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

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2015**

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

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Arts
In
Psychology
At Massey University, Wellington, NZ

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2015

Abstract

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

Acknowledgements

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Chapter One: Introduction

“It’s not the drinking, it’s how we’re drinking” (NZ Government advertisement, 2008)

Concern about alcohol abuse in Aotearoa/ New Zealand (NZ) reaches back to the early 1800s, when European whalers introduced it to the indigenous Māori population (Law Commission, 2009). Where such interactions took place, a culture of heavy drinking, violence, and vice developed, facilitated by the fledgling colony’s geographic isolation which, for a time, put it out of reach even from the long arm of the British law. In the Bay of Islands, alcohol and a state of lawlessness helped grow Kororareka’s (Russell’s) ignominious reputation as the “hellhole of the Pacific” (M. King, 2003). Charles Darwin commented upon visiting Kororareka, “There are many spirit shops and the whole population is addicted to drunkenness and all kinds of vice” (Darwin, 2001, p. 384).

Approximately two hundred years on, a colourful report in the *Waikato Times* (2014), echoed Charles Darwin’s sentiment in describing scenes *Revelers out of Control in Central City* on a weekend night in Hamilton, NZ:

‘There are hundreds of males high on liquor and testosterone and females whose busts and thighs verge on explicit at every bounce [...] this girl, in a leopard-skin mini-skirt, is hunched up on the curb vomiting into the gutter. Vomit has splashed onto the footpath and soiled her five-inch heel [...] and a man in his forties, a builder that you’d expect to be a good citizen, king hits this guy out of the blue (Bowen, 2014).

As today’s scenes of drunken revelers spilling out of nightclubs onto the streets of Hamilton, or any other urban NZ locale graphically illustrate, heavy drinking is still very much a part of NZ’s culture, inspiring much reporting on the issue and generating genuine concern about what is to be done. As seen above, this concern no longer centres exclusively on men’s drinking. Gendered discourses permeate discussions about drinking; reflected above in the differential concern with a woman’s attire that ‘verges on explicit’ and a man’s violent behaviour at the mercy of testosterone and alcohol.

As the extract above also hints, the traditional and exclusive association between men and alcohol that existed in the drinking culture of pioneering Pakeha men (Phillips, 1987) has given way to increased consumption by women (McPherson, Casswell, & Pledger, 2004), forcing renegotiations of gender within drinking contexts (Willott & Lyons, 2012). Yet although women are ‘catching up’ worldwide, it is still men who engage in the heaviest alcohol consumption (Rahav, Wilsnack, Bloomfield, Gmel, & Kuntsche, 2006; White et al., 2011). For some men, dangerous health behaviour

such as excessive drinking is a way to construct masculinity as strong (Courtenay, 2000). These distinctions between men and women's drinking highlight the value of continued examination into the links between masculinity and alcohol.

Youth drinking culture has, in recent years, received much attention in NZ (eg., Chainey & Stephens, 2014; Fergusson & Boden, 2011; McCreanor, Barnes, Kaiwai, Borell, & Gregory, 2008; McCreanor et al., 2013; L. A. Smith, 2014). A steady stream of newspaper reports dedicated to NZ youth's dangerous and occasionally lethal encounters with alcohol indicate that many of today's binge drinkers are young males. Although they may or may not have experienced drinking first hand, the under studied young teenage male demographic is an important one; the age marks the beginning of the transition 'from boys to men,' in which boys leave behind the concerns of childhood to consider in greater depth 'what it means to be a man.' This transition is arguably more drawn out for today's western teenage male than it has ever been (Kimmel, 2009).

Gender constructions do not occur in a vacuum. Representations circulated by mainstream media provide a potent source of ideals for making sense of one's life (Lyons, 2000; Lyons, Dalton, & Hoy, 2006; McCreanor et al., 2008), including one's gender. Various media provide a multitude of often conflicting discourses. Boys are likely to be steeped in the now prominent health discourses linked to masculinity (Gough, 2006) which also stress the adverse consequences of alcohol (Casswell, 1997). Yet many formats construct alcohol as desirable (Strasburger, Jordan, & Donnerstein, 2010; Villani, 2001) by tying it to masculinity. Alcohol companies put gendered discourses to work in advertising formats (Gee & Jackson, 2012; Law, 1997; Wenner & Jackson, 2009) – including, in some instances, music videos (Collinson, Judge, Stanley, & Wilson, 2014; Cranwell et al., 2015). In the current post -postmodern context of consumerism and free-market ideology (Braidotti, 2005), music videos are the focus of the current research. They are explored for the dominant meanings they portray around masculinity and alcohol, and the ways these are taken up, resisted, or reinterpreted by teenage boys. The pop music video is important. It “offers up a distillation of the ways in which contemporary culture perceives itself through cultural production” (Railton and Watson, 2005, p. 52).

In pursuing the aims of this study, the first section of this chapter provides an overview of teenage drinking in NZ, including a cursory summary of the historical, social and political context that enables it. This includes brief consideration of how the current liberalised alcohol market helps facilitate teenage drinking. Reasons for this are explored, and include the pressure exerted by liquor lobbyists on the government to turn a blind eye to the widespread dissemination of positive alcohol-related media portrayals (Casswell, 1997), and to allow access to cheap alcohol which is readily available for purchase many hours of the day.

Following this, the focus will be narrowed to consider links between gender - particularly masculinities - and alcohol, including the potential role of music videos in creating meanings around these. Connell's hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) and post-

feminist theory (eg., Gill, 2008, 2011; McRobbie, 2007, 2009, 2011; O'Neill, 2014) are considered in developing a theoretical framework to guide the current research. Post-feminist theorising is essential to consider for what it offers to understandings of hegemonic masculinity (O'Neill, 2014). Both theories are important for understanding masculinities, alcohol consumption and music video representations and how they are taken up. The research has two stages: in stage one, four pop music videos are selected and analysed for their dominant gender and alcohol portrayals and in stage two, the reception of these music videos by teenage boys in NZ and their reading of the dominant meanings are explored.

Historical overview of alcohol in NZ

As Phillips (1987) documents, “There can be no question of the centrality of the pub to the frontier male culture” (p. 34). Gold diggers, whalers, foresters, farmers – all are amongst NZ’s early pioneers who, among other more celebrated achievements, helped pioneer a strong culture of drinking within this country - a culture that, approximately two hundred years later, would still be manufacturing headlines and generating debate. The history of legislative responses to problem drinking has been pendulum-like. Early attempts at dealing with the heavy drinking legacy of ‘pioneering men’ took the form of a swing to the other extreme. A temperance movement developed that stopped just short of prohibition by settling, in 1917, for the introduction of six o’clock closing.

But six o’clock closing had the opposite effect to that intended. It led to what became colloquially known as the ‘six o’clock swill’ (Room, 2010). The unsavoury scenes - of taverns bereft of furniture and crammed with men swilling, swearing and jostling for beer - gave way, in the 1960s, to a relaxation of alcohol law that, amongst other things, extended bar opening hours (Stewart, 1997). The trend towards alcohol liberalisation gained further momentum in the 1980s, aided by a free-market philosophy of deregulation and decentralization, and changing societal attitudes, particularly towards women’s drinking (Huckle, Pledger, & Casswell, 2011). Subsequent legislative attempts by the government to address drinking, its associated problematic behaviours and adverse health outcomes, have been half-hearted and ineffectual. In apparent response to concerns about teenage drinking, legislative changes were introduced in 1999 that ostensibly intended to reduce harm and contribute to a more sophisticated drinking environment similar to some European centres (Law Commission, 2009). This included lowering the drinking age from 20, to 18.

In light of the lack of impact of these policies, however, policy makers were urged by health advocates to revisit alcohol legislation once again in order to curb alcohol’s negative impacts. In 2008, under direction from the Labour government of the time, the Law Commission was charged with this task (Law Commission, 2009). Their subsequent report noted the complex nature of the problem, in which supply factors such as drinking age and liquor licensing laws are conflicted by cultural, socio-demographic, and advertising and promotion considerations. The recommendations contained within the Law Commission’s final report, in 2009, provided a host of practical and legislative suggestions

for stemming problematic teenage drinking. These centred largely on supply issues. As summarised by Kypri, Maclennan, Langley, and Connor (2011), the suggestions included increasing taxes on alcohol, raising the purchase age once again to 20, restricting alcohol sponsorship, and mandatory restrictions by local bodies on outlet density. Yet once again, much to the chagrin of those with an active interest in lessening alcohol related harm, many evidence based proposals were not implemented. An example of the frustration felt by many public health academics is provided by Professor Doug Sellman: “the government has announced a comprehensive suite of half-hearted changes, policy tweaking and deferred initiatives” (One News, 2010).

Vested interests

The ‘half-hearted’ response of the government is seen by Kypri, Connor, Maclennan, and Sellman (2013) as a “capitulation to [the] commercial interests” (p. 557) of liquor companies. As some have noted, these ‘interests’ include the young drinker’s market (McCreanor et al., 2008). Despite the passing of the *Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act* (2012), which placed some limitations on opening hours, conditions of alcohol sales, and density and location of alcohol outlets, the drinking age remained unchanged, and sponsorship remained legal. Today, a highly liberalised alcohol market remains, offering a dazzling array of alcoholic beverages through a variety of vendors to those 18 and over. Although dairies lost the right to sell alcohol, supermarkets and other grocery stores remain able to at low cost and for much of the day (until 11 o’clock pm), while on license venues can sell until 4 am (Ministry of Justice, 2013). It would seem that liquor companies are willing to take advantage of the government’s reluctance to impose effective restrictions; they still enjoy many rights to advertising, including sponsorship (Cody & Jackson, 2014), and have been allowed to continue marketing to young people, albeit surreptitiously (Huckle et al., 2011).

Dirty Politics, Nicky Hager’s (2014) controversial exposé of the internal abuses of political power within the current government, illuminated some of the reasons for its reluctance to regulate (Swinburn & Moore, 2014). Swinburn and Moore lament the increasingly close ties between the liquor industry and the resulting “escalation of government efforts to control public health information and messages” (p. 505). Within this political context, the exploration of socio-cultural factors such as gender and the media assume significance in providing potential alternative avenues for intervention; the findings from studies investigating these might potentially be used to develop educational tools to help facilitate greater awareness of cultural factors, and thereby help curb teenage drinking even within the current (de)regulated environment. Such consciousness raising efforts might help circumvent the plethora of positive messages about alcohol through fostering critical awareness of these (Collinson et al., 2014), or by providing youth with effective counter-arguments with which to resist advertising messages (Slater et al., 1995).

Youth Drinking

Within today's liberalised alcohol market many teenagers are imbibing (Ministry of Justice, 2005). Often they do so copiously, with sometimes harmful or tragic consequences (Fergusson & Boden, 2011). Newspaper headlines regularly highlight binge drinking amongst NZ's teenagers. In 2010 the Dominion Post reported on the chief coroner's findings that 12 teenage deaths had resulted from binge drinking between the years 2007 – 2010 (Newton, 2010). One such incident, in 2010, involved a 16 year old boy dying from 'skulling' a bottle of vodka at a friend's party. As recently as 2014 a video posted on *Youtube* of an intoxicated primary school-aged boy grabbed national news headlines (Choe & Moran, 2014).

Despite timely reminders of the sensationalism inherent in the media's reporting of relatively atypical stories such as these and the knee jerk reactions they often provoke (L. A. Smith, 2014), any death or injury resulting from excessive drinking is troubling. The harm stemming from the direct toxic effects of alcohol upon the body is widely documented. Yet there are also many indirect effects for teenagers and young adults (Kypri et al., 2009), including increased risk for motor vehicle accidents (Kypri et al., 2006) crime, sexual risk taking, mental health problems and suicidal behaviours, victimisation (Boden & Fergusson, 2011; Bonomo et al., 2001), adult substance dependence, herpes infection, early pregnancy (Odgers et al., 2008) and violence (Bachman & Peralta, 2002).

Some risks pertain largely to teenage boys or young men, underscoring the need for more research into the drinking practices of this specific demographic. Boys are, for instance, more likely than their female counterparts to engage in assault leading to hospitalisation (Kypri, Davie, McElduff, Connor, & Langley, 2014) and alcohol has been shown to be a factor in male perpetration of sexual assault (*for a summary of the literature see* Abbey, Wegner, Woerner, Pegram, & Pierce, 2014) including date rape (Rickert, Vaughan, & Wiemann, 2002). As Abbey et al. (2014) identify, little research has explored factors that moderate the relationship between alcohol and sexual assault.

Physiology is sometimes drawn on to explain alcohol's behavioural effects, but this does not supply a complete explanation. The common assumption that alcohol lowers inhibitions through its physiological operation was contested by Critchlow (1986), who highlighted social beliefs and expectations as the most important aspects for the lowered inhibitions observed when people drink. Even studies which emphasise the myopic physiological effects of alcohol fail to account for why certain information is more salient for intoxicated people than other information in a given situation (Giancola, Josephs, Parrott, & Duke, 2010). Discourses linked to alcohol consumption might affect behavior in conjunction with its physiological effects, such as through influencing expectations (Dunne & Katz, 2015; George & Stoner, 2000). For instance, with regard to factors that might influence sexual assault, at least one study has shown that some men view women who drink alone as more sexually available (Parks & Scheidt, 2000). Moreover, the role of music videos in linking the

dehumanising and sexualisation of women to drinking (Herd, 2014), or general violence to alcohol (Collinson et al., 2014) may help construct violence and women's sexual availability as expected corollaries of drinking.

Furthermore, marketing has been demonstrated as a strong factor in influencing alcohol consumption amongst young people (Lin, Caswell, You, & Huckle, 2012) such as through sporting sponsorship (Wenner & Jackson, 2009). Sponsorship would be relatively easy to regulate if there was political will. But other material cannot be easily legislated. The internet, for example, is an increasingly valuable forum for liquor companies looking to increase their market share (Winpenny, Marteau, & Nolte, 2014). It is important for its significant take up by young people (Gross, 2004) and the easy access it provides to a wide variety of media which depicts alcohol use positively. Moreover, it is not easily policed (Collinson et al., 2014) or blocked by parents (Jones, Thom, Davoren, & Barrie, 2014). Social media has been found to be a significant facilitator of teenagers and young adults' participation in alcohol consumption practices (McCreanor et al., 2013), and a range of videos on Youtube, including music videos, have been shown to promulgate positive messages about alcohol (Primack, Colditz, Pang, & Jackson, 2015).

Music videos are readily accessible through the internet and television. They increasingly depict positive messages about alcohol (Collinson et al., 2014; Herd, 2005) and provide powerful, persuasive gendered discourses (Herd, 2014). Thus, understanding *how*, and *to what extent* music videos, as both products of, and agents of influence upon culture might shape discourses about drinking and gender in young people is important. In the following two chapters, the role of drinking in the social construction of gender, and the roles music videos play in constructing meanings and attaching cultural value to alcohol consumption will be considered.

To date, little research has examined how masculinity and alcohol representations in pop music videos are taken up by young teenage boys (age 13-15). The young teenage demographic is important to study with regard to masculinity and alcohol due to the risks that pertain largely to teenage boys who drink excessively, their pervasive engagement with the internet and their status as the target audience for pop music (A. Riley, 2005). The early teenage years are also characterized by rapid change and identity formation – identity that is bound to the construction of gender (Kimmel, 2009). Finally, although many teenagers have started drinking by this age, many more have not. It was hoped that studying the responses of boys this age would provide vital information on what factors might lead them to consider alcohol positively. Such information would be essential in any interventions to prevent involvement in heavy drinking cultures.

Chapter Two: Masculinity and alcohol

“Wasted, so what? Irrelevant.” (Flo Rida, in Taio Cruz, *Hangover*)

Much of the research on masculinity and drinking has focused on young adults and college students; much less has focused on younger teenage populations, despite research indicating that serious alcohol problems later in life often begin at this time (Grant, Stinson, & Harford, 2001; Guttmanova et al., 2011) and that this is a period marked by identity formation (Meeus, 2011), developmental changes, and greater risk taking (Zucker, 2008). Nevertheless, the extant literature on older teenage binge drinking (16 – 18) reveals the extent to which social processes and discourses are responsible. Chainey and Stephens (2014) found that NZ teenagers of this age explained their drinking as a social lubricant, as something ‘cool,’ and they discursively resisted the discourse that ‘alcohol is bad’. Similar findings occur in studies based in other countries (eg., Guise & Gill, 2007). Sanders (2011) interviewed adult men regarding their substance abuse as teenagers and found that viewing these activities as masculine underpinned their drinking. Gaughan (2006) revealed that gender is a strong component in peer influenced drinking amongst adolescents; in mixed sex interactions boys influenced girls’ drinking but were not influenced by the girls. These gender differences in adolescent peer influence were supported by other studies (eg., Dick et al., 2007).

Hegemonic masculinity

Masculinity is a powerful socio-cultural construction that has profound implications for male drinking (eg., Peralta, Steele, Nofziger, & Rickles, 2010). In considering what might provide its power, hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) and feminist approaches that borrow predominantly from Foucauldian discursive theory (A. King, 2004) have much to offer. Despite doubts expressed over their compatibility (eg., Pringle, 2005), each allows for overlap with the other (Aboim, 2010; Said & Hoy, 1986). Particularly, Connell’s emphasis on gender identities “forged *in relation* to others” (S. Jackson & Scott, 2010, pp. 114-115, in Beasley, 2012, p. 761) shares an understanding with Butler and other feminist theorising (eg., Budgeon, 2013; Schippers, 2007) that gender is constructed dichotomously, in terms of its ‘other.’ The construction of gender has been theorised either in terms of *lack* (for females), or “by contrast [...] in terms of abundance and positive flows” in which the “‘other’ is not positioned as oppositional to the self” (Beasley, 2012, p. 758). This is relevant for alcohol research.

