the relationship, the main objective in the Prince's exercise of power must be to strengthen "the Prince's relation with what he owns, with the territory he has inherited or acquired, and with his subjects" (*Ibid*:90). The exercise of power is therefore about strengthening the Prince's bond with the principality.

In being able to perform this act, the Prince must do two things. Firstly, he must identify the dangers or challenges, both internal and external, to his sovereignty (where they come from, what they consist of, their severity: which are greater, which the slighter). Secondly, the Prince must develop "the art of manipulating relations of force that allow the Prince to ensure the protection of his principality, understood as the link that binds him to his territory and his subjects" (Ibid:90).

While the wellbeing and protection of citizens may be important to the Prince, the objective over which power is exercised is the 'territory' which the citizens occupy. Therefore the relationship that the Prince builds with his citizens must be seen within the wider context of his desire to strengthen his bond, primarily with the principality. For the Prince, however, there is a utilitarian purpose for securing the 'common good' of his citizens - this being understood as "a state of affairs where all the subjects without exception obey the laws, accomplish the tasks expected of them" (Ibid:95). This securing of the 'common good' should be seen within the context of enhancing the internal security of the principality.

The law plays an important technique of the sovereign exercise of power. It is effectively a repressive apparatus that subjects are expected to obey. To break the law, is therefore to represent a threat to the sovereign's exercise of power. The Prince must legitimate his right to rule by providing public spectacles of his power over those who break the law. These relate to displaying his power, publicly, over life and death and involves the Prince 'manipulating the relations of force' in such a way as to legitimate his power over his principality and therefore his sovereign right to rule (Foucault, 1977).

It is this constant submission to the Prince, with the ongoing preoccupation of the securing of the principality that highlights the 'essential circularity' of sovereignty, with the means also being the ends. Because the end of sovereignty is internal to itself, the purpose of the exercise of power reduces citizens to the idea of 'possessions' to be managed within the principality. The needs of the citizens can only be met through their willing submission to the

authority of the Prince. The needs, or 'common good', of citizens is constructed in subordination to the need and desire of the Prince to secure his principality.

The dilemma faced in this theory of judicial sovereignty is that the needs of the people can only ever be realised by their submission to the authority of the Prince. In this submission, the Prince comes to define the common good of the people, which can only ever be seen as a means to securing his principality.

Foucault is keen however to highlight that in the exercise of sovereignty, or wherever there is the exercise of power, there is also resistance. This resistance, through disobedience of the law or other dissenting activities, poses a threat to the internal security of the principality. It becomes more difficult to contain this resistance with the Prince having to exercise publicly, his authority over life and death, through the use of dramatic displays of power, such as through the public execution of those who threatened the law. These ineffective and inefficient exercises of power contribute to a dilemma and crisis of authority for the Prince, or in this case, the idea of a monarchical State.

2.3 Disciplinary power

Disciplinary power emerges as a response to the issues that sprang from the public spectacles of sovereign power over subjects in the theory of judicial sovereignty. It describes the implications and the shift from a system of justice that "expresses itself in the violent spectacle of public execution to one that unites punishment with incarceration" (McNay 1994:91).

The emergence of this exercise of power over subjects can be traced to the advent of the Enlightenment, where the spectacle of public displays of power, such as executions, came to be considered uncivilized. For Foucault, the emergence of this type of power could be seen in relation to a dislike for the irregularity or inefficiency in the feudal regime of punishment. The drivers for reform were not based on concerns over a fairer or more equitable punishment system but rather the desire to establish a new economy of power which was

more efficient and less costly both economically and politically. According to Foucault:

The power to judge should no longer depend on the innumerable discontinuous, sometimes contradictory privileges of sovereignty, but on the continuously distributed effects of public power. (1977:78)

This fundamental reorganisation of social relations through the rule of disciplinary power can be linked to a range of concerns that emerged at the time including the growth of capitalism and also to the 'discovery' of new types of illnesses such as 'madness', for which new institutions of disciplinary power emerged, such as 'the asylum.' This new regime of power operates around the production of conformist, 'docile bodies.' Disciplinary power operates at three distinct levels: the body, power and knowledge.

2.3.1 *The Body*

The primary focus of disciplinary power is the organisation of the body in a way such that it can be controlled and dominated. Foucault (1977) proposes that the focus of disciplinary power is to discipline and subject the body in a way that provides a submissive, productive and trained source of labour.

The success of disciplinary power is identified through the subjugation of the body. The strategies employed involve the regulation, monitoring and re-orientation of subjects' bodies into a pattern of 'disciplinary monotony' within geographically enclosed spaces (Foucault, 1977:136).

Foucault suggests that this can happen in a range of social institutions and draws specific reference to the emergent institutional regimes such as the school, the factory, the hospital which all resemble a form of 'carceral archipelago.' It is suggested that all of these institutions involve key disciplinary strategies that can be seen in the prison (Foucault, 1977:228).

It is through the repeated and ritualistic subjugation of the body that subjects develop habitual patterns of behaving, therefore inducing particular ways of thinking. Foucault's approach challenges the psychoanalytical proposition of the unconscious, instead favouring the idea that a patterning of the subject occurs, of which the subject is not conscious of their actions. This bodily 'regulation' instead manifests through the subject's muscular and skeletal structure.

2.3.2 *Power*

Foucault's position on power can be described as a departure from the manner in which the concept had been deployed in sociological enquiry that has stemmed from Marxist or critical theory. For Foucault, power is not something that is possessed by a dominant group such as class or a site such as the State, but rather it is a strategy. Foucault also argues that power does not dominate or impose itself upon subjects but rather works through, invests in, and is transmitted by subjects (Smart, 2002:77).

In this sense, Foucault conceptualizes power neither as a structure nor institution of domination but suggests that power acts strategically in its intent. Power does not dominate but the effect of domination is the result of maneuvers, tactics, techniques and operations. He also suggests that wherever there is power, this is also resistance, which occurs throughout a 'multiplicity of points.' As a consequence of these ideas, he can therefore propose that the exercise of power is always socially constituted, through both the manner in which it is transmitted and through the acts of resistance that subjects almost involuntarily exercise in response.

Unlike the judicial use of power which manipulates the relations of force in order to secure the principality, disciplinary power constitutes subjects by working towards specific ends. In this sense, disciplinary power both acts through whilst socially constituting the subject.

2.3.3 Knowledge

The concept of knowledge is the third component of Foucault's concept of disciplinary power. This involves the observation, monitoring and regulation of subjects through the constitution of formal records and surveillance. Foucault's discussions present knowledge as never being neutral, and always embodying particular power dynamics.

This is because all knowledge arises out of a power complex, giving rise to a knowledge/power dialectic. This is because regimes of power define what is considered knowledge, which topics should be investigated, what constitutes facts and so on. These systems of power elicit particular types of knowledge which then have material effects in the bodies of social agents. Further to this, all regimes of power are constituted through discourse. Regimes of knowledge define the intellectual authority on particular issues and who controls this information.

On the whole, the exercise of disciplinary power led to the emergence of certain resistances created unintentionally within some of the environments where this power was exercised. For example, prisons created sub-cultures of criminals who were more likely to re-offend. Mental asylums, likewise, resulted in the creation of 'institutionalised' subjects who couldn't function outside that particular environment.

2.4 The art of government

Governmentality emerges as a distinctly new form of thinking around the exercise of power. To govern properly is to focus on the 'economic' or efficient management of the population. It involves enhancing the health, wealth, prosperity and happiness of the population. The object of government becomes the population, rather than territorial integrity or the individual body, made up of subjects who are resources to be fostered, used and optimized. It is a form of government through which each is regulated through the management of all,

functioning through the mechanism of the economy. This means that government itself must be economical, both financially and in the use and exercise of power (Dean, 1991:19). The idea ultimately is that government can be exercised not by recourse to the rule of law but through the securing of the prosperity for the people. The securing of this prosperity involves employing those types of rationalities that structure the ability of individuals to exercise their own free-will.

Although governmentality retains techniques, rationalities, and institutions characteristic of both sovereignty and discipline, the objects of the exercise of power differ. Governmentality seeks to reframe the apparatuses of political security such as armies, police forces, intelligence services, and so forth, in a way that ensures the security and prosperity of a population. Rather than there existing a sequential displacement in the exercise of power from sovereignty – discipline – governmentality, Foucault (1991:102) suggests all three make up the modern exercise of power. The modern exercise of power, however, reframes sovereignty and discipline around the goal of optimizing the population – that is, in securing its happiness, wealth, health, prosperity, and efficiency.

Foucault began his line of enquiry in response to criticisms from the Marxist left for failing to account in any detail for a ‘global politics’ in relation to power, namely the relations between society and State. Critics argued that Foucault’s earlier work, particular his discussions on power relations in *Discipline and Punish*, represented society as a network of “omnipresent relations of subjugating power which seem to preclude the possibility of meaningful freedom” (Gordon, 1991:4). It is this criticism - a lack of comprehensive engagement with macro-physical approaches towards power - that led to the emergence of Foucault’s work on ‘the art of government’, on governmentality.

In developing his approach, Foucault avoided the contemporary discussions of State theory, which often attempted to deduce the activities of modern government from ‘essential’ properties and propensities located within the State, such as its role as guardian of bourgeois economic interests. Foucault asserted that the State held no such inherent properties, and thus had no such

essence. For Foucault, the nature of the institution of the State was a function of changes in practices of government, rather than the converse.

Foucault argued that 'the same style of analysis used to study techniques and practices of individual human subjects, within particular local institutions, could also be used to study techniques and practices for governing populations of subjects at the level of a political sovereignty for governing an entire society' (*ibid*:4). In keeping with this, Foucault believed that there should be no methodological or material discontinuity between the microphysical and macrophysical approaches to the study of power.

Thus for Foucault, governmental practices could be seen as emerging out of eighteenth century shifts in political and ethical discussion surrounding the status and role of the individual, rather than any structural determinants of economic necessity (Burchell, 1991:122)

2.4.1 *Raison d'état – Reason of State*

Through introducing the concept of *raison d'état*, Foucault attempts to chart those shifts in political and ethical understandings, and their impacts upon the manner in which the purposes or reasons for State governance have come to be defined. In discussing these reasons for State governance, Foucault draws on two models which come to embody different ways of thinking about government - 'Pastoral power' and 'city-citizen game.' Foucault discusses both of these ways of thinking in relation to the dilemma of the Welfare-State, namely the tension between political power exercised over legal-political subjects and pastoral power exercised *through* individuals. It is the tension that arises from these different modes of thought that gives rise to Foucault's articulation of the *raison d'état* that is unique to governmentality.

According to Dean (1991:82) these concepts create two different types of individuals. Pastoral power creates an individual as a living being whose welfare is to be cared for as an individual and as part of a population, as one who must be integrated within complex forms of social solidarity. This finding is based on

Foucault's analysis of the pastoral techniques of government through which Christianity functions. This relationship, he notes, is based on the pastoral relationship between God, the pastor (his representative) and the pastorate (Christian community). This relationship is based on the idea that the Lord is the shepherd of his 'flock.' Firstly within the Christian model of pastoral care, the shepherd becomes accountable for the action of the flock. Secondly, in response to the presence of a sovereign-type power, all members of the flock are required to be obedient to the will of the shepherd, not, in this case, however, because of law but because it is his will. Obedience to such a will, rather than to the relatively remote presence of the law, becomes a virtue-supreme. Thirdly, the shepherd must have a complete knowledge of each member of the flock. Confessionals became a way of the shepherd knowing the needs, aspirations and activities of each member. Finally, the practices of guidance, examination and obedience are linked with the idea of encouraging members to regulate their own behaviours, by renouncing their own desires for the opportunity to enter the 'kingdom of heaven.'

The city-citizen game, alternatively, creates an individual as citizen who exercises freedoms and rights within the legal and political structure of the political community on the basis of equality with other citizens (*ibid*:82). This idea is taken from the Aristotelian idea of euergetism – the desire to 'do good' for a city, that is based on the idea of ruling nobles standing as benefactors for their cities. This model of government involves the practice of thinking about rule within a city in light of the relationship between the rulers to themselves and the relation of the ruled to the ruler. In effect, the nobility reigns supreme, however subjects are afforded particular rights by virtue of their membership within the city.

The problematic of government comes to be represented in the tension between the pastoral care and city-citizen game model. It gives rise to questions about how needs might be balanced between a secular and rational exercise of power and a need to enhance the welfare of subjects through their empowerment through rights and the addressing of their needs. In seeking to address this tension, Foucault identifies a particular rationality of government

that had come about in response to this tension, which he terms 'Reason of State.'

Firstly, the Reason of State is governed by the principal of reason alone. It is a rational 'art' of government that employs specific secular sets of techniques conforming to rational rules. Reason of State makes no reference to God or to strategies of the Prince (Foucault 1989a). It is an art of government that is focused on what is to be governed first and foremost, the State (Foucault 1989b). The State must preserve and reinforce and guarantee its own sustainability by protecting itself from both internal conflict and the threat from other States. In its management of internal and external risks, Reason of State involves a particular type of knowledge, that of a precise and measured knowledge of the strength of the State. Foucault (*ibid*) alerts us to the fact that the emergence of disciplines such as statistics, were first and foremost 'the expertise of the politician.' This ability to 'know' everything about the life of subjects provided an opportunity for the State to shape and mould the needs of the subjects for its own ends. Positivist disciplines such as criminology and sociology were able to demonstrate, through statistical representations, the emergence of a phenomenon called population. Finally, Reason of State is a pastoral form of government that is predicated on the fact that subjects are important in so much as they contribute positively to the sustainability of the State.

By articulating the Reason of State Foucault was able to differentiate a rationality of government that was not based on previous exercises of power such as the sovereign or of discipline. Governmentality came to embody a new rationality in the exercise of government with an object called population; where enhancing the welfare of the population came to be central to the sustainability of the State's own interests.

There remains however a tension between the sovereign and governmental exercise of power. For Foucault, the strength of the governmental exercise of power lies in its ability to work *through* individuals in a way such that individuals feel that they are exercising a freedom of choice. Sovereign power does not

seek that enhancement of self-governance within individuals, as it relies on methods of coercion. For Foucault, effective government always incorporates both those techniques, utilising the sovereign exercise of power but only in ways that influence the ability of individuals to shape their own conduct. In this sense, governmentality comes to incorporate sovereign power, but in this process, introduces a tension within itself between the manifestly different goals of governmental and sovereign power. In terms of this playing out, liberalism emerges as one of the forms of political power through which governmentality and its multiple rationalities manifest.

2.4.2 Liberalism

For Foucault, liberalism should not be understood as a doctrine or practice of government but more as a recurrent critique of state reason and politics.

Liberalism emerges in relation to the problem of how market freedoms, through which individuals might come to authorise themselves, can be reconciled with the unlimited exercise of sovereign power, that is, political sovereignty (Rose, 2001:21). Liberalism confronts the limits of government that occur within the ‘science of police’ and *raison d'état* with the focus on ‘knowing’ and then regulating the population. In particular, *raison d'état* emphasised the ability of the State to have an adequate and detailed knowledge of what had to be governed, that is, a knowledge of itself on the basis of which the State could act to enhance and strengthen its own needs.

Instead, liberalism emerges as a critique of *raison d'état* and in particular, the possibility of the State or anyone being able to perfectly know, in its entirety, the details of the reality to be governed. Liberalism also questions the ability of the State to shape that reality at will on the basis of this knowledge (*ibid*:21). In this sense, this critique emerges from the realisation that political government might be its own undoing in that too much government could thwart the very ends of government. The challenge that liberalism poses regarding governance, therefore, is not one of how to govern less but rather, how to govern in a manner that is mindful of the potentially counterproductive effects of governance (Rose, 1993).

According to Foucault, the emergence of liberalism also signals the emergence of society:

It seems to me that at that very moment it became apparent that if one governed too much, one did not govern at all – that provokes results contrary to those one desired. What was discovered at that time – and this was one of the great discoveries of political thought at the end of the eighteenth century – was the idea of *society*. That is to say, that government not only has to do with a territory, with a domain, and with its subjects, but that it also has to deal with a complex and independent reality that has its own laws and mechanisms of disturbance. This new reality is society. From the moment that one is to manipulate a society, one cannot consider it penetrable by police. One must take into account what it is. It becomes necessary to reflect upon it, upon its specific characteristics, its constants and variables. (Foucault, 1989b: 261)

The importance of this new concept of a ‘civil society’ should not be underestimated. The supposed separation between the State, with its imperative to govern, and civil society is a problematisation of government, not a call for the State to withdraw from governance. Liberalism emphasises the problem space of government and sets out to define a definite art of government that is both thinkable and practicable. It does this by determining how to govern in relation to an object-domain which is ‘natural’ and has its own specific self-regulating principles and dynamics. This natural domain is both what must be governed, and what government must (re)produce, or maintain in the optimum condition of what ‘naturally occurs’ (Rose, 1996:25). Civil society therefore becomes both the object and end of government.

Civil society must also mediate between the ideals of security and liberty; ideals which are at the heart of liberalism. Foucault maintains that security is a precondition of liberty. Equally, however, liberty must be a prerequisite for security, for without liberty, there can be no laissez-faire, and without laissez-faire, no civil society. Liberalism therefore becomes focused on maintaining the course of ‘natural’ sociality. This rationality of government comes to focus on

securing those social conditions which maintain these natural systems of regulation. It becomes the job of government to identify and encourage those social processes which are vulnerable, by viewing these as necessary mechanisms of security. Because of this, the sponsorship of liberty becomes an integral part of governmental rationality (Tie, 1993:33).

Civil society thus becomes the vehicle through which government seeks to shape, influence and thus control the public sociality. Unlike disciplinary power, where there is direct control exerted over the population for a desired outcome, Foucault identifies that it is the construction of sociality that controls people indirectly. The shaping of sociality through techniques such as 'social norms' influences how we think of ourselves and of how we ought to conduct ourselves in relation to those around us.

It is here that the relationship between civil society to the governmental exercise of power becomes more precise. The State chooses to exercise its influence through the shaping and moulding of that natural domain – civil society. It is the job of the State to both guarantee those conditions which maintain civil society and to influence the construction of sociality within civil society.

Self-government becomes a focus in liberalism and particularly the exercise of the considered, disciplined, and rational self. Early liberal techniques of government did this by emphasising the need to promote within the governed population, particular techniques of self such as saving and providentialism, development of habits of cleanliness, sobriety, fidelity, self-improvement and so on. With the development of neo-liberalism, there emerges a slight shift in the techniques of self-authorisation through which the citizenary is governed.

2.4.3 Neo-liberalism

Since the mid 1980s, throughout the western world, neo-liberalism has been a dominant form of political thought. Perhaps what neo-liberalism is best known for is its critique of the practice of liberal welfare governance (Kelly, 2001). The Welfare State, as it came to be known, invested in practices of government

whereby the State came to be known as 'guarantor' of both freedom of the individual, and the freedom of capitalist enterprise. It did this through attempting to recode the 'relations between the political field and the management of economic and social affairs through seeking to "social-ise" both individual citizenship and economic life in the name of collective security' (Rose, 1996:48). This model was perceived as operating somewhere between classical liberalism and nascent socialism (*ibid*:48).

A range of criticisms emerged of the Welfare State, concerned with the efficiency of the economic sphere, stating that State regulation and intervention impacted adversely on the privacy and ability of the market to act 'naturally.' These criticisms often extended to concerns that social insurance and security mechanisms such as State-funded education, unemployment benefits, child-security payments and so on were considered inefficient, costly and ultimately non-conducive to the economic sustainability of the State. Criticisms were also raised about the excesses of government within the Welfare State that limited autonomy and freedom of individuals (Bell, 1979).

As a consequence of these criticisms, neo-liberalism emerged to answer this problematic of government, of the tension between collective governance and individual self regulation. Neo-liberalism addresses this issue by tilting the equation towards personal freedom. The free conduct of individuals once again becomes the principle by which government is rationalised. According to Dean:

... this [freedom] principle [thus] itself is subject to a series of successive displacements. The displacements reveal a conception of freedom that moves away from the emancipatory aspirations of social movements towards the virtuous, disciplined and responsible autonomy of the citizenry desired by neo-conservative. (1999:155)

The security of the State becomes recast around the rational, free-thinking, autonomous individual. Individuals are then invited to exercise this freedom in ways that accord with market-place type rationality. For Rose (2001:27), neo-liberalism comes to define the positive tasks for government activism. In this

sense, neo-liberalism comes to “construct those legal, institutional and cultural conditions that will enable an artificial game of entrepreneurial conduct beyond be played out.”

In short, neo-liberalism constructs a government generalised on the “enterprise form.” This enterprise culture is primarily structured around the economic realm but is also extended to other realms within society.

2.4.4 The rise of the responsible individual

According to Larner (1998), whilst neo-liberalism might mean less government, it does not follow that there is less governance. Neo-liberalism problematises the Welfare State’s approach to social insurance and economic efficiency. Instead it acts to ‘responsibilise’ by employing governmental techniques that encourage both institutions and individuals to conform to the ‘appropriate’ norms of an artificially constructed market-place. Citizens become reconstructed as consumers engaged in a contractual relationship.

This entrepreneurial market place is underpinned by principles of ‘market governance’ (Larner, 1997) whereby individuals are reconstructed as active agents that exercise their rational, ‘free-choices’ in order to participate in market-transactions for goods and services. Although the neo-liberal governmental techniques seem wide and varied, Donzelot (cited in Larner, 1997) argues that most employ procedures of ‘contractual implication.’ This involves offering individuals and groups active involvement in action that can resolve the kind of issues which were previously within the realm and responsibility of government agencies and departments. This is not without its cost in that those invited to participate are expected to take active responsibility for these activities, both for carrying them out and for the outcomes they generate. In doing so, individuals and organisations are expected to conduct themselves in relation to a norm, according to ‘appropriate’ models of action. This new form has come to be known as ‘responsibilisation,’ whereby the governed are actively persuaded, in a free and rational manner, to conduct themselves in particular (that is, responsible) ways.

Within this new ‘active society’ envisaged within neo-liberal discourse, the responsibilised individual becomes the active agent (Dean, 1995). This society is linked to particular ideas regarding the politics of self where all are encouraged to ‘work on ourselves’ in a range of ways, even including involvement in counter-cultural movements that lie outside the realm of traditional conceptions of the political.

It is those political technologies employed by organisations that seek to responsibilise individuals and organisations in particular ways for determined outcomes, which becomes the focus of this thesis.

2.5 Implications for this thesis

The challenge for ALAC is likened to the ‘the art of government’ of which Foucault speaks in the opening quotation of this chapter. How does ALAC negotiate the tension between those techniques and strategies that compel and coerce individuals and those regimes and frameworks of self-regulation that are calculated to guide individuals’ behaviours?

From a Foucauldian perspective, ALAC emerges as part of an elaborate network of agencies, both State and non-State, which seek to influence the conduct of individuals. In ALAC’s case, it seeks to influence individuals to drink differently through its programme of work – the culture change programme. ALAC’s culture change programme is responsive to the exercise of power in neo-liberal society. As an authority, ALAC seeks to shape the beliefs and conduct of others in desired directions by mobilising and acting upon the will, circumstances, or environments of individuals (Rose & Miller, 1992:175).

ALAC seeks to influence individuals through the establishment of a particular ‘social norm’ or outcome – more moderation, less harm. According to ALAC (2002a:4), this involves New Zealanders drinking “within safe limits; where bingeing and drunken behaviour are seen as unacceptable; and where people

with alcohol problems have access to the appropriate support and treatment for themselves, their families and communities.”

The culture change programme represents a decisive shift away from the idea that ‘the sovereign’ through legislation is the preeminent means for inciting behaviour change. Implicit in the idea of influencing behaviour through a ‘social norm’ is the neo-liberal idea that there exists a prudent and self-regulating subject that can respond rationally to such a norm. The establishment of the social norm of “more moderation, less harm” is central to the idea that individuals are more likely to choose to drink in a way that is ‘less harmful’ if the majority of the population, or the “culture”, supports this approach. In a closing address delivered at a March 2006 ALAC conference, the Deputy Chief Executive of the organisation stated that

People cannot be scared into changing the way they consume a legal product that has desired social and health benefits, but knowledge is necessary.

And

People will consume, for the most part, a product to the norm set by their society.

(Kirby, 2006)

ALAC’s programme of work to change the drinking culture of New Zealand, that reflects this construction of a new social norm, is as follows:

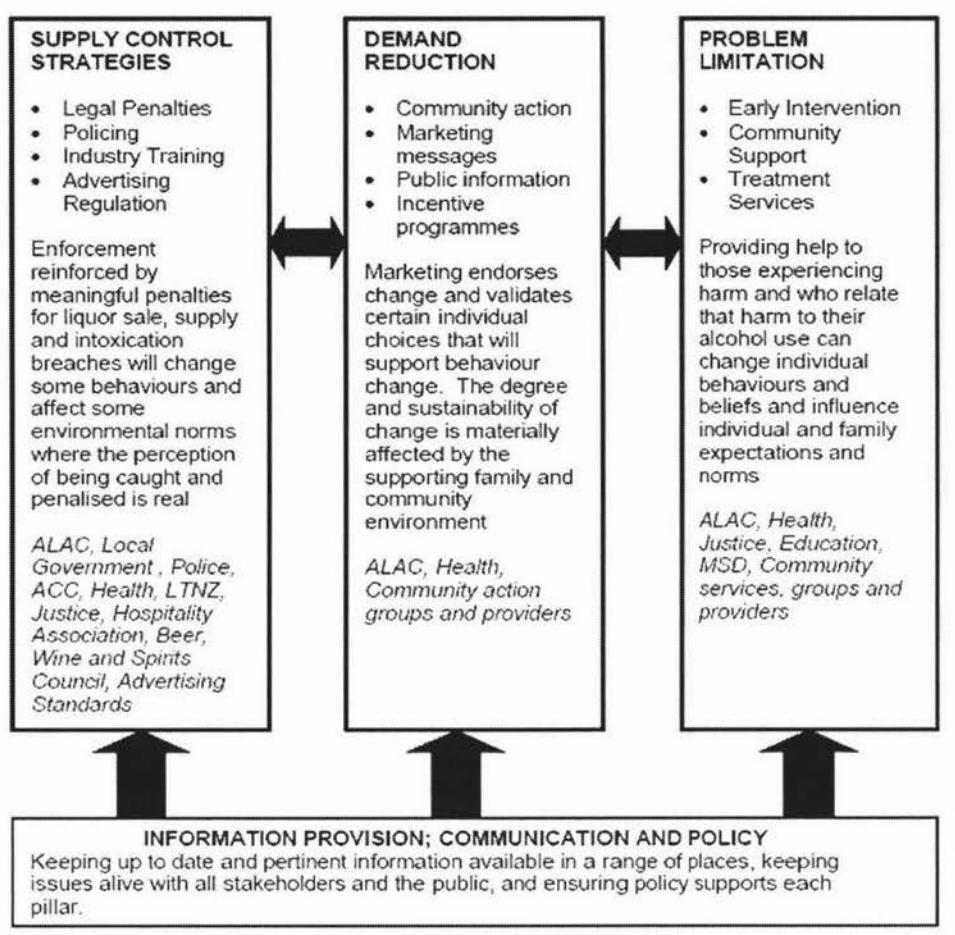


Figure 2.1: A programme to change New Zealand's drinking culture
(Source: ALAC Statement of Intent 2006)

The culture change programme employs a 'multi-strategy approach' that displaces the legal regulation of a population with a mode of regulation that is organised around the social norm of more moderation, less harm. In working towards the establishment of this norm, ALAC is aware of the limitations of past approaches towards reducing alcohol-related harm, of approaches which focused on 'reducing the availability' of alcohol through legislation to reduce harm and those that have sought to incite individuals to change their own drinking behaviour. In attempting to negotiate the tension between the sovereign and governmental impulses represented, respectively, by these past approaches, a new discourse focusing on 'culture change' emerges.