As Donaldson (1993) explains, hegemony (developed by Gramsci, 1971, in *Prison Notebooks*) describes the processes by which the ruling class maintains power through “the ability to impose a definition of the situation, to set the terms in which events are understood and issues discussed, to formulate ideals and define morality” (Donaldson, 1993, p. 645). An important aspect is its reliance on consent rather than coercion, and the importance of culture in soliciting this consent (Hearn, 2004). Connell appropriated the concept of hegemony and applied it to masculinity studies in

Australia during the 1980s as a way to address some of the limitations of sex role theory (Connell, 1995, Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Demetriou 2001) . Specifically, it transcended sex role theory's inherent individualism to foster awareness of wider economic, social, and cultural influences that actively construct gender (Kessler, Ashenden, Connell, & Dowsett, 1985).

Key early aspects of the hegemonic masculinity concept included the embodied nature of gender construction; the structural nature of gender inequality; and the inaccuracy of the simplistic dichotomy between masculine and feminine (Kessler et al., 1985). It replaces this dichotomy with a focus on power, not only between the masculinity/femininity binary but also within masculinity itself - so that one speaks of *masculinities* rather than masculinity (Demetriou, 2001). These conceptualisations remain useful and applicable to understanding gendered drinking today. Embodiment has often manifested in the construction of masculine identity as alcohol tolerance (Peralta, 2007), as well as other types of tolerance, such as for pain (eg., Pringle & Markula, 2005). Thus, alcohol tolerance might be considered a hegemonic ideal of masculinity. However, the pluralism inherent within masculinities allows for complexity and ongoing renegotiations (Mahalik, 2014). Thus, 'masculinity' doesn't always conform to the same ideals in the same ways.

In a concise definition of hegemonic masculinity, Connell expresses its *function* as “the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 1995, p. 77). Hegemonic masculinity theory is thus predominantly concerned with how masculine power is maintained and validated. Despite its varied application in research, this underlying political imperative has ensured its support among those who want to question the power dynamics of gender relations (Demetriou, 2001; Jefferson, 2002) - a concern this research shares.

Criticisms and modifications

The charge of reification has been levelled at hegemonic masculinity theory (eg., Beasley, 2013; Collier, 1998; Jefferson, 2002; McMahon, 1993; Moller, 2007; Wetherell & Edley, 1999; Whitehead, 2002). In a major 'stock-take' of the theory Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) concede that reification has resulted from misunderstandings in much of the literature; that its subtleties and original formulations have become distorted in too many instances. They “reject those usages that imply a fixed character type, or an assemblage of toxic traits” (p. 854) and point to positive aspects of hegemonic masculinity that have been researched, and which have enabled it to perpetuate itself, such as “as bringing home a wage, sustaining a sexual relationship, and being a father” (p.840). Connell and Messerschmidt proposed retaining the aspects they saw as standing up to scrutiny. Briefly, these include its status amongst multiple masculinities as “more socially central, or more associated with authority and social power, than other [masculinities]” and which “presumes the subordination of other masculinities” (p. 846). Importantly for this study, they also retain emphases on “cultural

consent, discursive centrality,” recognition that “hegemony works in part through the production of exemplars of masculinity (e.g., professional sports stars [or perhaps pop music stars]), symbols that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them” (p. 846). Finally, they retain the possibility that ideals are open to change; forms of masculinity less reliant on subordination might possibly become hegemonic. One of the ‘better ways of understanding gender hierarchy’ (p. 847) they call for is provided through three ‘levels’ of masculinity, including the ‘global, regional, and local.’ Masculinities discourses are available at each; they interact and confront each other to produce multiple possibilities for construction.

A conceptualisation of hegemony that is defined by *process* is more useful than one defined by *content*. The ways in which hegemony operates, or the bases upon which it manifests- *how* it is desirable, or how it ‘claims legitimacy’ - are more important than what it looks like. Indeed, hegemonic masculinity’s outward appearance invariably shifts according to what particular hegemonic principles are manifest in the current historical bloc (Howson, 2008). Such shifts occur because of interactions between the local, regional, and global levels (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005); or perhaps because masculine ideals are what Laclau (2000) calls ‘particularities of society.’ These particularities are partial and shifting, but promise a “universality” with which they are “utterly incommensurable” (pp.79-81). While this promise might provide the persuasive power of masculine ideals, as ‘particularities’ the ideals can never be fully realised.

Given this, there is significant theoretical benefit to be derived from not pursuing concrete identification too vigorously. Hearn argues that “one of the subtleties of the hegemonic may be its very elusiveness and the difficulty of reducing it to a set of fixed positions and practices” (Hearn 2004, p. 59). For Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) “ambiguity in gender processes may be important to recognize as a mechanism of hegemony” (p. 838). For example, a man who can tolerate large amounts of liquor may be represented as ideal in certain media formats (such as music videos or alcohol commercials) or social contexts; but will be contradicted by other ideals, such as the church going teetotaler or family man, as seen for example, in the ‘authentic manhood’ movement (Authentic Manhood, 2015).

Drinking as masculine practice

Some of the key points regarding hegemonic masculinity outlined above are mirrored in research exploring drinking practices. Historically, drinking has been inextricably linked to masculinity (Lemle & Mishkind, 1989). In college settings it has been tied to the adventure and permissiveness that characterise the college experience for many young men; but also, paradoxically, as a way of offsetting powerlessness (Capraro, 2000). Iwamoto, Cheng, Lee, Takamatsu, and Gordon (2011) argue that college men who try to live up to the sexual risk-taking of the ‘playboy’ ideal experience greater alcohol problems. Alcohol tolerance has been seen as a way of embodying heterosexual masculinity. It is often linked relationally to femininity and homosexuality through an

‘othering’ of women and homosexual men – they are unable to ‘handle’ large quantities of alcohol (Peralta, 2007). Research from countries as diverse as Russia (eg., Hinote & Webber, 2012), the United States (eg., Peralta, 2007), the United Kingdom (eg., Mullen, Watson, Swift, & Black, 2007) and South Africa (Ratele, Shefer, Strebel, & Fouten, 2010) attest to the ubiquity of dichotomous constructions that privilege heterosexuality within a range of drinking contexts. For example, U.S. college students who did not meet the masculine standard of tolerance were labeled as feminine or homosexual, as “two-beer queers” (Peralta, 2007, p.751) while male and female college students’ masculinity scores on a survey predicted alcohol use, even while controlling for biological sex (Peralta et al., 2010).

Similarly, in the U.K., De Visser and Smith (2007) found that some men saw drinking as a defining feature of masculinity; and they stigmatised those who didn’t drink, or chose beverages other than beer, as homosexual. The researchers also noted that masculinity was constructed in other ways, through ‘trading masculine competence.’ Masculine capital can also be accrued through other behaviours identified as masculine, such as athletic prowess (de Visser & McDonnell, 2013). Those who have accumulated enough capital are freer to embrace non-hegemonic ideals; although, as Conroy and de Visser (2012) articulate, masculine capital is most often traded for other practices that are heterosexual and/ or dominant. For instance, the pressure to prove one’s masculinity by drinking is keenly felt by male non-drinkers, but “might be assuaged via alternative routes, such as assuming roles that facilitate collective male (sexual) interests (e.g. as ‘wingman’)” (p. 10). The ‘wingman’s’ core responsibilities include identifying and approaching potential sexual partners on behalf of his friend. The pressure to conform was also observed on a U.S. college campus. Abstainers were outcast, stigmatized, and sometimes violently harassed. While women were also susceptible to abuse, a young man who abstained was called a ‘pussy’ - a pejorative label implying a masculinity deficit (Herman-Kinney & Kinney, 2013).

Campbell’s (2000) research on masculinity and alcohol in a local NZ context revealed similar results, which might also be considered the legacy of the pioneering Pakeha male drinking culture (Phillips, 1987). Drawing on Connell’s (1995) theory of hegemonic masculinity and Butler’s (1993) notion of gender as performance, he showed how hegemonic masculinity is maintained through drinking in a rural NZ local ‘pub.’ Butler maintains the body *as* performance (Beasley, 2012) and that “performativity takes place within and on the surface of bodies” (Hassard and Holliday, 2003, p. 7). In contrast, Connell identifies a body that performs. Campbell contested previously held ideas that the pub is a site of egalitarianism where conversation serves a socially cohesive function. Rather, he described a largely competitive environment, in which hierarchy was maintained through performance of what he termed “conversational cockfighting” (p. 565).

The masculinity identified within Campbell’s (2000) study fits with the “authority and social power” that has defined hegemonic (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 846). Similar to others (eg.,

De Visser & Smith, 2007; Peralta, 2007), Campbell found that an important component of maintaining one's standing as a paragon of masculinity *in this context* were performance related markers, such as alcohol tolerance and conversational repartee. Also, rather than being explicitly defined, masculinity itself was invisible yet paradoxically ever present, implied through reference to its 'other' and performed through avoidance of behaviours deemed feminine. For Campbell, the glass phallus displayed on the pub's mantelpiece came to symbolise these observed aspects of local masculinity.

Context and complexity

That similar results regarding tolerance and the avoidance of 'othered' positions can be seen between different countries might be partially explained by the levels Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) theorise - local, regional, and global - with similar drinking processes between countries testament to the latter. The innumerable interactions between levels of masculinity, as well as class, ethnicity, age and sexuality are constantly negotiated (Christensen & Jensen, 2014; Dolan, 2011) and preclude a straightforward suggestion that hegemonic masculinity invariably, and in all contexts, is defined by alcohol tolerance or control over one's body. In certain local contexts men may resist or oppose what might be considered hegemonic. As Wetherell and Edley (1999) summarise, 'perhaps what is most hegemonic is to be non-hegemonic!' (p. 351). Or, to draw on Bourdieu's (1977) notions of *field* and *habitus*, as Coles (2009) has, different fields require different practices from men, and each field will have a particular dominant masculinity associated with it. Men will develop habitus in response to the fields in which they live and function, and these practices will come to be considered natural. In certain fields, a masculinity characterised by tolerance of excessive drinking might seem a natural correlate of masculinity but in others it may not.

In a series of studies of British men's homosocial bonding within the specific context of stag parties in Eastern Europe, Thurnell-Read (Thurnell-Read, 2009, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2012b) offers some surprising observations on embodiment and the role(s) that drinking plays in constructing masculinity for young British men. In accordance with those researchers cited above, Thurnell-Read (2011b) attested to the role of drinking in embodying masculinity. But rather than attempting to contain and control the bodily markers of drunkenness, participants celebrated the drunk male body during the stag party for its 'leakiness' and loss of control – qualities normatively associated with female bodies (Shildrick, 1997). This observation might attest to the claim made earlier, that gender is not necessarily, or always constructed in opposition to the other (Beasley, 2012, p. 758). Men may break with gendered norms because, as Foucault theorised, power is not always repressive. It is "a generative force" (Bordo, 1993, p. 109). Transgressing gendered boundaries through *identification* with the other, rather than through opposition, induces pleasure. Also, although there was a competitive aspect to it, drinking served a socially cohesive function in homo-social bonding (Thurnell-Read, 2012b). This seems to counter hierarchical processes within male drinking observed

within Campbell's (2000) research, but is perhaps understandable given the 'special' nature of the stag party as an escape from regularity, and the fact that a hierarchy of sorts pre-exists in the celebration of the 'stag' as the head of the group, its *raison d'être*. Further, the European stag party might represent a different and unique 'field' or sub-field (Bourdieu, 1977; Coles, 2009; De Visser, Smith, & McDonnell, 2009) in which a different type of masculinity dominates.

Rather than tolerance, then, the ability to 'cut loose' was celebrated as evidence of one's commitment to the stag group's values; the more he suffers (from hangovers etc.), the greater is his self-sacrifice for the group's sake. Tellingly, the masculinity practiced in the stag tours remained overwhelmingly heterosexual. It included predatory 'girl hunts' (Grazian, 2007), in which male bonding is facilitated through the objectification of women for the amusement of other men. However, in some instances, drinking ability appeared to be a greater marker of masculinity than sexuality, with two homosexual men in one group being valued for this. Perhaps enough masculine capital (de Visser & McDonnell, 2013) can be accrued through drinking to exonerate homosexuality. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that one of these men down-played his homosexuality within the group by 'acting straight' while another was frequently at the "center of some of the group's most humorous verbal exchanges" (Thurnell-Read, 2012b, p. 262)

Although these observations are seemingly at odds with conceptions of hegemonic masculinity that involve control over one's body, Thurnell-Read (2011b) maintains that the stag party is a specific context that strongly celebrates the momentary loss of control because such control is *ordinarily* hegemonic; the transgression reinforces normal expectations precisely because it is a transgression. It provides an 'outlet' in a similar manner to gender tourism (C. J. Thompson & Holt, 2004) - permitted on the basis of the privileges afforded only to those who enjoy hegemonic status. And as such, it re-inscribes the boundaries of hegemonic masculinity. Thurnell-Read (2011b) cites Skeggs' (2005) research on working class femininity and bachelorette parties in Britain to argue that similar transgressions by subordinated masculinities or femininities are not sanctioned to the same extent.

However, research exploring the bachelorette party in the United States – an imitation of the 'bachelor' party or 'stag' party - contests Thurnell-Read's (2011) point that binge drinking by women is generally stigmatised (Montemurro & McClure, 2005). As Montemurro and McClure argue, bodily comportment and demureness are usually expected of women, and they also seek to escape its confines through the ritual of the bachelorette party. In their research, excessive drinking represented a challenge to men's hitherto exclusive rights to use alcohol as an outlet. Participants explained it as an embrace of male drinking and the party itself as a form of mimicry. The authors concluded that acceptance for "drinking like men" is context specific; the bachelorette party is one of the few contexts in which binge drinking and associated 'risky' behaviours by women are socially sanctioned.

It is difficult to make sense of this contradiction. On the one hand Thurnell-Read (2011b) maintains that women's binge drinking is not sanctioned by society, and this is supported by Skeggs

(2005). On the other, Montemurro and McClure (2005) suggest that it *is* – albeit within a specific context. Moreover, in each context, each gender is seeking to escape discourses that limit the body. Cultural considerations might help explain it; the results may reflect differences in British and U.S. culture; or class, which was a strong factor in Skeggs’ (2005) analysis of working class English women.

Another clue might lie in the respective nature of the transgressions exhibited by women and men. Women at bachelorette parties might binge drink because they are not usually expected to do so. But the transgressions in men’s drinking might rest, not on binge drinking per se – this is expected in many situations - but in embracing alternative, non-hegemonic forms of masculinity *while* drinking. Hence the need to escape to a location removed from everyday life (Eastern Europe). It might also be reasonable to postulate that men’s behaviour during a stag party, such as nudity and public excretion, would not be excused if performed by women. However, the observation that after their weekend “the stag and his friends... [return] to their positions of hegemonic authority” (Thurnell-Read, 2011b) provides the greatest significance. Whereas men return to authoritative positions following their sanctioned ‘transgressions,’ women return after theirs to a society that, while ostensibly offering empowerment, also undermines them in many important ways (McRobbie, 2011). Moreover, women’s drinking during the bachelorette party remains an attempt to drink ‘like a guy’. As Young et al. also show, this is often to appear more appealing for men, and thus maintains a dichotomous framework of gendered power that ultimately reinforces heterosexuality and its attendant values (Young, Morales, McCabe, Boyd, & d’Arcy, 2005).

Others have noted a diminishing gap between women’s and men’s drinking, stemming from urban and contemporary environments where men and women drink together (Willott & Lyons, 2012) and a society that arguably offers women greater freedom in general (Holmila & Raitasalo, 2005). Consideration of such convergence is important because of its potential implications for expressions of hegemonic masculinity. In the Baltic and Scandinavian regions there is some suggestion that traditional gendered drinking norms are changing as society becomes less traditional, although heavy drinking by women is still not permitted to the same extent as that by men (Kobin, 2013). Finnish and Swedish research found mixed results, explained by the influence of context - most notably class - to associations between alcohol and gender constructions. Participants constructed more hegemonic positions in response to stimuli depicting a woman’s domestic drinking. Also, older and middle-class participants revealed views of drinking that challenge traditional, hegemonic ideals, whereas working class participants were more likely to invoke hegemonic understandings (Törrönen & Roumeliotis, 2013). Perhaps class positioning determines the extent of one’s freedom to choose alternative gender constructions. In support of this, argument, Thurnell Read’s (2011a, 2012b) participants were those who had the money to travel overseas for their transgressions.

In NZ, Lyons and Willot (2008) also found support for context specificity, suggesting that contexts permissive of heavy female drinking are proliferating and diversifying. Increases in women’s

drinking opened up spaces for men to renegotiate their own masculinity as deviating from (previously) pervasive norms. Yet, importantly, drinking was still constructed in gendered ways. For example, 'traditional' views of femininity as caring and nurturing were drawn on to justify why women over 30 should not engage in binge drinking. The corollary of this might be that men's drinking is excused because men are not constrained by the pervasive biological discourse that posits child bearing as a natural correlate of 'possessing' a woman's body (Butler, 1990). These researchers also found that discursive flexibility in the construction of masculinity was necessitated by increased alcohol consumption by women (Willott & Lyons, 2012). But, while sanctioning women's drinking in certain ways, young men overwhelmingly persisted in their adherence to consumption of large amounts of alcohol- specifically beer - as masculine, and constructed those men who like 'upmarket' beers or wine as 'poncy,' with strong undercurrents of homosexuality implied in this construction. Gendered drinking spaces were also apparent, such as a male 'rugby' night or the 'girl's night out.' This led the authors to posit that in the localized NZ setting, changes have occurred, but have not been as extensive as some other countries.

At odds with the mixed results chronicled above, Mullen et al. (2007) recognised the evolution and almost unequivocal acceptance of plurality within the masculinities practiced by a group of male participants in an urban setting in Scotland. They observed that many young men now prefer to drink in mixed gender situations. Also, the participants were in many instances critical of many of the values hitherto associated with hegemonic masculinity, particularly aggressive behaviour. This is consistent with Foucault's notion that "where there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1978, p. 95), and the many studies which reveal that men and young men often take up hegemonic-resistant positions (Kahn, Holmes, & Brett, 2011; McCormack, 2011; Wetherell & Edley, 1999), or that teenagers resist the stereotype of the teenage binge drinker (Nairn, Higgins, Thompson, Anderson, & Fu, 2006). Importantly, however, this is not to say that such stances are from a position "of exteriority in relation to power" (Foucault, 1978, p. 95). Such opposition takes place as an inevitable function of power's operations.