The programme does not disband the past strategies but rather seeks to co-opt some of the key concepts through which they functioned and rearticulate them

in ways that accord with the idea of ‘culture change.’ The programme thus employs ‘sovereign-like’ strategies that emphasise the enforcement of legislation and the penalising of individuals and organisations that do not comply with the law. Likewise, the notion of controlling the supply of alcohol ('supply control') reflects a sovereign-type exercise of power that emphasises the potency of law in restricting behaviour. The primary piece of legislation for governing the sale and supply of alcohol in New Zealand is the Sale of Liquor Act 1989 (SoLA). ALAC is not responsible for the enforcement of the Act but does have a role in supporting the implementation of the legislation by working with the agencies identified within the SoLA such as the New Zealand Police, District Licensing Agencies, Medical Officer’s of Health (or delegates), producers of alcohol, and licensees. Because ALAC is not responsible for the enforcement of the SoLA, it must identify opportunities to ‘support’ or ‘work-with’ these agencies in ways that support them to ‘perform their roles’ under the Act.

Another strategy ALAC employs to change the drinking culture of New Zealand is the reduction of public demands for alcohol ('demand reduction'). This represents the ‘governmental’ exercise of power and involves the marketing of messages addressed to the population that endorse change and that validate responsible choices by individuals to consume alcohol in ways that are safe (ALAC, 2005a:10). This approach assumes there to be – and targets – a ‘cognitive’ and ‘rational’ self-regulating subject that exercises their ‘freedom of choice’ when presented with information on the ‘harms’ or ‘risks’ associated with particular patterns of alcohol consumption. Key to this is the provision of information whose goal is to set individuals’ capacities to make their own choices within particular ‘normative boundaries.’ Once again, as identified in Figure 2.1, ALAC must work with Community Action groups and Health Providers in assisting with the delivery of these strategies.

The final strategy, that of ‘problem limitation,’ is not addressed here due to the fact this thesis focuses on the two strategies that reflect Foucault’s discussion on the exercise of power, which have as their focus the general population.

ALAC is clear that everyone has a role to play in reducing alcohol-related harm:

We are convinced that a number of parties – New Zealanders as individuals and community members, the public health sector, a range of government agencies, other interest groups, international groups and the industry – have a role to play if New Zealand is to achieve a society that is able to flourish in the presence of alcohol. (2006b:10)

In order to realise this goal, ALAC must position itself to govern the field of alcohol regulation, and to then do so in a way that enables the successful encouragement of both individuals and agencies to ‘perform their role’ in reducing alcohol-related harm. While ALAC seeks to enhance the ‘role performance’ of individuals directly through its marketing campaign, this thesis is specifically concerned with how ALAC constructs its relationships with external agencies such that the field of alcohol regulation becomes a governable space. ALAC has identified that it must work with a range of external agencies because it is not responsible for the operationalisation of many of the strategies that it advocates. For example, responsibility for monitoring and/or enforcing the Sale of Liquor Act falls to the agencies of Police, District Licensing inspectorates and Medical Officers of Health. ALAC must ‘govern’ – that is, seek to influence the conduct of these agencies – in order that they manifest their roles within the culture change programme as conceived of by ALAC. In seeking to influence the manner in which external agencies work, ALAC draws on the powerful signifier of ‘responsibility.’ This infuses its attempts to incite agencies to ‘play their role’ in reducing alcohol-related harm, presupposing there is a role that each is responsible for and for which ALAC is to make them account. This notion of responsibilisation itself contains the same tension that resides between the sovereign and governmental impulse: it is an injunction, and as an injunction, a creature of sovereign power, but it is an injunction to realise the potential of one’s agency, to inhabit a form of subjectivity that supersedes the need for sovereign control.

The following chapters examine this problematic of government – the tensions between the sovereign and governmental impulses – as it manifests within the culture change programme.

CHAPTER THREE: MAPPING THE MECHANICS - METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

PART ONE: METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

ALAC has identified that it must work with a range of external agencies because it is not responsible for the operationalisation of many of the strategies that it advocates. ALAC must therefore engage and influence the government of a space – that is of its external stakeholders and their contribution to the culture change programme. With regard to this, the thesis asks the three following sets of questions: firstly, how does ALAC seek to influence external agencies in the culture change programme? How does ALAC construct a discourse that is appealing to external agencies? Secondly, how do external agencies respond to ALAC's desire to engage with them and what responses emerge that might impact on ALAC's ability to influence the field of alcohol regulation? What other discourses and concepts that circulate within the field of alcohol regulation (the field of discursivity) threaten the coherence and stability of ALAC's discourse, and how does ALAC respond?

The pursuit of these questions is undertaken through an analysis of the discourse used by ALAC and the external agencies that are involved in the implementation of the culture change programme, to describe their relationship with that programme and with one another. This chapter begins with a critique of the dominant epistemological assumptions that are employed in traditional public health research, a critique that demonstrates the value of discourse analysis as a means for inquiring into this field. Alternative theories of knowledge are then presented by drawing on the discourse analysis of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. The application of this theory as a method for analysing the culture change programme is then presented in part two of this chapter.

It is acknowledged that Foucault's genealogy and archaeology writings provide a tool for analysing discourse. However, the work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe as a form of discourse analysis has been adopted over Foucault's approach due to the negative ontological position adopted within the thesis. I have adopted the position that the social world is characterised by attempts by agents to institute an impossible object (society). For the reasons discussed in the following chapters, this is a necessary ideal that propels us forward, but always remains an 'impossibility.' In order to explore this negative ontological position, this approach belongs to a type of theorisation and political analysis which is based on the assumption that understanding social reality is not equivalent to understanding what society is (describing the positive forms social constructions take), but rather what prevents it from being (Laclau, 1990:44). Foucault's discourse analysis can be characterised as working from as a 'positive' form of description. For this thesis, Foucault's theoretical conceptualisation of governmentality is used to situate the ALAC culture change programme as a problematic of government. However, Laclau and Mouffe offer a more empirically useful framework for analysing the processes associated with the contestation and fixity of meaning.

Secondly, Foucault's writings in the area of governmentality do not produce precise methodological tools for studying specific cases but instead provide an approach, or a series of phenomena, with which to consider in the exercise of power (Hughes & Griffiths, 1999). To this end, Foucault's analysis of governmentality is being used here for the sole purpose of situating the culture change programme. Particularly, it frames the tension that ALAC experiences between techniques and strategies that compel and coerce individuals and those that take as their goal the construction of self-regulating individuals. This thesis examines this matter by analysing the construction of the culture change programme, and specifically how ALAC seeks to operationalise the programme through its government of space, that is, its working relationships with external agencies.

Thirdly, Foucault's work on discourse explains the emergence and development of particular discursive formations and how those formations have come to be

taken as authoritative (Woodiwiss, 2003). It is in this regard that Foucault constructs a relation between knowledge and power, and relates that knowledge/power couplet to the resistance that can emerge to threaten the exercise of governmental power. However, the Foucauldian approach does not fully represent those processes through which resistance and the contestation of meaning are played out in discourse. Not only do Laclau and Mouffe provide tools for the analysis of the contestation of meaning within language, in the tradition of Foucault, but they introduce an additional dynamic, the 'condition of dislocation' (given further expression in the concepts of 'spaces of dislocation' and 'dislocation'). Dislocation occurs when a discourse is confronted by new events that cannot be explained, represented, or in other ways domesticated in its own terms (Torfing, 2005:16). The concepts associated with dislocation allow for an analysis of sites and conditions of discourse which threaten to disrupt and rupture the perspectives that dominate a field, and define its form. Dislocation plays a central part in this thesis, providing a means for establishing the political significance of discourses that potentially threaten ALAC's ability to govern or influence the conduct of external agencies. Given the theoretical approach of Laclau and Mouffe that is adopted through the analysis of discourse, it is through the deficiencies of an existing discourse that the conditions of possibility are manifested that provide for an alternative approach. It is against this backdrop and the condition of possibility that a critique of the current ALAC discourse is undertaken.

3.1 Closed systems – Positivism and empiricism in public health

According to the ALAC (2002:4), the culture change programme seeks to change the drinking culture where New Zealanders can drink "within safe limits; where bingeing and drunken behaviour are seen as unacceptable; and where people with alcohol problems have access to the appropriate support and treatment for themselves, their families and communities." As Foucault's governmentality writings suggest, key to this ability to influence the 'conduct' of New Zealanders is notion of rendering this space governable. Expertise and knowledge play a crucial role in the political rule of societies; rendering a

multiplicity of social fields governable through detailed documentation, classification, evaluation and calculation (Johnson, 1993). Nowhere is this clearer than in the government of the health of populations. Both the clinical health and wider public health field have been dominated by the discourse of 'evidence.' This discourse emphasises the need to evaluate and critically reflect on health practice and programmes often with a view to enhancing the efficacy and efficiency of those practices and programmes in consideration.

This drive for evaluation-based evidence is often underpinned by empiricist or positivist epistemologies which attempt to predict, generalise and explain co-relationships within human health behaviours. Epidemiology exemplifies this through its analysis, explanation, and generalisation of health behaviours across populations. This approach often focuses on the 'objective' traits of populations rather than the social relations that people ascribe to their social position, biography and health, and thus fails to account for the role of meaning in shaping health behaviours (Coburn & Poland, 1996). The development of associated disciplines, such as 'social epidemiology,' has sought to address some of these criticisms by focusing on social interactions, including social norms, laws, institutions, social conditions and behaviour, and the impact of these on the health of populations. However, even this approach leans more towards describing and explaining the social and geographic distribution of health, and the determinants of health, with a view to making generalisations and predictions for the future.

According to McGuire (2005:558), the public health research field has been influenced significantly by the evidence-based model (EBM) which is routinely employed in clinical health research. Although there is a wide variety of study designs and theoretical perspectives used to examine the complex interaction between biological, behavioural, social and environmental interactions that characterise the focus of public health, McGuire argues that public health research has often prioritised the clinical EBM model as a methodological approach in the evaluation of public health programmes. Represented in the predominance of research designs such as the 'randomised control trial,' clinical EBM models seek to establish explanatory co-relationships between factors

based on empirical observations of patterns of events. This methodology is often employed in the natural sciences where it is believed that causal mechanisms can be identified and observed through the isolation and manipulation of the object being studied.

In regard to the application of this approach to social research, a range of critiques have emerged which argue that this 'de-humanises' the personal experience of illness by failing to account for the social context and meaning that individuals give to their experience of health and illness (Popay & Williams, 1996). The strongest critique of the EBM is made in relation to its positivist and empiricist underpinnings, particularly its attempt to apply natural science methodologies to the study of social phenomena. Unlike the natural sciences, a social system cannot be closed through the isolation and manipulation of objects of study, and through the exclusion of others. For example, human behaviour is constituted through the use of language where agents continually ascribe meaning to the social world and adapt to changes in the environment (Danermark, 2002). This meaning is contingent, never static, always historically located and open to the possibility of contestation and change. Language continually 'opens' even the most sealed of 'closed' research settings.

The existence of continually changing 'open systems' within the social world means that there may be a range of generative mechanisms which could intervene in any given research setting, therefore calling into question the ability of researchers to accurately identify regularities. The 'open' nature of the social world, and the behaviour of humans in relation to this, makes it impossible to identify and control for all factors within social research approaches such as the randomised control trial. Such issues problematise the empiricist and positivist epistemological assumptions of generalisability and prediction that are often drawn on within public health research and evaluation.

Whilst research and evaluation is one part of understanding the realm of practice within public health, it is central to its construction as a discipline. A focus on describing objective phenomena often fails to acknowledge the link

between the role of expertise in the constitution of the social world through the exercise of power via knowledge production. Language as a constituting factor of the social is ignored, favouring its use as an objective tool to describe a reality 'out there.' This does not acknowledge that the underpinnings of language – power, and knowledge, are both responsible for creating the social, the ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002:14). Laclau adds to the power/knowledge couplet the 'condition of dislocation' to account for the way in which discourses threaten the stability of a given field of knowledge. In regard to the dominant public health research and evaluation approaches, the claims to truth embodied in these dominant research methods have become a set of orthodox beliefs about the production of knowledge, obsolescing and limiting other ways of knowing the world (Dean, 2004).

This thesis posits that the social world, including its subjects and objects are constituted fundamentally through the language or discourses we employ. The limitations within dominant epistemological approaches in public health research and evaluation cannot adequately explain the 'open' and constructed nature of the social world. Language can never reflect a pre-existing reality as all meaning is mediated through discourse. In order to understand the 'open nature' of the social world and the role that language plays in shaping our understanding of the world, it is necessary to draw on methodological approaches that take as their core interest the machinations of discourse.

3.2 Beyond closed systems – Post-structuralism

This thesis should be considered within the broader context of post-structural theory. This has its roots in the structural linguistic writings of Ferdinand de Saussure or structuralism, as it came to be known.

Saussure drew a distinction between two levels of language, *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* represents the structure of language, the network of signs that give meaning to each other, and is fixed and unchangeable. *Parole*, conversely, is

situated in language use, the signs actually used by people in specific situations. *Parole* always draws on *langue* because it is the structure of language that makes specific statements possible (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002:10). *Parole* can never be the object of study for structuralism because situated language use is considered too arbitrary and random for ‘scientific’ analysis. As *langue* is fixed, it is this that becomes the main object of study.

Saussure’s theory of synchronic language asserted that the relationship between the spoken word (signifier) and the object (signified) is arbitrary (Saussure, 1960). It is only through custom and not by any intrinsic relationship that the sound and the object come to have meaning. That is why different languages can use different signifiers to refer to the same signified. For example, the word “tree” in Maori being “rākau” and “arbol” in French. Saussure went on to posit that signs have meaning through their relationship to other signs, and in particular, through *différence*. For example, a ‘tree’ comes to have meaning because it is not a ‘flower,’ nor a ‘river.’ Thus, meaning comes from understanding what a thing **is not**, rather than from any ‘essential’ or ontological sense of what a thing **is**. Meaning is also generated through ‘binary pairs’ (male/female, white/black and so forth).

Saussure’s synchronic language theory asserted that language is a semiotic system, a system of signs. Because language mediates access to reality, there is no ‘essential meaning out there’ – there is nothing for the ‘knowing’ subject outside of language. Also integral to structuralism is the idea of a ‘subject;’ an individual constituted by the various structures that circulate within a society at a given time. This approach de-centres the idea of the ‘rational’, ‘free-thinking’ individual who is the author of his/her own life and instead posits that individuals are socially constructed and determined by various structures (Layder, 1994:118). Different disciplines seized on these tenets of structuralism to develop ‘structuralist methods’ in an attempt to ‘scientifically’ analyse and understand various phenomena such as cultures, literature, and so forth. Roland Barthes’ (1977) proclamation “the author is dead,” referred to the idea that language speaks through people, representing the extent to which determinism had come to permeate structuralism.

Post-structuralism emerged as a resistance to the deterministic nature of structuralism and the absence of human agency. In particular, it rejected the idea that the structure of language or culture could be mapped. Post-structural thought maintains that signifiers do not produce signifieds, but instead merely indicate the presence of other signifiers. As an example, language works like a dictionary, when you look up a word, you get other words that provide meaning. This ongoing process of looking up words will ultimately bring you back to the word from which you started (McBride, 2006). Post-structuralism dissociates itself from the structuralist differentiation between *langue* and *parole*, asserting that the difference between these terms is more fluid. Whereas structuralism suggests that structure is created, reproduced and changed through concrete language use, post-structuralism argues that it is through specific acts such as speaking and writing that structure is reproduced but also challenged through the introduction of alternative ideas for how to fix the meaning of signs (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002). Post-structuralists maintain that structures still exist, but always in a temporary state, and always open to change. Changes in the meaning of a word are the result of signs shifting in relation to one another.

This thesis takes a broad post-structuralist approach to informing the adopted methodological approach. It acknowledges that language is not a reflection of a pre-existing reality but rather a structured system of patterns or discourses whereby meanings change from discourse to discourse in part through the reconfiguration of words and in part through the disruptive effect of dislocation. In this sense, social life is constituted by discourses where systems of patterns are both maintained and transformed. The most effective way of understanding the maintenance and change of meanings is through the analysis of the specific contexts in which language is employed (*ibid*).

3.3 Mapping the mechanics of discourse – Laclau & Mouffe

This thesis draws on discourse theory as a way of analysing and understanding the socially constituted nature of ALAC's relationships with external agencies,

as it manifests in the culture change programme. It draws on a form of post-structural discourse theory informed by the writings of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. Both Laclau and Mouffe were strongly influenced by developments in Marxist, post-structuralist, post analytical and psychoanalytic theory (Smith, 1998). They draw on hermeneutical foundations in the belief that theory is never objective as it can never exist outside the reality which it seeks to explain. Discourse theory rejects the sharp distinction made between value and fact, instead accepting that the discourse theorist and analyst are always located in a particular historical and political context with no neutral point from which to describe, argue and evaluate (Mouffe, 1983). Theoretical practices are in themselves constituted and shaped by the social world in which the subjects and objects of research find themselves (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000:6). Discourse theory also borrows from interpretative methods of social inquiry that emphasise the task of understanding and explaining the emergence of the logic of discourses, and the ways in which subjects inhabit the socially constructed nature of identities.

For Laclau and Mouffe, discourses are systems of meaningful practices that form the identities of subjects and objects. They build on contemporary critiques of behaviouralist and essentialist paradigms by asserting that all objects and actions are imbued with meaning and that this meaning is conferred by historically specific systems of rules. There is a rejection of positivist and naturalistic conceptions of knowledge and method, and in particular those 'scientific' laws of society and politics grounded on empirical generalisations which form the basis of testable empirical predictions (*ibid*:6).

For Laclau and Mouffe, the purpose of discourse theory is to investigate the ways in which social practices articulate and contest the discourses that constitute the social world. Meaning can never be ultimate or definitive, as it is located within an 'open system' which is characterised by a constant struggle about definitions of 'society' and 'identity' with resulting social effects (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002). Laclau and Mouffe's project is inherently political in that every articulation of discourse involves an attempt to establish a system of relations between different objects and practices, while providing (subject)

positions with which social agents can identify. 'Politics' is understood as the organisation of society in a particular way that excludes all other possible ways. Social organisation therefore becomes the outcome of continuous and ongoing political processes. When a struggle occurs between particular discourses, this is due to the fact that different actors are trying to promote different ways of organising society through various attempts to reorder signs in relation to each other (*ibid*). The social world is characterised by the attempts of different actors trying to weave different strands of discourse together in an attempt to organise a field of meaning so as to fix the identities of objects and practices in a particular way (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000:3).

All 'objects' are objects of discourse as their meaning depends upon socially constructed systems of rules and significant differences (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). This does not reduce everything to discourse or suggest that there is no world 'out there.' Rather it acknowledges that we are always internal to a world of signifying practices. From an ontological perspective, this stresses the primacy of language, as one cannot seek to conceptualise the world from an extra-discursive position (Barrett, 1991). Laclau & Mouffe maintain:

The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition. An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainty exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of 'natural phenomena' or 'expressions of the wrath of God,' depends upon the structuring of the discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive conditions of emergence. (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:108)

Laclau and Mouffe (1985:111) also argue that society is 'impossible' and does not exist. This is because society as an objective entity is never completed or total, being disrupted by the eruption of that which exists beyond the terms in which it is conceptualised. Society is characterised by an ongoing struggle over

meaning, the reordering of signs in relation to one another, and the quest to pacify in language that threatens to dislocate the prevailing constellations of meaning. Discourses become dislocated when objects or sets of objects cannot be integrated into their systems of meaning. New political frontiers and imaginisations emerge to fill the space created from the collapse of the former discourse. The new discourse that emerges, however, is never fully formed, itself containing internal contradictions and limit points that might be exposed by competing interests.

Critical to Laclau and Mouffe's understanding is that the structuring of discourses never exhausts all the possibilities for the ascription of meaning. Although, the starting point of such analysis is that all structures are contingent, it is never possible for us to think outside of these discursive structures, for in the ascription of meaning, we must refer to other structures. Meanings are never completely fixed, nor are they completely fluid (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:113). Partial and contingent fixed meaning is both possible and necessary for communication. According to Laclau (1994:53) although the fullness and universality of society is unachievable, its need does not disappear: the idea of closure and fullness still functions as an impossible ideal. The social world is organised and centred on the basis of such an (impossible) ideal.

In order for us to communicate however, it is necessary for us to act as *if* these meanings are closed and fixed. For example, if people identify with different classes, it is not because society is objectively constituted by these classes, but because there has been temporary closure whereby other possibilities for identification, such as gender or ethnicity, are marginalized or excluded (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002:39). It is always possible for a discourse to be undermined by the reordering of signs in different relations to one another – this is called articulation. Signs are therefore structured in relation to each other but are never and can never be closed as a system. This understanding provides an impetus for this approach as a political project – discourses are always only temporary fixations of meaning in a constantly changing and fundamentally undecided field (*ibid*:39). These constant attempts at fixation, or closure of a field of discourse, which become the entry point for discourse analysis.

An integral part of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is the 'condition of dislocation.' This concept is a central focus of enquiry within this thesis, providing a tool for examining those discursive moves that threaten ALAC's ability to render governable the space of alcohol regulation. According to Stavrakakis (2000:100), dislocation employs a negative ontology by focusing on the element of negativity inherent in the human experience, on the element of rupture and crisis threatening and subverting our social – ideological forms, the field of social objectivity. Stavrakakis argues:

Starting from a negative ontological framework, according to which all human constructions constitute attempts to institute an impossible object (society) and master an excessive element (the real in Lacanian terms) which always escapes our means of representation, the theory of dislocation belongs to a type of theorization and political analysis which is based on the assumption that understanding social reality is not equivalent to understanding what society is (describing the positive forms our social constructions take) but what prevents it from being. What prevents it from being what it promises to be is the force of dislocation; which is also what generates new ideological attempts to reach this impossible goal.

(Stavrakakis, 2000:100)

The condition of dislocation, along with a range of other terms (which I review below) from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, can be employed as tools for examining those sites where struggle over meaning occurs. The methods for analysing those sites of struggle shall be identified in part two of this chapter. For Laclau and Mouffe, another aim of discourse analysis is to map out the processes through which subjects struggle about the way in which the meanings of signs are to be fixed, and the processes by which some fixations of meaning become so conventionalised that they are thought of as 'natural.' Following are key terms as used by Laclau in Mouffe, which shall be employed as tools for analysis in this thesis.

3.4 The practice of discourse analysis – Key terms:

Laclau and Mouffe identify two elements that characterise discourse: those which enable meaning to form and those which dislocate or threaten to dislocate meaning previously formed. Elements in the construction of meaning are as follows:

Articulation refers to practices that establish a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of that same articulatory practice.

Discourse is the structured totality of this articulatory practice. *Moments* or 'key concepts' are the differential positions that appear articulated within a discourse. *Elements* or 'indeterminate notions' are those differences that are not 'discursively articulated' and because of this floating character emerge in periods of social crisis and threats of dislocation (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). As an example, the development of a public health focus on alcohol came about through the articulation of previous elements of 'harm minimisation' and 'health' such that they came to be linked to the privileged signifier of alcohol. Thus, in turn, 'harm minimisation' and 'healthy-population' become key concepts (moments) that are played out in public health discourse with regard to the reduction of alcohol-related harm.

A key goal of analysis in this thesis is to identify how articulations constantly reproduce, challenge, or transform discourses. This is approached here by examining ALAC's construction of alcohol-related harm as an issue of governance, and then examining how external agencies seek to introduce new elements into the ALAC constructed discourse such that the meanings of its key concepts shift.

Discourses transform elements into moments by reducing their polysemy to that of a fully 'fixed' meaning. The complete transition from the elements to the moments is, however, never fulfilled (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:110). That being said, temporary closure is sometimes assumed to occur so as to stop endless fluctuation in the meaning of signs. This is done by excluding all other possible meanings that signs could have had; that is, all the other possible ways in which

the signs could have been organised in relation to one another (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002:27). Therefore a discourse is a reduction of possibilities and an attempt to stop the sliding of signs in relation to each other, thereby creating fixed, albeit temporary, meaning. This discourse is always threatened by the multiplicity of meaning that occurs through the presence of other concepts or competing discourses within the *field of discursivity*. The field of discursivity is everything outside a particular discourse or, to rephrase the point, everything that is excluded by a given discourse. This thesis seeks to identify which discourses and/or indeterminate notions (elements) in the field of discursivity might threaten to dislocate the culture change programme.

The fact that the transition from elements to moments is never complete raises the question of how any partial structure or social meaning is formed. Laclau and Mouffe introduce the concept of *nodal points* or 'organising ideas' to account for the structuring of elements into a discourse. Nodal points are privileged signifiers or reference points within a discourse that bind together a particular type of meaning. The nodal point functions by transforming elements into internal moments and by partially fixing meaning to itself (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2002). For example ALAC (2002a) refers to 'culture,' 'moderation,' and 'partnership', in its Strategic Plan. Within this chain of signification, the nodal point of 'harm minimisation' transforms these previously indeterminate notions into key concepts (moments) within a discourse in a way that implies that the minimisation of alcohol-related harm depends upon about changing New Zealand's drinking culture in partnership with a range of stakeholders.

Hegemonic practices are also critical to understanding ALAC's relationship with external agencies. Hegemonic practices presuppose the presence of elements that can be articulated in diverging ways by opposed political projects. The aim of hegemonic intervention is to fix meaning across a range of discourses that otherwise collide antagonistically; that is to construct and stabilise the nodal points that form the basis of 'fixed' social orders by articulating as many available elements – floating signifiers – as possible (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985:135). This thesis posits that in order to keep stakeholders engaged and to govern the space of alcohol regulation, ALAC must perform hegemonic

practices or interventions when antagonisms comes to be played out between external agencies in the culture change programme. The purpose of these interventions is to govern the space by keeping external agencies engaged in the programme of work. This thesis aims to identify and analyse these hegemonic practices.

Myths or floating signifiers emerge when important signifiers are unable to be sufficiently affixed into one or more discourses. In effect, myths are invested with different content by different articulations - the sign is loose enough to mean almost anything. The lack of fixed meaning is central to the ability of the myth to suture spaces of dislocation. A myth can be articulated in a range of ways. It involves the formation of a new objectivity by means of rearticulating usually dislocated elements that threaten the coherence and political viability of existing discourses (Laclau, 1990:61). This is often as a result of previously significant signs that have failed as nodal points. The effect of a myth is essentially hegemonic where it succeeds in suturing antagonisms. Once this is achieved, the myth is transformed into an *imaginary*. A collective social *imaginary* is an absolute limit which structures a field of intelligibility (ibid:61). The imaginary acts as an aspirational signifier, a universal horizon for each agent can strive towards.

For example, 'partnership' and 'collaboration' are employed as key concepts by ALAC in an attempt to mobilise a range of external agencies towards reducing alcohol-related harm. When there are tensions or disagreements by agencies over the strategies employed in the culture change programme that support the organising idea (nodal point) of 'harm minimisation,' then 'partnership' becomes elevated to the status of a myth to suture this gap. The myth then plays out as a 'solution' to the tensions and disagreements, giving rise to comments such as "we need to get some agreement on shared outcomes, and work together to reduce harm." It becomes an imaginary when it becomes the unreachable promise that agencies see as the only solution. It structures a field of intelligibility when its absolute limits come to be articulated by a range of agencies: "the only way to reduce alcohol-related harm is if we work together." Laclau also introduces the idea of floating signifiers or floating ideas that also

perform the same kind of hegemonic function as myths because of their lack of 'fixity.'

3.4.1 *Elements that dislocate meaning*

As indicated above, the 'condition of dislocation' plays a central role within Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and signals an important point of difference in Foucault's conceptualisation of discourse. This thesis considers the 'condition of dislocation' in two ways. Firstly, it considers it as existing through the presence of tensions or disagreements within a discourse which at first seem potentially irresolvable. These antagonistic tensions however can be 'fixed' through the articulation of myths and other floating signifiers in a way that sutures the gap or tension. These tensions and antagonisms are considered *spaces of dislocation.*' Secondly, a discursive structure should be considered 'dislocated' when it confronts events that it cannot integrate. These events usually emerge in an unpredictable way, unlike the observable antagonisms that constitute the spaces of dislocation. The threat of *dislocation* generates new attempts – through new articulations - to reach this impossible goal of closure (Stavrakakis, 2000:100). When a *discourse* is dislocated, the space is ungovernable. This thesis seeks to understand what contestations of meaning threaten to dislocate the field of alcohol regulation and thus ALAC's attempt to render the space governable.

Antagonisms occur when agents are unable to fully reach or occupy their desired subject position. This kind of disruption occurs where elements that comprise this identity are also used by others with opposing political projects. Thus the parties involved feel that the constitution of their identity is limited by the presence of an 'other.' This objectified other, who claims their discursive space, is a symbol of the actor's non-being, thus allowing for an overflow of a plurality of meanings which prevent the fixation of an identity (ibid:100).

Antagonism gets structured through *logics of equivalence and difference.* These concepts play a key role within Laclau and Mouffe's formulation of antagonism, which is similar to Foucault's concept of 'resistance' that is discussed in relation to the 'knowledge/power' concept.

A logic of equivalence functions through the creation of an equivalence between identities, that express a negation of the discursive system – that is the creation of a purely negative identity that cannot be integrated into a system of discourse. This is often done by splitting a system of differences, and constructing differences between two opposed parties. A logic of difference works by dissolving existing chains of equivalence and by incorporating the disarticulated elements into one's own expanding discourse. According to Howarth & Stavrakakis (2000:11), a project employing a logic of equivalence seeks to divide a social space by condensing meaning around two antagonistic positions, typically them/us. A project employing a logic of difference seeks to weaken these poles in order to displace sharp antagonistic polarities by seeking to relegate that division to the margins of the social: there are some things that we like about them, because those ideas remind us of ourselves. Central to understanding ALAC's relationship with its external agencies, a significant point of enquiry in the analysis is in understanding how logics of equivalence and difference are constructed by both ALAC and external agencies within the culture change programme.

Part two of this chapter considers the above concepts as a method for analysing the ALAC discourse and culture change programme, in regard to the external agencies that ALAC seeks to govern.

PART TWO: DATA GATHERING AND SOURCES OF DATA

In considering the ethical issues relating to the research and before the commencement of the collection of data, an ethics application (Appendix A) was submitted to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) - Albany for consideration. The application and ethics approval was granted by MUHEC (Appendix B).

Because the social world is constituted by struggles over meaning or attempts to fix it, an effective way of understanding the maintenance and change in meaning is through the analysis of the specific contexts in which language is employed. Two types of data are used in the analysis, they are described as follows.

3.5 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were the primary form of data collection. For the purposes of this thesis, semi-structured interviews represent the opportunity to identify and examine responses of external agencies to ALAC's attempt to govern. They also provide data for analysis with regard to the creation, maintenance and transformation of meaning, and of those discourses that might threaten to dislocate ALAC discourse.

From a methodological perspective, semi-structured interviews were used as the primary data source due to the fact that they are much less sanctioned, formalised and rationalised than written documents. This provides for a more animated insight into the spontaneously formulated expressions of the discursive patterns which structure a particular field of discourse (Hansen & Sørensen, 2005:99). Following on from this Hansen & Sørensen assert:

Knowledge is obtained about the ways individuals in different positions within a discursive structure construct meaning and identity – and thus

knowledge – about themselves and the other actors, and how and where they draw the discursive patterns of inclusion and exclusion. (ibid:99)

In terms of key informants, interviews were secured from representatives of ALAC – this included the Chief Executive and the Chairman of the Council. Secondly, interviews were secured with those agencies that were actively involved with then-current ALAC projects or programmes of work. Because the culture change programme represents the sum total of ALAC's entire work programme, it was assumed that involvement in a current project represented an 'engagement' with the ALAC culture change programme.

As I was in the employment of ALAC during this phase of the research, the organisations were identified by examining the internal ALAC business plans, looking for projects that were undertaken with external agencies. I then reviewed the organisations with the ALAC Chief Executive to ascertain whether there were any further recommendations on other external agencies that might be considered. The Chief Executive also provided recommendations on the appropriate contact person within each agency.

In terms of an invitation to participate, I made contact with those people where there was a pre-existing working relationship. Where there was no direct working relationship, an approach was made by the Chief Executive, citing ALAC support and inviting participation in the research project. Six external agencies in total were identified with all agreeing to participate. These agencies included: the Accident Compensation Corporation of New Zealand (ACC); Beer, Wines and Spirits Council; Hospitality Association of New Zealand (HANZ); Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ); Ministry of Health (MoH); and New Zealand Police.

An introductory email (see Appendix C) was sent to participants thanking for them for agreeing to participate and outlining research purpose, objectives, audience and possible future uses. A follow-up phone was made to confirm the participant had received the email and was still in agreement to participate. An interview venue, location and time was then agreed upon.

3.6 Interview Instrument

A semi-structured interview instrument (Appendix D) was developed using Foucault's conceptualisation of the exercise of power as reflected in the ALAC Strategic Plan. Outcome statements were identified which represented the exercise of 'sovereign' power – concerning the effectiveness and enforcement of legislation. Outcome statements were also identified which reflected a focus on governmental power – that is through individuals' capacities to make their own choices within particular 'normative boundaries.'

Before interviews commenced, the participants were provided with an information sheet (Appendix E). Within the interview, participants were asked to reflect on the nature of their organisational relationship with ALAC and their understanding of both the culture change programme and the ALAC statement of more moderation, less harm. They were also asked to respond to a number of outcome statements which focused on the role of law in behaviour change and that of individual agency. In relation to the field of alcohol regulation, the participants were then asked to put the issue of the culture change programme aside and to think around how an organisation might go about influencing or changing the behaviour of both individuals and populations, of how this might be done and of the strategies that should be adopted to mobilise other agencies in support of a shared outcome.

The interviews took an average of 45 minutes to complete, with the participants signing a consent form (Appendix F) before the interview commenced agreeing to participate and to have the interview recorded electronically. Once the interviews were completed, the recordings were sent away for transcription. The transcribed interview was sent back to the participant, inviting them to read through the document and to make any amendments to the material. Once again, the participant was asked to sign a form (Appendix G) acknowledging that they read the transcription and authorised its use, subject to any amendments, for the purposes of analysis.

3.7 Textual

Textual documents were also used to supplement the semi-structured interview data. In particular, the *ALAC Strategic Plan 2002 – 2007* was used as it outlines ALAC's attempt to engage and work with external agencies. This plan is an official document outlining a 5 year vision for reducing alcohol-related harm. It covers how the organisation will work towards this including its role, a framework for setting outcomes and strategies, and the principles by which ALAC shall operate. The Strategic Plan represents an 'official' position with regard to the direction of the organisation. It provides a general overview of those strategies adopted by the organisation but little detail on the specific techniques of government in terms of how it shall go about engaging with other agencies.

Other key documents used included the annual Statements of Intent (Sol). The Sol were used to supplement the analysis by providing a clearer understanding of ALAC's annual activities with external agencies. In doing this, the Sol from the 2004/2005 and 2005/ 2006 financial years were sourced to supplement the analysis. Before 2004, the Crown Entities Act was not enacted and therefore ALAC was not required to produce an Sol. In this instance, 'business plans' from 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 were obtained instead. Although the content and information presented within the Sol and business plans vary, the documents are consistent in the articulation of key outcome statements which reflect the ALAC Strategic Plan.

The outcome statements within the Sol are critical to understanding ALAC's construction of the field of governance and in particular, its attempt to inform and shape organisational engagement with external agencies. As discovered in the analysis, these outcomes serve a number of functions through which ALAC structures the field of discourse. In certain instances, the outcome statements represent key nodal points, myths and imaginaries that ALAC draws on in its attempt to render governable the socio-political space that external agencies inhabit.

As an autonomous Crown Entity, these outcome statements are also central to ALAC's relationship with other State sector agencies. The discourse of 'outcomes' and 'shared outcomes' is linked to discourses of 'accountability' and 'efficiency', that are used to organise relations within the wider state-sector. ALAC also has reporting, governance and other obligations outlined for it in the Crown Entities Act 2004 – in ALAC's case to the Minister accountable, through the Ministry of Health.

In terms of how outcomes work throughout the State sector, the State Services Commission is the key agency responsible for providing a range of advice and guidance on issues such as leadership, management systems and structures within the state services sector. As part of this role, the State Services Commission is responsible for the *Managing for Outcomes* project. According to the Commission:

Managing for outcomes seeks ongoing improvement in agencies' ability to identify and deliver the interventions that best contribute to the outcomes and objectives government is seeking. However, many of the major objectives of government cannot be easily delivered by a single agency. This means delivering better results for New Zealanders will require government agencies to work together in many instances. Working together is not appropriate in all circumstances. Working together costs — not just in time, money and other resources, but also in lost opportunities. This means explicit judgments need to be made about when to proceed with any joint work. Getting better at managing for shared outcomes starts with decisions about why, when and how to work with other agencies.
(2004:3)

The process of managing for shared outcomes is identified as a form of inter-agency collaboration or joint working where the agencies involved share responsibility for, and actively collaborate, to manage towards a common outcome. There is an expectation that all agencies across the State sector are guided by the principles of the project.

In addition, the Commission maintains:

The decision to collaborate towards a shared outcome should be deliberate, and based upon an assessment that the joint activity of the two (or more) agencies is likely to be more effective (and cost effective) in achieving the outcome than their separate individual activities. There should also be some underpinning and testable rationale that clearly articulates how working together contributes to the outcome, and how results will be demonstrated in order to inform future decisions and ongoing learning. (2004:3)

This responsibility to 'collaborate' within the State sector helps locate ALAC's desire to engage with external agencies, so as to achieve the more moderation, less harm outcome that underpins ALAC's culture change programme.

Although the development of the Strategic Plan pre-dates the Act, and of ALAC's reporting requirements that came to be determined within the statute, there is a clear discourse of partnership and collaboration expressed by the government-of-the-day. This discourse had come to be widely adopted across the State sector.

Not all agencies that ALAC seeks to engage have a statutory requirement to identify and work towards shared outcomes. ALAC must draw on a range of other concepts and discourses in which to engage and mobilise those external agencies, and it is these discourses that are analysed in the following chapters. The ALAC documents provide an 'official' means of understanding ALAC's desire to engage with external agencies. As identified by Hansen & Sørensen (2005:99), however, 'official documents' are often messy and unclear because they are the outcome of processes of negotiation and compromise that provide little information about patterns of conflict. It is for this reason that ALAC's official documents are used to supplement the more spontaneous expressions of discourse represented in semi-structured interviews.

3.8 The analysis of data

In keeping with Laclau and Mouffe's hermeneutical foundations which assert that theory is never objective, since it can never exist outside the reality which it seeks to explain, a number of propositions were developed for analysing the data (below). These highlight the socio-political constructedness of discourse in and around ALAC's culture change programme. This approach recognises that the practice of discourse theory and analysis are closely linked.

3.8.1 The analysis of government

The key proposition being tested in the research project is that in order for ALAC to influence external agencies and to sustain an ability to govern, ALAC must pursue a hegemonic position. The analysis commences by analysing ALAC's construction of alcohol-related harm as an issue of governance, and in particular the key concepts and elements that play out through ALAC's structuring (discursive structuration) of the field. This involves identifying those concepts and discourses that ALAC draws on in its attempt to engage with external agencies; and those logics of equivalence and difference that are created by ALAC in order to govern the space.

3.8.2 The analysis of barriers to engagement

ALAC discourse, and thus the culture change programme, is threatened by external agencies when they choose not to occupy the subject positions, or 'roles of responsibility,' that ALAC has constructed. The data is examined for signs that external agencies are rearticulating key concepts (moments) and indeterminate notions (elements) of the culture change programme such that those agencies can create alternative subject positions for themselves. An associated proposition is that ALAC must incorporate concepts from the alternative perspectives put forward by the external agencies in order to stabilise the antagonisms that emerge between them. This is achieved by

identifying and analysing discourses that ALAC develops in response to the alternative articulations of the external agencies.

3.8.3 The analysis of the condition of dislocation

Irresolvable antagonisms exist within the culture change programme that are likely to dislocate the ALAC discourse. This proposition leads to the following questions: to what extent might such antagonisms exist? Where they exist, how does ALAC understand these antagonisms? What does this potential threat of dislocation mean for the future engagement and governance of external agencies? This proposition was examined by analysing ALAC's self-identification of antagonisms (irresolvable and otherwise) within the culture change programme, its articulation for how these emerge (the 'causes' of antagonisms). Also, suggestions are made of strategies that might enable ALAC to 'move forward' in recognising the ever-present threat of dislocation.

The following chapters present the analysis of ALAC's culture change programme in relation to these key propositions.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE ANALYSIS OF GOVERNMENT

No one organisation has the resources to do the job alone. However, ALAC believes one organisation can activate the process and, with a shared vision, lead the necessary cultural change with support from a range of sectors

ALAC (2005a:8)

This chapter explores the proposition that the success of ALAC's culture change programme depends upon its securing a hegemonic position within the field of alcohol regulation, such that it can govern, engage with, and/or influence the socio-political field within which external agencies function. In order to achieve this, it must successfully incorporate a range of concepts from external discourses within its own programme of work. This is done by rearticulating the organising ideas and key concepts (nodal points and moments) through which the discourses of external agencies function, in such a way that they get incorporated within the terms that are used by ALAC to interpret the field of alcohol-related harm. This analysis begins by exploring the manner in which 'alcohol-related harm' is constructed by ALAC as a governance issue such that it can be acted upon. It then looks at the development of the culture change programme in terms of the key concepts (moments) that ALAC uses to rearticulate, and thus incorporate, the competing discourses of external agencies.

4.1 ALAC's construction of alcohol as a governance issue

ALAC's Strategic Plan presents the primary goal of the organisation as inciting those who drink, to consume alcohol in a manner commensurate with the slogan of 'more moderation, less harm.' The *ALAC 2005 -2006 Statement of Intent* defines this further:

ALAC's mission is 'more moderation, less harm', with the delivery of its programme of work intended to support the achievement of an overarching outcome whereby New Zealanders experience less harm from alcohol use, their own and others. (2005b:7).

In addition to defining the field of alcohol use in this way, ALAC positions itself as a leader of the field and a facilitator of other groups with regard to that vision. To this end, one respondent stated:

It is clear that the role of ALAC is to provide leadership and act as a facilitator in building strong networks and opportunities to collaborate with other agencies to reduce alcohol-related harm. It is necessary to have one organisation doing this because everyone else has a range of other competing priorities to look after.

The Strategic Plan further defines a range of operating principles such as leadership, collaboration and knowledge-sharing, which position ALAC as the government's lead advisory on alcohol-related issues. Together, these demonstrate the presence, within ALAC, of a desire to occupy a hegemonic position. This position is brought about through the rearticulation of others' concepts and discourses for the purpose of rendering the socio-political field governable in ALAC's own terms.

In 2002 ALAC sought to shift the terms through which the nodal point of its discourse - 'harm-minimisation' - had been given substance, beyond the traditional meanings given to it through the discourse of pathology. Its tool was a commissioned analysis by economist Brian Easton into the costs associated with alcohol consumption, *Taxing Harm: Modernising Alcohol Excise Duties* (Easton, 2002). This analysis introduced economic language into the field, deploying discursive moments such as 'economic cost' and 'impact' to give a special kind of content to the concept of harm minimisation. Thus, it could be announced:

The total estimated cost of alcohol-related deaths is \$5.5 billion per year, with alcohol being the second leading contributor to fatal road crashes.

The total estimated cost of alcohol-related illness and disease is \$6.6 billion. Productivity losses (including absenteeism) are estimated at \$1.8 billion. These figures ignore the costs directly attributable to alcohol associated with policing, court processing and imprisonment. They also ignore the huge impact alcohol has on the wellbeing and safety of New Zealand families, many of whom are negatively affected by alcohol at some time. (Easton, 2002:4)

The introduction of concepts such as 'economic cost,' and 'impact' shaped and altered the ALAC discourse in a way that the key concept (moment) of pathology was displaced within the discourse. This also allowed ALAC to identify concepts within the discourses of external agencies that were complimentary to the outcomes it was seeking through its mobilisation of economic analyses. A key effect of this new form analysis was to enlarge the range of discursive possibilities through which the issue of harm minimisation could be spoken, beyond both pathology and health. A respondent for this research thus observed:

What Brian pointed out was absolutely clearly that the cost, the health cost of alcohol is in fact significant, but not, by no means the major cost and so the public health people had to step back a bit and say this is more than just a health problem. We [ALAC] then worked very hard by bringing health together with other groups such as Police, ACC, Social Welfare and all those groups by saying there is another way here. This is not just health related but the cost for those who were dealing with marriage break ups, or those who were dealing in social welfare with people unemployable because of their drinking behaviour or whatever.

The recognition that alcohol-related harm produces costs that aren't picked up from within the health-sector provided ALAC with an opportunity to widen the appeal of its discourse of harm-minimisation. It sought to do so by incorporating the ideas that were animating other agencies working within the field,

rearticulating their key discursive moments into its preferred language. ALAC has thus been able to rearticulate the primary nodal point of its discourse (that is, harm minimisation) in a way that is more pluralistic, that is, able to incorporate and express primary concerns of its external agencies. Important within ALAC's struggle to position itself as central to the field of alcohol regulation, and exemplifying this process of rearticulation, is the contest that has occurred over the meaning of the concept of 'evidence'. This signifier exists as a key concept (moment) within public health discourse, emphasising the centrality of approaches that are informed by research that demonstrates 'effectiveness' of particular interventions. According to one respondent:

There are a lot of people, especially in the health sector, that go on about being evidence-based. But really it is not that simple. Anyone can come up with evidence to prove their point if they really want to. I think we should all be cautious about over-emphasising this idea of evidence.

In light of its significance within public-health discourse, evidence or 'evidence-based practice' becomes an important discursive moment through which ALAC attempts to stabilise potential antagonisms over the meaning of harm minimisation, that is, to suture agencies' competing visions over what constitutes alcohol-related harm and of the most effective ways of dealing with this. This rearticulation of evidence, such that it becomes a central signifier in the harm minimisation discourses of both ALAC and the public health agencies, does not stop the contestation of meaning in how the evidence is read and the recommended strategies that follow.

The significance of evidence, and particularly in relation to the quantification of alcohol-related harms that cannot be identified from within the terms of pathology based discourses, provided ALAC with a legitimate evidence-based proposition for widening its sphere of government into non-health related areas. Within ALAC's understanding, so long as its analyses of alcohol-related harm were articulated in terms of evidence, the chances of radical clashes with others' discourses might be reduced. Clashes would instead be reduced to the validity or otherwise of particular forms of evidence. To this end, the Easton

report provided ALAC with an evidence-based discourse through which it could incorporate the analyses of external agencies within its own nodal point of harm minimisation. Alcohol-related harm was no longer solely about the health-related outcomes of individuals' misuse of alcohol, such as cancer, diabetes and so forth, but the wider acute or social impacts of such misuse. Most significantly, as a consequence of this move, ALAC's ability to articulate the idea of harm across a range of sectors, and to incorporate the interests of other agencies involved in the field of alcohol consumption, expanded.

4.2 Culture change – articulating new concepts

In addition to the discursive moment of evidence, ALAC's programme of work also draws heavily on the key concept (moment) of 'culture.' This signifier comes to play a number of important roles for ALAC. At its most basic, it comes to brand ALAC's entire programme of work as "the culture change programme." More so, however, the fluidity of the concept's meaning enables a relatively empty discursive space to open up in which other agencies' key concepts (moments) can be rearticulated, by ALAC, into the discourse of harm minimisation. The highly pluralistic, and thus relatively empty nature of the concept of culture, comes to be structured around, other indeterminate notions (elements) such as 'responsibility'. Exemplifying this, a respondent reflected:

Perhaps ALAC's culture change programme is so popular because it promotes a culture of responsibility. It doesn't say that it is the individual's fault or that the producers or suppliers should be blamed, but rather that there is a role for everyone. Everyone is responsible for changing our drinking culture and we all have to play our part.

This aspect illuminates the manner in which the concept of culture change acts as a 'mentality of government' through which the responsibilisation of both individuals and organisations is sought. It highlights the notion that governance can occur through the influencing of people's freedoms towards a condition of self-regulating behaviour. Responsibilisation is an element that is not a

recognised and conscious object within ALAC's self-perception, but is nonetheless operative. It describes a primary mode of governance through which ALAC seeks to influence the conduct of individuals and external agencies. Responsibilisation acts as a floating signifier (myth), supporting the realisation of the discourse of culture change.

Interpretations of culture as 'lived experience' have been picked up by ALAC so as to support its organising idea (nodal point) of harm minimisation. The product of this articulation is reflected in an excerpt from a March 2004 media release from ALAC:

"The culture of New Zealand drinking is our problem and we all have to change our patterns of drinking and tolerance of binge drinking and intoxication. New Zealanders must confront the reality of their drinking habits. I challenge New Zealanders to change their drinking behaviours. It is never okay to get drunk." Dr MacAvoy says.

As the above quote highlights, "the culture of New Zealand drinking is our problem," and the challenge to New Zealanders is to "change their drinking behaviours." New Zealanders are interpellated into a system where they are called to do something about their actions. Whilst this is something that all New Zealanders need to think about, the message appears to read, the challenge is for everyone. The challenge for everyone is to reflect on their possible contribution to this problem, that is, to take personal responsibility. This same emphasis on self-responsibility is also present in the manner in which ALAC's marketing campaign was presented for this research:

What we have tried to do is to take individuals back and show there is a relationship between the way you drink today, tonight, the amount you drink and the likelihood of something acute happening. You're not going to have an accident or injury every time, and a lot of it will never be recorded because it is personal. But you know, those times that you made a bloody fool of yourself, vomited in the bed, all those sorts of things that you would never recall. There is a relationship between the way you drink tonight

and the potential for immediate fall out, negative fall out in your life and that's the change that we have been trying to drive in people's behaviour and that is the first step.

Building on from this, the ALAC culture change programme represents a particular strategy, one that seeks to govern through the changing of a social norm, in which 'moderation' replaces 'pathology' as the index of normativity. In attempting to establish moderation as a norm, ALAC also employs a number of dominant discursive moments from the field of liberal discourse. Notable here is an awareness of the limitations as to what law can achieve:

Still others want stricter controls on advertising and promotion, and the number of liquor outlets in a community. All of these things need to be addressed. But the problem remains more fundamental than what the law can control. (ALAC, 2005a:7)

Drawing further on key concepts (moments) in neo-liberal discourse, ALAC then discusses the need to 'sell' the proposition for change as part of its marketing campaign. The culture change programme thus becomes a programme which is responsive to and working through people's freedoms.

In conjunction with this focus on the responsibilisation of agents, and of a form of governance that functions through their freedoms, ALAC constructs a picture of those approaches which it contests (a logic of equivalence). That picture contains those organisations that continue to assert the pre-eminence of legal mechanisms over mentalities of governance that function through the mobilisation of freedoms, and which are positioned antagonistically to ALAC. One contributor to the research displayed the construction of this logic of equivalence thus:

People do not like being legislated into about certain forms of behaviour which they consider to be a right, a freedom, an enjoyment, whatever, you know and so that approach has certainly purveyed [sic] in our public health. Some of the public health people will always be those who got

caught up in the smoking thing which I think they were quite right in taking the approach they did, and now see that as being, that's the template for anything else. I think they just forget what human beings do and think out there.

Secondly, in addition to the culture change programme representing a form of governance that works through agents' freedoms via a responsibilisation of their subjectivities, the programme reconceptualises the notion of cause/effect that has been operating within the pathology-oriented discourses. Rather than a 'closed' kind of system that must be presupposed within positivist analyses, ALAC presents the field of alcohol-consumption as something more akin to an 'open system', with multiple determinates that interact in non-determinate ways. The culture change programme does this, initially, through drawing upon a range of competing and potentially antagonistic discourses, rearticulating these in the terms of its own dominant nodal point, that is, harm minimisation. These antagonistic discourses at their most basic include, from the field of public health - that of 'legislating behaviour change' (supply-control) and, from the marketing campaign, 'self change' (demand reduction). Both become co-opted under the umbrella of ALAC's evidence-based coordinated programme of work. As a consequence of these rearticulations, the indeterminacy (elemental nature) of evidence thus dissipates such that it becomes a key concept (moment) within ALAC's discourse. However, the structuration of evidence becomes linked to the idea of a 'multi-strategy approach' which highlights the open nature of the social world, where ALAC must draw on multiple determinates that interact in a range of ways. Disbanding with the notion of cause/effect, as it is espoused within pathology-oriented discourses, allows for an expanded discursive structure that gestures towards the idea of an open social system.

In conjunction with this attempt to incorporate a range of analyses that take competing conceptions of evidence as their base, ALAC constructs its logic of equivalence in a manner that excludes those agencies that advocate single strategies or that emphasise one particular strategy over another. To this end, one of the respondents drew attention to the fact that there needed to be a focus on changing a number of aspects including individual attitudes and

behaviour, plus the physical environments of consumption. This was thought to have a flow-on effect in terms of the social norms around the consumption of alcohol, this being ALAC's ultimate goal. In reflecting on ALAC's role in assisting with the creation and establishment of this norm, one of the respondents asserted:

There's a greater skepticism in society today about authority figures and organisations in power, from parliamentarians to government bodies to the medical profession, and I think with the culture change program we were saying 'hey look, you are in the driving seat on this one. This is something about which YOU can do something, this is our problem rather than big daddy telling you to pull your socks up and behave yourselves.'

This reflects once again the influence of neo-liberalism upon governance, emphasising the need for individuals to take responsibility for their actions and act accordingly, in this case to moderate their consumption of alcohol. The control of individual consumption through legislation does not, however, disappear from view. Instead, it gets repositioned by ALAC as one of the various strategies on hand (through a new logic of difference) suggesting that the law as a principal mechanism for engaging change within a population should be used as a last resort. To this end, the following was stated from within ALAC's position:

I've seen a lot more push back from people saying you know we want to live ... the way we want to and in some cases they were absolutely right to stand up. The position I've always held is that you know you can be libertarian to a point and allow people to do what they like to a point until it comes to affect society in such a way societies can't effectively govern themselves or provide the services necessary to protect or manage people's issues and problems and health and so forth; the clearest example is wearing seatbelts.

Although ALAC's cultural change programme recognises a role for legislation in the regulation of individuals' behaviours – through support for 'supply control'

and 'information provision' strategies - external discourses that privilege legislation have the potential to create spaces of dislocation within the culture change programme. Within ALAC's position, the issue concerns the appropriate use of legislative tools: attention is drawn to the fact that the culture change programme is not just about marketing individual change but also about ensuring that the law is applied when appropriate:

It is a combination of carrots and sticks I think really. The culture change program isn't just about warm fuzzies, it's also about a few cold pricklies, and the cold pricklies are the risk of getting yourself in the cells for the night or getting embarrassed by having to front up to court or whatever else.

Also, the potential of legislation to influence individuals' behaviours is recognised by ALAC, it being a strategy that might have to be used should the culture change programme fail:

If we just fail to convince people, well, there'll be one of two scenarios. People will say "they tried and failed, and it just goes to show that they should never have gone down that route, it's an endemic problem and we can't do anything about it." Or government will have to adopt a harder line approach on social controls and go back to a more traditional public health model of clobbering people. I do see the culture change program as an experiment. It's an experiment in collegial and collective self control, and if it doesn't work either you have to live with the problem or other controls will need to be imposed. But what we are doing at the moment is saying to society, as are other agencies, our partners, saying "hey look, let's see if we can crack this one together in the interests of everybody, rather than putting ourselves in a position where much tighter legal sanctions may have to be applied," which would be a more Draconian approach.