Together, these findings paint a complex picture. Although double standards and gender divisions persist in some contexts, conventional links between masculinity and drinking increasingly appear to be challenged in others, perhaps reflecting the nature of modern societies in which women are offered more freedom in general (Holmila & Raitasalo, 2005). Differences in gendered drinking practices across countries, while sharing some similarities, are complicated by factors such as age, class, ethnicity or time and space. But there are also re-positioning strategies at work that seem to shore up traditional associations between masculinity and alcohol. It is to these that the next section turns.

Post-feminism and the heterosexual matrix

The fact that gender is constructed relationally necessitates consideration of femininity.

Conroy and de Visser (2012) argue that “any investigation concerning health-related behaviours relevant to masculinity [...] should be discussed in connection to issues involved in gender relations more broadly” (p. 2). In order to do this, understandings provided through feminist scholarship are crucial - particularly post-feminism. O’Neill (2014) laments that masculinity studies have largely ignored post-feminism to their detriment. Moreover, over-emphases on plurality within masculinities have risked losing sight of ‘the reproduction of gender inequality’ (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009), so much so that patriarchy needs to be ‘brought back into focus’ (Ortner, 2014). With this in mind, some feminist theorizing – particularly on post-feminism- is explored below for the ways in which it might shed light on masculinity, drinking and, most importantly, the maintenance of patriarchy. In covering aspects of post-feminism, attention will also be given to symbolic gender constructions such as the phallus for the ways they have informed approaches to analysing gendered power, and understandings of post-feminism. Although they come from a feminist perspective, the observations made of post-feminism are every bit as important to understandings of hegemonic masculinity as the theory itself. In fact, it could be argued that they are ‘flipsides’ of the same coin, united in their subtle undermining of inclusivity whilst seeming to embrace it (T. Bridges & Pascoe, 2014; McRobbie, 2007; O’Neill, 2014).

A temptation in reading findings that point to greater inclusivity within drinking contexts (eg., Mullen et al., 2007) is to concede that perhaps masculinity *has* become more inclusive in general; less mired to exclusionary processes. Some findings - such as, for example, the apparent readiness with which homosexual participants were accepted in Thurnell-Read’s (2012b) research - may even suggest that the heteronormative basis for the exclusion of homosexuality has disintegrated. This is what Anderson (2007) argues in his ‘inclusive masculinity’ theorising, contending that the current form of hegemonic masculinity is one that is no longer homophobic. In doing so he offers a seductive “sense of cheery optimism and hope” (O’Neill, 2014, p. 8). But the fact that gendered power imbalances are maintained despite appearances (T. Bridges & Pascoe, 2014) suggests the fluidity inherent within hegemonic masculinity, and the deployment of repositioning strategies. In theorising ‘hybrid masculinity’ Bridges and Pascoe (2014) warn against prematurely trumpeting inclusive masculinity as currently hegemonic, as they deride Anderson (2007) for doing. O’Neill (2014) agrees, arguing that inclusive masculinity theory is an attempt to all but “erase sexual politics” (p. 2), and thus pushes a post-feminist agenda seeking the same. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) concede the validity of hybrid masculinities but refute their claim to hegemony, although Bridges and Pascoe (2014) suggest that hybrid masculinities *are* hegemonic; they “work in ways that not only reproduce contemporary systems of gendered, raced, and sexual inequalities but also obscure this process as it is happening” (p. 247). As noted earlier, hegemonic masculinity is a process rather than a character type. Hybridisation is a key element of this process.

In a convincing refutation of many aspects of inclusive masculinity theory, de Boise (2014) contends that the current lack of ‘homophobia’ identified by Anderson is accounted for by many

other factors, including Connell's (1995) useful notion of complicity. de Boise (2014) argues that men can gain from the subordination of homosexuality without themselves exhibiting homophobia. Such complicity is regardless of class status. The patriarchal dividend - or 'payoff' of social authority—encapsulates these advantages and provides a motive for complicity. Perhaps the patriarchal dividend partly induces the 'pleasure' integral to Foucault's notions of power (Bordo, 1993). Complicity, and the dividend it offers, may explain why imbalances in gendered power are not more readily challenged, or are renegotiated so that they appear to be challenging masculine hegemony while shoring it up in an underhand way. Thus, attention must be paid to the complex ways in which 'freedom' is afforded to women and subordinate masculinities, while simultaneously undermined.

Post-feminism provides a theoretical framework for understanding complicity. One important way that power has been conceptualized and applied in feminist theorizing on post-feminism is through the notion of the phallus (eg., McRobbie, 2007). Originally theorised by Lacan (1958), it has enjoyed widespread subscription, as seen above in Campbell's (2000) identification of the phallus to symbolize the power that men attempted to appropriate within a NZ pub. Thompson and Holt (2004) argue that the phallus accounts for the massive global appeal of sports stars and generates huge profits for companies who exploit it, such as Nike. It could also, therefore, account for the power of pop stars. The phallus is useful in symbolising the appeal of the "widespread ideals, fantasies, and desires" (Connell and Messerschmidt, p. 838, 2005) of hegemonic masculinity. For Sheff (2006) heterosexual desirability also functions as evidence of polyamorous men's possession of the phallus, so that a man who is desired by many women is seemingly given this power.

Conversely, possession implies *lack*, and this corollary manifests in the charge of homosexuality or femininity that, as was discussed above, has sometimes labelled those men who cannot tolerate alcohol, or refuse to participate in drinking. Butler's (1990) heterosexual matrix shows how certain constructions of masculinity have been hierarchically privileged over both femininities and other forms of masculinity; it explains, respectively, how 'external' and 'internal' hegemony (Demetriou, 2001) is maintained. Butler (1990) identifies the pervasive discourse that constructs the binary of man and woman as *natural*, based on an erroneous assumption that the body exists a priori to discourses that inscribe gender upon it. Anatomy is a visible sign of difference upon which a persuasive biological discourse of reproduction-as-natural is built. The penis is a "metonym" that "stands in for masculinity" (Connell, 1995, p. 54) and through a conflation with the symbolic power of the phallus, is related to the lack of the appendage in women and thus lack of power of women. Heterosexuality is consequently posited as powerful and normative; a refusal of it represents a deviant challenge to this power.

But the inherent power of the phallus relies on women: "for women to 'be' the phallus means, then, to reflect the power of the Phallus, to signify that power, to 'embody' the phallus, to supply the site to which it penetrates, and to signify the Phallus through 'being' its Other, its absence, its lack, the dialectical confirmation of its identity" (Butler, 1990, p. 56). Yet McRobbie (2007) notes that in

postfeminist society women can appear to possess the phallus too; its temporary exchange is a strategy whereby the gains of women are incorporated in ways that solidify hegemonic masculinity. Young women are actively encouraged to drink copiously “within the confines of licensed transgression of, for example, weekend heavy drinking culture” (McRobbie, 2007, p. 732). This is, for McRobbie, a limited licensing of ‘phallic power’ proffered on a woman’s promise to provide the ‘spectacle of excessive femininity’ through, for example, what Gill (2003) regards as ‘sexual subjectification.’ This trade-off McRobbie (2009) terms the *new sexual contract*. It preserves the heterosexual matrix upon which hegemonic masculinity’s own claims to legitimacy depend. It defines the acceptable behavior of women, who “can no longer risk being seen as too powerful for fear of jeopardising their chances in marriage and family life, hence the thin line between coercion and consent” (McRobbie, 2009, p. 726). It also defines the acceptable practices of hegemonic masculinity. If women can be offered the phallus, then men are potentially free to explore masculinities that are no longer overtly dominant, aggressive and misogynistic. Yet masculine power remains unchecked, and men are complicit (Connell, 1995) in enjoying the social authority engendered by women *choosing* to subjectify themselves in ways that perpetuate the heterosexual matrix.

Hegemonic femininity

In what contexts would women’s drinking constitute a refutation of McRobbie’s (2009) new sexual contract? Schippers’ (2007) discussion of the complementarity inherent in hegemonic femininity and its relation to hegemonic masculinity is useful in explaining gendered double standards in drinking (eg., De Visser & Smith, 2007; Lyons, 2009). Diverging from Connell (1995, 2005), Schippers (2007) proposes that hegemonic femininity is of higher status than other femininities because it *complements* masculine hegemony. Thus, the bachelorette party (Montemurro & McClure, 2005), for example, might be sanctioned on the basis that it is only a temporary transgression of the standards normally expected of them. Or, as Budgeon (2013) argues, these drinking practices might reflect ‘new femininities’ tolerated by society at large for serving as symbols of its equality and cultural progress - as symbols of women’s individualism - without actually troubling structural imbalances. ‘Drinking like a man’ does not appropriate hegemonic masculinity, but serves its underlying heteronormative basis by functioning as a way to impress men, for instance (Young et al., 2005), while unsanctioned instances of women’s drinking – of which there are many more - inspire labelling and stigmatisation from men and women alike (Lyons, 2009).

Such labels are attached to ‘pariah femininities’ (Schippers, 2007). In theorising the ire that pariah femininities inspire, Schippers borrows Butler’s conception of ‘man’ and ‘woman’ as binary categories to which “certain bodies, behaviors, personality traits, and desires neatly match up” (Schippers, 2007, pp. 89-90), and considers that gender relations are symbolically defined by normative heterosexual penetrative sex and its associations: “‘intrusion, ‘taking’, ‘dominating’” (p. 90). If women significantly subvert male dominance, heterosexuality or otherwise challenge

masculine authority; if they refuse to be 'penetrated' or are "contaminated" with hegemonic masculine characteristics, they are provided with a pejorative label: "a lesbian, a 'slut', a shrew or 'cock-teaser,' a bitch" (ibid., p. 95) or as McRobbie (2007) identifies, a 'feminist.' Likewise, if men are contaminated by symbolically feminine qualities – particularly sexuality- they are subordinated. Pressure is exerted on males and females alike as a choice between the 'rock' of conformity to hegemony and the 'hard place' of stigmatisation. Hegemonic masculinity then, might be associated with taking and dominating, in accord with the symbolic nature of heterosexuality; all the while ensuring that women 'supply the site that [the phallus] penetrates" (Butler, 1990) and thus provide its power.

The concept of pariah femininities may explain why women who drink alone are considered as more sexually available, as they were in Parks and Scheidt's (2000) research - if one reasonably considers the epithets 'more sexually available' or 'loose' as euphemisms for 'slut.' In this case it may not be drinking *per se* that identifies the women as deviant but their drinking *alone*, which violates demureness and its attendant submission to heterosexual dependency. Conversely, there might be a corresponding pressure for men to conform to hegemonic masculine constructions that idealise sexual conquest and domination – a fact that is borne out by the 'girl hunt' (Grazian, 2007) observed in Thurnell-Read's (eg., 2011) accounts of stag parties.

Summary: Chapter two

Its adaptive ability means that through hybridisation and complicity hegemonic masculinity remains hegemonic without appearing so; it is able to tolerate and incorporate women's drinking too - as long as the drinking and associated behaviours nestle within the heterosexual matrix. Similarly, the feminist ideal of empowerment is accounted for - hybrid fashion - by postfeminist discourses that posit women's difficulties in negotiating gender inequality as a result of *individual choices* rather than structural gender inequalities (Budgeon, 2013). Sexual objectification becomes commonplace, as a marker of women's liberated and freely chosen sexuality (McRobbie, 2007, 2009). Although they might appear to challenge it, post-feminist discourses serve hegemonic femininity and, by extension, hegemonic masculinity. These points remind us to extend a critical gaze beyond classic markers of masculinity and drinking, such as tolerance, overt violence, or competition, to novel ways in which women's drinking is subsumed by the patriarchal gender order, or to how alternative masculinities are incorporated within an overwhelmingly middle-class, heterosexual hegemony. For hegemonic masculinity does not scrutinize, 'make visible' or 'problematise' masculinity in any meaningful or lasting way (Budgeon, 2013).

While masculine dominance owes its continued hegemony to its adaptability, compulsive heterosexuality remains its defining feature (Richardson, 2010). Flexibility for men arises from the

number of positions on offer; these can be taken up at will because the underlying heterosexual matrix that privileges masculinity provides a 'safety net' that is ultimately left intact. As Sheff (2006) argues with respect to polyamorous men, the advantages of hegemonic masculinity afforded by one's status as white, heterosexual and middle-class, can 'shield' men "from some consequences of their transgression of social norms" (p. 639). Moreover, the ability to accrue masculine capital (De Visser et al., 2009) in several ways also means that there exists a variety of masculinities which, despite their surface differences, are united by social authority and heterosexual domination. Whether the flexibility to 'transgress' is considered gender tourism (C. J. Thompson & Holt, 2004) whereby men are able to 'try out' alternative masculinities that temporarily seem to relinquish the phallus but which in fact preserve gender hierarchy; or a momentary escape from the confines of bodily control that normally characterises the embodiment of masculinity (Thurnell-Read, 2011b); whether considered as part of hybrid masculinity theory (T. Bridges & Pascoe, 2014); or as enabled through post-feminist discourses which offer the phallus to women as a temporary condition dependent on subscription to the new sexual contract (McRobbie, 2007) - or whether it is considered under the 'umbrella' of hegemonic masculinity, men continue to enjoy greater flexibility in drinking and gendered practice.

Many agree that the ideals or discourses associated with post-feminism and hegemonic masculinity outlined above are disseminated through media (Connell, 1995, 2005; Gill, 2008b, 2009; McRobbie, 2004) and bound to neo-liberalism and consumer culture (Evans, Riley, & Shankar, 2010; McRobbie, 2009). This link to consumerism imparts importance to the consideration of pop music videos, as both reflections and instruments of capitalist imperatives. The role they play in influencing subjectivities is less clear (Gill, 2008). Thus, the next chapter turns to the role of music videos and the mechanisms by which they gain their appeal that. Music videos may have an important role in fostering complicity to gender imbalances. They disseminate, reflect, and reconstruct societal discourses, and in their global reach they 'engender' the widespread normalisation of alcohol consumption (Cranwell et al., 2015; Herd, 2005; Primack, Nuzzo, Rice, & Sargent, 2012).

Chapter Three: Music videos, alcohol, and masculinity.

“To the store, to get me a 4-0, Snoop Doggy Dogg paged, that must mean more hoes”
(Snoop Dogg, *Bitches Ain't Shit*)

Hand wringing about possible negative effects of music on young people is not new. Since the 1950s, when Rock and Roll ‘shook, rattled, and rolled’ the foundations of popular culture, fears of the corrupting influence that music might have on young people have been vociferously voiced. As Sternheimer (2015) notes, references to sex and drugs concerned ‘moral crusaders’ to the point of inducing moral panic - panic which was also bound to class and race based prejudices. There were concerns that this music would replace religion in young people’s lives. The images of Elvis Presley gyrating on stage, spread far and wide through television, prompted desperate denunciations of his morality and induced worry amongst parents, religious authorities, and other self-appointed arbiters of civil standards. To many Elvis was “the devil personified” (Cole & Hinckley, 2009, p. 24). Yet despite, or perhaps because of these reactions to popular music, its strong association with youth culture continues. As noted by Rideout, Foehr, and Roberts (2010), U.S. youths listen to an average of 2.5 hours of music each day. Music plays an integral part in teenager’s identity formations; as a way to provide impressions to others, meet emotional needs (North, Hargreaves, & O’Neill, 2000), socialise and form identity (P. S. Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007). These findings confirm associations and motives for youth interest in music that many lay people might easily identify, and hardly qualify as novel. What *is* novel is the sheer volume of graphic alcohol related references in today’s music.

Alcohol in music

Links between alcohol, sex, and aggression have grown more explicit over time (Hardcastle, Hughes, Sharples, & Bellis, 2013). Many artists, especially those within rhythm and blues (R&B), soul, blues, or jazz have sung about alcohol, making no secret of their predilection for the bottle. The 1950s saw a string of R&B hits such as those performed by Amos Milburn - *Bad Bad Whiskey; One Scotch, One Bourbon, One Beer*, for example. The “rat pack” of the 1960s – including Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Junior, and Dean Martin – developed a reputation as hard drinking, sophisticated rogues (S. Levy, 1999). Music in the 1970s was replete with references to substance use. Yet audiences of 1950s, 60s or 70s might now be shocked by the ways in which the content of music has become more graphic and explicit in its portrayal of alcohol, misogyny, and violence. Consider the following lyrics from LMFAO and Lil’ John’s 2009 collaboration, *Shots* (Delatorre, Gordy, Gordy, & Smith, 2009), which explicitly link alcohol and sex. The video has garnered over 169 million hits on Youtube (LMFAOVEVO, 2009):

The ladies love us
When we pour shots
They need an excuse
To suck our cocks...

If you ain't getting drunk get the fuck out the club
If you ain't takin' shots get the fuck out the club
If you ain't come to party get the fuck out the club
Now where my alcoholics let me see ya hands up
What you drinkin on?

Even the more palatable, mainstream collaboration of husband and wife duo Jay Z and Beyonce, *Drunk in Love* (Carter et al., 2013) drew condemnation for its controversial reference to Ike Turner's assault of his wife, Tina Turner, née Anna Mae (eg., Mokoena, 2014; Tate, 2013). The song begins with a celebration of drunken sex between Beyonce and Jay Z, in itself relatively innocuous:

I've been drinking, I've been drinking
I get filthy when that liquor get into me

The domestic violence reference occurs as part of Jay Z's rap; serving to unite alcohol, sex and violence in just a few lines which also reference the boxer Mike Tyson:

Catch a charge I might, beat the box up like Mike
In '97 I bite, I'm Ike, Turner, turn up
Baby no I don't play, now eat the cake Anna Mae
Said, "Eat the cake, Anna Mae!"