The culture change programme therefore emerges as a result of a rearticulated organising idea (nodal point) of harm minimisation. This rearticulation involves the introduction of new supporting signifiers such as 'culture', 'responsibility' and

'evidence' that emanate from liberal, legislative and scientific discourses. The culture change programme disbands with the idea of cause/effect and gestures towards the idea that the field of alcohol consumption as an open system with multiple determinates that interact in non-determinate ways.

4.3 Establishing a hegemonic position

The culture change programme represents an attempt to rearticulate a number of dominant discourses into ALAC's programme of work in a way that becomes pluralistic and therefore appealing to those external agencies that ALAC seeks to influence.

As the opening quote to this chapter clearly highlights, ALAC also draws on the concepts of 'partnership' and 'collaboration' in undertaking the culture change programme. These concepts appear within ALAC's discourse in two ways, playing two discrete functions. In the first, they constitute discrete discursive moments within the culture change programme which reinforce the possibility that agencies' mutual interests can be successfully articulated in terms of ALAC's organising idea (nodal point), harm minimisation. The second form in which they appear is as myths which have the potential to suture dislocated spaces when nodal points fail.

The first articulation of partnership/collaboration resonates with the discourse of responsibilisation by articulating the idea of shared interests or shared outcomes, particularly those through which other State-sector agencies function:

There are some organisations with which we can relatively easily partner, on the assumption that partnerships always carry benefits and costs. But there are some partnerships which we could pursue fairly comfortably and easily, because the benefits are the same for us and for them, and the costs are either not great or they are ones that we are comfortably able to bear, and other government agencies would be in that camp.

In this instance, the idea of partnership/collaboration is rearticulated around the ideas of shared interests and a transactional rationale. Both of these key concepts (moments) work to support the organising idea (nodal point) of harm minimisation. Presented in this way, the pursuit of harm minimisation therefore becomes not only a partnership approach with potential benefits and costs for those involved, but ultimately the most effective way of working.

Partnership, as a key concept (moment) within ALAC's position, also allows ALAC to rearticulation key ideas (moments) through which the discursive positions of external agencies function. This concept is employed in relation to agencies whose discourses at times, appear to run counter to those of ALAC, like those of the alcohol industry:

Our stance is to take the view that you can often, even though you may be playing for different teams and wearing different jerseys, that at least if you get on the field as it were and engage with them you might get a little bit further than by sitting in the stands and throwing cans at them, or whatever. So I think our view is that rather than just throwing bricks at the industry you do actually have to start from a position that they must adopt a moral stance about their industry, even if others say they don't. That we must at least challenge them to do that, and to adopt principles of social responsibility, and then negotiate with them what that means in practical terms.

An example of this rearticulation of another discourse's moments into those of ALAC's occurs with respect to the alcohol industry, through the re-presentation of what – from the industry's position – might be an indeterminate notion (element), into an established discursive moment within ALAC. We can see this in the manner in which ALAC repositions the industry's floating concept (element) of evidence and positions it in relation to the signifiers of research and evaluation:

One is an attempt to make sure the issues are clear as we see them, that the data are there, and that we don't back off from that. So we are professional in expressing what we see is the problem, and the work that we do to articulate the nature of the problem, so that they can't fudge that and say "look the problem's not really as great as you say it is." So I think good communication and good documentation, good research, that's one element in that relationship.

Evidence of research and 'good communication' are cited as potential solutions when there are disagreements over approaches between ALAC and the industry. Even in employing the concepts of rationality and evidence, no guarantee exists that a sector may not try and use other means to express their concern over particular strategies within the culture change programme. Once again in relation to the alcohol-industry:

The industry are very smart, I think my belief is that they go along with us happily to a certain point but that they use a variety of tactics, as do other people in the interested group, either to try and slow things down, to kick for touch, to deflect the debate, to throw in red herrings, that sort of thing.

The second form in which the key concepts (moments) of partnership and collaboration occur is through ALAC's positioning of an approach which it contests, relative to itself (the construction of a logic of equivalence). In establishing itself as a hegemonic bloc, ALAC articulates the notion of partnership as a model of best practice, where all agencies are expected to work together towards the same goal. Agencies choosing not to work in partnership with ALAC become 'the other' in their refusal to engage with culture change programme. Where the concept of partnership fails at the level of a discursive moment, where it proves insufficient to incorporate those agencies which refuse to engage with ALAC, the concept can shift in form to the level of mythology: it becomes a myth (floating signifier). The ongoing articulation of 'partnership', now as a myth, has the potential to suture the gap that emerges as a result of the 'space of dislocation' that has been opened up by those agencies that do not support this key tenet of ALAC's position, that is, of

collaborative work. Thus, the notion of partnership becomes ‘something that we should be working towards if we want to reduce alcohol-related harm’. There are gestures of the signifier of partnership being employed as a myth. According to one respondent:

This field is characterised by a lot of emotion. A lot of finger pointing and sometimes a lot of blame. But let's face it, alcohol-misuse is a big problem in New Zealand. It's going to take a number of people and organisations to fix it. We aren't going to fix it by fighting so we need to put our differences aside and start talking constructively to one another.

4.4 Summary

The ALAC work programme represents an attempt to articulate a number of organising ideas (nodal points) and key concepts (moments) from external discourses into its own discourse in a way that becomes more pluralistic and therefore appealing to those external agencies that ALAC seeks to influence. It does this in a number of ways but principally through drawing on forms of governance that are consistent with liberal mentalities of government. The strategies act as organising ideas (nodal points) that other agencies can relate to and understand. The liberal mentalities firstly focus on self-regulation, as evidenced in ALAC’s marketing campaign where New Zealanders are interpellated into a system inviting them to change their drinking behaviours. The second mentality – reflecting Foucault’s notion of sovereignty – is a legislative discourse that seeks to incite behaviour change by shaping the environments in which agents consume alcohol. ALAC constructs a logic of equivalence in a manner that excludes those agencies which advocate single strategies or that emphasise one particular strategy over another. Also, ALAC constructs a logic of difference that incorporates those single-strategy advocates, by asserting the need for a range of approaches, including the law, in changing the drinking culture.

ALAC's culture change programme comes to represent a governmental form of rule. It displaces the exercise of sovereign power, or that of the law, as the primary mechanism for influencing conduct. Instead, it seeks to responsibilise individuals by interpellating them into a system where they are encouraged to monitor their consumption of alcohol and actively self-regulate their behaviour. The sovereign impulse is still present but it is acknowledged that this should be used as a last resort when individuals fail to self-regulate. The culture change programme disbands with the fixed idea of cause/effect models and gestures to the idea that the field of alcohol-consumption is an 'open system' with multiple determinates that interact in contingent ways.

This is ALAC's construction of its field of discourse. The following chapter examines some of the potential disruptions to the culture change programme that emerge in ALAC's relationships with external agencies. Although ALAC has attempted to create a programme of work that represents a more pluralistic approach for external agencies, through the articulation of potentially dislocating external key concepts (moments from external discourses) into its programme of work, the stability of the culture change programme is always vulnerable from attempts by external agencies to construct alternative understandings of the field of alcohol regulation.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE ANALYSIS OF BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

I think one of the issues for ALAC is . . . they are in a difficult space in terms of you've got the perception on one hand, you've got the mean and dastardly industry out there with horns and tails and then you've got the puritanical advocates on the other side and to an extent I guess, ALAC needs to be able to engage with both of those.

Respondent

The culture change programme represents a departure from a range of traditional approaches employed by ALAC in the past to reduce alcohol-related harm. The programme attempts to articulate a number of key concepts (moments) from external discourses into its own terms in a way that becomes more pluralistic and therefore appealing to those external agencies that ALAC seeks to influence. The culture change programme emerged as a result of an antagonism between the exercise of sovereign and governmental power. This has played out through disagreements between different stakeholders over those strategies that emphasised law or the exercise of sovereign power in inciting behaviour change and those strategies that emphasised the role of the individual in changing their own behaviour. In effect, the culture change programme is an attempt to suture a dislocated space that arose as a result of these antagonisms.

In performing this hegemonic intervention, the prime task for ALAC is to fix the meaning of ambiguous words (elements) that appear in its discourse such that ALAC's view of the field has the capacity to become the dominant form of social thought or the new "common sense" in reducing alcohol related harm. This chapter analyses the responses by external agencies to these moments within ALAC's discourse of culture change, highlighting the manner in which external agencies themselves map the field and by which they seek to transform key

concepts through which ALAC's discourse functions so as to reinforce their own perspectives.

5.1 ALAC's hegemonic intervention

As a hegemonic intervention, the culture change programme seeks to govern the dislocated space that had emerged within the field of alcohol regulation, through an articulation of the key concept (moment) of a multi-strategy approach. Organising the terms of ALAC's intervention with the field is the concept of harm minimisation, the key nodal point by which ALAC seeks to construct the field as a governable space. Within the culture change programme ALAC articulates a range of key concepts (moments) which bring the nodal point into being, that give it substantive form. Figure 5.1 outlines the key concepts within the ALAC discursive totality.

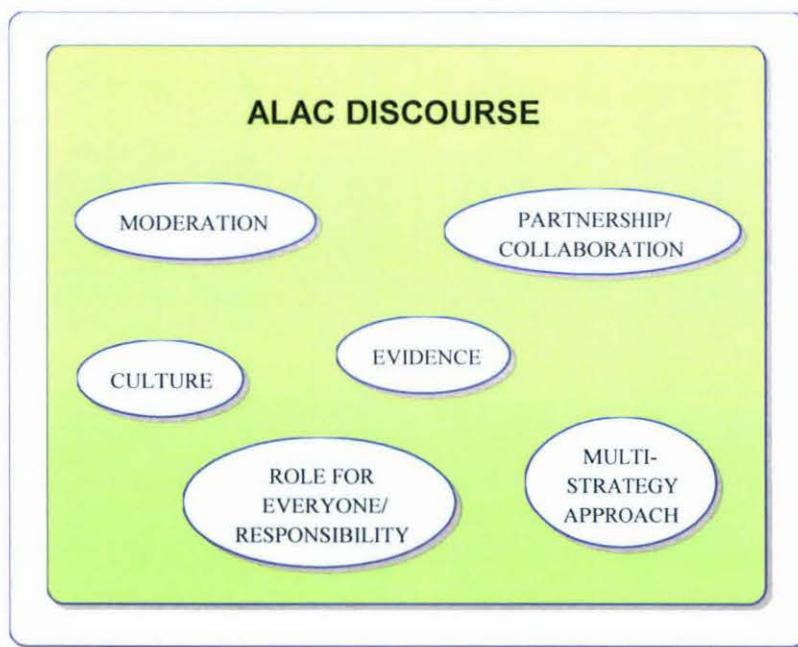


Figure 5.1: Key concepts (moments) within the discourse articulated by ALAC

A range of key concepts (moments) appear within ALAC's discourse but the primary signifiers that structure its form, and which ALAC seeks to

operationalise, are those of moderation, evidence, culture, multi-strategy approach, role for everyone/responsibility, and partnership/collaboration. This, however, is ALAC's understanding or construction of its own field of discourse. It will not necessarily reflect external agencies' perceptions of ALAC discourse.

Given that the culture change programme represents the sum total of ALAC's work, any association by external agencies with ALAC meant that they were 'engaged' with the culture change programme. This initial reading of the situation on my part was examined in the interviews by seeking feedback from the agencies as to their thoughts on the culture change programme. Analysis of the interview material showed clearly that all external agencies supported the culture change programme when initially asked about their general view of it. The notion of 'support' is highly politically nuanced, however, as the response of the following respondent indicates:

No one disagrees with the culture change programme, with the idea of reducing alcohol-related harm. That is not politically astute. Therefore no one is going to stand from the sidelines and criticise it. All the agencies will participate, but just because they do, you shouldn't think that they aren't going to try and undermine it in other ways.

This quotation illuminates the inherent political nature of articulations – that one can support the culture change programme yet challenge it in other ways. When asked for thoughts on the culture change programme, what it involved and what might be the challenge for ALAC, another respondent stated:

People often get hooked into arguing that you need more laws or you should focus your efforts on making people more responsible for their own behaviours. The reality is that you need both to change people's behaviours. You can't clobber people just with legislation or say that "you need to change." It's not an either/or, in my reading, it's a "both" approach. And the problem for ALAC is that there will be organisations that say "yep you need both" and then will turn around and say "more laws" or "more advertising." How do you balance that? I don't know.

ALAC's response to this 'balance' has been to articulate a programme of work that is responsive to the antagonism between the sovereign exercise of power (supply control) and governmental exercise of power (demand reduction), through its development of a multi-strategy approach (that idea becoming a key concept or moment within its discourse). By articulating and committing to both forms of governance, ALAC attempts to suture the spaces of dislocation that exist between the external agencies that support one kind of strategy over the other. This suture in the Symbolic Order of strategies, however, can only ever be partial and temporary because the articulation of the multi-strategy approach is only an imagined entity, by ALAC, and is not actively taken up by some external agencies. Whilst some organisations might engage within the idea of a multi-strategy approach, there are others where the antagonism is still present.

5.2 Antagonising conditions

Antagonisms arise when agents are unable to fully reach or occupy their desired subject position, or they are unable to realise their subject position within a particular discourse (Laclau, 1985:39). This antagonism gives rise to attempts by subjects to stabilise their identity. Thus, although the culture change programme seeks to suture the antagonism between the exercise of sovereign and governmental power, external agencies continue to assert the primacy of one over the other because the antagonism can never be fully resolved within ALAC's position. The continuing existence of this irresolvable antagonism at the heart of ALAC makes various key concepts (moments) and indeterminate notions (elements) of its discourse vulnerable to rearticulation by external interests, as those agencies seek to resolve the antagonism, or render it invisible, such that their own identities can stabilise.

Exemplifying this issue, one of the respondents questioned the effectiveness of ALAC's investment in a multi-strategy approach, given the rise in immoderate consumption of alcohol that has occurred within New Zealand society (a rise

that appears to correspond with the increased availability of alcohol that has developed over the last decade in non-licensed environments):

The culture change programme is a really important part of what we need to do in terms of shifting the way we use and think about alcohol in society but I think it will need to be supported by other things and I know ALAC's very clear about the fact that it is not just the social marketing campaign, it needs to be supported by all these other things. But as I say, there's actually, over the last 5 or 10 years, the other things, particularly in the supply-control area, have effectively been working in opposition and unless those are addressed or modified, I suspect that the culture change campaign is going to be quite very difficult [sic] to simply change peoples attitudes if they're getting a different message from what's happening in terms of the availability of alcohol.

Despite its critical position towards the culture change programme, this response reaffirmed ALAC's key concept (moment) of culture, thereby sustaining the broad meaning of the word that ALAC has been advocating. In so doing, however, the respondent seeks to reintroduce the concept of 'availability' in a manner that sits outside ALAC's discourse around harm minimisation, ALAC preferring to employ the key concept (moment) of culture to give meaning to the term. For ALAC, culture represents a much more inclusive articulation than the more instrumentalist concept of availability advocated above, a concept which is potentially antagonistic to the interests of other key stakeholders.

The concepts of availability and culture also come to structure another antagonism, this time between the traditional public health approaches - which advocate law-based reductions to the 'availability of alcohol' - and those approaches, like ALAC's, that take as their primary units of analysis entities like 'patterns of consumption' (articulated around the signifier of culture and associated catch-phrases like 'the way we drink'). For ALAC, the signifier of availability creates a vulnerability within its position, a vulnerability that ALAC recognises but cannot articulate due to its potential ability to dislocate the

space. The inability of ALAC to fully incorporate the concept of availability into its discourse, however, leaves the signifier open to be articulated by other agencies. One respondent demonstrates this, in their articulation of availability in a manner that challenges the salience of ALAC's concept of a multi-strategy approach:

In a way the culture change programme is trying to, in a broad sense, shape demand or shape the way the product is consumed. The question is how much it can do that successfully? How successful can that be if in the supply control area it is acting in the opposite direction or things are going in the opposite direction?

According to this respondent, because supply-control has weakened and there is increased availability of alcohol (in non-licensed environments), the ALAC culture change programme must then be primarily about trying to shape demand for the way a product is consumed. This directly challenges the key concept (moment) of the multi-strategy approach suggesting that ALAC is not able to invest in a number of strategies, due to the perception that supply control measures had been weakened.

Both the articulation of availability and the questioning of the likely effectiveness of a multi-strategy approach could in turn, threaten the viability of the nodal point used by ALAC to suture the whole field of discursivity over which it watches, that is, harm minimisation. In essence, these articulations cast doubt as to whether the multi-strategy approach is in fact feasible.

This destabilisation by an external agency of ALAC's key concept (moment) of a multi-strategy approach allows, moreover, the relation of law to harm minimisation to be rearticulated from outside ALAC, as well as other issues upon which the culture change programme pivots, such as the relation between behaviour change and the concept of evidence. To this end, according to one respondent:

I'll have to keep coming back to the fact there is a role for governments to play in shaping the environment if they are going to shape people's behaviour and responses. One of the key levers that government have is regulation and it's very difficult to point to a successful public health gain over the last 100 years where there hasn't been some regulation of the environment.

Evidence emerges here as a significant floating signifier – signalled by the notion that some public health programmes have indeed been ‘successful’, suggesting the existence of an empirical standard by which success has been determined - through the precise meaning of the word remains, indistinct. Indicating this point further, another respondent suggests that anyone can find evidence to support their own position:

If you look at the evidence of alcohol as a contributing factor to crime, I mean Police are responding to an alcohol-related incident every 5 or so minutes in the weekends.

And

Public opinion is often good evidence of whether you should proceed with an unpopular policy like clamping down on intoxication. After all, if the majority of drinking New Zealanders enjoy the thought of drunkenness, then convincing them to act otherwise will be near impossible.

Alternatively, some of the external agencies involved attempt to ‘fix’ the meaning of evidence by articulating this sign in relation to other key concepts (moments) that ALAC employs. In one such case, for example, the meaning of evidence is tied to – what for ALAC is an ambiguous notion (element) - of ‘the individual’:

Well I think that there has to be a strong research component so it's research based and again, about what's really happening, what people thinks happening [sic] and what they want to happen so that you're using

the 80/20 principle¹. There will be a number of drivers which impact on the majority of people and it's a matter of choosing those and do those ones first.

This produces the effect of linking evidence to the individual with the implication that ALAC's primary evidence base should be about what individuals think and want, and that strategies for reducing alcohol-related harm should be linked to empirical knowledge about what people indeed 'think and want'.

In addition to infusing some of the external agencies' uses of the concept of evidence, 'the individual' repeatedly appears within the discourses of some external agencies as a key element that is used to rearticulate, and thus shift the emphasis of, ALAC's discourse of culture change. Primarily this involves a straight translation of ALAC's concept of culture into that of 'the individual.' This creates a particular interpretation of the culture change programme that amplifies the role of the individual in the construction of meaning. Thus, according to one respondent:

We have this whole culture which is shifting the responsibility to somebody else. It's somebody else's fault for the activities of the individual and that's one of the things that we like about the culture change programme because it is shifting the responsibility to where it really at the end of the day has to belong, in terms of individuals making choices because they feel right about them and taking responsibility for the consequences.

This quote also gestures to the issue of responsibilisation, identified above as a vague indeterminate notion (element) that indeed sits within ALAC's concept of culture, not fully articulated but nevertheless discernable from the vantage-point of the analyst. The notion of 'the responsibilisation of individuals' is not an object that ALAC seeks to - and perhaps cannot - articulate directly, with the consequence that it can be articulated in a range of ways from positions that are

¹ This principle relates to the idea that 80% of all consequences stem from 20% of the causes. In the field of alcohol regulation this term is sometimes used as a means of understanding and prioritising the small number of evidence-based strategies that will have greatest population health outcome.

external to ALAC. As indicated in the above quotation, the concept of responsibility is thus rearticulated relatively easily in terms that resonate with key concepts (moments) that already exist within ALAC's discourse, of the individual and of culture. This chain of signification then implies that the culture change programme is primarily about the construction of individual responsibility. It is precisely this lack of determinate meaning around the notion of culture that allows for multiple and varied articulations of the term by different stakeholders.

In addition to the concept of culture, ALAC's key discursive moment of partnership is vulnerable to rearticulation by external agencies. Within ALAC's discourse the key concept (moment) of partnership comes to represent the idea of external agencies working to support ALAC in achieving its vision (ALAC, 2002a:18). For some of the external agencies interviewed for this research, however, partnership means not 'collaboration towards the ALAC vision' but, rather, indeterminate notions (elements) of 'balance' and 'rationality'. Thus:

There is a lot of emotion in this field and that often clogs rational and informed debate. People get caught up in this idea that there is some type of bad alcohol – take alco-pops as an example. Where ever there is an issue, we will always get a range of opinions from one end of the scale to the other. It is important that whatever the issue, that all parties are able to compromise and find a balance. Not listen to the extremists, because when there is a balance of views, there is more likely to be progress.

This respondent raises the issue of balance and rationality in relation to partnership where difficult disagreements emerge within ALAC or other external agencies. Thus where ALAC's use of the concept of partnership is unable to successfully incorporate key ideas (moments) from external discourses, other floating signifiers such as balance and rationality are introduced by those agencies to suture the gap left by the dislocated signifier of partnership.

To summarise this point, antagonisms are played out in a range of ways between agencies within the ALAC culture change programme. ALAC must

always seek to suture the spaces created by antagonisms if it wishes to engage and influence agencies with its programme of work. Issues arise however when agencies seek to create alternative subject positions within ALAC's discourse, by rearticulating significant concepts within ALAC's position through playing upon other notions in ALAC's discourse whose meanings are relatively ambiguous. We see that above, around ALAC's concepts of culture and partnership. This activity by the external agencies involves the introduction of a logic of equivalence and a logic of difference, that contest ALAC's mapping of the field. These logics describe the manner in which antagonistic relations, like those between ALAC and its external agencies, plus the relations between those same agencies, threaten a discursive system such as ALAC's culture change programme (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985).

5.3 Constructing logics of equivalence and difference

To provide a more common-sense interpretation, a logic of equivalence functions through the creation of equivalent identities that *express a negation of the discursive system* (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000:11). This involves identifying the interests which oppose those of the position from which inquiry is being mounted, that contest 'one's own position.' The process occurs when organisations are unable to fully occupy a desired subject position within a discourse. Internal differences are weakened and individuals or agencies organise themselves collectively around an 'other.' This 'other' then becomes the focus for articulating an identity. In my opinion, this is played out in a range of ways in the wider sector of alcohol harm reduction. For those that identify with the wider idea of 'public health' - health promoters, health protection, epidemiology and public health medicine specialists - the 'other' often becomes those interests that do not appear to act in the interests of, and for the wellbeing of, 'the public' (generally seen as being 'business' or the 'alcohol industry'). Equally, 'the industry' which comprises the producers and supplies of alcohol construct an 'other' which is in opposition to their economic interests – often the public health sector. These positions are most clearly demonstrated quotation with which the chapter opened:

I think one of the issues for ALAC is . . . they are in a difficult space in terms of you've got the perception on one hand, you've got the mean and dastardly industry out there with horns and tails and then you've got the puritanical advocates on the other side and to an extent I guess, ALAC needs to be able to engage with both of those.

A logic of difference, on the other hand, dissolves existing perceptions of friend/foe and in the process incorporates concepts that get 'disarticulated' into the (expanding) discursive structure from within which the logic of difference was itself constructed. A logic of difference aims to weaken and displace sharp antagonistic polarities and relegate these divisions to the margin of the social relations involved (Norval, 2000).

Both logics of equivalence and difference are readily apparent within ALAC's culture change programme. ALAC's logic of equivalence places in opposition to itself those organisations that privilege one strategy, such as the law over other strategies that are advocated in the culture change programme. Thus, the 'other' comes to represent those organisations that do not articulate the key concepts (moments) that refer to the diversity of approach that ALAC seeks, particularly the notions of partnerships and of the multi-strategy coordinated approach. According to one ALAC respondent:

It was difficult for some organisations or individuals, who shall remain nameless, to comprehend the need to work with the industry. They were locked into an ideological paradigm where they believed and still do that there is no role for the industry in reducing alcohol-related harm. We say that there is a role for everyone and their ideas of just creating more legislation are never going to solve everything. Fixing the problem involves everyone playing their part and we are not going to get anywhere with people standing on the sidelines taking pot-shots saying it is my way or the highway.

The culture change programme also expresses the logic of difference through which ALAC maps the field of alcohol regulation, dissolving existing antagonisms between agencies and incorporating disarticulated elements into ALAC's expanding discursive structure. For example, antagonistic signifiers such as 'the law' and 'the individual' are articulated around the powerful moment of 'culture change.' ALAC seeks to articulate as many moments from external discourses as possible into the culture change programme in order to appeal to external stakeholders. In this sense it is an expanding order though there are limits. According to one ALAC respondent:

The culture change programme represents a new way of doing things and we've identified some, but there may be others. Putting past squabbles aside, it's about saying everyone has to play a role in reducing alcohol-related harm. You can't keep trotting out that it is the individual's responsibility, nor can you say just enforce the law. The evidence highlights the importance of changing the socio-cultural environment in order to support positive health behavioural choices.

The differences that exist between ALAC's articulation of the 'logics' and those of external agencies constitute the politics of alcohol regulation. Where external agencies are seen to be constructing their own logic of equivalence, this is because they are unable or unwilling to occupy the subject positions that ALAC has created for them through the culture change programme. The result of this inability and/or refusal of external agencies to occupy the 'imagined' subject positions is that they seek new positions of identification by constructing their own logic of equivalence.

There are two possible outcomes of external agencies articulating their own logic of equivalence. The first is for external agencies to seek points of identification outside of ALAC's discourse. This, however, is unlikely given earlier comments that no one is going to "disagree with the culture change programme" as that would not be considered "politically astute." If a substantive and politically viable point of identification that was external to ALAC's discourse did exist, this could likely result in the dislocation of the culture change

programme. Points of identification outside of ALAC's discourse did not exist during the period that the research was undertaken.

A second possibility is that external agencies construct their own logic of equivalence by rearticulating the key concepts (moments) through which the ALAC discourse functions, in relation to discursive moments that are central to their own discourses. Strong evidence exists of this occurring. For instance, the opening quotation to this chapter points to the manner in which one industry respondent gestures to the antagonistic and oppositional identities that ALAC must manage. Although no specific oppositional 'other' is named by the industry respondent, the positions characterised are that of the industry with "horns and tails" and "the puritanicals" as the other. There is an overt acknowledgement by this stakeholder that ALAC must manage the tension between these two positions. An industry respondent further alluded:

I would actually argue that in terms of achieving their [ALAC's] objectives, the point of engagement which is going to be the most valuable and make the most difference is actually with the people with horns on because those are the people that they're looking to change attitudes rather than the people that have long since already made their minds up and are horse whipping you to go harder and harder and better outcomes. There has to be a pragmatic approach and we aim to be practical.

This presentation of pragmatism and practicality as key attributes of the culture change programme seek to differentiate the industry position from those that have "already made their minds up." The 'other' in this case is identified as another sector within the culture change programme.

As a consequence, ALAC's hegemonic position comes under threat not because external agencies construct ALAC and the culture change programme as their 'other' but, rather, because external agencies attempt to themselves map their own logics of equivalence in a manner that amplifies their differences with one another. This field of difference is the space that ALAC seeks to govern through its culture change programme. The two polarised positions that

consequently emerge within the discursive space which ALAC seeks to render governable are, as this thesis has probably made clear by now, are those of 'public health' and 'the industry.'

Supporting this perception that relations between the external agencies are fraught with contest and struggle, one of the external agencies drew attention to an ongoing tension between different construals of the meaning of 'moderation'. The respondent argued that 'the industry' has a legal obligation under the Companies Act to increase profits and that there are two ways in which they can do this: increasing the cost of product or increasing the volume sold. Increasing cost is considered unviable given the amount of competition in the market so the preferred option is to increase the volume. This, however, from the position of the respondent, is likely to have an adverse affect on the health of a population:

Our concern is their idea of moderation would be to get the group of people that is drinking too much to moderate their intake or perhaps keep drinking the same amount but reduce the binge drinking component of their intake, in other words, their high-per occasion consumption. But those of us that are not drinking to the moderate level, that is 21 units on the part of males and 14 on the part of females, to increase our consumption to that so called, quote "moderate level" because if they don't do that, then they won't continue to increase their profits. The real concern is what it comes down to, which is what moderate intake is. On the part of the industry, they would be really concerned if moderating intake meant decreasing your intake. There's this real tension there and we haven't really played that out yet.

This position is defined by constructing an 'other,' in this case the industry, and then defining a position in negation of this discursive construction. This is achieved through the articulation of personal pronouns of "we" and "they" establishing a position to speak from and then referring to the opposite position e.g. our view versus their view. Moderation becomes a vehicle for this issue because it can be articulated in relation to the apparently objectivist key

concepts (moments) of evidence and profit, producing a chain of signification that suggests the industry must increase alcohol consumption to meet profit imperatives in the face of evidence which suggests that this increases the risk of harm.

Alternatively, from the position of the industry interests, the notion of moderation can mean the following:

The moderation aspect is to try and drink moderately but maybe on more occasions. I don't know that that is an ALAC statement but one of the statements that I used to use years ago when I first started this job was - that it would be great if we could get more people to drink more moderately on more occasions. Because that's less harm, and it's a win/win situation.

The first position acknowledges that a tension exists within the concept of moderation, leading to a lack of clarity about its meaning, and thus a lack of agreement about it. As a consequence of this ambiguity, the concept of moderation is open to articulation in a range of ways by external agencies. Both positions cited above articulate a binary opposition by either directly or tacitly inferring that the definition of moderation is one of 'an absence of binge drinking'. Due to the 'negative' nature of this definition, shared between the groups, there is no fixity around what constitutes moderate consumption. This allows for a range of possible articulations of the idea. As a consequence of the manner in which the external agencies construct their respective logics of equivalence, potential exists for each one's use of the term moderation to be undermined by the other.

In order for ALAC to ensure that the discursive space around alcohol regulation remains governable, it must mediate or suture this space in order to prevent dislocation of the field. In the case of the signifier of moderation, ALAC does not attempt to fix the meaning of moderation through a definition, but instead adopts two strategies. The first is to rearticulate the floating nature of the sign by outlining a 'safe' drinking range and discussing 'upper-limits' as represented in its *Standard Drinks* resource (ALAC, 2002b).

Secondly, ALAC articulates the signifier of moderation by emphasising the role of the individual in assessing their own risk in relation to alcohol consumption. Within the discourse of culture change, this is done by once again drawing on the element of responsibilisation and by articulating this in relation to the floating signifier (myth) of moderation. Thus:

We are not in a sense trying to manipulate people into a certain thing but are saying to people 'you know your limit'. You will know when you have gone too far, you will know when you are placing yourself at risk of drink driving or beating up your wife or whatever; we are not going to tell you that.

ALAC's articulation of the element of responsibilisation is consistent with neo-liberal forms of rule that have been illuminated in the Foucauldian school of governmentality, which emphasise self-regulation or voluntarism. Thus a responsible individual is one that drinks in moderation and who, through policing themselves, "knows their limit."

Resistance arises, however, to this articulation of moderation with the concept of personal responsibility:

That's the tension for the culture change programme. The risk is that it will be just focussed on 'here are risks if you drink in this way and'.... One thing is most people actually do experience one of those harms either as an individual who's drunk too much or someone else around them has drunk too much. So there's a reality. But there's also the environment. If the environment is not changing, if the environment is still the same, alcohol is a part of everything we do, then I think there is a real issue.

This resistance to the focus on individual responsibility functions through a rearticulation of the concept of moderation in terms of 'the social environment'. Assisting this shift in meaning, the above contributor attaches the empty signifier of 'real' to that of 'environment' in order to give the latter an aura of

objective validity. For the external agency represented by this respondent, the most effective means of structuring and shaping that environment was through legislation.

The construction of alternative logics of equivalence by the external agencies involved with the ALAC culture change programme also threatens ALAC's ability to govern the field as it weakens the important concept, for ALAC, of partnership. This key moment of partnership is central to ALAC's attempt to bring the organising idea (nodal point) of harm minimisation into being. It is through partnership that ALAC seeks to reduce alcohol-related harm. Through the construction of alternative logics of equivalence, external agencies weaken the coherence of that concept. In response, ALAC must find new ways of suturing the antagonistic differences that exist between agencies, that gain concrete form in the logics of equivalence that those external agencies construct to map the field of alcohol regulation.

ALAC responds by articulating as many floating ideas (floating signifiers) and indeterminate notions (elements) from those external agencies into its own discourse as possible, in a way that supports its nodal point of harm minimisation. The attempt by ALAC to do this is through a rearticulation of the floating signifier (myth) of moderation and the indeterminate notion (element) of individual responsibility. 'Responsibilisation' doesn't exist as a concept in ALAC's lexicon, but something akin to individual responsibility does. Thus, according to one ALAC respondent:

We need to put our differences aside and really commit to working together. There are a lot of attempts by different players to point the finger at the other person and say "it is your fault." It's about partnerships and transparency. If you are serious about making a contribution and really addressing the issue, you need to front up and be honest. Not say one thing behind closed-doors and another in public.

This statement suggests that ALAC recognises that its key moment of partnership has failed, being weakened by antagonistic difference between the external agencies, represented in their respective logics of equivalence.

In response to the possibility of dislocation, which its own mapping of the field faces as a consequence of these antagonisms, ALAC introduces a set of new, ambiguous signifiers including the concepts of 'transparency' and 'honesty' in relation to the notions of partnership and to working together. In the process, the concept (moment) of partnership gets elevated to the position of myth. Myths play a significant role within a discursive position emerging when important signifiers are unable to fix discourses (Howarth & Stavrakakis, 2000). The effect of the myth is hegemonic, insofar as it unifies a set of previously dislocated signifiers under a single idea. When key moments such as partnership are dislocated through agencies' resistances to working together, ALAC articulates the concept of partnership in the guise of a myth, as something whose origins lie in the past but which is actually yet 'to come'. Thus when agencies fail to work together, ALAC rearticulates partnership as an aspirational signifier – something that everyone 'needs to do' (to reduce alcohol-related harm) – replacing the idea that the condition of partnership already exists for those involved. In this future-oriented vein, one of the respondents notes:

If we actively listen to each other and understand more fully where everyone is coming from, then partnership might be a reality because no one can do this thing [reduce alcohol-related harm] alone.

This respondent notes that partnership as it stands in this case has not occurred. But it still functions as something to which the respondent aspires. Other elements are articulated in conjunction with this, such as 'active listening' and 'understanding', being presented as central to the realisation of partnership.

While the public health and industry sectors clearly constructed alternative logics of equivalence to each other, a range of other external agencies saw the culture change programme as an expanding discursive structure that

accommodated a range of previously disparate organisational interests. In relation to the logic of difference through which ALAC has sought to incorporate that diverse range of interest, it was noted:

In some ways the culture change programme has provided a clear focus for a range of agencies. Agencies, in the past that might have competed, probably doing similar things, but never having really spoken to each other. We had never really worked with organisations such as local government and often thought of them as being solely communities focused, and rates, rubbish etc. That is not our job so there was no reason to engage with them. But when the burden of alcohol-related harm is spelled out clearly, you can really see the links and the logical opportunities to work together on a clear goal.

This comment draws attention to the perceived success of ALAC's articulation of a set of relatively ambiguous notions (elements), such as 'injury' and 'wellbeing', in relation to its culture change programme. These signifiers now function as important concepts (moments) which, when articulated in conjunction with partnership, as a myth, reduce the competition that previously characterised the field, thus resulting in the expanding discursive structuration presented here as ALAC's culture change programme. Comments such as this suggest that ALAC's rearticulation of partnership as a myth has provided a temporary suturing of the space of dislocation that arises when partnership fails to act as an immediate, organising concept for relations between external agencies. As a consequence, a broader range of external agencies are able to "see the links and logical opportunities to work together on a clear goal."

5.4 Summary

ALAC has created a range of organising ideas (nodal points) and key concepts (moments) through which it envisages external agencies will function, such that those agencies come to be successfully incorporated within the terms that are used by ALAC to interpret the field of alcohol-related harm. However,

antagonisms remain between those agencies and are played out through debates that resonate with questions about the validity and efficiency of sovereign versus neo-liberal forms of governance. These antagonisms challenge ALAC's nodal point of harm minimisation and the associated discursive moments of its culture change programme. This results in threatening the hegemonic position of the culture change programme within the field of alcohol regulation. The threat primarily comes from the attempts by external agencies to rearticulate key concepts (moments) within ALAC's position and through their construction of logics of equivalence that are different to that through which ALAC seeks to position them.

This poses a potential threat to ALAC's position in that the rearticulation of key concepts (moments) within the ALAC discourse by external agencies could potentially collapse the organising idea (nodal point) of harm minimisation, thus resulting in a dislocation of the ALAC discourse. The contestation of meaning by various agencies produces a potentially destabilising effect on the nodal point. The nodal point is destabilised through the ongoing rearticulations of key concepts (moments) within ALAC discourse. It is these moments that act as discursive structures that bring the nodal point into being. As these moments are transformed, so too is the potential appeal of the culture change programme across a range of agency interests.

Whilst ALAC's culture change programme, through its expanding discursive structure, represents an attempt to construct a logic of difference with external agencies, ALAC's own mapping of the field of discourse is threatened by external agencies' own construction of alternative logics. In the case of the culture change programme, two dominant sector positions emerge: those of the public health and industry sectors. In addition to positioning each of these sectors in relation to ALAC, the logics of equivalence that each agency develops identify the other agency as an oppositional identity. This antagonism threatens the coherence of the culture change programme and undermines key concepts (moments) such as partnership.

ALAC's response to this must be to suture the space that exists between such antagonistic relations if it wishes to avoid the threat of dislocation. It must therefore undertake a range of hegemonic interventions in a way that sutures this potential antagonism. As outlined in this chapter however, no attempt can completely suture the field and this suturing is always partial and vulnerable. For ALAC, the goal shifts to stabilising the field in such a way that agencies continue to engage in the culture change programme. This can occur in two ways.

The first is to rearticulate key concepts (moments) that it uses in relation to signifiers that float about in the discursive field. ALAC does this by combining the notion of partnership with that of evidence. Partnership is also articulated in relation to the empty signifier of a 'shared vision' within which agencies are invited to participate. Where it becomes evident that antagonisms are so great that the agencies still cannot work together, the concept of partnership comes under threat. In an attempt to continue engaging with external agencies, ALAC seeks then to rearticulate partnership as a myth - the articulation of a goal that everyone should work towards, but which is ultimately empty in meaning save for some romantic fantasy of an originary communal state. This allows for new articulations to occur of ideas from other discourses and in so doing holds open the possibility that the space of alcohol regulation might remain governable.

Secondly, ALAC can expand the discursive construction of the culture change programme by incorporating the external agencies' attempts to rearticulate its key concepts (moments), back into its own discourse. However by doing so, there are risks in isolating other agencies with this approach. As an example, if ALAC were to rearticulate the indeterminate notion of reducing availability as a primary and key concept (moment) as favoured by the public health sector, then they are likely to isolate the industry as the key concept of 'multi-strategy approach' would not be able to function.

The following chapter considers this issue of dislocation more fully and of ALAC's response to the rearticulated key concepts and discourses that might threaten the stability of the culture change programme.

CHAPTER SIX: THE ANALYSIS OF THE CONDITION OF DISLOCATION

I think that some people will say and do, say, "let's eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die" sort of thing, or "to hell with the long-term consequences, I'm aware of all that stuff, I'm prepared to accept those risks."

Respondent

This chapter considers the issue of dislocation further and discusses ALAC's response to those concepts and discourses whose rearticulation by external agencies threaten the stability of the culture change programme.

The condition of dislocation manifests as a threat to the ALAC discourse in two ways. Firstly, it exists through the presence of identifiable tensions or disagreements - spaces of dislocation - within the culture change programme (namely between its legal and liberal impulses) which, at first consideration, seem irresolvable. These antagonistic tensions however might be negotiated through the articulation of myths and other floating signifiers in a way that sutures the gap or tension. Secondly, a discursive structure can be considered 'dislocated' when it confronts events that it cannot integrate into its own terms. These events, by definition, emerge in an unpredictable way, unlike the observable antagonisms that constitute the spaces of dislocation. This form of dislocation is the moment when a discourse is destabilised as a result of the emergence of objects that cannot be integrated into its system of meaning. The result of such is a situation of crisis and rupture in which a field of social objectivity is threatened by an encounter with its own incompleteness (San Martin, 2002:3).

Dislocation can be linked to notion of the *Real* as understood by Lacan. The *Real* is a condition, or order, that escapes representation within the *Symbolic*

Order, confronting us not with what we imagine ourselves to be but with the internal limits of our representations of our imagined selves. These imaginations include both images of our individual selves and social life. Because it escapes representation, being extra-discursive, the Real can be seen as that which prevents us from being or achieving the state of fullness we imagine possible in and of ourselves (Žižek, 1989). It is dislocation by the Real that prevents a discourse from fully functioning, as in fully representing actuality. Dislocation has a dual character in that it both threatens and destroys identities, social imaginaries and discourses; and secondly, it generates the desire for new ways of understanding the social world. The latter involves attempts to find a new fantasy of closure that can resuture the (constitutive) lack which the dislocation has made visible (Laclau, 1990; Torfing, 1999). As a consequence, new political frontiers can emerge through hegemonic struggles, built upon new articulations that fix floating signifiers into a new social imaginary, presenting a 'new vision' or pathway forward.

In order for ALAC to sustain such a hegemonic position within the field of alcohol regulation, it must actively construct, and where required, repair a governable space within which external agencies are productively engaged in the culture change programme. The threat of dislocation, in this sphere, would be a situation where agencies are no longer governable and thus ALAC's sphere of influence is severely curtailed.

Spaces of dislocation represent potential threats to ALAC's ability to govern agencies. Where ALAC is able to identify these threats, it attempts to suture the gaps through hegemonic interventions drawing on a range of concepts from external discourses and articulating them in relation to key concepts (moments) within the culture change programme e.g. responsibilisation and balance. This move, however, has its limitations in that external agencies may construct alternative logics where and when they choose not to occupy those imagined subject positions that ALAC has created for them. The outcome of this process is that external agencies rearticulate key ALAC concepts (moments) in relation to their own concepts and floating signifiers in an attempt to contest and alter meaning within the culture change programme. In the process of its key

concepts (moments) being destabilised through these alternative articulations of the field, ALAC's nodal point of harm minimisation is threatened. This chapter will examine ALAC's response to such threats of destabilisation, by specifically focusing on its response to external agencies' attempted rearticulations of its key concepts (moments).

The second threat of dislocation comes from ALAC's non-engagement with the open and contingent nature of the social world. ALAC does gesture towards an understanding of the social world as an open socio-political space in its idea of a multi-strategy approach, where ALAC must draw on multiple determinates that interact in a range of ways, disbanding with the simple idea of cause/effect that is employed in single strategy approaches. This chapter shall also consider the limit-points of the ALAC discourse to address the issue of governance in an open system.

6.1 The threat of alternative articulations

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the hegemonic intervention that is the culture change programme is potentially destabilised when external agencies do not occupy the imagined subject positions that ALAC has created for them in the culture change programme. This plays out through the construction of alternative subject positions by those external agencies, through their substitution of ALAC's logics of equivalence and difference with articulatory logics of their own. The construction of these logics becomes problematic for ALAC in the following ways.

Firstly, as a consequence of the logics of equivalence that are constructed by the external agencies, two oppositional identities emerge. In particular, these identities are the creation of positions represented by public health and the industry. Both positions articulate a negation of the other through their particular subject positions. Both also attempt to rearticulate key concepts (moments) within ALAC discourse. In the case of the industry there is a clear attempt to articulate elements such as 'individual responsibility,' 'balance' and

'compromise' in relation to key ALAC moments such as culture and evidence. The result is the assertion that ALAC's culture change programme is about enhancing self-regulation and the responsibility of individuals for their own actions.

Alternatively, the public health position is characterised by attempts to articulate the primacy of the law as a central tool for changing the behaviour of individuals. This occurs through the articulation of the signifier of environment. This signifier is a floating, slightly ambiguous concept for ALAC and is not given a central role within its discourse. This public health position also seeks to challenge the key ALAC moment of multi-strategy approach by combining its preferred understanding of the concept of evidence with the notion of availability, as it is used by ALAC. The rearticulation of these concepts threatens ALAC's ability to undertake a multi-strategy approach because the notion of evidence comes in the process to be linked to the rise of immoderate consumption by the public, privileging the kind of scientific interpretation of alcohol use championed within the public health model. As a consequence, ALAC's ability to undertake a multi-strategy approach is challenged. This rearticulation positions ALAC's use of advertising in the context of evidence that immoderate consumption of alcohol has increased at the same time that the control of supply has been loosened. In relation to such evidence, the effectiveness of ALAC's strategy thus comes to look somewhat limited. ALAC's strategy is thus positioned in opposition to the evidence – as denoted by the public health sector's definition – suggesting that significant public health gains are only ever achieved through legislation that shapes and creates environments that are conducive to those gains occurring (economic, physical and social).

These attempts by an external agency to rearticulate its key concepts challenge ALAC on a number of fronts. Incorporation of these articulations by ALAC could destabilise its organising, nodal point of harm minimisation. As an example, if the concept of 'the primacy of law' was to be incorporated within ALAC's culture change discourse so as to become a key concept (moment), as the public health sector position suggests, other of ALAC's significance concepts such as

multi-strategy approach, culture and partnership would be undermined. This would occur because the multi-strategy approach could no longer function if a single strategy such as “the law” was to dominate. This would destabilise ALACs nodal point (of harm minimisation) by limiting the subject positions that other external agencies might otherwise occupy and that are beneficial to ALAC’s culture change programme as presently configured. In order to counter these attempted rearticulations, ALAC must respond in a way that keeps all agencies engaged. Apparently cognizant of this issue, an ALAC respondent informs:

We do have some stakeholders that, for whatever reason, have had difficulty getting on with each other in the past. Some assert measures that have limited appeal, both politically and from what we know of the New Zealand public. I am talking about the ‘availability-theory’ arguments. Others want to focus on the individual and say it is the individual’s responsibility. There is strong evidence that emphasises the importance of the socio-cultural environments in shaping health behaviours. After all most people will consume a product to the way in which a society considers acceptable.

This quote highlights the position that ALAC has adopted. It recognises and acknowledges the attempts by some sectors to articulate a range of elements that are external to ALAC’s discourse, and, the particularly antagonistic nature of these articulations in relation to its own position and the position(s) of other external agencies. The respondent challenges the public health model’s emphasis on availability suggesting that this position has limited political support and is likely to be unpopular with the New Zealand public. Instead the respondent highlights the significance of political and social “acceptability.” The respondent then goes on to challenge the rearticulation of the individual with ‘responsibility’ that has been occurring amongst external agencies – doing so by articulating the concept of evidence and stating that the “socio-cultural environment” is important in shaping individual health behaviours. In furthering this point, the ALAC respondent goes on to assert:

Our position is that there is a role for everyone and each strategy, whether it's supply control, demand reduction or problem limitation, must support the other if we are to change health behaviours and our drinking culture.

This respondent's interpretation of 'responsibility', in the terms that there is a "role for everyone," acknowledges the position that ALAC must take if it is to continue the discursive structuration that supports the nodal point of harm minimisation. With the ongoing antagonisms that exist between the two positions of the public health and industry sectors, ALAC can only go so far as recognising and acknowledging these alternative articulations of the field. It cannot, however, fully incorporate them into its own discourse as key concepts (moments). Rather, for ALAC, concepts that are key to its external agencies, such as 'availability,' 'primacy of law in inciting behaviour change' and 'individual responsibility' can only remain, within its own position, signifiers of uncertain and ambiguous significance (elements). When these sectors seek to introduce elements into ALAC discourse or rearticulate key moments of that discourse, ALAC must draw on dominant moments in its own discourse in order to suture the potential dislocation. ALAC recognises that there are limits to its ability to incorporate alternative articulations. According to one ALAC respondent:

We accept that we can't please everyone and nor would we want to. We do however want to challenge people to move away from this idea of the single approach whether it is the law or whatever, and that requires a different way of thinking for many people.

This quote demonstrates ALAC's awareness that its discourse faces something akin to dislocation through the alternative articulations of the field of alcohol regulation that are constructed from positions within that same field but external to itself (though, of course, it doesn't use that language). In responding to this threat, ALAC manages the discursive positions of these agencies by leaving those antagonistic articulations by external agencies as elements, floating signifiers of uncertain meaning. This strategy leaves ALAC vulnerable,

however, as those elements remain unfixed and therefore ripe for further rearticulation. ALAC's vulnerability however is not only limited to those potential threats of dislocation that it can recognise.

6.2 Ontological limitations

This thesis highlights the open nature of the social world and the role that discourse plays in constituting the way that the social world is understood and experienced. A post-structuralist reading of the culture change programme foregrounds the role of language or discourse in shaping the political nature of the object of governance that is alcohol use. Politics in this sense is understood as the organisation of social life in a particular way that excludes all other possible understandings (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002:36). Through their organisation, all discourses exclude alternative ways of conceiving of and understanding the social world. The articulations that occur within a discourse, however, are always subject to challenge in their attempt to fix (temporarily) meaning. Through this process of contestation, discourses are reproduced or changed. There are limits, however, as to how much a discourse can change before it is unable to function and therefore becomes dislocated.

Dislocation draws attention to the internal limits through which a discourse can function. This means that as a discourse is being formed, it must presume at the point of enunciation, its own closure. In order to function, it cannot account for the contestation of meaning that shall inevitably occur. This issue is particularly pertinent to ALAC's ability to govern and engage external agencies. For ALAC, governance is a practice of pursuing rational ends in a calculative manner. Such pursuits cannot entertain the certainty of their dislocation. In this same manner, ALAC's discourse does not allow for an understanding that government always occurs within social systems that are interminably 'open' or, to rephrase the point, by the ways in which social life is constituted in and through discourses that always already contain dislocating, internal limit-points.

This issue arises most starkly in relation to the evidence that ALAC employs to construct alcohol as an issue of government. ALAC's construction of alcohol-related harm as field of governance is strongly influenced by those disciplines that are underpinned by empiricist and positivist epistemologies which, for the purposes of their analyses, must assume that their objects of inquiry, at the point of inquiry, are bounded within closed systems. Epidemiology is one such discipline whose evidence ALAC's argument builds upon. Its methodology accords with the above, seeking to construct and analyse a range of abstract 'objective' variables - of 'health' and 'illness' - to examine sets of co-relations within those constructs and, thereby, to identify possible preventative measures. Within this context, the concept of evidence becomes inflected with an ontological assumption that 'closed systems' are, at least at the moment of analysis, possible.

However, the position taken in this thesis is that the social world is an open system where the meaning of actuality is maintained, contested and transformed through the various uses of language that communities employ. Because all meaning is mediated through discourse, language becomes a central focus in constituting any object of analysis. For disciplines such as epidemiology, alternatively, language as a constituting factor of the social is ignored. Instead, language is used as an objective tool to describe a 'reality out there.' This does not acknowledge the underpinnings of language – power/knowledge and dislocation - which are both responsible for creating the social, for constituting the ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, and of the manner in which particular forms of expression can rule out alternative ways of being and talking (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002:14). As an example, where a particular sector might express concerns about an approach that ALAC seeks to undertake, the concept of evidence is used as a primary tool for articulating an 'objective' problem. Exemplifying such moves, one of the respondents informs:

One [strategy for managing tension] is an attempt to make sure the issues are clear as we see them, that the data is there, and that we don't back off from that. So we are professional in expressing what we see is the

problem, and the work that we do to articulate the nature of the problem, so that they can't fudge that and say "look the problem's not really as great as you say it is." So I think good communication and good documentation, good research, that's one element in that relationship.

From the preceding discussions, however, it might now be apparent that the meaning of evidence cannot be divorced from the manner in which that word is being articulated with other concepts, and of their relation to the dominant discourse within the field. This illustrates the central role that the construction of meaning, in and through language, plays within the constitution of the field. Therefore it should never be taken for granted that evidence speaks for itself, for meaning is always contingent, the subject of struggle, and thereby subject to change.

As a consequence of not taking into account the ongoing transformations of meaning that occur through language, of the open form that social life thereby takes, spaces of dislocation are likely to arise within ALAC's discursive position itself, as ALAC fails to address the political processes that play out in and through itself. Of primary significance here is the persistence of conflict between key external agencies over strategies for reducing alcohol-related harm. Instead, ALAC appears to adopt the kind of political analysis reminiscent of liberal pluralism, within which a field is seen to be constituted by a set of competing interests which jostle for influence and power. To this end, ALAC is unlikely to recognise, let alone account for, the myriad of discursive strategies undertaken by external agencies that aim to forge alternative ways of understanding and constructing alcohol-related harm as an issue of governance. Instead the culture change programme presumes that a workable consensus will develop between conflicting agencies. The ALAC discourse as it is currently structured does not have a means of contemplating that consensus is potentially impossible. Thus, the persistent conflict between external agencies, the absence of agreement notwithstanding the presence of understanding, emerges as the internal limit point of the culture change programme, the emergence of the Real.

ALAC's response when there is contestation over meaning is to attempt to 'close' the system by rearticulating the moment of evidence, as if a correct definition of 'the evidence' will re-establish its place at the top of the interest-group heap. In demonstrating this, one respondent maintained:

You can discuss the population-health data and patterns of consumption until you are blue-in-the-face with some organisations and they will nod, discuss it logically, and then turn around and say something different. It always astounds me as to how two people can read evidence and come to two vastly different conclusions.

In this example, the contestation over meaning is reduced to a potential 'misreading' by one party coming to a different conclusion. This quotation clearly illustrates how such 'misreadings' are 'corrected' by ALAC through appeals to other signifiers such as "population health data" and "patterns of consumption," both of which are key concepts (moments) within epidemiological discourse. These 'misreadings' are the result of closed-system assumptions or the belief that the evidence, should and can speak for itself.

ALAC's apparent reliance upon the assumption that social life can be explained in terms of relatively closed-systems is, however, challenged in relation to the signifier of 'uncertainty' that appears from time to time within its discourse. While recognised within ALAC discourse, it is left as a floating signifier given its potential to dislocate established sets of meaning within ALAC around the governance of alcohol use. The signifier of uncertainty comes to represent that which cannot be accounted for, or articulated in relation to, the discursive moment of evidence. In reference to this point, one respondent noted:

I was absolutely fascinated by the behaviour of people in New York after the 9/11 because their attitudes began to change. I think the expression was, live for today you could be toast tomorrow and what did that result in? There was a huge increase in drug use, alcohol use, casual sex, all the things you know that one might do.

Uncertainty presents a number of challenges that threaten to dislocate ALAC discourse. It threatens the ability of ALAC to govern a space through rationality and calculation as uncertainty is that which cannot be accounted for. Another respondent furthered:

I think life is a lot less certain, we tend to, as far as our survival is concerned, play up the certainties and the stabilities in life, but it's often in fact a damn sight less stable than we want it to be.

ALAC's response to this is to internalise the element of uncertainty by seeking to adopt a closed- system of understanding of the term by articulating the probabilistic moment of risk in relation to the signifier of the "human condition" and the moment of moderation:

We are a risk-taking species, and we need change, we need to get the adrenaline going, so I think we would be on a hiding to nothing if we equated moderation with a safe secure lifestyle where nothing ever happened. I mean that would be an anathema to most people. So we've somehow got to say, "hey look, there are risks in life but perhaps there are risks you might enjoy taking that are more meaningful and sensible ones than the risks associated with heavy alcohol use.