These tracks are not isolated examples. A significant increase in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug content occurred in the 50 years from 1957- 2007 (P. C. Hall, West, & Neeley, 2012). From 1979 - 1997, rap songs referencing alcohol increased five-fold, with the overwhelming majority painting alcohol use in a positive light (Herd, 2005). Other U.S. based content analyses have shown this trend continuing unabated. In an analysis of the lyrical content of the 279 most popular songs of 2005, Primack, Dalton, Carroll, Agarwal, and Fine (2008) revealed that 23.7% portrayed alcohol use, with the majority of these portraying it positively. Only 4% of songs contained explicit substance refusal, and substance use was "frequently motivated by peer acceptance and sex" (p. 2). Specific brands are also referenced 25% of the time that alcohol is mentioned within songs in the U.S. (Primack et al., 2012), leading the authors to postulate increasing ties between the liquor and music industries. In the U.K., Hardcastle et al. (2013), noted a steep rise in alcohol related content in popular music between 1981- 2011. In all these, alcohol use, especially in rap and hip-hop, was most often linked to positive outcomes and behaviours, including wealth, sex, luxury items, and partying.

To a greater extent than music alone, music videos create meaning through the marriage of modes: music and image. Perhaps it is for this reason that videos have increasingly been used as vehicles for marketing alcohol (Burkhalter & Thornton, 2014). Analyses of music videos have found that alcohol use was present in one fifth to one third, with rap and hip-hop videos twice as likely as any other genre to portray drinking; such portrayals are often linked to humour (Gruber, Thau, Hill, Fisher, & Grube, 2005). The NZ charts have significant overseas musical content, exposing this country's youth to increasing alcohol and drug imagery. One study found that 19.5% of music videos screened on NZ television in 2010 contained references to alcohol use, largely within the overseas (U.S.) content (Sloane, Wilson, & Imlach Gunasekara, 2013), and more alcohol references were found in hip-hop and R&B. Especially concerning for Collinson et al. (2014), is the frequent association between violence and alcohol in music videos shown within NZ; violence was present in 34.5% of videos portraying alcohol. Burkhalter and Thornton (2014) argue that product placement in music videos is a deliberate marketing strategy. They identified alcohol marketing in 9.3% of hip-hop videos, for purposes similar to advertising: "to serve as a mechanism to transfer cultural meaning from brands to consumers" (p.4). Such studies raise the question: is content causally related to consumption?

Do music media influence youth drinking?

Taking note of the high rates of positive alcohol portrayal in modern music media, some have attempted to establish causality. Van den Bulck and Beullens (2005) found that viewing music videos containing drinking lowered the threshold for substance experimentation in a Belgian sample. Engels, Hermans, Van Baaren, Hollenstein, and Bot (2009) demonstrated that Dutch participants exposed to movies and commercials containing large amounts of alcohol content in a bar setting drank more than those in the condition with no alcohol content. Another Netherlands based study found an increased proclivity for drugs and alcohol in 15 year olds who listened to dance music (Ter Bogt, Keijsers, & Meeus, 2013). In one of the few studies focused on early adolescents, music preferences, and alcohol consumption, Kam, Wang, and Harvey (2014) found a link between exposure to music with alcohol references and consumption beliefs and patterns. However, this correlational study cannot rule out the possibility that consumption preferences and pre-existing beliefs may lead adolescents to seek out music that contains these elements. Wills (2009) found that movie exposure was related to increases in adolescent alcohol use. In an overview of the quantitative research investigating the relationship between different types of media and adolescent drinking, Koordeman, Anschutz, and Engels (2012) concluded that television, movie, and music video watching influences the onset and progression of alcohol consumption in adolescence. Thus, it seems clear that the value-laden images espoused through music media do influence young people's views, and attitudes about alcohol, and may also affect drinking behaviours. While much research demonstrates this link, much less has identified *how* this happens - an important question and one that more exploratory qualitative methodologies might

be able to tackle. Ratele, Shefer, and Strebel (2010) explored conceptions of masculinity by South African teenage males, and showed that alcohol use discourses are tied to persuasive gendered discourses. In assuming the strong ‘impact of popular music culture in boys’ lives’ (p. 559) they used rap music videos containing both what they considered hegemonic and marginal representations of masculinity to facilitate discussions. They found that masculinity was constructed by teenage boys in response to these videos, as the performance of a set of activities that are permissible. Also, the boys considered masculine activities in opposition to constructions of femininity and homosexuality. Alcohol consumption and smoking were gendered activities; women were considered less feminine and thus less attractive if seen consuming alcohol in the videos, and were considered less likely to handle it than men – highlighting again the links between masculinity and tolerance.

The Youtube revolution

Writing in the lull between the decline of the once popular MTV and the dawning of the Youtube revolution, Austerlitz (2007) wrote what could be considered a eulogy for a soon to be forgotten cultural commodity enduring its death throes, announcing that the music video medium “appears to have mostly run its course, or at least hit a momentary rut in its evolution” (p. 1). But far from ‘running its course’, the music video did in fact hit a rut from which it has since been well and truly liberated. Although commercial radio and tips from peers are important in discovering new music, Youtube has become the most popular way for teens in the U.S. to listen (SoundScan, 2014). In NZ, 62% of internet users at least occasionally watched videos online, with Youtube being the most popular forum for this (Crothers et al., 2014). The burgeoning popularity of Youtube has seen the music video format thrive through its provision of virtually unlimited access to a huge variety of content. Much of Youtube’s music or other content depicts alcohol intoxication, and includes specific alcohol brand name references (Cranwell et al., 2015; Primack et al., 2015). In the first content analysis of its kind, Cranwell et al. (2015) investigated the prevalence of alcohol and tobacco imagery and use within music videos hosted by Youtube. They found high rates of alcohol use within these music videos, and reported that these were in fact higher for online music videos than those reported by earlier studies that focused on television formats. Moreover, they identified increasing ties between the artists themselves and the liquor industry as a significant reason for this increase in content.

In what Holt (2011) terms the “video turn” in music- a proliferation of audio-visual musical material owing to Youtube and other online platforms - the ‘official video’ serves the same function as the video that was produced to “stage a song on music television” (p. 52); that is, for marketing purposes. Music videos “are both advertisements for the product (the music) and ads for themselves” (p. 6). Their methods and formulas, such as fast cutting and rhythmic editing, are therefore similar (Railton & Watson, 2011). Yet, because of their directorial influence, Vernallis (2004) argues against simply equating the music videos with advertising. Add to this the wishes of the artist themselves to create a brand, and the music video can be considered a form of pop art. But the implication that the

music video represents more of a creative expression than the commercial does not necessarily dispense with discussion of its persuasiveness. It ultimately invests the music video with greater potential for selling, by masquerading as something *more* than advertising, and often through the use of inventive or novel methods.

Big business

Aufderheide (1986) considered the music video's effectiveness through the observation that it "never delivers a hard sell ... Instead, it equates the product with an experience to be shared, part of a wondrous leisure world" (p. 62). One important way the 'wondrous leisure worlds' are created is through sexualised imagery. In this way, Austerlitz (2007) argues, music videos "force emotion", eliciting resentment, but also respect for "how consistently and skillfully the button is pushed" (p. 5). This aspect places the music video firmly within mainstream 'raunch culture' (A. Levy, 2006).

An increase in alcohol branding in the music industry (eg., Burkhalter & Thornton, 2014; Primack et al., 2012) shows that the "button" is frequently pushed to sell more than just the song or the artist. Today's wealthiest artists have transformed the popular appeal they initially garnered through music into other commercial ventures. Although initially a rapper and producer, Dr. Dre is not the prolific artist he once was; his latest (2015) release comes sixteen years after his previous one (Britton, 2015). Yet he now tops the rich list for rappers, is the third most powerful celebrity on the planet, and is close to becoming the world's first billionaire hip-hop artist (Forbes, 2015b). Much of his wealth can be attributed, not to his music royalties, but to sales of his range of 'Beats by Dre' headphones. In a symbiotic relationship with other artists, he has exploited the global reach of music videos to increase the prestige and visibility of his product to an ever-widening market. Busta Rhymes, another U.S. rapper, unearthed the marketing potential of music videos. He purportedly helped to increase the sales of Courvoisier cognac by 'double digits' through his 2002 song *Pass the Courvoisier* (Sung & De Gregorio, 2008). The artists, in turn, benefit from association with a glamorous brand, and of course the money paid by the 'advertiser'. Importantly, the next on the list for the world's richest hip-hop artist is Sean "Diddy" Combs, aka P.Diddy (Forbes, 2015a). Like Dr. Dre, he is no longer a prolific recording artist (Billboard, 2015c) yet the brand for which he is an ambassador, Ciroc vodka, makes appearances in many of today's music videos, including the extremely popular *Sorry for Party Rocking* (Beck, Gordy, & Gordy, 2012) which references Beats by Dre and Ciroc vodka through product placement. Vernallis (2004) articulates the benefits for each party: "contemporary culture has made it hard to determine what is designed to promote what" (p. 91). The products promote music videos as much as the videos promote products.

The business acumen and financial success of artists such as P Diddy and Dr. Dre seem to have inspired other artists, including Pitbull. No longer content to accept the profits offered up by the recorded music industry, Pitbull has used his status to market Voli vodka - a company in which he is a major shareholder (Baddish Group, 2013). Thus, as Pitbull himself points out, today's performer is a

businessman too: “Look, Pitbull is a *product*. Don’t get it fucked up—I’m a businessman. This industry is 90 percent business, 10 percent talent” (Pitbull, in Russell, 2012, italics in original).

Genre, meaning and legitimacy

Two major drivers of music videos: the capitalist imperative to sell – whether more records or more vodka - and the artists’ desires to make artistic statements are aspects that virtually all music videos share. Yet despite similarities in function, the use of techniques to achieve commercial success can differ dramatically between music videos. For Austerlitz (2007), music videos “straddle genres, typologies, functions” (p. 4). In acknowledging this complexity, Railton and Watson (2011) have attempted to sort music videos into genre according to video structure rather than music genre. One cannot speak of a ‘typical’ rap, country, or pop video; diverse musical genres have shared similar video formats. Railton and Watson (2011) distinguish four major genres: The *Pseudo- Documentary* “deploys the aesthetics of documentary realism to portray the ‘working life’ of the band or artist” (p. 49); the *Art Music Video*, “claims legitimacy by appealing to notions of art and aesthetics” (p. 51); the *Narrative Music Video* “tells a story” (p. 55); and the *Staged Performance Music Video* “exploit(s) a performance that is explicitly staged for the production of the video” (p. 58). Hybridity between the four genres occurs frequently. Despite its name, the *narrative music video* does not usually deliver narratives fully formed. Vernallis (2004) argues that most music videos tend to be non-narrative or incomplete narratives. One reason for this is a music video’s adherence to its song’s structure. Pop songs tend to explore a concept or theme rather than tell a story. Thus, Vernallis argues for considering “music video’s narrative dimension in relation to its other purposes: underscoring the music, highlighting the lyrics, and showcasing the star” (ibid., p. 3). One might add advertising considerations to these.

In eschewing fully formed narratives music videos rely on meanings evoked by images: the music video format possesses an “open-ended quality ... where image is reality” (Aufderheide, 1986, pp. 57-58). Some have accordingly labeled music videos as postmodern (Wollen, 1986). Mundy (1994) suggests that in music videos “the old distinction between fiction and reality simply dissolves” (p. 260). He draws on Lyotard’s (1984) contention that postmodernism surrenders a totalising meta-narrative and, paraphrasing Baudrillard, asserts that “if, for modernism, language - the sign - referred to reality, for postmodernism the sign has *become* reality (Mundy, 1994, p. 260, emphasis in original). Postmodernism may be a thing of the past (Braidotti, 2005), but the sign’s status *as* reality within music videos stands. Yet Mundy (1994) asks: if all that remains is the image, how do music videos position us to take certain meanings from them? Ultimately he concludes: “whether [post-modernism] negates and replaces all that has gone before- ideology, power, control, and the classic patterns of capitalist production and accumulation- remains in doubt” (p. 266). Music videos are primarily concerned with money, and nowhere is the persuasive force of the music video’s commercial imperative stronger than in those spawned by the pop music industry. Although they may not appeal

to metanarratives of progress or enlightenment, these videos can nevertheless be understood within the exploitative rubrics of several 'isms' and their metanarratives: capitalism, consumerism, neo-liberalism, and post-feminism. All promote individual consumption and commodification. Lyotard's question: "Where, after the metanarratives, can legitimacy reside?" (Lyotard, 1993, p. 73) Has been taken up by Braidotti (2005), who asserts that in the current cultural climate of post-postmodernism "the inevitability of market economies as the historically dominant form of human progress" (p. 169) has emerged as one of two major meta-narratives (the other is the determinism of evolutionary biology). Money, fame, and power have thus emerged as legitimate pursuits in their own right.

Pop music videos absorb, repackage and recirculate cultural values (Railton & Watson, 2011) and position us to see particular values as legitimate over others. If, in a consumer culture, wealth accumulation characterises progress (Braidotti, 2005), then these might be reflected in dominant discourses provided through pop music videos. Indeed, Belle (2014) recognises the potential freedom that rap music has to offer Black men, but also that "hip-hop is a microcosm of patriarchal and hegemonic ideals promoting male domination physically, financially, and lyrically" (p. 288). Given the global popularity of 'gangsta' rap among ethnically diverse audiences (Morgan & Bennett, 2011) and the extent to which rap elements have become incorporated within pop music for global dissemination (Johnson, 2008), it is important to consider their take-up in diverse local contexts.

Power: from video to viewer, and back again

Consideration of the global appeal of music videos and the capitalist imperatives driving them necessitates concern with mechanisms of power. Gill (2008) warns against a 'hypodermic effect' model of cultural representations, whereby certain agents foist representations upon impressionable audiences. Equally, however, Gill warns of altogether discounting the effects that cultural representations can have. Connell (1995) and Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) also assert that hegemonic masculinity is not a simplistic, unidirectional power dynamic; that it perpetually faces challenges from "protest masculinities" (Connell, 1995). However, the underlying structuralist assumptions that gave rise to the theory have, for some (eg. Whitehead 2002, Beasley 2012, Pringle, 2005), allowed it to be interpreted as unidirectional. These assumptions are manifest in Connell's statement that: "The hegemonic masculinities are those of the corporate world" (Connell, 2012, p. 14). This comment, however understandable within western free-market capitalism, demonstrates a propensity to locate patriarchal power with specific men. But it is erroneous to consider power as located in any *one* particular place. Instead it might be seen in the "flows and specific convergences and consolidations of talk, discourse, and attentions" (McRobbie, 2004, p. 256). It is "constitutive and not merely prohibitive" (Beasley, 2008, p. 756). And, as Foucault argued: "[power] traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourses" (Foucault, in Rabinow, 1991, p. 61). Hegemony, then, as a mechanism of power, might depend for its legitimacy upon its capacity to produce pleasure. As mentioned, this pleasure might be considered in relation to Connell's

(1995) notion of the patriarchal dividend. However, hegemonic masculinity, as a set of ideals or discourses, is not necessarily embodied by those who exercise dominance; ‘non-ideal’ men may be socially or financially dominant. Conversely, men who do actually embody the ‘manly’ hegemonic ideals of mass media may actually represent a relatively subordinated minority (Beasley, 2008).

In the music industry, then, record company executives or producers of music videos could be considered dominant men in that they wield financial resources without *necessarily* embodying ideals of hegemonic masculinity themselves. They might, however, recirculate ideals of hegemonic masculinity in music videos as a way of appealing to, and uniting different men for commercial purposes. It is not to say that there cannot be an overlap between dominant masculinities and hegemonic masculinities. A large degree of Dr Dre’s financial dominance is based on the ideals of ‘gangsta-masculinity’ that form part of his ‘brand,’ regardless of the fact that the brand *may* no longer correspond to his own ‘real life’ situation. Despite benefiting from them, these ideals hold an appeal that is not entirely of Dr Dre’s making, but are due to a variety of complex historical, political, and social factors (LaGrone, 2000). Likewise, Snoop Dogg maintains a thuggish, womanizing ‘gangsta’ image despite being happily married with children (Powell, 2011). The discourses within the music videos of Dr Dre or Snoop Dogg are not merely ‘inflicted’ upon audiences but reflect dominant discourses extant within culture. Discourses flow through, converge, and collide within music videos, but their power is contingent on the extent to which they ‘produce discourses’ *through* audiences. Produced largely in the U.S., the selected music videos have been exported as global popular culture and integrated into the local culture of NZ through local audiences, and interpreted in light of local and regional discourses of masculinity. To what extent does patriarchal power result from this convergence?

It may be that a variety of representations of masculinity are provided through music videos, in which audiences can recognize local versions of masculinity, and ‘take them up’ or reject them accordingly. Yet Railton and Watson (2011) assert that despite ostensible variety, there is a unity throughout versions of masculinity presented in music videos which represents global masculine values within the current historic bloc. Moreover, such a unity makes sense when considered either with Connell and Messerschmidt’s (2005) framework, or through a postfeminist lens (McRobbie, 2009). Thus, the overlaps between these theories are rendered visible.

Summary: Chapter three

Music media have a large role to play in influencing both gender and alcohol consumption, and do so according to a capitalist agenda of wealth accumulation. They promulgate and perpetuate discourses glorifying commodification and consumerism. Music videos provide explicit images and representations of drinking and gender that need to be investigated for how they are taken up or resisted by their target markets. In light of the dearth of qualitative research NZ exploring the role that music videos have in influencing teenage boys’ constructions of masculinity and alcohol use, the

current study attempted to identify and analyse their responses to the videos. Analysis of music videos was deemed important because teenagers might be considered their major target audience (A. Riley, 2005). Moreover, young teenage boys are beginning to grapple discursively with masculinity as they transition to adulthood, and are likely to become increasingly exposed to alcohol and discourses linking it to masculinity. Therefore, stage one of this research aimed to explore the dominant discourses around masculinity and alcohol constructed within four popular music videos, and identify the extent to which they linked alcohol to masculinity. Stage two involved talking to groups of young teenage boys to explore the ways in which they make sense of the four music videos.

Social constructionism is the underlying theory informing this research. Broadly speaking, this epistemological position stems from postmodernist challenges to hitherto held assumptions of modernism: individual knowledge, the belief in an objective world, and the role of language as a vessel for information transfer (Gergen, 2001). In place of these assumptions, social constructionism draws on theorists such as Wittgenstein (1953, *in* Gergen, 2001) to posit that knowledge is actively constructed through language. Rather than residing in an inner state of the speaker or reflecting an external objective reality, language takes meaning from shared cultural conventions, outside of which it has no meaning. To use language, then, is to participate in a relationship, and its 'truth' value depends on the extent to which others play that particular language game (see Wittgenstein's game theory of language, 1953, cited in Gergen, 2001).