In this instance, risk is articulated in relation to the external moment of the "human condition", seeking to naturalise the behaviour. Risk, however, is not the same as uncertainty. Risk, in relation to the moment of evidence or epidemiology, is articulated through empirically grounded analyses whereas uncertainty is that which is unaccounted for and which cannot ever be accounted for in empirical analyses. According to Bonß & Zinn (1995), the probabilistic concept of risk emerges in relation to the construction of 'security' – through mathematical calculations. In modernity, the repeated experience of catastrophes shows the limits of absolute rationality in the fabrication of probabilistic risk calculations. The awareness of such undermines the surety of probability-grounded judgment and has lead to a politicisation of risk discourse. In this same manner, 'uncertainty' challenges the certainty of empirically-

oriented 'evidence', as it appears within ALAC's discourse. This attempt to transform uncertainty into a question of order and certainty may be explained by ALAC's attempts to transform an open system into a closed system.

Uncertainty, however, represents the open nature of the social world, which ALAC's articulation of closed systems – through its understanding of the term evidence - cannot account for.

This presents a number of challenges to ALAC's ability to govern the field. Given that government is a rational and calculative mechanism, demonstrated through ALAC's articulation of the moments of evidence and being evidence-based, to what extent can ALAC govern those elements of the social world that are uncertain or that are constitutive of an open system? This is particularly difficult for ALAC given the key concept of evidence that structures its discourse and through which the field of alcohol regulation functions. ALAC's current discursive structuration suggests that the recognition of uncertainty as a key concept in its discourse is not possible. Instead, it remains floating in nature. Rather, ALAC's response is to articulate the concept of 'risk' thus attempting to render open systems of meaning governable by articulating them in relation to closed systems of meaning. ALAC's hegemonic struggle is represented over those certainties (closed systems) that can be articulated and governed, but uncertainty (open systems) raises the very real possibility that there may be limits to that government. Signalling its awareness of this, one of ALAC's respondents observed:

While we might all plan to reduce alcohol-related harm today and beaver away in our respective organisations, there could be something horrific that could change everything tomorrow. Take the Tsunami as an example, [it] changed the lives of hundreds-of-thousands of people just like that. You cannot account for some things and it kind of puts things in perspective.

6.3 Summary

The condition of dislocation represents a threat to ALAC's ability to govern external agencies. For ALAC, it must keep external agencies in a governable space in order to engage them in the culture change programme. The threat of dislocation means that agencies are no longer governable and thus ALAC's sphere of influence is limited.

The condition of dislocation arises in a number of instances. Firstly it occurs through vulnerable floating signifiers which ALAC can recognise but cannot incorporate as key concepts (moments) in its discourse due to the antagonisms between the articulations of external agencies, from within which those signifiers emerge. If ALAC was to incorporate those signifiers, it is likely that it would isolate other agencies within the culture change programme and undermine its nodal point of harm minimisation.

ALAC's second threat of dislocation comes from its reliance on closed-systems of meanings to account for the social world. By not accounting for the ongoing transformation of language, or its open nature, spaces of dislocation are likely to continue arising as ALAC fails to address the political processes that play out through other external agencies as they attempt to articulate alternative understandings of the field. ALAC's response when there is a contestation over meaning is to attempt to 'close' the system by rearticulating the moment of evidence. This attempt to render the field governable through the focus on closed system responses to a social world constituted through open systems raises the question as to the limits of ALAC's ability to govern. ALAC's discourse does not allow for an understanding of governability outside of a closed system.

If the social world and the field of discourse are fundamentally open systems of meaning, where there are attempts to fix meaning, albeit contingent meaning, what does that mean for the future of ALAC's ability to govern and engage stakeholders through the culture change programme?

CHAPTER SEVEN: REFLECTIONS & CONSIDERATIONS

We are doing some really great things, but there will always be the question of how can we do things better? How can we improve our practice in a way that contributes to our outcome – more moderation, less harm? Sometimes asking this question is like opening Pandora’s box, but the question should be asked nonetheless.

ALAC Respondent

The premise through which ALAC seeks to render the field of alcohol regulation as a governable space is that the social world functions in a manner akin to a closed-system. In order to govern, that is to influence the conduct of agencies, ALAC seeks to engage external agencies in the culture change programme. This programme of work emerged as the result of antagonisms that previously disrupted the field. In particular, disagreements developed between different sectors over the efficacy of strategies that emphasise law to incite behaviour change (the exercise of sovereign power) and strategies that emphasise the role of the individual in changing their own behaviour (governmental power). In the terms suggested by the discourse analysis of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, the culture change programme is an attempt by ALAC to suture the gap between these two strategies by bringing them together, using key concepts from the discourses of the other agencies that are involved in the regulation of alcohol. This involves the rearticulation of those agencies' organising ideas (nodal points) and key concepts (moments) in ways that accord with the nodal point and key moments of the culture change programme. The nodal point of ALAC's culture change programme, harm minimisation, is supported by its key concepts (moments) of moderation, evidence, culture, multi-strategy approach, and partnership. ALAC's rearticulation of other agencies' key concepts is directed towards the consolidation of these concepts.

The way that ALAC structures the field of discourse (its discursive structuration), however, has its limitations in that external agencies construct

alternative logics where and when they choose not to occupy the subject positions that ALAC has imagined for them. The outcome of this process is that external agencies rearticulate the various key concepts (moments) and floating ideas (floating signifiers) that make up ALAC's position in an attempt to contest and alter the meaning of the culture change programme. In Laclau's terminology, and in relation to the ALAC work programme, this is achieved by the public health and industry sectors constructing their own 'logics of equivalence' that demarcate their particular positions. Such logics can contest both ALAC's articulation of the field, and other agencies' position by constructing the 'other' as the enemy. In Laclau's terms, the logic of equivalence of another agency becomes a logic of difference in relation to one's own position – it seeks to break the potential of one's discourse to function in a hegemonic manner, by introducing elements of difference into it that weren't there previously. As a consequence of these alternative articulations by the public health and industry sectors, the structuration of ALAC's key concepts (moments) is threatened by the reordering of these signs. An outcome of this reordering is the potential destabilisation of ALAC's pivotal organising principle (its nodal point) of harm minimisation. The destabilising effect also threatens to dislocate the culture change programme as a whole, and with that, ALAC's ability to occupy a hegemonic position within the field of alcohol regulation.

After reviewing the analysis that has been undertaken in the thesis, of ALAC's position, this concluding chapter considers the implications for ALAC in continuing to engage external agencies in its programme of work. It also examines future trajectories by reflecting on the theoretical frameworks employed in the thesis.

7.1 Liberalist and rationalist understandings

Two theoretical approaches have influenced the conceptualisation of this thesis. The first is that of Michel Foucault and in particular, his work in the area of governmentality. Governmental power, Foucault argues, is a power that takes population as its focus and employs a range of techniques and rationalities that

seek to shape the beliefs and conduct of individuals in a number of ways by acting upon their will, circumstances and/or their environment (Rose & Miller, 1992). This has become a pre-eminent form of power in late modernity. It is not represented by the State imposing its will on its subjects but rather through the range of authorities and disciplines that endeavour to administer subjects in the name of that which is good, healthy, normal, virtuous, efficient or profitable (*ibid*175). For Foucault, these strategies are manifested through the actions of individual agents. This is consistent with Foucault's focus on the identification of the various socio-political agencies that have emerged and through which power functions.

ALAC is presented here as one of those authorities. Its task is to encourage the "responsible" and "moderate" use of alcohol within the New Zealand public. ALAC draws on a range of techniques of government in its attempt to incite New Zealander's to drink differently, however it chooses first and foremost to do this by influencing the conduct of a range of agencies that are also involved in the general regulation of alcohol use. Although ALAC outlines three strategies in its culture change programme - being supply control, demand reduction and problem limitation - this thesis focuses on the two strategies that reflect Foucault's discussion on the exercise of power and which also have a general population focus.

Within the culture change programme, ALAC outlines two main strategies or techniques of government: supply control, the first of these, reflects the sovereign exercise of power insofar as it emphasises the primacy of law in inciting behaviour change. It involves ALAC in supporting work that focuses on enforcement action against those who breach the law. Demand reduction, the second of the strategies, reflects the governmental exercise of power and involves the marketing of messages that endorse cultural changes that induce lower levels of demand for alcohol and that validates individual choices which support behaviour change (ALAC, 2005:10). The third, strategy, 'problem limitation' or in ALAC's case 'early intervention' is not considered within this thesis due to its focus on a small number of people experiencing 'problems' with their drinking.

In seeking to influence external agencies, ALAC draws on the powerful signifier of responsibility. This can be seen in its attempts to incite agencies to play their role in reducing alcohol-related harm, as if there is a role that each is responsible for and for which ALAC is to make them account. ALAC's emphasis on 'responsibilisation' is not something it overtly recognises, such that it becomes a deliberate discursive moment to which it refers within its own self-understanding, but rather responsibilisation functions symptomatically, as an element (or indeterminate notion) that is ever present but unrecognised.

Although ALAC might not recognise responsibilisation as a key concept (moment) within its position, its function is nonetheless consistent with neo-liberal forms of rule where individuals and agencies are encouraged to regulate their own behaviour. ALAC therefore emerges as an organisation that is responsive to the rationalities of government embodied in a liberal society in a way that both encourages the responsible use and self-regulation of individuals through their alcohol consumption and the responsible use of power by agencies charged with bringing that about. This occurs through ALAC's attempt to establish a particular social norm regarding personal behaviour – one in which intoxication is no longer acceptable and where New Zealanders drink within "safe" limits (ALAC, 2002a) – and inciting agencies involved in the regulation of alcohol use to play their role.

ALAC exercises its influence in a range of ways that appeal directly to the New Zealand public. The more visible manner in which this occurs is through its marketing campaign but more importantly, in relation to this thesis topic, through its work with other agencies, which, in the eyes of ALAC, have complimentary roles to itself in reducing alcohol-related harm. In order to influence the field of alcohol regulation, ALAC must 'govern' external agencies as part of its culture change programme, influencing the conduct of external agencies in a way that aligns them with its overall outcome of more moderation, less harm that it seeks to establish across the New Zealand population.

ALAC's influence is articulated through the message that 'everyone', including external agencies, has a role to play in reducing alcohol-related harm. This is denoted through two key concepts (moments) within the culture change

programme, of partnership and a multi-strategy approach, where all are expected to ‘work together’ to reduce harm. This approach is also underscored by the key concept (moment) of evidence. ALAC considers itself an evidence-based organisation where research and evaluation inform the strategies or techniques of government that are employed to reduce alcohol-related harm. Its approach to research and evaluation tends to employ the methodological approaches that are used by public health disciplines such as social epidemiology, whose ontological frameworks assume that social behaviour functions in a manner akin to a closed system.

The association of ALAC’s work with the discourse of responsibilisation can also be seen in the manner in which it draws on a range of strategies that appeal to individuals to change their own behaviour – through the provision of information and marketing messages. This focus on the mobilisation of individuals in the promotion of their own well being does not eradicate the use of sovereign-type strategies, but rather displaces them. ALAC still continues to advocate strategies that attempt to shape the physical, social and economic environment either through enhancing the provisions of existing legislation or supporting the enforcement of such legislation. Over and above that approach, ALAC seeks to responsibilise individuals with regard to their drinking behaviour, evident in a behavioural change model which ALAC terms “see, think and act.” The model seeks to present individuals with information about problematic alcohol use so that they might “see” those problematic patterns within themselves and recognise the harms associated with it, invite those individuals to “think” about their own actions in relation to that behaviour and, finally, to incite those individuals to “act” in ways that change the harmful behaviour. The sum total of ALAC’s work programme is underpinned by this model. The approach resonates strongly with the kinds of rationalist models of behavioural change common to cognitive psychology, such as Prochaska & DiClemente’s (1982) six-stage model of personal change (involving the stages of pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation/determination, action, maintenance and termination).

In the adoption of such cognitive models, ALAC's approach presupposes a social field that is populated by rational, 'free-thinking' individuals whose behaviour and motivations can be influenced by either choosing to act differently, or where the individual is unlikely to choose, to respond to situations appropriately where socio-cultural norms are shaped in a way that makes intoxication unacceptable. Once again, this approach is consistent with liberal mentalities of government which seek to responsibilise and encourage individuals to regulate their own behaviour in particular ways. The rationalist approach appeals to the idea that there is an active agent able to either make autonomous and informed choices or act rationally when confronted with a changing environment. In keeping with this belief, a number of respondents for this research argued that it is important to offer individuals the "appropriate information" and to draw their attention to the fact that intoxication causes harm, but that it is ultimately the individual's "choice" to change their behaviour and to act differently. This understanding of the social world, as being populated by autonomous moral agents, is rendered problematic both by Foucault's perception of social life and the second major theoretical influence within this thesis, that of Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory.

The discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe rejects rationalist approaches which presume that social actors have given interests and preferences. It rejects the idea that the actions of agents can be explained and predicted by reference to the considered calculations of an individual's economic self interest (Olson, 1965). Instead discourse theory argues against the assumption that subjects or agents have (potentially) stable identities, as presumed within the strategy of responsibilisation. Instead, the subject is understood as being internal to the socio-symbolic structure, but not completely determined by it; in this sense, the subject has a failed structural identity (Laclau, 1990). The ongoing disruptions that occur to the discursive structures in the social world disallow the full determination of a subject's identity. Rather, a split subject emerges which is traumatised by its lack of fullness. The split subject then attempts to fulfil the illusion of a full identity by means of identifying itself with the promise of fullness offered by different political projects (Torfing, 2005:17). In short, the contingent

nature of the social world, with its constantly disrupted structures, renders problematic the liberal notion of the rational and free-thinking agent.

Discourse theory also opposes positivist and naturalistic conceptions of knowledge and research methods. It rejects totalising theories or scientific laws of society and politics. In particular, discourse theory opposes naive conceptions of truth where generalisations of unproblematic objective realities are assumed (Chalmers, 1982). This is because discourse theory argues that all truth is mediated through language. Truth is thus not a feature of an externally existing reality, but a feature of language. There is no extra-discursive space where empirical facts, methodological rules or privileged scientific criteria speak a truth (Rorty, 1989). All meaning is instead relational, contextual and historically located. In contrast to this viewpoint, ALAC's position appears to accord with assumptions about the existence of closed social systems through which comprehensive and true knowledge can be developed. This approach is characterised by traditional public health disciplines which seek to explain and predict changes in social reality through analyses and explanations of health-related behaviours.

By assuming the possibility of knowledge that is based upon the existence of closed social systems, ALAC fails to account for the condition of dislocation that can occur to social practices and institutions. Dislocation occurs when a discourse is confronted by new events that cannot be explained, represented, or in other ways domesticated in its own terms (Torfing, 2005:16). The condition of dislocation does not register as a possibility for ALAC because it cannot fully entertain the open and political nature of social life. This thesis approaches this issue by reflecting on the antagonisms that exist in and around ALAC's culture change programme, that have the potential to dislocate that programme.

The culture change programme itself emerged as a result of dislocations that occurred within the ALAC position to two of its formative discourses: the traditional public health discourse, which focuses on reducing the availability of alcohol, and the discourse of 'individual choice.' The traditional public health

discourse focused on the use of legislation to control the supply of alcohol to the public, using the key concepts (moments) of evidence and public good to structure its arguments. Conversely, the discourse of 'individual choice' is articulated around the key concepts (moments) of 'the individual' and 'freedom of choice.' Both discourses were disrupted and dislocated by one another within ALAC's position, due to their respective inabilities to reconcile and integrate key signifiers from the other's competing discourse. The public health discourse, as it was being used by ALAC, could not articulate individual choice as a relevant concept, substituting the notion of the individual, as its key unit of analysis, with that of 'population.' The individual choice discourse, for its part, could not rearticulate the key concepts (moments) from public health discourse of evidence and public good in ways that could prove meaningful within its own terms. It is important to note however that these discourses are still active within the public health and industry sectors.

The culture change programme emerged as a hegemonic intervention to these dislocations, seeking to rearticulate the key concepts and nodal points from these previously dislocated discourses. The ALAC discourse, as presented here, expands as, in Laclau's terms, a logic of difference, that seeks to disestablish previous understandings of friend/foe and attempts to articulate as many key concepts (moments) and organising ideas (nodal points) from competing discourses as are needed in order to render the field of alcohol regulation into a governable space in ALAC's terms. As part of this, ALAC has identified a range of stakeholders it chooses to work with in attempting to reduce harm. In the preferred terms of the thesis, these stakeholders are agents whose discursive structures are amenable to hegemonic rearticulation. It has become evident from the discourse generated for this research that a number of antagonisms still exist within the culture change programme, in and around these discursive structures. These antagonisms threaten to undermine the culture change programme as structured by ALAC.

These antagonisms within the culture change programme are played out within the respective logics of equivalence of the two key external sector positions within the field of alcohol regulation: public health and industry. Moreover,

antagonisms experienced *within* the culture change programme reflect these very same antagonisms between the discourses of public health and individual choice, that is, between the use of legal control and cultural regulation. Their presence threatens to undermine the coherence of that programme. This threat arises because both sectors (public health and industry) fail to occupy the subject positions that ALAC's discourse has created for them. Instead both sectors attempt to create alternative subject positions for themselves by rearticulating key concepts (moments) of ALAC's discourse in relation to ideas that, for ALAC, are of no great significance (floating signifiers), but which are central to the positions of those external sectors. The public health sector, for example, seeks to challenge the key ALAC idea (moment) that alcohol regulation ought to function through a multi-strategy approach. It does so by rearticulating the concept of evidence in relation to the manner in which ALAC uses the notion of availability, as it applies to alcohol, a notion that is not pivotal to ALAC's discourse. The availability of the supply of alcohol is then linked to the key concept (moment) of evidence. This rearticulation advantages the political position of public health insofar as it challenges ALAC's ability to undertake a multi-strategy approach without it highlighting the issue of availability, which is so central to the public health perspective. In the case of the industry, commercial interests seek to rearticulate the ALAC's central idea (moment) of evidence along with ALAC's more indeterminate notion (element) of responsibilisation, so as to produce its preferred term of 'individual choice.' The result is that the emphasis shifts from ALAC's concern with a 'role for everybody' to play in reducing harm, to that of making individuals more responsible for their own actions.

ALAC's initial response to these attempts to rearticulate its key concepts is to simply recognise and acknowledge them. Despite the promise of partnership and collaboration, ALAC cannot fully incorporate these rearticulations by external agencies into its own discourse as central ideas or key concepts (moments). Instead for ALAC, these concepts, that are pivotal to its external agencies, can only exist within its own position as signifiers of uncertain and ambiguous significance (that is, as floating signifiers, or elements). If it were to incorporate these external signifiers into its nodal point of harm minimisation,

this would likely disrupt ALAC's discursive structuration, resulting in the dislocation of the ALAC discourse. The inability of ALAC to incorporate these rearticulations highlights the limits of its own discourse and the incommensurable antagonisms that structure the culture change programme. The task for ALAC becomes a question of how to suture the gap (spaces of dislocation) that shall always exist. In order to attend to this, ALAC instead rearticulates its key concepts (moments) of partnership and responsibilisation, resulting in a signifying chain such that everyone has a role to play and that everyone should work together to reduce alcohol-related harm.

ALAC appears to avoid the dislocating effects of these antagonisms that exist between its external partners by attempting to locate the source of disagreement within the agencies' disputes over the meaning of the evidence, as it relates to the regulation of alcohol use. ALAC's construction of the social world as a closed system makes it difficult for it to appreciate the central role played within a field by the contestation of meaning through language. ALAC's view of language tends towards the view that meanings are relatively fixed and, thus, beyond dispute. Instead, the struggle between the public health and industry sectors becomes conceptualised as a disagreement over the evidence presented, not a contest over the terms through which the very notion of evidence has been constructed. This thesis, on the other hand, posits that politics is inherent to the social world, that the social world is animated by struggles over meaning (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Struggles over meaning are political in the sense that established meanings organise society in ways that exclude other possible ways of understanding. By reconceptualising the social world as political, rather than in the terms of closed systems, the possibility of new tools for understanding the ongoing tensions in the culture change programme emerge.

To further this point, the tensions that exist within ALAC's culture change programme are not simply disagreements between rational agents over the evidence, but rather a product of a struggle for hegemony in which each agency's position reflects an alternative conception of what constitutes 'the issue'. The discourse generated for this research indicates the presence of

clear attempts by the external agencies involved in the culture change programme to rearticulate a range of signifiers which ultimately seek to develop alternative interpretations of the culture change programme. These attempts by external agencies to rearticulate the concepts that ALAC uses, should be conceived of as hegemonic struggles: that is, they have the potential to create horizons of possibility, reconfiguring ambiguous elements of ALAC's discourse, in ways that cannot help but skew the culture change programme from the vision for it initially developed by ALAC.

Whilst the ALAC discourse is flexible in terms of its ability to incorporate meaning from other discourses, all discourses eventually confront events which they cannot integrate. ALAC recognises that there are limits to its discourse in relation to some of the alternative articulations undertaken by the public health and industry sectors. That is, it cannot integrate the central ideas (moments) of the public health and industry sectors such as availability and individual choice as central ideas of its own. Instead, ALAC can only recognise these as spaces of dislocation. This very activity threatens to dislocate the ALAC discourse, however, by drawing attention to the presence of limits. In order to sustain its approach, ALAC has been rearticulating its key concepts (moments) of partnership, evidence and responsibilisation. It also, however, reformulates a range of other signifiers to stabilise the field that operate as myths (floating signifiers). Examples of this include the point where ALAC took two ideas that had only up to that time 'floated about' within its discourse – those of social and political acceptability and of balance - enlarging their significance to the culture change programme such that they might stabilise the field and thus stave off the threat of dislocation posed by the external agencies' discourses.

Over and above the threat of dislocation that can come from its key concepts (moments) being co-opted and rearticulated by other agencies, a more thorough-going form of dislocation confronts the ALAC discourse: a situation where the field that external agencies occupy becomes ungovernable and ALAC's sphere of influence severely curtailed. The likely result of such is the collapse of the culture change programme or a significant rethinking, by ALAC, of its current discursive structuration of the field of alcohol regulation. This form

of dislocation cannot be comprehended from within the terms of the discourse being dislocated. In ALAC's case, the reason for this is due to the liberal nature of the discourse and its understanding of the ways in which antagonisms are played out in civil society. For ALAC, "of course" agencies are going to disagree due to their conflicting interests. ALAC's liberal conceptualisation fails to perceive the significance of such antagonisms because it presumes the existence of some undisclosed space or condition within which those antagonisms will get resolved, and that in the end, agreement will emerge. ALAC's focus is therefore to institute proceduralist methods based on instruments such as discussion and debate between stakeholders, to try and manage tensions and to ultimately create agreement on a 'way forward'. This 'way forward', however, will always be problematic. Any position or way forward will always express particular sets of interests that are contested by other agencies within the field. The culture change programme represents a suggested way forward, a new vision, where everyone can work together, yet still this is problematised by some external agencies. As demonstrated through this thesis, this contestation is played out through language, or discourse, which reflects the open nature of the social world. ALAC's reliance on liberal discourse, with its focus on gaining agreement from stakeholders and moving forward with a shared vision, cannot comprehend the apparent fact that full agreement, as conceived of within liberal and rational understandings, is unattainable. The very acceptance of this problematic within liberal discourse and the culture change programme is likely to result in a dislocation of the ALAC discourse.

However, by continuing to encase its view of the field of alcohol regulation within the metaphor of closed systems, as appears to characterise knowledge created by traditional public health approaches, ALAC risks perpetuating the antagonisms that have dislocated past discourses, and of reproducing them within the current culture change programme. So what possibilities might exist for reconceptualising the social world as an open system, 'opened' by an unavoidable political dimension? Where does that leave the issue of a rational and calculative form of government?

7.2 Moving forward: governance of open systems

ALAC's conceptualisation of the social world, embodied through its liberal understanding of agency, and of closed systems, cannot easily account for the open nature of the social world. If ALAC were to reconceptualise its view of the world as an open social system where meaning is relational, contextual and historically located, a new set of tools would become available to it for understanding the prospects of the culture change programme. The condition of dislocation can never be prevented but, rather, ALAC could develop sensitivity to the types of discursive practices and processes that lead to dislocation. As identified in the thesis, it is possible to manage the kinds of antagonisms that agencies are aware of (the spaces of dislocation), through the use of myths and other floating signifiers in ways that suture the gaps or tensions they face. The threats of dislocation to a discourse that arise from events and conditions that are not identifiable, however, that constitute the internal limit-points of the discourses, are more problematic for the viability of those agencies' programmes. It is hard to account for that which is unidentifiable. The resulting issue for ALAC, therefore, shifts from that of how the condition of dislocation might be prevented (that is, how to keep other discourses from disrupting the terms of its own position), to how to work with the ever-present antagonisms that structure an open, social world (that is, contests over meaning between the external agencies)? This research leads to a recommendation that ALAC reconsiders the field of governance, the culture change programme, and the means through which it seeks to construct the field of alcohol regulation, in the terms offered by post-structuralist discourse theory, which acknowledges and works with the open and political nature of the social world.

Torffing's (2005) reflections on the value of post-structuralist discourse theory illustrate what ALAC might gain from applying such insights to the governance of alcohol regulation and for the future of the culture change programme in particular. Firstly, the assumption that the social world is open poses different types of research questions than those generated by the rationalist and

behaviourist perspectives that envisage society as a set of relatively closed systems. The focus shifts from building totalising or generalising theories that seek to explain the reasons why individuals choose to act in particular ways to understanding the contestations over meaning, and the failure of discourses, which drive and propel new ways of understanding the social world. Enabling this shift, the discourse theory of Laclau commences from a negative ontological position, beginning with the problem of what prevents something from being. This is not the same as seeking to explain why individuals act in a certain way. Rather, through language or discourse, specific empirical and analytical tools are employed in a way that seek to investigate what prevents the realisation of particular political frontiers – in this sense the culture change programme. Within the analysis undertaken in this thesis, discourse theory has highlighted a disjuncture that exists within external agencies between their understandings of the culture change programme and their acceptance of it. Although, on the face of it, all agencies said they supported the culture change programme and ALAC's key concepts (moments) such as partnership and multi-strategy approach, the public health and industry sectors were clearly attempting to transform the meanings of words that constituted the programme. So while the agencies agreed or understood the discursive structure of the culture change programme as conceived by ALAC, the ALAC structuration of the programme was not readily accepted and alternative articulations were attempted. By commencing from a negative ontological position, this thesis has sought to highlight the significance of such challenges to ALAC in its attempt to realise its culture change programme.

In addition to illuminating the manner in which external interests might attempt to rearticulate a given discursive position, critical discourse analysis, as offered by Laclau, provides new ways of understanding the issue of resistance; in ALAC's case resistance refers to the actions of external stakeholders within the culture change programme. It renders problematic the cognitive psychological models of resistance through its questioning of the notion of rational agency, by highlighting the struggle and contestation that occurs within language over meaning. Also, discourse theory questions the idea of a cohesive subject

position – of either individuals or agencies - from which resistance might be imagined to emerge.

Secondly, post-structuralist discourse theory draws attention to the contingent formation of social phenomena. It does not begin from the position of privileged starting points such as social structures or subjective interests. Rather, this thesis has sought to analyse ALAC's construction of the field of alcohol-related harm as an issue of government. This thesis suggests that in the process of constructing alcohol as an issue of government, ALAC has sought to redefine other ways of conceiving the issue. Where alternative approaches suggest the use of law to either solve problems relating to alcohol-use or to enhance individual responsibility, ALAC has displaced these primarily behavioural tools into a programme of work that instead takes a multi-strategy approach that also focuses on cultural change. This construction, however, is always subject to challenge by external agencies. Post-structural discourse theory highlights the issue of power and power-related struggles as a central point of consideration. Instead of being conceived of as a resource or dominating force, power is understood as a strategy and is understood in terms of political acts which seek to both include and exclude meanings. Because of this, discourse and power are linked intrinsically, for it is within discourse that meaning is constructed. This point would suggest that ALAC could well be advised to conceive of its discourse as being open and subject to challenge by external agencies, through their attempts to articulate key concepts (moments) within the culture change programme. By understanding discourses as sites of political struggle, where contests are waged to reorder and transform the social world, the contingency of all discourses are brought to the forefront. This allows for a critical reconsideration of the culture change programme's structure by reviewing the key concepts (moments) of the programme as new signifiers and articulations emerge from the discourses of external agencies. In this sense, the culture change programme is conceived of as a living, transformational site of contestation within which struggles are waged to define the form that alcohol-related governance is to take.