Stage one research questions

With this in mind, the first question this study sought to answer is: what discourses do pop music videos construct around masculinity and alcohol consumption? Relatedly, it also seeks to examine the relationship between these two aspects, by asking: to what extent is alcohol consumption linked to masculinity within the music videos, and how is it linked? In light of the co-constructed nature of gender, another important question was: how is masculinity constructed in relation to femininity within the music videos? And finally, how do the videos fit within current theoretical gender frameworks, such as post-feminism or hegemonic masculinity?

Chapter four: Critical multimodal analysis of four popular music videos

“We are witness to a hyper-culture of commercial sexuality” (McRobbie, 2004, p. 259)

Stage one of this research involved the selection and multimodal analysis of four target music videos to explore the discourses employed. Critical multimodal discourse analysis (CMDA) was the approach taken, primarily for its recognition that texts position readers/ viewers to take certain meanings, and this meaning is created through a variety of semiotic modes. In the case of music videos this point is particularly salient due to the combination of musical, visual, and verbal elements that combine to produce meanings, and which are not reducible to one or the other modes. The benefits of analyzing the music videos include examination of the ways they might conform to, or lie outside those theoretical frameworks already outlined. Identifying the dominant discourses was also a first step in then exploring how teenage boys take up, resist or modify the discourses offered by the music videos.

Selection of videos

The selection criteria for the videos used in this study were content, popularity, and contemporaneousness. The target content was specified as at least 3 lyrical references to alcohol and/or its effects, as well as conspicuous visual consumption of alcohol, or alcohol product placement. As the focus of the research was on masculinity, it was important that the videos featured male artists. Popularity was established through Youtube views, which are an important measure of a music video’s popularity. Popularity provided greater certainty that the participants would have previously engaged with the songs and/or videos. The cut-off point for popularity was a minimum of 50 million views on Youtube.

To ensure familiarity, the music videos selected needed to have been produced within the previous four years. Given the target demographic for this study was 13–15 year old boys, any videos more than four years old may have escaped their attention. A search of *Youtube* provided songs that met the criteria for contemporaneousness and popularity. A content analysis of the videos that met these criteria yielded a shortlist of 22 potential options. As a final step, six prospective participants were asked at an initial information session which of the songs they were familiar with. From this, the list was reduced to 7 videos which were familiar to at least half of the participants. Four music videos were chosen from these seven, as they had over 150 million Youtube views and were included in the U.S. Billboard Hot 100. The four videos were *Hangover* (Psy featuring Snoop Dogg), *Timber* (Pitbull featuring Kesha), *Sorry for Party Rocking* (LMFAO), and *Wild Ones* (Flo Rida featuring Sia). Each is described briefly below.

The four music videos

Timber

Globally, *Timber* is perhaps the most widely known song of those chosen. In 2014 it reached number one on 30 charts around the world, including the U.S. *Billboard*, and finished at number eleven for the top 100 songs of that year (Billboard, 2015e). In NZ it also performed well, peaking at number 3, and remaining in the top 40 singles chart for 27 weeks (Recorded Music NZ Ltd., 2015b). As of writing the official version of the video had received 670,451,551 hits on Youtube, climbing from 497,584,175 views in a period of less than a year (PitbullVevo, 2013). The video was nominated in MTV's 2014 Video Music Awards best collaboration category (MTV, 2015). Fourteen different writers/ composers wrote *Timber*, including Armando Christian Perez and Kesha Sebert who, under the respective pseudonyms of Pitbull and Ke\$ha are the performers of the song (Warner/ Chappell Music, 2015). Kesha has a strong history of collaborations with other artists, and is a well-known artist. As part of the way she has marketed herself, she has crafted an image of imperviousness to political correctness (Weiner, 2010). The song itself is a pastiche of country and club dance elements, earning it the epithets: "faux-country dance" (Lipshutz, 2014), "club-hoedown hybrid" and "bro country" (Molanphy, 2014). The country elements include aspects of instrumentation, melody, rhythm, and lyrics. Its hip-hop elements include rap, and its dance music conventions include a 'four-on-the-floor' (a thumping kick-drum on each beat of a four beat bar) rhythm and conventions such as tension building and 'beat dropping.'

Wild Ones

Flo Rida (real name Tramar Dillard) was born in Miami, Florida. His song, *Wild Ones*, was a popular hit upon its 2012 release. The *Billboard's* Hot 100 list for the end of the year 2012 listed the song at number 11 based on radio play, sales, and streaming data over a year (Billboard, 2015d). In NZ, the song reached number one on the NZ Top 40 singles chart, where it remained for 8 weeks (Recorded Music NZ Ltd., 2015a). The official video, at time of writing, had 268,358,653 views on Youtube, an increase from 237, 692, 511 under a year earlier (Flo Rida, 2012). It contains many of the same formulaic elements as *Timber*. Musically, it is a dance/ club song. Its form is also similar to that of *Timber*, borrowing from dance and rap music conventions. As with *Timber*, this song begins with the chorus or hook, sung by a female artist (Sia) before the beat 'drops' and the feature artist (Flo Rida) starts rapping. The beat, as with *Timber*, includes a four on the floor electronic kick drum, but features a snare or hand-clap on the 2 and the 4 of each beat of the bar. A syncopated synthesiser track provides a pulsating feel. Visually, it utilises the same editing style of cutting rapidly and often rhythmically between different scenes. The video for the song employs pseudo-documentary (Railton & Watson, 2011) elements of Flo Rida engaging in a variety of 'high adrenaline' activities in Dubai and Miami (sky-diving, racing *Ferraris*, dune buggying etc.) rapidly cut with scenes of partying

within a club. The average shot length of the video is short (0.9 seconds). It includes enhanced performance also, and a mini-narrative of an airboat ride Flo Rida takes with his friends, his stranding on a pontoon in the marshes, and a rescue staged by his love interest, after which the lovers leave their friends behind.

Sorry for Party Rocking (LMFAO)

LMFAO (a common text abbreviation of *laughed my fucking ass off*) is a now defunct duo consisting of Stefan Gordy and his nephew Skyler Gordy, who perform under the stage names of Redfoo and SkyBlu, respectively (IMDB, 2015). Redfoo is the son of Motown founder Berry Gordy, and SkyBlu is Berry Gordy's grandson (Billboard, 2015a). Their album, *Sorry for Party Rocking* was criticised by Sam Wolfson, of *NME*, for combining "persistent and aggressive misogyny [with] ever-so-slightly tongue-in-cheek" humour (Wolfson, 2011). Despite this, the single *Sorry for Party Rocking (SFPR)*, released in 2012, is popular. It currently has 234, 550, 031 views on Youtube. It featured in the NZ Top 40 singles chart for 3 weeks, peaking at no. 27 (Recorded Music NZ Ltd., 2015c) and reached number 49 on the *Billboard Hot 100* (Billboard, 2015b). The video's formula, while still relying on enhanced performance, is more focussed (than the two above) around a singular linear narrative. There are approximately 152 shots in a total video length of 7:17, providing a relatively long average shot length of 2.88 seconds. It relies more heavily than the previous two on humour, and is set largely within the confines of a fictional house party in a stereotypically suburban neighbourhood. The simple narrative is created through introduction, conflict, and resolution. The video itself also features as part of a larger narrative, as a prequel to another of their videos which starts where *SFPR* ends, in a parody of Hollywood's propensity for the same.

Hangover

Hangover, by the Korean Pop (K pop) star Psy and the U.S. rapper Snoop Dogg, is the final video analysed. It is a heavily produced electronic song, slower song than the others. The hook repeats 'hangover' many times, and the video echoes this repetition both through structure and content to emphasise the message of repeated drinking. Although this song did not perform as well as Psy's global hit *Gangnam Style* (which at over 1 billion views is credited with the most Youtube hits ever), it has still received over 174 million Youtube views. A large proportion of this success might reasonably be attributed to Psy's previous success with *Gangnam style*, but also to the appearance of Snoop Dogg, one of the industry's biggest rap stars. Snoop Dogg is an icon of rap music with a long career in the industry. As Powell (2011) argues, "with his acquittal from murder charges, gang affiliation, rap-lyric adulation of marijuana... and pornographic video production company, Snoop Dogg the hip-hop referent *is* thug life personified" (p. 466, italics in original). But although mentioned, references to 'gangsta' life are not as frequent in *Hangover* as they have been in Snoop

Dogg's past performances. His performance in this video is almost a caricature of the 'brand' he has created: referencing it but never quite embodying it fully. This sense of self-parody is heightened by the video's light-hearted ironic humour, and also, perhaps by his incongruous appearance alongside Psy. But it is doubtful whether the irony conveyed through this parody of a typical Korean heavy drinking session was ultimately successful – at least for western audiences. Park (2015) suggests that Psy's previous hit, *Gangnam Style*, was popular because of its reproduction of “the emasculated and clownish Asian male” stereotype (p. 3) rather than for its satire of the South Korean upper class. Western audiences may be “laughing at him” (Park, 2015, p. 7, emphasis in original). This collaboration may thus be an attempt at accessing a form of masculinity more in keeping with western hegemonic ideals - the “gangsta lifestyle epitomized by criminal activities, a celebration of wealth and consumption, and a distinctive phallogocentric hedonism” (Diallo, 2007, p. 324) of black sexuality (Gray, 1995) that Snoop Dogg has evinced throughout his long career. But, if Snoop Dogg's status as a hegemonic masculine ideal might ‘rub off’ on Psy, Psy's emasculated ‘minstrelsy’ (Park, 2015) might in turn influence the way Snoop Dogg is regarded.

Analytical approach

Analysis of the music videos took a critical multi modal discourse analysis (CMDA) approach, which is a fusion of critical discourse analysis and multi-modal analysis (Machin and Mayr 2012). Critical discourse analysis extends simple linguistic content analyses or literal analysis approaches to explore in greater depth the ways in which authors and texts position or even manipulate readers through techniques. Although a “loose combination of approaches founded in linguistics” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 1), a CMDA approach was appropriate to this study's concerns with uncovering the positioning strategies and discourses promulgated through music videos. CMDA seeks to “‘denaturalise’ multimodal representations” and “reveal the kinds of power interests buried in them” (Machin and Mayr, 2012, pp. 9 -10).

Multimodality recognises that a variety of modes other than the purely textual create meaning (O'Halloran, Tan, Smith, & Podlasov, 2011). A variety of modes are essential to many forms of communication and therefore cannot be ignored in analysis (G. Kress & Ogborn, 1998, in Iedema, 2003, p. 39). Indeed, for Baldry and Thibault (2006), no text is ever mono-modal (even written texts). Moreover, the integration of modes creates a whole that cannot be reduced to one mode without losing the meaning of the text. The combination of semiotic modes has been called *intersemiosis* (Jewitt, 2009a, in O'Halloran 2011); in combination, the different modes create meanings that are unique to what might arise if considered in isolation from each other. Importantly, music may serve to provide “temporal continuity across visual cuts” (Iedema, 2001, cited in Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001, p. 188). While music videos often include fast cutting between different spaces and times, it is the music that frequently marries these disparate images into a unified whole.

A plethora of concepts abound within the multimodal literature (O'Halloran et al., 2011), but several crucial aspects of CMDA are outlined by Baldry and Thibault (2006) and provided guidance for analysis. What they term the 'resource integration principle' captures the two notions of 'use' and 'function'. A director may *use* certain visual semiotic resources (defined by the authors as a "system of semiotic forms," p. 16) in the creation of a music video, which in turn *function* to position viewers in a certain way. 'Use' will be modified by contextual factors (Baldry and Thibault (2006) such as the cultural background of the director, the constraints of budget, technology, or artistic nous, or the dictates of the record label and artist (Railton & Watson, 2011). Similarly, the ways these semiotic resources 'function' to position audiences will vary according to the socio-cultural context of the individual, making multimodal analysis a complicated affair. Moreover, a music video's meanings are never static: "even the process of making a video recording of a television advertisement [or music video] and its subsequent viewing is itself an act of selective recontextualisation of a prior semiotic event" (Baldry & Thibault, 2006, p. 165). Hence, the CMDA analysis within this thesis provides an example of recontextualisation; the criticism and analysis brought to the music videos in an academic context is likely to yield some readings which are different to those of a teenage boy watching for entertainment. This will be explored directly in stage two of the current research.

A variety of 'semiotic resources' (O'Halloran et al., 2011) combine in music videos to create meaning. CMDA of music videos might consider how lyrical content (the textual) combines with visual elements - clothes, gesture, movement, posture (Baldry & Thibault, 2006); and how these are communicated through cinematographic and editing choices - camera angles, shot duration, for example (K. Thompson & Bordwell, 1993.); colour (G. Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2002); and musical elements of pitch, rhythm, timbre, and tempo (Van Leeuwen, 1998). An important concept considered in this analysis, is the 'metafunction.' Originally proposed by Halliday (1994), the metafunction has been adapted to dynamic audio-visual texts by Baldry and Thibault (2006). The 'experiential metafunction' refers to "the internal relations between the depicted participants, things, the actions they perform and the settings or circumstances in which they occur" (p. 39). The interpersonal (interaction or orientation) metafunction is conveyed through gaze, distance, and perspective. For example, a direct relationship between the viewer and the participant may be established through a direct gaze at the camera, in which something is asked of the viewer (G. R. Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996); with reference to distance, a close-up creates an intimacy lacking from a long shot. Perspective may refer to the camera angle the viewer is given. A low angle shot, for example, would help imbue the participant with a greater degree of authority, or perhaps as more socially distant than eye level (Iedema, 2001). Finally, the 'compositional' or 'textual' metafunction refers to the composition of a text; how it is put together and how it is appreciated as a whole. In audiovisual media it corresponds most closely with editing choices – the ordering of events and how these influence viewers (Iedema, 2001). As an example of how to use some of the tools of CMDA, Cross and Maier's (2014) analysis of Michael Jackson's *Earth Song* was followed. While the videos differ markedly from *Earth Song*,

the overall approach of analysing many aspects of the videos in conjunction with each other suits the aims of this research well. It should be noted however, that much previous multimodal work has involved a level of technicality (see, for instance, Van Leeuwen, 1998) that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Analytic procedure

Having gained an acquaintance with some of the concepts and tools of CMDA, analysis of the videos began. An internet search engine was used to identify and compare sites providing the song lyrics. This established a version of the lyrics for each song that were most accurate. Where there were different versions of the lyrics the researcher repeatedly listened to the song and used his own interpretation. This was only required on two occasions, each time for *Wild Ones*. The lyrics were firstly analysed to identify various metaphors, themes and objects related to gender and alcohol prior to watching. Following this, Youtube was used to view the videos. The videos were viewed many times, with pauses at each change of shot to note down visual elements, such as mise en scène, lighting, camera angles, and other salient features (an example of this can be seen in *Appendix A*). The music mode was also considered for elements that worked with the other modes to create meanings, such as rising tension, hooks, chorus, instrumentation, and melody. Finally, the modes were considered holistically for the discourses they constructed. As lyrical analysis preceded that of the visual mode, the visual and aural modes were generally considered in terms of the ways they augmented, supported or contradicted the lyrics. From this, overall discourses were organised to form the critical component of the analysis. Comparisons were then made between the videos to try and identify, for instance, commonalities in the construction of discourses surrounding masculinity, femininity and alcohol. It should also be noted that, although these readings of the texts approximate ‘ideal readings,’ in reality, actual readings, such as those that might arise through this study’s participants are rarely as complete. (McHoul, 1991, in Iedema, 2001).

Stage One Results

Despite their differences, the music videos are remarkably uniform in their conformity to overwhelmingly dominant, hetero-normative constructions of masculinity. The differences can be recognised as the ‘brand’ each artist attempts to build through idiosyncratic stylistic choices: costume, format, set design, lyrical content and other features. The similarities might be recognised as widespread, perhaps even hegemonic discourses of masculinity. Each song incorporates a rap; this is important because “some analysts describe rap music as part of a larger reaction against the feminist movement, seeking to perpetuate women’s inequality and re-empower men” (Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009, p. 25). This broad, sweeping claim was true of the four videos analysed, whose raps contained themes of misogyny, but also substance use and braggadocio.

Although the 'regional' versions or 'brands' of masculinity presented in each of these videos may appear different, they are united through thinly veiled misogyny and male power - what might be considered global hegemonic ideals. These are overwhelmingly based on heteronormative conceptions of gender that ensure the continued subordination of women. Women in these videos, as will become clear, supply the 'site of penetration' (Butler, 1990); and the constructions of masculinity conform to those symbolic ideals - of taking and dominating - identified by Schippers (2007) as based on heteronormative sex. The dominant discourses that emerged through analysis include 'provision,' 'extreme consumption,' and 'freedom.' Each discourse is described in turn below, and variations within the discourses are explored under sub-headings. This is followed by an analysis of the subject positions that these discourses create when considered in combination. Finally, these results are considered in terms of broader gender conceptualisations.

Provision

"But if any man does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."
(1 Timothy 5:8)

A discourse of provision has helped construct ideals of masculinity since at least the writing of the *New Testament*. More recently, provision is a patriarchal discourse that serves to construct the model of the breadwinner (Bjørnholt, 2014). Howson (2008) considers breadwinning, alongside aggression and heterosexuality, as a currently hegemonic masculine ideal in the West, with which "most men are complicit" (p. 111). Since the industrial revolution the breadwinner has largely provided for the nuclear family. But the increasing participation of women in the workforce has meant that this household role no longer belongs solely to men (Warren, 2007). However, irrespective of the realities of who actually assumes the breadwinner role within modern households, the associations that provision has with masculinity still manifest as an ideal within today's western societies (S. C. Riley, 2003). This traditional discourse was constructed within *Wild Ones* and *Timber* to varying degrees. In *Wild Ones* responsibility was cited and subverted to include a responsibility to provide a good time for others. 'Family' was also extended to fans or the artists' 'crew,' band, or fans.

In *Timber* the connection between Pitbull and the 'action' in which he is not physically present is made through frequent jump cuts; the presentation of his image on the television screens behind the saloon bar and on the jukebox; and the unitary function of the music. In this way a sense of omnipotence and omnipresence is conveyed, of Pitbull manipulating the action from afar. In the video, the saloon patrons experienced a transformation of their fortunes when an attractive woman initiated *Timber* on the jukebox. While the woman ostensibly starts the party, the jump cuts and other visual links between this simple narrative and Pitbull leave the viewer with no mistake as to who is *actually* providing the entertainment. He is not only responsible for the song that has transformed the everyday, 'hum drum' bar scene into a party, but has also supplied the women (his suited attire

reminds one of a pimp when considered in light of this) and the alcohol. Moreover, wealth was a highly valued ideal in this video (“blessed to say, money ain’t a thing”), partly for its ability to facilitate provision of the ‘dreamscape’ for others.

In *Wild Ones* a discourse of provision was more explicit. Flo Rida is the leader of his ‘crew,’ with whom he engages in various fun activities such as skydiving, air boating and partying - shot pseudo-documentary style with elements of enhanced performance (Railton & Watson, 2011) to show us that *this is his life*. Moreover, the frequent mid-shots of him surrounded by his friends show him as the centre of the attention, as responsible for the fun they are evidently having. As is clear from the shots of the crew as they skim across the marshes on a speeding fan boat, they are literally ‘riding’ on his success.

The lyrics in *Wild Ones* support a sense of provision:

Said I gotta be the man
I'm the head of my band, mic check one two
Shut them down in the club while the playboy does it, and y'all get loose

Flo Rida is the reason for the party. The first line (“I gotta be the man”) establishes a gendered discourse and provides a sense of responsibility. He has ‘got’ to be the man. The rest of the verse clarifies what this involves: the provision of good times for others. The inclusive nature of this verse is also an important aspect. ‘Band’ refers not just to the other musicians that might perform with him, but to his fans, as indicated by the collectivity inherent in the use of the second person and inclusive pronouns that follow (“y’all get loose,” and “we all get bent”). He is the ‘head’ of his band in a way that is reminiscent of the provider as head of the household. Thus, in much the same way that elements of the video’s pseudo-documentary genre (Railton & Watson, 2011) let us into his life, these lyrics also provide a sense of the audience as part of it, with him as the leader; the provider of good times for which the viewer is at least partially dependent on the artist.

Other examples of the visual mode further support his ability to supply his fans with an experience. An over-the-shoulder shot of his phone while he is sitting on his motorbike, for instance, reveals him ‘tweeting’ an invite to his *Twitter* followers to come join him: “come party with me & the IMG/STRONGARM [his record label] family for a #Good feeling on Miami beach!! Calling all #wild ones for this one.” ‘Family’ is significant here in marking out his status as the ‘the head of the band’ and patriarchal provider. Further, the inclusive nature of his brand of masculinity is only heightened through the reference to his fans as “#Wild Ones” to whom he promises a “#Good Feeling.” Each of these is a title of a song, and he is promoting them here in a way that breaks down the ‘wall’ between artist and fan.

Provision is further constructed through the nightclub scenes. While others dance, hand-held shots depict the artist sitting at a table upon which an ice bucket, vodka and champagne bottles, and

champagne flutes sit. He is surrounded by friends, including his love interest, and is once again placed here as the centre of attention- the hub and heart of the party. But while he seems to cite responsibility to be this type of person for his friends and fans, he also corrupts the breadwinner values of middle-class respectability and financial prudence; he ‘breaks loose’ and helps others break loose. He is able to ‘shut down the club’ and provides the party, women and alcohol. Although this subverts traditional constructions of breadwinning, it remains one in which a distinct type of provision is valued - enabled through financial resources attained through a certain kind of work (and play) ethic and physical exertion. The provision that was evident in *Wild Ones* and (to a lesser extent) *Timber* was largely absent in *SFPR* (although as the party host, Redfoo might be considered as a provider) and *Hangover*. As will be seen, these latter two videos instead espoused a more laddish sense of irresponsibility.

Extreme consumption

“Oh my goddamit, there’s the fucking limit” (Psy and Snoop Dogg, *Hangover*)

A discourse that celebrated extreme consumption was constructed within the videos. ‘Extreme consumption’ as a category has been incorporated into literature examining drinking games amongst U.S. college students (eg., LaBrie, Hummer, Kenney, Lac, & Pedersen, 2011; Zamboanga et al., 2013). These games help achieve heavy intoxication within a brief timeframe, and as such do not rely on skill or strategy to the same extent as other games (Zamboanga et al., 2013). Within the videos this definition of extreme consumption was certainly observed in relation to alcohol – augmented by a sense that ‘life is short’ - but extended beyond it. As such, its use as a discursive label here was broadened to encompass extreme consumption of a variety of consumables.

Extreme consumption of alcohol was entwined with tolerance in some instances, where the ability to tolerate extreme consumption was valorised. Alcohol tolerance has been discussed as a traditional way of performing or embodying masculinity (eg., H. Campbell, 2000; Peralta, 2007; Peralta et al., 2010). But, in somewhat contradictory fashion, a lack of alcohol tolerance was also permitted, and even glorified in certain of these videos. Nevertheless, while it was not always imperative that one’s body should tolerate extreme consumption, being able to handle *repeated* extreme consumption seemed highly valued, particularly within *Hangover* and *Wild Ones*. In other words, one may push oneself to the limit and, in some cases, even exceed this limit; it is being able to do it all over again that matters.

In *SFPR* the extreme consumption of alcohol is boasted about in a way that reinforces its ties to traditional notions of masculinity:

Let’s go drink for drink
A hundred bucks she won’t outlast us

Sky Blu is celebrating his ability (as a man) to consume and tolerate more alcohol than a woman. Somewhat perniciously, the line is also issued as a challenge of sorts, serving to reinforce binge drinking as a competitive game of extreme consumption (augmented in other places by explicit references to established drinking games like *Buffalo*). Moreover, the similarities are apparent between this line, and research discussed earlier, which revealed that women's drinking is in part spurred by a desire to keep up with males while drinking - to 'drink like a guy' (Young et al., 2005). The challenge, also, is for men to outdrink women, with the implicit assumption that if you are a normal male you *should* be able to do this.

Extreme consumption of alcohol was brashly exhibited within *Wild Ones*. In the club scenes Flo Rida is alternately shown with either a champagne bottle, or a flute (glass) and a champagne bottle in each hand. The only exception is when he is pumping his fists in the air (stymying his ability to hold drinks). In many instances he thrusts his champagne flute or bottle towards the camera in a toasting motion, and at one point tips two champagne bottles into his mouth at once. In another shot he recklessly pours champagne onto the table before a hand reaches into the frame to fill a flute, and the champagne bubbles freely over both the glass and the hand holding it. His 'cup runneth over' both literally and figuratively.

Extreme consumption was not limited to alcohol. In *Wild Ones* alcohol is merely an accoutrement to a lifestyle involving non-stop travel, extreme, 'high adrenaline' leisure activities, and partying – all conveyed visually through rapidly cut montage. The references to elements of Flo Rida's performances, such as crowd surfing ("take me so high, jumping nose dive, surfing the crowd") collapse the distinction between his work and play in this video; and as becomes apparent lyrically, the maintenance of this lifestyle requires a certain endurance, tolerance, and resistance to pain:

I like em' untamed/ don't tell me how pain
Tolerance, bottoms up with the champagne
My life, call my homie then we hit Spain.

It is a celebration of pleasurable pain, born of extreme consumption in the pursuit of hedonism.

Although *SFPR* constructs a discourse of tolerance in certain places, it also revels in pushing physical boundaries in others, similar to the young adult males' celebrations of leakiness in Thurnell-Read's (2011b) stag party research, or accounts of college drinking activities (eg., Zamboanga et al., 2013). The body is not expected to constrain the effects of alcohol. Rather, the outward signs of extreme consumption serve as evidence of commitment to the in-group's values. For instance, the dangerous effects of binge drinking receive lighthearted attention in the following lines:

If you show up already tore up this is what you say
(Sorry for party rocking)
And if you're blacked out with your sack out this is what you say (...)

And if you throw up in ya hoes cup this is what you say (...)
And if she has a hissy fit cause you're whiskey dick this is what you say (...)

'Pre-loading' (a NZ term that describes getting drunk before going out), "prepartying," or "front-loading" (U.S. terms, Borsari, Murphy, & Barnett, 2007), impotence, unconsciousness, vomiting - all are defiantly celebrated through repetition of the sarcastic apology. Moreover, they are constructed as exclusively masculine activities through direct appeal to fun loving heterosexual males. The contrasting constructions of women encourage this reading. In comparison to men, women are 'hoes' (whores), or killjoys prone to 'hissy fits' (histrionic fits); yet are also sexualized through their concern solely centered on the fact that the 'party rocker's' intoxication renders him unable to satisfy her sexually (because he is "whiskey dick"). Masculinity, in this example, involves defiance of the significant other's legitimate potential concern, and the unrepentant ability to carry on as one wants, regardless of the social or health consequences. Moreover, when considered in the context of the song, this blatant disregard is a privilege granted on the basis of one's position of social authority as a heterosexual, financially privileged man.

In *Hangover* more allusions to the negative physiological effects of alcohol are presented in a way that also celebrates extreme consumption. *Hangover* glories in pushing oneself to the limit, before doing it all over again. In a similar vein to *SFPR* 'letting go' is valued, rather than control over the physiological effects of extreme alcohol consumption. The following lines celebrate drinking as part of 'living it up.' They also lightheartedly celebrate alcohol addiction, embracing the negative effects of binge drinking as evidence of commitment to a certain lifestyle choice.

Drink 'till you're drunk...
I can't remember last night...
Drink another cup until I fall flat...

Drink it up and get sick
Bottoms up get wasted
Pour it up drink it up live it up give it up
Oh my god dammit there's the fucking limit

...or

Badeusio
But I can't stop
Making bottles pop until the wheels fall off
Badeusio
And I can't quit
I wake up in the morning do the same shit...

These final lyrics, when read off the page in isolation, make for an almost depressing read, like the confessions of an alcoholic at an AA meeting ("I can't quit ... same shit"). But when considered in conjunction with the visual mode, extreme consumption is made fun. The comical effect of Snoop

Dogg rising from the bathtub to rhythmically slap Psy's back as he vomits into the toilet; or the animated shot showing Psy top of frame, vomiting lime green bile against a purple background while the word "Yuuuuuck" floats past, serve to lessen the negative impact of the hangover and turn the body's evident intolerance into something lighthearted. Additionally, the lyrics support the fact that the hangover is not so bad as to prevent a repeat:

Party's over, it ain't over
Tryna' make a bad memory over and over.

In this way they also recall Thurnell-Read's (2011b) stag party values, in which the next day's hangover is celebrated with even more heavy drinking.

Freedom

"I like crazy, foolish, stupid
Party going wild, fist pumping music,
I might lose it
Blast to the roof, that how we do'z it (do'z it do'z it)
I don't care the night, she don't care we like"

(Flo Rida, *Wild Ones*)

Intimately entwined with the hedonistic fantasy that extreme consumption promises, is a discourse of Freedom. This broad discursive category encompasses the value placed on various forms of fun, transcendence, transgression, and looseness constructed across all the videos. It is argued here that all are essentially united in their celebration of freedom. Although related to 'provision' in that the former provides means of deliverance from the stifling confines of reality, 'freedom' stands independently as a discourse concerned with breaking free from one's *own* confines, or the strictures and structures 'civilised' society attempts to place on the individual. It is distinct from 'extreme consumption' where consumption is constructed as something to be pursued, in for its own end; but it too is related. Extreme consumption, particularly of alcohol, is constructed in some places as facilitating freedom, looseness, fun, and providing deliverance. Taste, decency, sexual conservatism, sense, or even ordinary 'reality' fail to constrain the artists within the videos, and alcohol plays a strong part in this.

Flo Rida, who feels a certain responsibility, also celebrates freedom. The excerpt above illuminates several facets of this. "Crazy, foolish, stupid," "wild", 'losing it,' 'not caring', and a height metaphor of 'blasting to the roof' point to an exuberant, transcendent masculinity almost at odds with the sense of responsibility expressed elsewhere ("said I gotta be the man"). The function here appears to be to perform a highly valued masculinity that ultimately eschews responsibility. His paradoxically

compelling message is to get loose: ‘*gotta* break loose cause that’s the motto’ and this discourse of looseness, of being ‘wild’ and ‘untamed’ (“I like ‘em untamed”) characterises the song as a whole; the word ‘loose’ occurs several times throughout and is augmented by other modes. Thus, in addition to an almost disembodied height metaphor (“blast to the roof”), an embodied animalistic metaphor is utilised. While these metaphors seem conflictual, they are in fact united in that, together, they help to construct a discourse of unfettered freedom. Moreover, Flo Rida is portrayed as more *active* (Iedema, 2001) than the others within the video (and indeed the artists in the other videos) in a way that is in keeping with the physical brand he is crafting. Through these activities freedom is embodied; he himself is a ‘wild one.’ He sky-dives, drag-races Ferraris, pulls ‘wheelies’ on a BMW motorbike, speeds in a 4WD off-road buggy over jumps, and travels in a fan-boat at high speed across marshes. These images construct, in dizzying fashion, a discourse that celebrates freedom, wildness, risk taking and adventure – qualities traditionally associated with hegemonic masculinity (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009).

The dance club scenes are rapidly cut with these action sequences in a way that links the high adrenaline physical activities of the day with those of the night - skydiving with stagediving - to create a sense of freedom and movement:

Take me so high, jumping nose dive
Surfing the crowd

In these club scenes, the visual mode saturates the audience’s visual sense through lighting, editing, and cinematography. They are shot with a slightly chaotic hand-held camera, again in pseudo-documentary style. They are lit with strobe lighting and rapidly cut with a montage of the happy faces and body parts of ‘fist-pumping’ revelers to reinforce the themes of fun, craziness and foolishness communicated lyrically. We glean from the club scenes that Flo Rida has been performing and is now enjoying a drink (or two) and partying with his many friends. The freedom of the day spills into the night.

The overarching discourse of *SFPR* also includes looseness and transgression, which might be considered forms of freedom. The artists are ‘free’ from staid sartorial confines. Loud leopard and zebra skin patterns, hot pinks, and lime greens (branded with the group’s logo) dominate the wardrobe choices, set design, and overall aesthetic. Characters include a ‘shuffle bot’ robot (playing *Foam Fighters* on an Apple iPad) and an inflatable zebra. Along with the other modes, the costumes attempt to create a point of difference, a hedonistic homo-social in-group that transgresses normal, ‘decent’ or civilized society. SkyBlu sums up this attitude: “we ain’t got no manners...” and Redfoo: “I don’t give a fuck...” This defiant, if somewhat narcissistic attitude is a form of youthful antagonism somewhat akin to that found in ‘lad magazines’ (eg., Mooney, 2008).

Freedom only money can buy

The freedom to take a carefree attitude is a form of privilege enabled by money, fame and proficiency. These aspects set the artists above others. LMFAO boast of the money with which they are able to obtain women, but which also provides them with *Ciroc* vodka ‘on tap’ (*Ciroc* is the vodka promoted by rapper Sean Diddy Coombs, aka P Diddy or Puff Daddy):

“I got a bunch of bad bitches in the back
With *Ciroc* on tap and a little bit of Grey Goose oooo/
Oh yeah we killin shit/ with our money we diligent”

Here, being a successful male who is able to fulfill these fantasies is linked explicitly to financial resources. LMFAO are ironically ‘diligent’ in spending their money frivolously. The responsible breadwinner discourse is again invoked and parodied; treated in an ironic, fun-loving way, free from middle-class responsibility or respectability. In this sense it is indebted to the ‘pimp style’ of gangsta rap and its rejection of the traditional middle-class breadwinning discourse (Quinn, 2005, p. 122).

Among other techniques, *Hangover* uses fragmented structure, repetition and humour to construct a discourse that ideally associates masculinity with freedom from ordinary limitations. The injunction within the video seems to be: get drunk, wake up (with a hangover), do it (extreme consumption) again. However, far from creating a morose sense of *deja vu*, the structural ambiguity within the video (it is difficult to establish a temporal order for events within the narrative) helps construct a discourse that celebrates a privileged, carefree life of leisure free from temporality, and involving non-stop partying As Snoop Dogg brags, “it’s the life of a superstar.” He is able to “smoke [his] whole day away” and presumably drink it away too, because his transcendent superstar status and finances free him from other responsibilities. He is carefree, and unencumbered by the constraints that ‘ordinary’ men might face. Moreover, the many female dancers in the video seem to owe their presence to no other reason than the stars’ glorification, and remind the audience that a privileged form of masculinity involves having women at one’s beck and call.

In addition to promising fantasy, the discourse of freedom-enabled-by-wealth serves a self-aggrandising agenda, and serves as evidence of proficiency. A key message in *Timber* is that Pitbull can afford to travel, to live a life of luxury and is not limited in any way:

Live in hotels, swing on planes
Blessed to say, money ain't a thing.

The metaphor of being “blessed” implies a divinity not extended to others. This braggadocio - of having ‘made it’ - is a convention borrowed from the desire of hip-hop artists to assert their success in freeing themselves from those impoverished communities from which many of them emerged (Sköld & Rehn, 2007). In Pitbull’s case the lyrics function intersemiotically with the visual mode to create a

glamorous 'brand.' Part of Pitbull's ambition for his brand, as he states on his website, is to become known as "Mr. Worldwide." This video helps create the impression that he is a global phenomenon, omnipresent, exclusively privileged ('blessed'), and ultimately set free by money. While he has likely worked hard to achieve his position, a discourse of hard-work does not seem to fit this image of effortless freedom here.