Thirdly, discourse theory emphasises both continuity and change. History is marked by a radical discontinuity where discourses are disrupted and dislocated. These disruptions occur as a result of political processes and struggles where discourses are dislocated and new frontiers of possibility emerge. This involves the reorganisation of social structures around new hegemonic principles (nodal points and myths) which have the effect of capturing the hearts and minds of individuals. They do so by rearticulating floating and previously dislocated signifiers around new discourses which promise new horizons or pathways forward. This thesis has pointed to the manner in which the culture change programme emerged as the result of the dislocation to previous discourses. In considering the future, the threat of dislocation can never be eliminated. In the face of such a threat, ALAC can address, or suture, the gaps caused by observable antagonisms (spaces of dislocation) within its programme. Its primary method for doing so is through the re-presentation of floating signifiers such as responsibility, rationality, and balance as myths that can recreate a sense of holistic order. However, through the process of reconceptualising the culture change programme as being akin to an open system of knowledge, ALAC might become aware, and therefore more sensitive, to the importance of the struggles over meaning through the use of language, the impact that this has in the constitution of its programme of work, and the discursive means through which it seeks to retain a hegemonic position. This new form of self-awareness about the processes of change and restabilisation may provide opportunities for the development of tools that allow sites of potential dislocation to be identified, where external agencies are attempting to rearticulate key terms within ALAC's position.

Finally, discourse theory provides new insights for understanding the driving forces behind the formation and reproduction of political alliances, government networks, and political communities. With its criticism of the rational, cohesive subject, discourse theory provides new insights into the formation of political identities which emerge as a result of dislocation. New visions and aspirations for the future emerge that are based on common experiences of frustration and disenfranchisement with 'old' ways of doing things. New visions are inevitably held together by series of empty signifiers and create common identities,

vocabularies, and narratives through those signifiers. The analysis of these identities is central to understanding the patterns of inclusion and exclusion through which various communities come into being and are constituted. New communities herald the promise of 'happiness' through the prospect of a fully achieved and functional identity, proffered in the guise of overarching myths that suture actually-existing differences between members. The myth of the stable, fully functional identity is problematic, however, due to the ongoing disruption that occurs to the discursive structures that make up all social formations. Instead, a split subject emerges which is traumatised by its lack of fullness, and which constantly seeks to fulfil its identity with the promise of fullness that is offered by different political projects. In the case of ALAC, the culture change programme emerged as the result of the dislocation of previous discourses and has been offering alternative ways of reducing harm to those proffered by the public health and industry-based approaches, through its key concepts (moments) of moderation, evidence, culture, multi-strategy approach, and partnership. ALAC, in its construction of alcohol-related harm as an issue of government, seeks to manage alternative ways of understanding not by fully excluding them but by rearticulating the field of alcohol regulation such that some of the key terms of those positions are incorporated into ALAC's discourse and the specific meanings of those terms reoriented in ways that consolidate the cultural change programme. It promises the hope of reducing harm in a coordinated manner, employing a range of strategies and with the optimistic vision, where everyone works together to achieve this shared outcome.

7.3 Theoretical considerations and future trajectories

This thesis has employed two theoretical frameworks in the consideration of the research topic. Michel Foucault's work in the area of governmentality was employed to analyse the problematic of government. It has been used to identify those mentalities of government that ALAC employs in its attempt to influence the New Zealand public and the external agencies that it works with. The approach orients the research toward an inquiry into the strategies by

which ALAC operates through individuals' experiences of freedom, so as to create its preferred social outcome of "more moderation, less harm." With the focus of inquiry thus oriented, ALAC is seen to be appealing directly to the New Zealand public through its marketing campaign, but more specifically, by seeking to influence and responsibilise the other, external, agencies that are working within the field of alcohol regulation. The approach also attunes the inquiry to the possible associations between the range of governmental techniques that ALAC uses and liberal and neo-liberal mentalities of government. The research has identified that ALAC's culture change programme reflects both what Foucault would have termed the sovereign impulse - through its focus on supply-control strategies or the enforcement of existing laws - and governmental strategies, through the provision of advice and information to individuals in guise of strategies to reduce demand for alcohol at its source, so to speak, within individual desire.

The study of governmentality does not easily suggest tools for qualitative research – notwithstanding the detailed exposition of Foucault's essay on discursive formations - but rather more powerfully produces a certain attitude or sensitivity towards particular questions of rule (Kendall & Wickham, 2004). This orientation was used to locate the ALAC culture change programme as an issue of the regulation of individuals' conduct and that of the organisations that ALAC works with to reduce alcohol-related harm. In approaching the field in this manner, I (then an employee of ALAC) was privy to a number of internal conversations that gave rise to a set of questions about the manner in which that regulation occurred and the kinds of resistance that emerged in response to that regulation. These questions focused on the nature of ALAC's relationships with a range of external agencies. A number of instances became evident, through the interview process, where agencies demonstrated actions that did not seem congruent with their public support of the culture change programme. Some agencies embraced the culture change message in public, however in other iterations of the ALAC culture change message by these agencies, key messages were communicated differently; not in a way that directly rejected the ALAC programme of work but rather in a manner that focused on specific aspects of the programme at the expense of others, thus skewing the intent of

the programme. This often occurred through an emphasis on either the role of the individual in reducing harm, or the need for legislation to shape environments, rather than the use of both that is proffered by the culture change programme.

The Foucauldian framework, in particular Foucault's notion of governmentality that was employed to orient this investigation, tended to focus on liberal and rationalist understandings of agency without providing sufficient tools for exploring the relationship between language, its transformative potential, and ALAC's external agencies. To this effect, the governmental framework was supplemented by conceptual tools that could enable ALAC's relationship with external agencies to be interpreted. The post-structuralist writings of Laclau and Mouffe were chosen because of their focus on discourse and the open nature of the social world that they portrayed. While this thesis has covered in significant detail the manner in which Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory might be used to approach a programme like ALAC's as a discourse, perhaps the most significant contribution of this theoretical framework is the concept of dislocation.

In the process of interpreting the ALAC culture change programme and the politics within which it is embedded and to which it contributes, the condition of dislocation provided a new platform for exploring the limits of ALAC's discourse and of the culture change programme in particular. ALAC's culture change programme emerged as a result of the dislocation of past discourses which could not integrate key concepts (moments) of competing discourses at the time. Key components of these discourses now act as important signifiers in the ALAC culture change programme, in its expanded discursive structuration. Even with its expanded discursive structure, it became apparent that the culture change programme was contingent, only partially fixed in the manner in which it constructs alcohol-related harm as an issue of government. That is, ALAC's culture change programme is always threatened by the condition of dislocation on account of potential 'spaces of dislocation' in which alternative positions can rearticulate strategically important concepts. Also the ALAC discourse is threatened by the more thorough-going form of dislocation where antagonisms

between external agencies threaten ALAC's hegemonic position and thus the governability of the field of alcohol-regulation.

The field of public health, within which this inquiry generally sits, has not tended to be analysed in Foucauldian or post-structuralist terms, with studies in the field being dominated by positivist methodologies such as epidemiology.

Exceptions to this include the work of Deborah Lupton (1999b) who has explored the relationship between risk discourse and governmentality as part of the new public health. Although Lupton's work tends to adopt a more 'positive' ontological reading of discourse, her approach lends itself to a more critical analysis of the role of power, knowledge and discourse in the construction of public health issues. The anti-essentialist ontology and anti-foundationalist epistemology of discourse theory employed in this thesis builds on from such approaches by challenging a number of theoretical stalwarts employed by public health advocates. The idea that there exists no pre-given, self-determining essence to social life that is capable of determining and fixing identities within a stable and totalising structure also challenges the assumptions that were gleaned from cognitive psychology for the culture change programme. Discourse theory, in contrast, links identities and subject positions with the contingent flow of language structure, or with the contestation and transformation of language use. However, perhaps the most significant challenge to the field of public health by a post-structuralist discourse analysis is the idea that meaning is always being mediated through language. As Torfing (2005:14) elaborates, there is, as a consequence, no extra-discursive instance in terms of empirical facts, methodological rules or privileged scientific criteria, which can safeguard either truth or science. Truth is always local and flexible.

Notwithstanding its insights regarding the relations between power, knowledge, and dislocation, post-structuralist discourse theory does present a number of significant challenges in its adoption as an empirically relevant theoretical framework for research. In relation to the work of Laclau and Mouffe, Norval (2000:223) poses the question: is it possible to provide a non-essentialist account of identity formation that does not privilege the antagonistic over the differential dimension of identity? Here, Norval draws attention to the

apparently relentless tendency of post-structural discourse theory to privilege the moment of negativity that is involved in the construction of socio-political boundaries, and of an equally unremitting presence of antagonism that undermines the coherence of all discourse. In particular, the condition of dislocation, with its focus on the internal disruption of discourse, becomes a privileged, central fulcrum around many analyses that employ the work of Laclau and Mouffe.

In considering such challenges in the implementation of post-structural discourse theory, I became aware of the preponderance of work in the area that focused on explaining and illustrating its key concepts. Much of these contributions were pre-occupied with the philosophical and theoretical dimensions of the field rather than with the task of substantive analysis. The challenge for discourse theory, and its theorists, is to produce new insights through problem-driven studies of specific discourses that permit the application of the tools of analysis (Torfing 2005:25). This thesis has sought to employ the tools of discourse theory in this way, illuminating and providing theoretically attuned insight into the work of a specific organisation as it attempts to influence the individuals and other organisations through which its own conditions of possibility exist. While discourse theory has been occupied with some of the meta-questions of late modernity such as gender, ethnicity, social movements and so forth, opportunities also exist for the consideration of topics where objectivist and rationalist theories tend to dominate, such as policy analysis and public administration (*ibid*:25). Opportunities thus exist to employ the lens of discourse analysis to inter-organisational relationships that are based on shared or joint projects. As this field develops, so too will the questions of methodological enquiry with regard to discourse analysis.

In concluding, the possibilities for future research topics and pathways for employing post-structuralist discourse perspectives are significant. Discourse theory, with its focus on the open nature of the social world, has the ability to generate insights into the political construction of mainstream, organisational issues where rationalist theories have tended to occlude such. This analysis of the ALAC culture change programme has been presented in this manner. One

final quotation by a respondent signals the infinite possibilities that arise out of a reconceptualisation of the social world as an open system and of the implications that this might present for an organisation considering its future direction:

You just don't know what you don't know. It becomes more difficult when you are presented with new information, then you have to decide what to do with it. Now that's the tricky part.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. (2002a). *Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand 2002 – 2007. Strategic Plan.* Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. (2002b). *A guide to standard drinks.* Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. (2004). *Alcohol and New Zealand. The Alcohol Advisory Council working to reduce alcohol-related harm in New Zealand (Corporate Profile).* Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. (2005a). *New Zealand and its drinking culture. A programme of change.* Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. (2005b). *Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand Statement of Intent for the year ending 30 June 2006.* Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. (2006a). *The Way We Drink 2005 - Executive Summary.* Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand. (2006b). *Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand Statement of Intent. For the year ending June 2007.* Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Barrett, M. (1991). *The politics of truth.* Cambridge: Polity.
- Barthes, R. (1977). The death of the author. In S. Heath (Ed.), *Image, Music, Text.* New York: Hill.
- Bell, D. (1979). *The cultural contradictions of capitalism.* London: Heinemann.
- Bonß, W., & Zinn, J. (2003). Ungewissheit in der moderne. Oder: Die gestaltung des lebens als unisicherheitsmanagement. *Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen* 32, Heft 2, 24-34.
- Burchell, G. (1991). Peculiar interests: Civil society and governing 'the system of natural liberty.' In G. Burchell, C, Gordon & P, Miller (Eds.), *The Foucault Effect.* Hempstead: University of Chicago.

- Castel, R. (1991). From Dangerousness to risk. In G. G. Burchell, C and Miller, P. (Ed.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in governmentality*. New York: Routledge.
- Chalmers, A. (1982). *What is this thing called science?* Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Clifton, J. (1989, 6 June). "Liquor Council fights to save its powers." *The Dominion*.
- Coburn, D., & Poland, B. (1996). The CIAR vision of the determinants of health.: A critique. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 87, 308 - 10.
- Cohen, S. (May 30 - June 2, 1989). Thinking About Social Control, *Working on Controlling Social Life Conference*. European University Institute.
- Danermark, B. (2002). *Explaining society: Critical realism in the social sciences*. London: Routledge.
- Dean, K. (2004). The role of methods in maintaining orthodox health beliefs in health research. *Social Science and Medicine*, 58, 675 - 85.
- Dean, M. (1991). *The constitution of poverty. Toward a genealogy of liberal governance*. London: Routledge.
- Dean, M. (1995). Governing the unemployed self in an active society. *Economy and Society*, 24, 559 - 83.
- Dean, M. (1999). *Governmentality. Power and rule in modern society*. London: Sage.
- Easton, B. (2002). Taxing harm: Modernising alcohol excise duties. Wellington: Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London: Allen Lane.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. London: Allen Lane.
- Focault, M. (1989a). *Résumé des cours*. Paris: Juillard.
- Focault, M. (1989b). An ethics of pleasure. In S. Lotringer (Ed.), *Foucault live* (pp. 257 - 276). New York: Semiotext(e).
- Foucault, M. (1991). Governmentality. In G. Burchell, C, Gordon & P, Miller (Eds.), *The Foucault Effect*. Hempstead: University of Chicago.
- Focault, M. (1993). About the beginning of the hermeneutics of the self. *Political Theory*, 21, 198 - 227.

- Gordon, C. (1991). Governmental rationality. An introduction. In G. Burchell, C, Gordon & P, Miller (Eds.), *The Foucault Effect*. Hempstead: University of Chicago.
- Habgood, R., Casswell, S., Pledger, M., & Bhatta, K. (2001). *Drinking in New Zealand - National surveys comparison 1995 & 200*. Auckland: Alcohol & Public Health Research Unit.
- Hansen, A., & Sørensen, E. (2005). Polity as politics. Studying the shaping and effects of discursive polities. In D. Howarth & J. Torfing (Eds.), *Discourse Theory in European Politics. Identity, Policy and Governance*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Howarth, D., & Stravrakakis, Y. (2000). Introducing discourse theory and political analysis. In D. Howarth, A. Norval & Y. Stavrakakis (Eds.), *Discourse theory and political analysis. Identities, hegemonies and social change*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Hughes, D., & Griffiths, L. (1999). On penalties and the patients' charter: centralism v decentralised government in the NHS. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 21, 71 - 94.
- Johnson, T. (1993). Expertise and the State. In M. Gane & T. Johnson (Eds.), *Foucault's new domains*. London: Routledge.
- Jorgensen, M., & Philips, L. (2002). *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. London: Sage.
- Kelly, P. (2001). Youth at risk: processes of individualisation and responsibilisation in the risk society. *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 22, 23-33.
- Kendall, G., & Wickham, G. (2004). The Foucaultian framework. In C. Seale, G. Gobo, J. Gubrium & D. Silverman (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice*. London: Thousand Oaks.
- King, A. (2005, April 21). *Public Health Law Symposium*. Opening address presented at the New Zealand Public Health Law Symposium held at the University of Auckland.
- Kirby, S. (2006, March 30). *Changing the New Zealand drinking culture. Where to from here?* Closing address presented at the ALAC Partnerships Conference. Positive Partnerships - Shared Outcomes. Napier.
- Laclau, E. (1990). *New reflections on the revolution of our time*. London: Verso.

- Laclau, E. (1993). Discourse. In R. Goodin & P. Pettit (Eds.), *The Blackwell companion to contemporary political philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Laclau, E. (1994). *Emancipation(s)*. London: Verso.
- Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (1985). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. London: Verso.
- Larner, W. (1997). The legacy of the social: Market governance and the consumer. *Economy and Society*, 26, 373 - 99.
- Larner, W. (1998). Sociologies of neo-liberalism. Theorising the 'New Zealand Experiment.' *Sites*, 36, 5 - 21.
- Laclau, E. (1990). *New reflections on the revolution of our time*. London: Verso.
- Layder, D. (1994). *Understanding social theory*. London: Sage.
- Lupton, D. (1999a). *Risk*. New York: Routledge.
- Lupton, D. (1999b). *Risk and socio-cultural theory. New directions and perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- McBride, K. (2006). *WS 610: Theories and methodologies of early modern studies. Structuralism, post-structuralism, deconstruction (Foucault)*. Retrieved August 30, 2006, from
www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/mcbride/theory/emstruct.htm
- McGuire, W. (2005). Beyond EBM. New directions for evidence-based public health. *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, 48, 557 - 69.
- McNay, L. (1994). *Foucault. A critical introduction*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Mouffe, C. (1983). The return of the political. In R. Bernstein (Ed.), *Beyond objectivism and relativism. Science, hermeneutics and praxis*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Mouffe, C. (1996). *Deconstruction and pragmatism*. New York: Routledge.
- Norval, A. (2000). Trajectories of future research in discourse theory. In D. Howarth, A. Norval & Y. Stavrakakis (Eds.), *Discourse theory and political analysis. Identities, hegemonies and social change*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Olson, M. (1965). *The logic of collective action*. Cambridge: Harvard University.
- Petersen, A., & Lupton, D. (1996). *The new public health. Health and self in the age of risk*. London: Sage.
- Popay, J., & Williams, G. (1996). Public health research and lay knowledge. *Social Science and Medicine*, 42, 759 - 68.

- Prochaska, J., & DiClemente, C. (1982). Transtheoretical therapy toward a more integrative model of change. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice.*, 19(3), 276 - 87.
- Rorty, R. (1989). *Contingency, irony and solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rose, N. (1993). Government, authority and expertise in advanced liberalism. *Economy and Society*, 22, 283-300.
- Rose, N. (1996). Governing 'advanced' liberal democracies. In A. Barry, T. Osborne & N. Rose. (Eds.), *Foucault and political reason :Liberalism, neo-liberalism and rationalities of government*. London: UCL Press.
- Rose, N. (2001). Liberal Government - Old and New. In A. Barry, T. Osborne & N. Rose (Eds.), *Foucault and political reason. Liberalism, neo-liberalism and rationalities of government*. London: Routledge.
- Rose, N., & Miller, P. (1992). Political power beyond the state: Problematics of government. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 43, 173 - 205.
- San Martin, P. (2002). *Discussion Paper. The crisis of Francoism and the emergence of an Asturian nationalist ideology*. Aalborg: Aalborg University.
- Saussure, F. (1960). *Course in general linguistics*. London: Peter Owen.
- Skøg, O. (1991). Implications of the Distribution Theory for Drinking and Alcoholism. In D. Pittman & H. White (Eds.), *Society, Culture, and Drinking Patterns Reexamined* (pp. 576-97). New Brunswick: Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies.
- Smart, B. (2002). *Michel Foucault*. London: Routledge.
- Smith, A. (1998). *Laclau and Mouffe*. London: Routledge.
- State Services Commission. (2004). *Getting better at managing for shared outcomes*. Wellington: State Services Commission.
- Statistics New Zealand. (2005). *Alcohol and Tobacco Available for Consumption, Year Ended December 2004*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.
- Stavrakakis, Y. (2002). On the emergence of Green ideology": the dislocation factor in Green politics. In D. Howarth, A. Norval & Y. Stavrakakis (Eds.), *Discourse theory and political analysis. Identities, hegemonies and social change*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

- Torfing, J. (1999). *New Theories of Discourse. Laclau, Mouffe and Zizek*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Torfing, J. (2005). Discourse theory. Achievements, arguments and challenges. In D. Howarth & J. Torfing (Eds.), *Discourse theory in European politics. Identity, policy and governance*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Wild, C. (2002). Personal drinking and socio-cultural drinking norms: A representative population study. *Journal of studies on alcohol*, 63, 469-75.
- Woodiwiss, A. (2003). *Making human rights work globally*. London: Glasshouse.
- Žižek, S. (1989). *The sublime object of ideology*. London: Verso.

Appendix A: Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) application



Massey University
Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

Application No: _____ / _____
This number is assigned when your application is accepted.
Quote on all documentation to participants and the Committee.

Human Ethics Application

FOR APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RESEARCH/TEACHING/EVALUATION INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

(All applications are to be typed and presented using language that is free from jargon and comprehensible to lay people)

SECTION A

1. Project Title Building synergies and managing tension. A programme to reduce alcohol-related harm.
Projected start date 08/05/2006
for data collection
Projected end date 30/05/2006
In no case will approval be given if recruitment and/or data collection has already begun.
2. Applicant Details (Select the appropriate box and complete details)

ACADEMIC STAFF APPLICATION (excluding staff who are also students)

Full Name of Staff Applicant/s _____
School/Department/Institute _____
Campus (mark one only) Albany Palmerston North Wellington
Telephone _____ Email Address _____

STUDENT APPLICATION

Full Name of Student Applicant Shannon Te Ahu Hanrahan
Employer (if applicable) Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC)
Telephone 021 683 252 Email Address hanrahan@globe.net.nz
Postal Address 27 O'Neill St, Ponsonby, Auckland
Full Name of Supervisor(s) Warwick John Tie
School/Department/Institute School of Social and Cultural Studies – Massey University Albany
Campus (mark one only) Albany Palmerston North Wellington
Telephone 09 414 0800 Email Address W.J.Tie@massey.ac.nz

GENERAL STAFF APPLICATION

Full Name of Applicant _____
Section _____
Campus (mark one only) Albany Palmerston North Wellington
Telephone _____ Email Address _____
Full Name of Line Manager _____
Section _____
Telephone _____ Email Address _____

3. Type of Project (mark one only)

Staff Research/Evaluation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Research:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If other, please specify:
Academic Staff		Qualification		
General Staff		Points Value of Research		

4. Summary of Project

Please outline in no more than 200 words in lay language why you have chosen this project, what you intend to do and the methods you will use.

(Note: all the information provided in the application is potentially available if a request is made under the Official Information Act. In the event that a request is made, the University, in the first instance, would endeavour to satisfy that request by providing this summary. Please ensure that the language used is comprehensible to all)

This project examines the 'culture change' programme of the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC's), through which attempts are being made to reduce the high per-occasion consumption of alcohol of New Zealand's drinking population. More specifically, the project examines the manner in which ALAC constructs its relations with key stakeholders in that programme. It hypothesizes that a primary aspect of this is a strategy which Michel Foucault's analysis of power terms 'responsibilization.' Of interest to the researcher are those resistances and points of synergy that emerge in relation to ALAC's culture change programme.

The sole method that will be used to investigate ALAC's strategies is discourse analysis. Two forms of discourse will be examined: key documents relating to ALAC's culture-change programme and transcripts of interviews conducted with key members of both ALAC and key stakeholders in the culture-change programme. The goal of analysis will be to identify the types of language involved in the responsibilisation of individuals and organizations and the resistances and synergies that external organizations might employ in relation to this attempt to render them responsible.

I have chosen this topic as I have an interest in the area as it pertains to my work. I see the value of this research topic in being able to enhance my understanding and appreciation of how an organization working collaboratively seeks to improve the health of the New Zealand population.

5. List the Attachments to your Application, e.g. Completed "Screening Questionnaire to Determine the Approval Procedure" (compulsory), Information Sheet/s (indicate how many), Translated copies of Information Sheet/s, Consent Form/s (indicate of how many), Translated copies of Consent Form/s, Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement, Confidentiality Agreement (for persons other than the researcher / participants who have access to project data), Authority for Release of Tape Transcripts, Advertisement, Health Checklist, Questionnaire, Interview Schedule, Evidence of Consultation, Letter requesting access to an institution, Letter requesting approval for use of database, Other (please specify).

- 1 x Screening questionnaire to determine the approval procedure
- 12 x MUHEC application forms
- 12 x Information sheets (Appendix A)
- 12 x Consent forms (Appendix B)
- 12 x Transcriber confidentiality agreement (Appendix C)
- 12 x Authority for release of transcript agreement (Appendix D)
- 12 x Interview guide (Appendix E)
- 12 x Participant follow-up letter (Appendix F)

Applications that are incomplete or lacking the appropriate signatures will not be processed. This will mean delays for the project.

Please refer to the Human Ethics website (<http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz>) for details of where to submit your application and the number of copies required.

SECTION B: PROJECT INFORMATION

General

6 I/we wish the protocol to be heard in a closed meeting (Part II). Yes No

(If yes, state the reason in a covering letter)

7 Does this project have any links to other approved Massey University Human Ethics Committee application/s? Yes No

If yes, list HEC protocol number/s and relationship/s.

8 Is approval from other Ethics Committees being sought for the project? Yes No

If yes, list the other Ethics Committees.

9 For staff research, is the applicant the only researcher? Yes No

If no, list the names and addresses of all members of the research team.

Project Details

10 State concisely the aims of the project.

- Identify the discourses, rationalities and techniques by which ALAC seeks to inculcate responsibility within individuals and organizations associated with alcohol consumption
- Identify the resistances that emerge in response to ALAC's attempts to render individuals and organizations 'responsible' for the risks associated with alcohol consumption.
- Identify and evaluate the ways in which ALAC responds to and manages those resistances.
- Recommend possible alternative responses that ALAC might make.

11 Give a brief background to the project to place it in perspective and to allow the project's significance to be assessed. (No more than 200 words in lay language)
The Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC's) culture change programme is designed to reduce the high per-occasion consumption of alcohol for the drinking population of New Zealand. The ALAC culture change programme seeks to embody a sense of responsibility amongst the general drinking population of New Zealand to change their patterns of consumption. There are a range of public and private organizations who are each deemed to 'have a role to play' in this programme. These include industry, public health, monitoring and enforcement agencies. In its widest sense, ALAC is seeking to change New Zealand's drinking culture such that drinking to the point of intoxication is no longer socially and individually acceptable, and it seeks to do this by making individuals and organizations responsible for their actions.

The outcome sought by ALAC can be summed up through its mission statement of encouraging "more moderation, less harm." Although ALAC is the government's lead agency in addressing high-per occasion consumption, it can only reduce this harm by working in partnership with external agencies. This project aims to identify and examine the resistances and synergies that emerge in response to this attempt at 'responsibilisation', with a view to providing recommendations for further discussion in relation to ALAC's future work priorities.

12 Outline the research procedures to be used, including approach/procedures for collecting data. Use a flow chart if necessary.

Obtain ethics approval -> researcher seeks expression of interest by potential participants -> researcher sends out follow-up letter to potential participant -> researcher calls to confirm interest in participation and organises interview date, time, location -> semi-structured interview undertaken -> interviews transcribed -> follow-up phone call to participant notifying them that the transcription will be sent along with a transcription release form. -> further follow-up phone call to see if there are any concerns over transcription. Request for transcription and release form to be returned -> transcription returned (with any amendments) along with signed transcription release form -> Data analysis process commences.

- 13 **Where will the project be conducted? Include information about the physical location/setting.**
The field-research component of the project will be undertaken primarily in Wellington where the majority of the participants are based.
- 14 **If the study is based overseas, specify which countries are involved. Outline how local requirements (if any) have been complied with.**
N/A
- 15 **Describe the experience of the researcher and/or supervisor to undertake this type of project?**
The researcher, Shannon Hanrahan, has been involved as a field researcher undertaking a number of focus group and face-face interviews for Labour Market Dynamics – a Massey University research programme that seeks to contribute to a more detailed understanding of the various dynamics and mechanisms in labour markets in New Zealand, and particularly their impact on households and communities.