Perhaps it is for reasons of branding that his power is constructed to reside not so much in his physicality (he is only once, briefly, shown with his shirt off), but in a kind of *disembodiment* – signaled by wealth, glamour, style and transcendence of time and place – more fitting for his 'Mr. Worldwide' image. Transcendence is reinforced by a cliché from the superhero genre ("Look up in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane"). The height metaphor - which connotes freedom from physical limits - echoes that utilized by Flo Rida ("Take me so high, jumping nose dive" and "blast to the roof") as well as Psy and Snoop Dogg ("Pour it *up*, drink it *up*, live it *up*, give it *up*"). Russell considers Pitbull's rap in general as "in the style of the you-only-live-once rap that's everywhere now" (Russell, 2012). This assessment might also be extended to the other videos. Pitbull's rejoinder to his superhero cliché ("nah it's just me, ain't a damn thing changed") also indicates a status free from temporality. It might be an indirect reference to the days when he had more 'street cred' (credibility) as an upcoming rapper. In any case, it suggests his 'blessed' status is far from an ephemeral fad. Nothing has really changed since last time and it is not about to change any time soon. To reinforce his status as globetrotting playboy, unrestrained by time or place, sweeping aerial shots of the sea and associated scenery from his holiday in the Bahamas accompany his boasting.

The associated discourses of freedom, looseness and fun tie in with extreme consumption, and once again echo Thurnell-Read's (2011b) observations on the stag party in Eastern Europe. Here, extreme alcohol consumption coupled with overt, 'leaky' performances of drunkenness were encouraged as a way of celebrating temporary release from the stifling bodily comportment usually associated with masculine stoicism. To varying extents all the videos analysed above construct a discourse of breaking free from confines. However, rather than questioning the bases for hegemonic masculinity or challenging prescribed notions of masculinity, these discourses reconstruct and exalt financial and heterosexual dominance. So they serve to reinscribe hegemonic masculinity through painting these behaviours *as* transgressions – as freedom from stoicism.

Alcohol as facilitator of freedom

Alcohol was largely constructed both as a facilitator for, and an enactment of those freedoms discussed above. Without exception, it was essential for aiding the ability to 'get loose' and shed inhibitions including, most notably, sexual inhibitions. This might be considered as an embellishment of the widespread, powerful discourse of alcohol as 'social lubricant' (eg., Lyons & Willott, 2008), which associates alcohol with the ability to have fun (Kuntsche, Knibbe, Gmel, & Engels, 2005), and is an expected effect of alcohol by some young people who have yet to try drinking (Kuntsche,

Knibbe, Engels, & Gmel, 2007). These videos provide some clues as to where such discourses might circulate. They have particular salience considering that their audiences likely include young teenagers who have limited experience with alcohol.

Flo Rida points to alcohol's role in facilitating 'getting loose' and getting 'bent:'

Y'all get loose, loose,
After bottle, we all get bent and again tomorrow

'Getting bent' clearly refers to getting drunk, but it is more than that. It is a transformative metaphor that includes 'bending' reality, escaping its straight and narrow confines. It implies a momentary psychological escape and yet the line 'and again tomorrow' offers the fantasy of repeating the escape over and over again.

Implicit (and explicit) within *SFPR* is the role alcohol plays in getting loose. 'Party rocking', involves drinking as a way to break free from the confines of ordinariness, which in the video are parodied, in part, through the cantankerous antagonist: a neighbor who repeatedly demands the partiers turn their music down and is made a laughing stock for it. Alcohol features throughout, both in the explicit mention of particular alcohol brands (Ciroc Vodka, Grey Goose, Patron), product placement close-ups, and conspicuous consumption. The following lyrics loosely allude to the ability of alcohol to facilitate interactions with women (models). They accompany a close-up of drinks being poured into his cup:

I got a drink in my hand and they just called buffalo
Poppin' bottles in the house with models in the V.I.P.

Buffalo is a drinking game, and by referencing it, LMFAO are positioning themselves within a drinking subculture most frequently associated with college students and other young adults, who use the games to achieve intoxication rapidly and for socialising (Borsari, 2004; Borsari et al., 2007). The promise that alcohol offers in breaking free from psychological boundaries in the line below is similar to that offered in *Wild Ones*, where it facilitates 'getting bent.' In either case it helps in escaping ordinariness and drudgery - the sanity - of everyday life.

Baby baby, I'm awful crazy
Off Giroc, off Patron
Shit whatever's tasty

As mentioned, the discourse of breaking free from psychological confines through alcohol is embellished through the 'visually loud' non-conservative patterns and bright colours. *Hangover*, too, constructs a discourse of alcohol as a way of freeing oneself. There are examples of its glamorisation included in the theme of life as a party, and alcohol providing a means of escape or celebration. This

use of alcohol for celebratory purposes is strongly related to alcohol as a social lubricant. It can be seen in the line: “Pour it up, drink it up, live it up, give it up” in which drinking is part of living life and ‘giving up’ rigid adherence to its confines. The narrative also involves the artists getting drunk and having a night out, which includes ‘picking up’ older women (whom they mistake for younger women), singing at a Karaoke bar, and visiting an amusement park. Picking up women that wouldn’t ordinarily meet their usual standard of beauty parodies the popular ‘beer goggles’ trope. It also constructs alcohol as liberating elixir. It *looks* like fun. When you’re drunk, you simply don’t care. The song does portray the negative effects of a hangover, but this is constructed in a humorous way that serves to soften any negative interpretation.

Alcohol as facilitator of sexual freedoms

One of the most notable set of confines which alcohol helps free one from is sexual in nature. The pre-hook, below, is sung in *Timber* by Pitbull in a ‘hoe down’ type style. It explicitly portrays alcohol consumption and links it almost causally to sex:

Swing your partner round and round
End of the night, it's going down
One more shot, another round
End of the night, it's going down (x 2)

The references to alcohol - “one more shot, another round” - are recognised in the music video through the visual mode. The line “one more shot...” (a well-worn refrain of alcoholics) is embellished with a close up shot of Voli vodka being poured by a woman’s hand into a shot glass. Also in the frame are two other bottles of spirits with their labels turned round so as to be unidentifiable by brand. Pitbull thus uses his music video to promote his vodka. Also accompanying this line is a mid-shot of Kesha behind the bar in the saloon handing a shot over to a patron. This quickly cuts to a long-shot of the scantily clad female dancers dancing on the bar with the patrons sitting at the bar looking on. The second half of this line “Another round...” is accompanied by the same sequence of three shots: 1) Kesha behind the bar, 2) a still close up of Voli vodka (this time not being poured) accompanied by three other unidentifiable bottles of liquor, and a shot glass, 3) a long shot of two dancers dancing on the bar.

The next repetition of this line (“One more shot ... going down”) is again accompanied by a series of shots of the women dancing on the bar as well as an older couple linking arms to consume what Kesha has just poured for them. The line “end of the night it’s going down” refers to sex. The third person neuter pronoun “it” is used for its ambiguity. However, in the context of the song ‘it’ has previously been lyrically and visually linked through intersemiosis to sex. Thus, a cause-and-effect relationship is established through temporal ordering: have “one more shot, another round,” then have

sex. Implicitly then, the coercion alluded to in the line “she says she won’t but I bet she will” might feasibly be interpreted here as mediated by the consumption of alcohol. Alcohol ‘frees’ her up. This is yet another example of the tried and true ‘sex sells’ formula exploited incessantly within media.

Consequently, its use here to promote alcohol through the implicit assumption that it might be a way to coerce a woman into having sex is dangerous. It was also witnessed recently in the lad magazine *Zoo*, sparking controversy and protest by some (Hopkins & Ostini, 2015). While a message of the video might be that alcohol lowers a woman’s resistance, that it also inhibits capacity for consent is conveniently ignored. Furthermore, that it is coupled with a dehumanising image (“face down, booty up”) that offers up a fragments of a woman’s body for sexual ‘use’ is troubling, as is its promotion of a predatory type of masculine sexual behaviour as harmless (“Digetty-Dog”) fun. Further references to alcohol generally, and Voli specifically are included in the second verse, and are reinforced through pairing of lyrical and visual elements, in which alcohol is mentioned lyrically and combined with provocative sexual images, such as Kesha grabbing her breasts and gazing directly and sexually at the camera.

In *SFPR*, alcohol and inebriation provide a kind of excuse for sexual assault that is, disturbingly, treated in lighthearted fashion.

I don’t give a fuck when I’m in the club,
Sipping bub, really drunk, and I see a fat booty
Gotta grab it, I’ma have it, it’s a habit, automatic like Uzi

Drunkenness, as expressed above, facilitates freedom from, and disregard for moral, civil, and even legal standards. Here this disregard is extended to sexual advances. It is as if being drunk is its own excuse for sexual assault. The implications of such discourses seen above are obviously troubling. That alcohol somehow frees one from everyday confines seems to justify it as an excuse for satisfying one’s sexual desires – regardless of whether this is wanted or not.

In *Wild Ones*, the scenes of partying in the club include much conspicuous consumption of the alcohol mentioned in the lyrics: champagne (“bottoms up with the champagne”), Chambord (“more Chambord, number one club-popper”) and vodka (“got a hangover like too much vodka”). Nowhere is the relationship between sex and alcohol more pronounced than a close up of a woman’s buttocks in a tight dress, and the hand of the man with whom she is dancing holding a bottle of vodka in front of it. Following the references to Chambord and vodka Flo Rida sings:

No doubt by the end of the night
Got the clothes coming off
Then I make that move

These lyrics again provide a temporal link between alcohol and sex. However, it is not limited to the night before, but carries on in the morning, as part of the hangover:

All black shades when the sun come through
Uh-Oh, it's on like everything goes
Round up baby tilt the freaky show

It is notable also that vodka, Chambord and champagne are the drinks of choice - visually and lyrically - in this video. When one considers champagne's associations with wealth then this is hardly surprising. The inclusion of these conveys a sense of sophistication and glamour to the version of masculinity as well as femininity that is being idealised. This is what is on offer here for women also. Champagne's traditional associations with celebration clearly augment the textual metafunction of the piece as a whole: 'life is a celebration,' 'live it up.' As can be seen then, alcohol has a role within the videos that includes, but is not limited to, the 'traditional' discourse of alcohol as a social lubricant. More than facilitating social interaction, it facilitates breaking free from normal confines, such as those boundaries that normally demarcate acceptable sexual behavior and 'sanity.'

Dominant positions created across discourses

“All of the women on *The Apprentice* flirted with me—consciously or unconsciously. That's to be expected.” (Donald Trump)

This section focuses on how the identified discourses function *together* to position men. The positions that are discussed below include the playboy, and the woman as object.

The playboy

A useful way of encapsulating the position of men in the videos is through the playboy ideal. It has a strong history of its own and a powerful allure. Flo Rida explicitly positions himself as a playboy: “Shut them down in the club while the playboy does it” and within the video our understanding of what this means is informed by the discourses deployed. Although not mentioned explicitly, it is constructed in the other videos through modes other than the lyrical, which are as important to audience understandings as the lyrics themselves.

The playboy sexual ethic existed prior to the 20th century, but owes its greatest development to this era (Attwood, 2006). Particularly, *Playboy* magazine, which had its inception in the 1950s, crystallised the values of this version of masculinity as espousing a materialistic, urbane, sophisticated, and hedonistic sexual lifestyle for men (Jancovich, 2012). This definition provides an overarching image of masculinity that unites many of those discourses discussed above (freedom, financial dominance, extreme consumption etc.). However, the sexually persuasive aspect of the playboy has perhaps been the most salient (O'Hara, 2012), and this aspect is explored more fully here. As Pitzulo (2008) notes, “according to the Playboy philosophy, the bachelor lifestyle depended upon the man's sexual desirability to women of his own social and economic rank” (p. 260). The bachelor as a sexually liberated man emerged as a contrast to the married breadwinner ideal that pre-dated it; it

reclaimed and embraced the previously negative term of bachelor as a positive value and in doing so endorsed a sexually voracious type of masculinity (Patton, 2014) inimical to marriage and the family (Jancovich, 2012), and free from responsibility. These aspects were observed clearly in the videos, with provision being linked to providing 'good times' where the men were invariably the centre of sexual attention, and freely boasted of it. Furthermore, the "models in the VIP" or the "hundred supermodels" whom LMFAO and Flo Rida brag about, respectively; and the young, scantily-clad, attractive women who are ubiquitous visually within the videos are complementary status symbols befitting the male artists' 'social and economic rank.' Thus, money and status enable the freedom to 'have' attractive, young women. ("I *have* em' ... in their bra and thongs"- Pitbull). In the one instance in which older women are used (in *Hangover*), the relationship they have with the male protagonists is a ridiculous parody of what happens when one drinks too much and hallucinates others as more attractive than they 'actually' are.

The sexual persuasiveness central to construction of *playboy* polygamy is facilitated by alcohol. Iwamoto et al. (2011) define the norm of the playboy as involving multiple sexual partners, but also as leading to greater risk taking among those men who attempt to live up to the norm. Greater risk taking is understood to manifest within drinking contexts as greater alcohol consumption among men. Thus, the playboy position is constructed by the discourse of extreme consumption as it relates to both alcohol *and* sex. Playboys 'consume' both women and alcohol and have the 'freedom' to do this without repercussion. Another a salient feature of the drinking within the videos was the drinks (Champagne, Chambord, Patron, vodka) that are arguably associated more with wealth and help to construct the *Playboy* position. These stand in contrast to traditional associations between men and beer (Stibbe, 2004).

Sexual persuasiveness (and sometimes coercion) is glorified as an aspect of playful, virile masculinity within the videos. The man's sexual potency leaves women *no choice* but to surrender. In this sense it is also defined by Schippers' (2007) symbolic aspects of heteronormative sex as 'penetrative,' whereby men 'take'; but is also enabled by complementary post-feminist constructions of women as freely obliging in this regard (Amy-Chinn, 2006). For example, in *Wild Ones*, Flo Rida is flanked and fawned over by two beautiful women while riding the airboat. He sporadically turns to them in order to deliver lines from the song, to ogle or caress. That they are clearly enamoured with him establishes Flo Rida as a powerful heterosexual male. Sheff's (2006) observations of men in polyamorous relationships fits Flo Rida's presentation in this instance (as well as the other artists):

Attaining the coveted role as the phallogentric center of sexual attention among multiple women endows the heterosexual man with definitive evidence of his desirability. This value is accorded not only by the multiple women, but in contrast to other men who are unable to garner as much attention, thus demonstrating the man involved in the triad's mastery over (hetero)sexuality (Sheff, 2006, p. 626).

As Sheff notes, the value of sexual attention is constructed in contrast to other men who don't receive it. Interestingly, by virtue of being in the back of the airboat, Flo Rida's male accomplice does not enjoy the same exalted status. Nevertheless, he too is flanked by attractive women. Thus, the discourse of provision extends implicitly in some instances to providing women for one's friends ('setting them up'). Despite this, it is clear that the friend is basking in Flo Rida's reflected glory. In most other instances, it is mainly the artists who infatuate the female extras. Thus, although sometimes complicated by supplementary discourses, the playboy overwhelmingly enjoys a privileged status, not only over women, but most other men too.

In *Timber*, Pitbull also takes on the position of the playboy. We get the sense that the attractive, sexually charged woman with whom he is intimate is just one of many local women he has bedded. She is identified as domestic by her proud waving of the Bahamas flag; soon to be forgotten, perhaps, as Pitbull embarks on his next overseas jaunt. The sexual virility inherent within Pitbull's brand is conveyed in through the video in part through the use of the pun 'swing' ("live in hotels, swing on planes"). Through the discourse of freedom he defies the monogamous limitations and long term commitment that might ordinarily impinge on men and instead constructs playboy-type qualities as desirable. Pitbull's boasting of his sexual potency is not limited to this instance. As can be seen below, his 'slickness' gives him supreme confidence that, despite any protestations that 'she' does not 'want it', she *actually* does. Although presented in a playful fashion, or rather because they are presented this way, the implications of the following verse are troubling:

The bigger they are, the harder they fall
This big-iddy boy's a dig-gidy dog
I have 'em like Miley Cyrus, clothes off
Twerking in their bras and thongs, timber
Face down, booty up, timber
That's the way we like to-what?-timber
I'm slicker than an oil spill
She say she won't, but I bet she will, timber

The modes of cinematography, editing and the gaze work together here to solidify the meaning of lines that might otherwise be considered ambiguous or ironic. The cliché with which he opens the rap ("the bigger they are...") helps extend the metaphor of the song's title (*Timber*). Yet it nevertheless contains ambiguity; although the metaphor generally concerns conquest, it is not immediately apparent that it might mean *sexual* conquest. However, in the half-beat rest between this line and the next, the camera rhythmically cuts to a shot of the female dancers walking into the saloon wielding axes, and the idea of sexual conquest takes shape, informing our reading of the lyrics. The second half of the line "this big-iddy boy's a *dig-gidy dog*" (in italics) is emphasised through a close up of Pitbull lip-synching it with a knowing smirk, in similar fashion to the 'nod and wink' characteristic of post-feminist advertising irony - intended to render it immune to criticism (Blloshmi, 2013; T. Smith,

2005). The facial expression's meaning here is part of the gaze syntagm (Baldry & Thibault, 2006). This phrase was borrowed from de Saussure (de Saussure, 2011) by Baldry and Thibault (2006) to show that visually, meaning is constructed through body language and facial expression. Thus, Pitbull's sexual intentions can also be inferred visually, through his raised eyebrows and smirk. They are further informed by the idiom "dog" – a man who indulges frequently in sex without respect for his sexual partner(s). Together, these modes construct a playboy position. Moreover, the intersemiosis encourages a sexualised reading of the previous lines and the title itself. 'Bigger' might now be metaphorically interpreted as 'harder to get' and, perhaps, the more resistance women put up, the "harder they fall" for Pitbull – he is *that* sexually persuasive, that 'slick.' "Timber" is therefore rendered clearer in its meaning; inferred as the moment one's resistance to the male's desire for sex is toppled.