The Supervisor, Dr Warwick Tie, lectures in the Sociology programme and was Director for the Massey University Centre for Justice and Peace Development. His primary research interest is the politics of conflict resolution. Warwick has a keen interest in Foucauldian theory and its application to practice-base settings.
- 16 **Describe the peer review process used in assessing the ethical issues present in this project.**
Dr Mike MacAvoy (ALAC Chief Executive) and Dr Sara Bennett (ALAC Group Manager Populations Strategies) have been consulted on ethical issues relating to ALAC's association with this project. Both Dr MacAvoy and Dr Bennett have extensive research experience.

Both concur that the Human Ethics Application process is an appropriate one for attending to the issues of informed consent, confidentiality of information and the rights of participants.

Participants

17 Describe the intended participants.

Professor Andrew Hornblow – Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC) Chair
Dr Mike MacAvoy – Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC) Chief Executive
Victoria Owen – Local Government New Zealand Policy Advisor
Mike Webb – New Zealand Police Strategic Advisor Drugs & Alcohol
Dr Ashley Bloomfield - Ministry of Health Chief Advisory Non-communicable disease
Nicki Stewart – Beer, Wines and Spirits Council Chief Executive
Bruce Robertson – Hospitality Association of New Zealand Chief Executive

18 How many participants will be involved?

7

What is the reason for selecting this number?

(Where relevant, attach a copy of the Statistical Justification to the application form)

As this project involves qualitative methods, the number of participants was not a primary consideration. Rather the goal has been to identify members of ALAC and external stakeholders in the culture-change programme.

19 Describe how potential participants will be identified and recruited?

Please see the answer provided in question 18.

Participants were identified on the basis that these organisations publicly support the ALAC culture change programme.

As the researcher works with many of the proposed participants, initial discussions have already taken place with the goal of gauging the potential levels of interest each might have in participating in the research project. Within these initial discussions, it was acknowledged that this project was still to undergo the Human Ethics Research Application process at Massey University.

20 Does the project involve recruitment through advertising?

Yes No

(If yes, attach a copy of the advertisement to the application form)

21 Does the project require permission of an organisation (e.g. an educational institution, an academic unit of Massey University or a business) to access participants or information?

Yes No

If yes, list the organisation(s).

(Attach a copy of the request letter(s), e.g. letter to Board of Trustees, PVC, HoD/I/S, CEO etc to the application form. Include this in your list of attachments (Q5). Note that some educational institutions may require the researcher to submit a Police Security Clearance)

22 Who will make the initial approach to potential participants?

The researcher will make this approach.

23 Describe criteria (if used) to select participants from the pool of potential participants.

Please see the answer provided in question 18.

Participants must come from an organisation that supports the ALAC culture change programme. By support, this means that the organisation must be one that is identified through the ALAC 'champions and associates' marketing programme. Information on those organisations associated with this programme is publicly available through the ALAC National Office.

Secondly, potential participants have been identified on the basis of their organisational knowledge.

24 How much time will participants have to give to the project?

A maximum of 2.5 hours. This will involve an interview of no more than 1 hour, plus a further 1.5 hours at the discretion of the participant. This 1.5 hours would enable participant to read through the transcribed interview and make any amendments should they wish.

Data Collection

25 Does the project include the use of participant questionnaire/s? Yes No

(If yes, attach a copy of the Questionnaire/s to the application form and include this in your list of attachments (Q5))

If yes: i) indicate whether the participants will be anonymous, (i.e. their identity unknown to the researcher). Yes No

ii) describe how the questionnaire will be distributed and collected.

(If distributing electronically through Massey IT, attach a copy of the request letter to the Director, Information Technology Services to the application form. Include this in your list of attachments (Q5))

26 Does the project involve observation of participants? If yes, please describe. Yes No

27 Does the project include the use of focus group/s? Yes No

(If yes, attach a copy of the Confidentiality Agreement for the focus group to the application form)

28 Does the project include the use of participant interview/s? Yes No

(If yes attach a copy of the Interview Questions/Schedule to the application form)

If yes, describe the location of the interview and time length, including whether it will be in work time.
(If the latter, ensure the researcher asks permission for this from the employer).

The location of the interviews will be at a time, date and place that is convenient to the participant. This is more than likely to be in Wellington where the majority of the participants are located. The interview should take no more than 1 hour.

ALAC has agreed that these interviews can be conducted during the researcher's normal work time for that agency.

29 Does the project involve audiotaping? Yes No

30 Does the project involve videotaping? Yes No

(If agreement for taping is optional for participation, ensure there is explicit consent on the Consent Form)

31 If taping is used, will the tape be transcribed? Yes No

If yes, state who will do the transcribing.

(If not the researcher, a Transcriber's Confidentiality Agreement is required – attach a copy to the application form. Normally, transcripts of interviews should be provided to participants for editing, therefore an Authority For the Release of Tape Transcripts is required – attach a copy to the application form. However, if the researcher considers that the right of the participant to edit is inappropriate, a justification should be provided below)

32 Does the project require permission to access databases? Yes No

(If yes, attach a copy of the request letter/s to the application form. Include this in your list of attachments (Q5))

(Note: If you wish to access the Massey University student database, written permission from Director, National Student Relations should be attached).

33 Who will carry out the data collection?

The researcher will carry out the data collection.

SECTION C: BENEFITS / RISK OF HARM (Refer Code Section 3, Para 10)

34 What are the possible benefits (if any) of the project to individual participants, groups, communities and institutions?

ALAC's culture change programme is designed to address harms that are associated with high per-occasion consumption in New Zealand. One of the aims of this project is to contribute to a discussion on how ALAC can best achieve this outcome in conjunction/partnership with external agencies. The potential benefit of this research is that it will enhance this programme of work such that opportunities for harm are reduced for the general New Zealand population.

Participants and institutions will benefit by contributing to research that is likely to be incorporated within discussions on the development of ALAC's 2007 – 2012 Strategic Plan. The likely outcome of this discussion would be recommendations for how ALAC can improve its relationship with external stakeholders.

35 What discomfort (physical, psychological, social), incapacity or other risk of harm are individual participants likely to experience as a result of participation?

There is a disparity in power between the researcher who is also an employee of ALAC and members of the external organisations. Any harms that might ensue are not likely to occur at an individual level but at the level of inter-organisational relations. This might occur, for example, where an external organisation is critical of the ALAC programme and this information is construed from within ALAC as being non-conducive to positive inter-organisational relations.

36 Describe the strategies you will use to deal with any of the situations identified in Q35.

The best strategies to reduce the potential incidences of any harm occurring are those that enhance transparency. Participants will be notified that they are entitled to:

- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the study before 30 June 2006;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time;
- Provide information on the understanding that their name will not be used unless the participant specifically identifies that they wish their name to be used.

In order to ensure that participants are comfortable with the information provided during the interview, a full transcript of the interview will be provided. Participants will then have an opportunity to verify and remove any comments that they might not wish to be used in the final research report.

37 What is the risk of harm (if any) of the project to the researcher?

As per question 36, the same harm in relation to the working relationship of the researcher with external organisations.

The researcher is also at risk of harm in terms of reporting on the practices of the organisation he works for.

38 Describe the strategies you will use to deal with any of the situations identified in Q37.

Please see the answer provided in question 36.

The researcher has sought provisional approval from both the ALAC Chief Executive and Chair of the ALAC Council. A meeting was held with the ALAC Chief Executive and the ALAC Deputy Chief Executive to discuss the research proposal. The ALAC Chief Executive then discussed the proposal with the Chair of the ALAC Council. Both the ALAC Chief Executive and Chair of the ALAC Council have academic backgrounds and both agreed to support the project in principle and on the basis that it was considered before the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. Both could not foresee any likely conflicts of interest and welcomed the opportunity to support a research opportunity that might contribute and inform future ALAC work priorities. In short, the ALAC Chief Executive and Chair of the ALAC Council support this research proposal on the basis that the ethics application is approved.

The researcher will have at least informal monthly meetings with Dr Sara Bennett (direct line manager) to discuss the progress of the research. In the unlikely event that there is concern over the research and in order to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring to the researcher, the Supervisor – Dr Warwick Tie would be involved in a meeting with the researcher and appropriate ALAC staff member. Should a satisfactory outcome not be reached, a mutually agreeable third party would then be involved to assist with mediating a positive outcome for both parties.

39 What discomfort (physical, psychological, social) incapacity or other risk of harm are groups/communities and institutions likely to experience as a result of this research?

Please see the answer provided in question 36.

40 Describe the strategies you will use to deal with any of the situations identified in Q39.

Please see the answer provided in question 36.

41 Is ethnicity data being collected as part of the project?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes: i) will the data be used as a basis for analysis?

ii) justify this use in terms of the number of participants.

(Note that harm can be done through an analysis based on insufficient numbers)

If no: i) justify this approach, given that in some research an analysis based on ethnicity may yield results of value to Maori and to other groups.

The research topic and scope as it currently stands does not have an ethnicity component as neither ALAC nor the participant organisations are not constituted as ethnic entities

42 If participants are children/students in a pre-school/school/tertiary setting, describe the arrangements you will make for children/students who are present but not taking part in the research.

(Note that no child/student should be disadvantaged through the research)

N/A

SECTION D: INFORMED & VOLUNTARY CONSENT (Refer Code Section 3, Para 11)

43 By whom and how, will information about the research be given to potential participants?

The information on the research will be provided to participants through a letter. This information will be provided by the researcher.

44 Will consent to participate be given in writing?

Yes No

(Attach copies of Consent Form/s to the application form)

If no, justify the use of oral consent.

45 Will participants include persons under the age of 16? Yes No

If yes: i) indicate the age group and competency for giving consent.

ii) indicate if the researcher will be obtaining the consent of Yes No parent(s)/caregiver(s).

(Note that parental/caregiver consent for school-based research may be required by the school even when children are competent. Ensure Information Sheets and Consent Forms are in a style and language appropriate for the age group)

46 Will participants include persons whose capacity to give informed consent may be compromised? Yes No

If yes, describe the consent process you will use.

47 Will the participants be proficient in English? Yes No

If no, all documentation for participants (Information Sheets/Consent Forms/Questionnaire etc) must be translated into the participants' first-language

(Attach copies of the translated Information Sheet/Consent Form etc to the application form)

SECTION E: PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES (Refer Code Section 3, Para 12)

48 Will any information be obtained from any source other than the participant? Yes No

If yes, describe how and from whom.

49 Will any information that identifies participants be given to any person outside the research team? Yes No

If yes, indicate why and how.

50 Will the participants be anonymous (i.e. their identity unknown to the researcher?) Yes No

If no, explain how confidentiality of the participants' identities will be maintained in the treatment and use of the data.

Individuals will not be identified in the thesis. Where direct quotations are used, this information will be screened to omit any potential information that might identify the participating individual.

51 Will an institution (e.g. school) to which participants belong be named Yes No or be able to be identified?

If yes, explain how you have made the institution aware of this?

- 52 **Outline how and where:**
i) **the data will be stored, and**
(Pay particular attention to identifiable data, e.g. tapes, videos and images)
The data will be stored at the researcher's residence in a locked cabinet
ii) **Consent Forms will be stored.**
The Consent Forms will be stored at the Auckland ALAC Office under locked cabinet.
(Note that Consent Forms should be stored separately from data)
-
- 53 i) **Who will have access to the data/Consent Forms?**
Only the researcher will have access to the data and Consent Forms.
ii) **How will the data/Consent Forms be protected from unauthorised access?**
Both the data and Consent Forms will be contained within secure locked cabinets. Both the Researcher's residence and the Auckland ALAC office are secured through alarms and security.
-
- 54 **Describe arrangements you have made for the disposal of the data/Consent Forms when the five-year storage period (ten years for health-related research) is up?**
(For student research the Massey University HOD Institute/School/Section / Supervisor / or nominee should be responsible for the eventual disposal of data)
(Note that although destruction is the most common form of disposal, at times, transfer of data to an official archive may be appropriate).
The data and Consent Forms will be kept in the outlined secure locations until the publication of thesis. Both the data and the Consent Forms will then be handed to the Supervisor to store for five years after which time they will then be destroyed.

SECTION F: DECEPTION (Refer Code Section 3, Para 13)

- 55 Is deception involved at any stage of the project? Yes No
If yes, justify its use and describe the debriefing procedures.

SECTION G: CONFLICT OF ROLE/INTEREST (Refer Code Section 3, Para 14)

- 56 Is the project to be funded in any way from sources external to Massey Yes No

If yes: i) state the source.

ii) does the source of the funding present any conflict of interest with regard to the research topic?

-
- 57 Does the researcher/s have a financial interest in the outcome of the project? Yes No

If yes, explain how the conflict of interest situation will be dealt with.

-
- 58 Is there any professional or other relationship between the researcher and the participants? (e.g. employer/employee, lecturer/student, practitioner/patient, researcher/family member) Yes No

If yes: i) describe the relationship, and;

The researcher is an employee of ALAC. Both the ALAC Chief Executive and the Chair of the ALAC Council have been identified as participants.

The researcher also has an ongoing working relationship with the other external participants.

ii) indicate how the resulting conflict of role will be dealt with.

A meeting was held with the ALAC Chief Executive and the ALAC Deputy Chief Executive to discuss the research proposal. The ALAC Chief Executive then discussed the proposal with the Chair of the ALAC Council. Both the ALAC Chief Executive and Chair of the ALAC Council have academic backgrounds and both agreed to support the project in principle that it was considered before the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. Both could not foresee any likely conflicts of interest and welcomed the opportunity to support a research opportunity that might contribute and inform future ALAC work priorities. In short, the ALAC Chief Executive and Chair of the ALAC Council support this research proposal on the basis that the ethics application is approved. It was noted that the researcher would be using documents that are publicly available with no request for access to any confidential or sensitive information.

The researcher will have at least monthly informal progress meetings with Dr Sara Bennett (direct line manager). In acknowledging the potential value of this research in informing discussions on possible future ALAC work priorities (this is certainly one of the researcher's aims), the researcher has agreed to present a separate report to ALAC on recommendations for future ALAC work priorities.

Although highly unlikely at this stage, if any currently unforeseeable conflict were to arise between the researcher and ALAC, a discussion would first take place between the researcher and the appropriate ALAC staff member. If the issue was unable to be resolved, the Supervisor – Warwick Tie would then be involved in a meeting with the researcher and appropriate ALAC staff member. Should a satisfactory outcome not be reached, a mutually agreeable third party would then be involved to assist with mediating a positive outcome for both parties.

The potential harms identified and resultant strategies to minimise any of these harms in relation to external participants is provided in the answer to question 36.

SECTION H: COMPENSATION TO PARTICIPANTS (Refer Code Section 4, Para 23)

59 Will any payments or other compensation be given to participants? Yes No

If yes, describe what, how and why.

(Note that compensation (if provided) should be given to all participants and not constitute an inducement. Details of any compensation provided must be included in the Information Sheet)

SECTION I: TREATY OF WAITANGI (Refer Code Section 2)60 Are Maori the primary focus of the project? Yes No

If yes: Answer Q61 – 64

If no, outline:i) what Maori involvement there may be, and

ii) how this will be managed.

61 Is the researcher competent in te reo Maori and tikanga Maori? Yes No

If no, outline the processes in place for the provision of cultural advice.

N/A

62 Identify the group/s with whom consultation has taken place or is planned and describe the consultation process.

(Where consultation has already taken place, attach a copy of the supporting documentation to the application form, e.g. a letter from an iwi authority)

N/A

63 Describe any ongoing involvement of the group/s consulted in the project.

N/A

64 Describe how information resulting from the project will be shared with the group/s consulted?

N/A

SECTION J: CULTURAL ISSUES (Refer Code Section 3, Para 15)65 Other than those issues covered in Section I, are there any aspects of the project that might raise specific cultural issues? Yes No

If yes, explain. Otherwise, proceed to Section K.

66 What ethnic or social group/s (other than Maori) does the project involve?

N/A

67 Does the researcher speak the language of the target population? Yes No

If no, specify how communication with participants will be managed.

N/A

68 Describe the cultural competence of the researcher for carrying out the project.

(Note that where the researcher is not a member of the cultural group being researched, a cultural advisor may be necessary)

N/A

69 Identify the group/s with whom consultation has taken place or is planned.

Revised 27/01/06 - HEC Application

(Where consultation has already taken place, attach a copy of the supporting documentation to the application form)

N/A

-
- 70 **Describe any ongoing involvement of the group/s consulted in the project.**
N/A
-
- 71 **Describe how information resulting from the project will be shared with the group/s consulted.**
N/A
-
- 72 **If the research is to be conducted overseas, describe the arrangements you will make for local participants to express concerns regarding the research.**
N/A
-

SECTION K: SHARING RESEARCH FINDINGS (Refer Code Section 4, Para 26)

- 73 **Describe how information resulting from the project will be shared with participants.**

(Note that receipt of a summary is one of the participant rights)

All participants will receive a letter at the completion of the thesis. This letter will include a summary of the research and will provide participants with information as to where they can access a full copy of the research.

It will be noted in this letter that the ALAC central library will be provided with a copy of the thesis and participants will be invited to access a copy of the research through the ALAC library at no cost.

SECTION L: INVASIVE PROCEDURES/PHYSIOLOGICAL TESTS (Refer Code Section 4, Para 21)

- 74 Does the project involve the collection of tissues, blood, other body fluids or physiological tests? Yes No

(If yes, complete Section L, otherwise proceed to Section M)

-
- 75 **Describe the material to be taken and the method used to obtain it. Include information about the training of those taking the samples and the safety of all persons involved. If blood is taken, specify the volume and number of collections.**

N/A

-
- 76 **Will the material be stored?** Yes No
If yes, describe how, where and for how long.
N/A
-

- 77 **Describe how the material will be disposed of (either after the research is completed or at the end of the storage period).**

(Note that the wishes of relevant cultural groups must be taken into account)

N/A

78 Will material collected for another purpose (e.g. diagnostic use) be used? Yes No

If yes, did the donors give permission for use of their samples in this project? *(Attach evidence of this to the application form)* Yes No

If no, describe how consent will be obtained. Where the samples have been anonymised and consent cannot be obtained, provide justification for the use of these samples.

79 Will any samples be imported into New Zealand? Yes No

If yes, provide evidence of permission of the donors for their material to be used in this research.

80 Will any samples go out of New Zealand? Yes No

If yes, state where.

(Note this information must be included in the Information Sheet)

81 Describe any physiological tests/procedures that will be used.

82 Will participants be given a health-screening test prior to participation? Yes No
(If yes, attach a copy of the health checklist)

Reminder: Attach the completed Screening Questionnaire and other attachments listed in Q5

SECTION M: DECLARATION (*Complete appropriate box*)

ACADEMIC STAFF RESEARCH

Declaration for Academic Staff Applicant

I have read the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants. I understand my obligations and the rights of the participants. I agree to undertake the research as set out in the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants. My Head of Department/School/Institute knows that I am undertaking this research. The information contained in this application is to the very best of my knowledge accurate and not misleading.

Staff Applicant's Signature _____ Date: _____

STUDENT RESEARCH

Declaration for Student Applicant

I have read the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants and discussed the ethical analysis with my Supervisor. I understand my obligations and the rights of the participants. I agree to undertake the research as set out in the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants. The information contained in this application is to the very best of my knowledge accurate and not misleading.

Student Applicant's Signature _____ Date: _____

Declaration for Supervisor

I have assisted the student in the ethical analysis of this project. As supervisor of this research I will ensure that the research is carried out according to the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants.

Supervisor's Signature _____ Date: _____

Print Name _____

GENERAL STAFF RESEARCH/EVALUATIONS

Declaration for General Staff Applicant

I have read the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants and discussed the ethical analysis with my Line Manager. I understand my obligations and the rights of the participants. I agree to undertake the research as set out in the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants. The information contained in this application is to the very best of my knowledge accurate and not misleading.

General Staff Applicant's Signature _____ Date: _____

Declaration for Line Manager

I declare that to the best of my knowledge, this application complies with the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants and that I have approved its content and agreed that it can be submitted.

Line Manager's Signature _____ Date: _____

Print Name _____

TEACHING PROGRAMME

Declaration for Paper Controller

I have read the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants. I understand my obligations and the rights of the participants. I agree to undertake the teaching programme as set out in the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants. My Head of Department/School/Institute knows that I am undertaking this teaching programme. The information contained in this application is to the very best of my knowledge accurate and not misleading.

Paper Controller's Signature _____ Date: _____

Declaration for Head of Department/School/Institute

I declare that to the best of my knowledge, this application complies with the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations involving Human Participants and that I have approved its content and agreed that it can be submitted.

Head of Dept/School/Inst Signature _____ Date: _____

Print Name _____

Revised 27/01/06 - HEC Application

Appendix B: Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) approval



Massey University
AUCKLAND

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
(Auckland & International)
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore MSC
Auckland
New Zealand
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Auckland & International)
T: 64 9 414 0800 extn 9517
Regional Registrar (Auckland)
T: 64 9 414 0800 extn 9516
F: 64 9 414 0814
www.massey.ac.nz

3 May 2006

Shannon Hanrahan
c/- Dr W Tie
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Massey University
Albany

Dear Shannon

HUMAN ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION – MUAHEC 06/019
“Building synergies and managing tension. A programme to reduce alcohol-related harm”

Thank you for your application. It has been fully considered and approved by the Massey University, Albany Campus, Human Ethics Committee.

Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, a reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kerry Chamberlain".

Professor Kerry Chamberlain
Chairperson,
Human Ethics Committee
Albany Campus

cc: Dr W Tie
College of Humanities and Social Sciences



Appendix C: Introductory email to participants

Page 1 of 1

Shannon Hanrahan

Sent: Thursday, 4 May 2006 7:13 a.m.

Subject: Thesis Research - Building synergies and managing tension. A programme to reduce alcohol-related harm.

Hi [insert name]

Thank you very much for agreeing to an interview in relation to my research.

The Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC's) culture change programme is designed to reduce the high per-occasion consumption of alcohol for the drinking population of New Zealand. The ALAC culture change programme seeks to embody a sense of responsibility amongst the general drinking population of New Zealand to change their patterns of consumption. There are a range of public and private organizations who are each deemed to 'have a role to play' in this programme. These include industry, public health, monitoring and enforcement agencies. In its widest sense, ALAC is seeking to change New Zealand's drinking culture such that drinking to the point of intoxication is no longer socially and individually acceptable, and it seeks to do this partly by making individuals and organizations responsible for their actions. The outcome sought by ALAC can be summed up through its mission statement of encouraging "more moderation, less harm." Although ALAC is the government's lead agency in addressing high-per occasion consumption, it can only reduce this harm by working in partnership with external agencies. This project aims to identify and examine the resistances and synergies that emerge in response to this attempt at 'responsibilisation', with a view to providing recommendations for further discussion in relation to ALAC's future work priorities.

The objectives of the research:

- Identify the discourses, rationalities and techniques by which ALAC seeks to inculcate responsibility within individuals and organizations associated with alcohol consumption
- Identify the resistances that emerge in response to ALAC's attempts to render individuals and organizations 'responsible' for the risks associated with alcohol consumption.
- Identify and discuss the ways in which ALAC responds to and manages those resistances.
- Recommend possible alternative responses that ALAC might make.

I will call over the next few days to ensure that you received this email, and to also organize an interview venue, location and time.

Should you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me on 021 683 252.

Kind regards,

Shannon

Appendix D: Interview instrument



Massey University
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore Mail Centre
Auckland
New Zealand
T 64 9 414 0800
F 64 9 441 8162
www.massey.ac.nz

BUILDING SYNERGIES AND MANAGING TENSION. A PROGRAMME TO REDUCE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Please explain your organisation's relationship with the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC).
2. The aim of ALAC's work can best be expressed in the statement, *more moderation less harm*.

What do you understand this statement to mean?

3. The following statement is taken from the ALAC 2002 – 2007 Strategic Plan:

ALAC will work with other agencies to strengthen the legislative, regulatory and enforcement framework governing the supply and provision of alcohol; and support communities to reduce harm from the irresponsible or illegal supply and provision of alcohol.

This will be achieved by building relationships with and between a range of regulatory agencies and related sectors to ensure that the current legislation governing the supply of alcohol is implemented as effectively as possible. ALAC will also work with policy makers to review and where necessary improve relevant legislation.

What do you understand this statement to mean?

4. The following statement is taken from the ALAC 2002 – 2007 Strategic Plan:

ALAC will research, develop and implement an integrated marketing strategy to achieve behavioural and environmental change in the areas of alcohol supply and consumption.

How does your organisation respond to this?

This will be achieved by researching, developing and implementing campaigns which target both the drinking and provider.

What do you understand this statement to mean?

5. Thinking of the field of alcohol-related harm and putting the culture change programme aside, how does an organisation go about influencing or changing the behaviour of both individuals and populations?



6. What strategies should be used?

7. How do you mobilize other agencies in support of a 'shared outcome'?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix E: Information sheet



Massey University

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore Mail Centre
Auckland
New Zealand
T 64 9 414 0800
F 64 9 441 8162
www.massey.ac.nz

BUILDING SYNERGIES AND MANAGING TENSION. A PROGRAMME TO REDUCE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

INFORMATION SHEET

Hi, my name is Shannon Hanrahan. I am a post-graduate student at Massey University and I am currently undertaking research for a Masters Thesis in Sociology. As part of the research, I am undertaking an organisational case-study of the Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC) (also my employer). As you will be aware, ALAC has developed a programme designed to reduce the harms associated with high-per occasion consumption. This programme is widely known as the "culture change" programme. In particular, I am interested in interviewing stakeholders who work with and support ALAC in this programme to reduce alcohol-related harm. The purpose of this research is to identify the ways in which ALAC involves individuals and external organisations in the reduction of alcohol-related harm and those individuals' and organisations' responses.

I am inviting you as a representative of *(insert name of organisation)* to participate in a short face-face interview. This interview will take no more than one hour and will be undertaken at a location that is convenient to you. In the interests of accuracy, I would prefer that the interview be recorded. You may ask for the recording device to be turned off at any time during the interview.

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;
- Withdraw from the study before 30 June 2006;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you specifically identify that you wish your name to be used;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.



In order to ensure that you are satisfied with the information provided during the interview, I will also supply you with a full transcript of the interview. You will then have an opportunity to verify and remove any comments that you might not wish to be used in the final research report.

At the completion and publication of the thesis, you will be provided with a summary of research findings. You will also have an opportunity to access the thesis through the ALAC National Office in Wellington.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application ___/___ (*insert application number*). If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Kerry Chamberlain, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x9078, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

My thesis supervisor should you wish to contact him is:

Dr Warwick Tie
School of Social and Cultural Studies
Massey University – Albany
Ph: (09) 414 0800
Email: W.J.Tie@massey.ac.nz

Thank you very much for your time and assistance. Should you have any other questions pertaining to this research, please do not hesitate to contact me at work on (09) 916 0332.

Appendix F: Interview consent form



Massey University
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore Mail Centre
Auckland
New Zealand
T 64 9 414 0800
F 64 9 441 8162
www.massey.ac.nz

BUILDING SYNERGIES AND MANAGING TENSION. A PROGRAMME TO REDUCE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the 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 agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped. (*Please cross out that statement which does not apply*).

I wish/do not wish to have my tapes returned to me. (*Please cross out that statement which does not apply*).

I wish/do not wish to have a copy of the research findings sent to me. (*Please cross out that statement which does not apply*).

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name - printed _____



Appendix G: Consent form for the release of recorded transcript



Massey University
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL STUDIES
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore Mail Centre
Auckland
New Zealand
T 64 9 414 0800
F 64 9 441 8162
www.massey.ac.nz

BUILDING SYNERGIES AND MANAGING TENSION. A PROGRAMME TO REDUCE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

CONSENT FORM FOR THE RELEASE OF RECORDED TRANSCRIPT

This form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview/s conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used by the researcher, Shannon Hanrahan in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name - printed _____