As he sings the next line, "I have 'em like Miley Cyrus [...] bras and thongs," the camera cuts to the dancers 'twerking' inside the saloon. The lyric "twerking" is accompanied by a close up on the buttocks of the dancers, thus emphasising its sexual nature. His ability to 'have them' in their bras and thongs refers to his almost effortless ability to convince women to shed their clothes and sexually 'possess' them. It is similar to Flo Rida's boast that "*no doubt* by the end of the night got those clothes coming off." Similarly, *SFPR* is replete with sexual persuasiveness. We have already seen dominance and a sense of entitled freedom to take, where Redfoo boasts of being drunk and 'grabbing booty' within a club. In the second half of that rap, he alludes to his extreme confidence in his sexual potency:

"Who's he with the sick flow,
Make a chick go crazy and flash them ta tas? [breasts]
It's Redfoo, the dude, a true party rocker"

Here he *makes* women go crazy through his rapping skill ('sick flow') and general sexual desirability, prompting women to shed their clothing. This marks him out as 'the dude' – a term synonymous with 'the man.' This type of sexually virulent masculinity is also seen visually within *Hangover*, in which the two artists are frequently surrounded by sexualized women. Thus, the playboy is characterized by the ability to have sex with various women unencumbered. It is constructed through discourses of sexual potency, freedom, extreme consumption, which are in turn enabled by the financial resources and artistic nous of the performers in these videos. Through their patterns of consumption (clothing and alcohol) and their skills as rappers, these men leave the women *with no choice* but to be seduced. Finally, the use of visual signs points to the sexual virility constructed as a valued aspect of masculinity. Semiotically, the images of Flo Rida and his fast cars, boats, and dune buggies function, like the pick-up truck in *Timber*, as symbols of "male virility and sexual prowess in western industrial society" (Jewitt, 1997, p. 1) Likewise, in *Hangover* Psy straddles (ironically) a Harley Davidson

motorcycle, miming a saxophone solo while a scantily clad woman dances next to him with her foot on the seat.

Women as objects

The discourse of extreme consumption extends to the consumption of women too. That women are commoditised is in fact an essential corollary of the sexually dominant ‘playboy’ position. In order for women to be available for (sexual) consumption, several strategies are deployed within the videos. Together, these strategies help construct a position for women that can best be described as objectified. Objectification is in part achieved by the discourses of extreme consumption, freedom, and (to a lesser extent) provision. However, in circular fashion, it is also apparent that the objectification of women was essential in enabling these discourses to be articulated. Women cannot be provided for others, consumed, or used as an expression of a man’s freedom to take, unless they are first objectified. Key strategies employed in constructing the objectification of women included the separation of women’s bodies from their overall person, evaluations based on appearance, and language (verbal and visual) indicating that the primary function of women’s bodies is to satisfy male sexual desires. These techniques have long been a concern of much feminist scholarship, particularly for the damaging effects that they have for women (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Moradi & Huang, 2008; Szymanski, Moffitt, & Carr, 2010).

The use of visual and verbal metonym was frequently noted within the videos. Terms such as ‘booty’ came to fragmentize and simultaneously totally represent women. Redfoo grabs ‘fat booty’ in the club when he sees it; Pitbull playfully intones ‘face down, booty up.’ Fragmentation and fetishisation are achieved (in that order) through, firstly, bifurcating the body; and secondly, by demoting the seat of emotion and personality (‘face down’) while promoting a sexualized body part (‘booty up’) in much the same way the frequent close-ups on women’s ‘booty’ do. (It is also a playful, ironic allusion to a hitherto harmless, now sexualised, childhood game, ‘heads down, thumbs up’). Visually, the sexual objectification of these lyrics is realised in a frame that inverts the lyric ‘face’ through its pairing with a close up of a dancer’s derriere. In many other places this objectification is developed further through a barrage of ‘booty shots’ and close-ups on other fragments of women’s bodies, which force the male gaze upon the viewer.

Additionally, women in the videos were often stripped of agency, save as sexual provocateurs or seductresses. In this they conform to observations that the objectification of women makes ‘them less fully human’ (Heflick & Goldenberg, 2009). An animalistic desire for sex marks the women out as irrational and not in control of their urges – as seen above in the way RedFoo *makes* a woman “flash her ta tas.” The men within the videos possess the power, agency, and freedom to take what they want, when and where they feel the urge, but this has its flipside in a corresponding lack of freedom for women. Lyrically, the importance of ‘getting’ or ‘taking’ a woman as a privilege of being a successful male can be seen in Snoop’s Dogg’s line: “eenie meenie miney mo catch a lady by the

toe” which (perhaps ironically considering the origins of this phrase and Snoop Dogg’s African American ethnicity) constructs a woman as animalistic, as something to be ‘caught.’ Similarly, the seeming lack of choice here on the part of women shares a disturbing similarity with the lack of agency implicit in Pitbull’s line “she says she won’t but I bet she will.” The similarity to Red Foo’s ‘automatic habit’ of ‘grabbing booty’ is immediately apparent here; so too is the imagery constructed in *Wild Ones*, of women as wild, untamed, animalistic and thus less than human – but literally ‘asking for it.’ The following lines are sung by Sia (the female guest artist) and as such, help to construct the position of women within the video:

I am a wild one
Break me in
Saddle me up and let's begin
I am a wild one
Tame me now
Running with wolves
And I'm on the prowl

The confusing animalistic imagery (whereby she is simultaneously on the prowl and asking to be tamed and saddled) figuratively encapsulates the double entanglement of post-feminism (McRobbie, 2004, 2011). Women are expected to possess agency – but not *too* much. The metaphor is extended in Flo Rida’s response, in which the woman as wild, untamed animal makes domination acceptable, perhaps even necessary. It ‘keeps her in her place’ within the heterosexual matrix:

Show you another side of me
A side you would never thought you would see
Tear up that body
Dominate you 'til you've had enough
I hear you like the wild stuff.

Here, Flo Rida’s lyrics and delivery are somewhat at odds with each other. The singer’s promise to “show you another side” hints at a more sensitive, romantic or seductive side to his masculinity, an interpretation further bolstered by the slow motion editing choice and ‘introspective’ tone set up by the slower, more subdued musical accompaniment. The action accompanying this first part of the line is also intimate; he touches her chin lightly as he gazes lovingly at her. Yet the violent, thinly veiled reference to sexual domination somewhat contradicts this softness. The intersemiosis of the visual and the verbal here, seems to sanction and normalise this violent ‘tearing up’ of the body as something intimate and loving, and is endorsed by the women’s own requests. Although meant to be playful perhaps, it falls somewhat short of achieving this tone.

At an earlier point in *Wild Ones*, during the air boat ride, Flo Rida turns to the woman beside him - who has variously been leaning in close and displaying her cleavage to him, thrusting her

buttocks near his face, or sitting down and looking adoringly at him - and sings “what happens to *that* body is a private show.” The camera cuts briefly in this line to a close up on a woman’s buttocks dancing in the club. During the scene on the fan boat he gazes many times at the women’s bodies either side of him. At these points the vector of his gaze extends clearly from his eyes to the woman’s various body parts. We are thus encouraged to interpret the woman in the same way: as sexual object. The use of the demonstrative, distal pronoun ‘that’ also serves in this instance to objectify the woman’s body by removing it from her possession and by extension implies availability. It is not ‘your body’ or even ‘her body’ and as such it can be ‘taken’ and used without fear of repercussion. Moreover, the fact that what happens to ‘that body’ occurs in private indicates its sexual nature. In fact, the construction of ‘that body’ occurs in reference to the sexual domination cited above (“tear up *that body*”). Again in that instance, “*that body*” as a lyrical construction is bolstered by frequent close-ups on various parts of women’s bodies – particularly the buttocks.

In *SFPR*, women are commoditized in an aggressively misogynistic way. As with the line about having a “bunch of bad bitches in the back,” the intersemiosis of a mini-narrative in which a woman is thrown out of the car helps construct women as disposable; as sexual commodities. This interpretation is bolstered by the interaction of the characters, which clue us in to the experiential metafunction (Baldry & Thibault, 2006) by graphically portraying their relationship to each other. The woman’s expulsion from the car functions semiotically; the metaphorical association is of being discarded; this despite (or because) she has previously (already) gratified him through the performance of oral sex. She then runs to ‘catch up’ with him, and is thereby constructed as needy and desperate. As with the ‘hysterical woman’ discourse constructed through the portrayal of the women having a ‘hissy fit’ earlier in the song (“if she has a hissy fit ‘cause you’re whiskey dick”), so too is a discourse based on historical sexist assumptions of the irrationality of women and lack of emotional regulation reconstructed here. The narrative of the woman returning to the car to angrily admonish the man for tossing her out of it, only to be dismissed through the passively-aggressive line “no hard feelings bitch” and the familiar sarcastic apology: “sorry for party rocking,” serve to diminish and ridicule her anger and humorously glorify his actions. Empathy is not ‘manly’ here - merely a selfish inclination to take and consume in the interests of ‘party rocking.’ Finally, that wealth is implicitly associated with the ability and privilege to possess women only reinforces this discourse of disposability and commodification. It seems ‘party rocking’ exists for privileged men. Women are but one auxiliary, yet essential means to this end.

Gender conceptualisations: Post-feminism, new sexism, ironic lads, and hybrid masculinities

“Why, if feminism has come so far, does she [Hillary Clinton] feel the need to highlight the fact that she's a woman? ... Don't these women realise feminism has come further than they have?”(Paul Henry, NZ broadcaster)

This section considers the videos in terms of theories of gender and scholarly work on gender conceptualisations. Specifically, it considers the videos in terms of post-feminism, new sexism, lad culture and hybrid masculinity. It attempts to relate these to the imperatives of capitalism in order to provide an overarching context for their emergence.

Post-feminism, new sexism

Paul Henry's comments above reveal an essential dominant discourse of post-feminism: feminism has been achieved; gender is now irrelevant; the 'playing field' is level. As McRobbie (2004) defines it, post-feminism is an “active process by which feminist gains of the 1970s and 80s come to be undermined” (p. 255). Through a variety of techniques, feminism is limited to previous generations, is constructed as old and outdated, and feminists are reviled as 'man-haters.' Young women distance themselves from these constructions, or else consider feminism as no longer needed because they have already benefitted from its gains (McRobbie, 2011). This climate is, as McRobbie further argues, 'anti-feminist' and thus “marks out the horizon of a more profound hegemonic process” whereby “the granting of some degree of freedom or liberation for (western) women actually becomes an expression of a new form of capture or control” (ibid., p. 180). Gill (2011) considers this understanding of post-feminism also as 'new sexism'. Whether considered post-feminism or new sexism, the femininities they construct help excuse the overwhelmingly dominant masculinity discourses that were identified in the music video analysis. However there is a contradiction between the arguments being made here: that women are constructed within the videos as lacking in agency, and that the videos are also post-feminist, since the latter posits post-feminist femininity as freely chosen. As seen in relation to the woman in *Wild Ones* being on the prowl *and* asking to be tamed, this contradiction McRobbie (2004) terms the “double entanglement” (p. 255). It is in fact (for her) one of the defining features of post-feminism.

On the other hand, the following analysis draws on a particular understanding of post-feminism as “a depoliticized and anti-feminist backlash that acts as a ruse of patriarchy to spread *false consciousness* among women” (Genz, 2006, p. 336, italics in original). According to Genz, such an understanding represents an almost defeatist oversimplification that neglects the plurality and complexity within post-feminism. This plurality in fact creates spaces in which subversion of

patriarchy can occur. Its separation from the competing strand of academic post-feminism, coupled with its denigration, is born of a desire to “ensure that post-feminism remains easily categorized and contained in well-defined boxes” (ibid., p. 336). As Evans et al. (2010) summarise, such a concern highlights the problem of agency within recent feminist literature.

However, irrespective of the veracity of Genz’s (2006) argument, the particular videos analysed here unambiguously perpetuate imbalances in gendered power. The examples Genz chooses to demonstrate the subversive and political potential of post-feminism are more aware (than these videos) in their use of feminine sexuality to upset patriarchal power. Moreover, her analysis largely ignores constructions of masculinity that rely on post-feminism to perpetuate patriarchal dominance. These are partly enabled through irony which, in instances where it is an agent of dominant masculinity, might be thought of as manipulating the plurality, complexity and ambiguity inherent within post-feminism to subjugate women and extend masculine power. Through homogenous popular media, the subversive potential of feminine sexuality is diluted (Evans et al., 2010). As will be discussed, irony is an essential means for carrying this out within the music videos.

In a sense, the constructions of masculinity chronicled above can all be understood as products *and* drivers of a post-feminist socio-cultural milieu. The portrayal of women in the videos arises from a cultural context that encourages women to *subjectify* themselves as objects. Thus, the burden of responsibility is lifted from the men; it is not only they who are complicit, but women also. For example, Gill’s (2008, 2009) ‘midriff’ can be seen in each of these videos; or, equally, McRobbie’s (2009) ‘phallic girl.’ The ‘midriff’ is “a young, attractive, heterosexual woman who knowingly and deliberately plays with her sexual power and is always ‘up for’ it (that is, sex)” (Gill, 2009, p. 41). In *Timber*, Pitbull is sure that despite what she says, “she actually will.” And Kesha, in her sassy, hypersexual, provocative posturing seems to lend support to his playboy arrogance. She does not behave as a sex object against her will, but freely flaunts her “excessive femininity” (McRobbie, 2007, p. 725).

Flo Rida’s love interest remains sexually interested in him (devoted even) despite his flirtations with other women, in a way befitting the complementarity of hegemonic femininity. She is also a phallic girl - adventurous, loving the life of fast cars (although, with the exception of piloting the airboat to ‘rescue’ Flo Rida, she is never in the driving seat herself). She is classy and in control as she sits, dominant within a low-angle shot, astride a horse in full polo regalia. She is obviously ‘up for it’ too, participating freely in the strip dancing on the club’s stage, and asking to be ‘broken in’, tamed, and saddled. In *SFPR* the young woman in the car lifts her head to wave and smile at the camera before ‘going down’ again on Sky Blu. The lyrics valorize voyeurism and this overt sexual performance in a way that also normalizes pornography (“getting brain [oral sex] at a red light with people watching”). Moreover, as part of being pleasure seeking objects the women in these videos also enjoy drinking until drunk. It is the ‘licenced transgression’ of McRobbie’s (2009) phallic girl, sanctioned because in any case women ‘can’t outlast [men]’ (LMFAO, *SFPR*); or perhaps because

alcohol more readily “[has women] in their bras and thongs” (Pitbull, *Timber*) and “their clothes coming off by the end of the night,” to dance on stage in their underwear (as in *Wild Ones*) or perform hetero-sex.

Ironic lads

The objectification of women is often ‘excused’ as irony within post-feminist culture. As Benwell (2007) defines it, “irony is a versatile device which allows a speaker to articulate certain views whilst disclaiming responsibility for, or ownership of, them” (p. 540). It is an important technique identified by many post-feminist scholars (eg., Budgeon, 2011; McRobbie, 2004) through which feminist gains can be ‘accounted’ for in a sophisticated, knowing, and humorous fashion. Many of the examples of how irony manifests within media aimed at men come from the ‘lad culture’ exemplified in lad magazines (Benwell, 2007). Blloshmi (2013) identifies the image of the lad with fun, as a rejecting “traditional adult responsibilities” through which he maintains “his childhood essence” (p. 13). The adult responsibilities eschewed include, most notably, acknowledgement and concern for women or the mores of ‘civilised’ society more generally. Lad culture “marked a return to traditional masculine values of sexism, exclusive male friendship and homophobia” but is demarcated from previous versions of masculinity by “an unrelenting gloss of knowingness and irony” (Benwell, 2007, p. 539). Blloshmi (2013) termed such representations “ironic sexism” (p. 5).

Mooney (2008) identified the attempted use of irony in lad’s magazines such as FHM to justify and normalise the soft-pornography within its pages. However the irony was ultimately not successful, and was unjustifiable when considered in light of stories and interviews with women that utilise a “discourse of the real” (p. 253) - a construction of reality based on authenticating a male fantasy of the women as sexually available. Such stories are pointedly un-ironic. Likewise, *Zoo* magazine’s tips on ‘how to get women drunk and have sex with them’ attempts to paper over a dangerous message with irony. In this, it bears a remarkable resemblance to the videos analysed above. Such attempts at irony perpetuate sexual objectification, with potential ramifications for sexual violence (Horvath, Hegarty, Tyler, & Mansfield, 2012). Horvath et al. (2012) revealed that participants in their study had difficulty distinguishing between statements made by lad magazines and those by convicted rapists. But, when aware of a quote’s source, they were inclined to identify more with those articulated by lad’s magazines. The seeming acceptability of misogyny when it is attributed to lad’s magazines is partly because they are socially sanctioned, freely available in department stores and able to be purchased without restriction. Their informal, light-hearted tone aims to preclude criticism. But although criticism *is* targeted towards lad magazines, objectification is still carried out deliberately and consciously for the sales revenue generated by controversy. In this it represents what Benwell (2007) terms “complicit cynicism” (p. 540).

Both ‘ironic sexism’ and ‘complicit cynicism’ succinctly capture the tone of the music videos analysed. Moreover, like lad magazines, they are freely available – perhaps even more so considering

one does not have to pay for them, or leave the house to access them. *Hangover* and *SFPR*, particularly, are characterized by carnivalesque fun and irreverence. They aggressively and consciously dismiss responsible, 'staid' discourses such as those provided by feminism or political correctness under a blanket of tongue-in-cheek humour. In fact, both *SFPR* and *Hangover* arguably position men as lads more than playboys, although similar discourses are used to construct each. However, in keeping with the heterosexuality that underpins both lad culture and playboy masculinity, they are also conservative in many ways. Particularly, *SFPR* acknowledges, parodies – and perhaps hybridises - certain challenges to hetero-normative values in order to subjugate them. Homosexuality is invoked only to be ridiculed and refuted in one scene in the house, through the knowledge that the 'woman' who is performing oral sex is in fact Redfoo dressed as a woman. While the fact that it is a man performing fellatio provokes slight discomfort in the overwhelmingly heterosexual context of the video, the 'drag' makes it almost acceptable. The comic relief however, is palpable from the ensuing discovery that he only *looked* like he was performing oral sex. He was in fact funneling beer all along.

The joke recalls Gill's (2009) observation that within post-feminist advertising homosexuality is 'made safe' for straight men through its presentation as heterosexual. It also positions those who refuse to 'get it' on the outside. It excludes difference. Moreover, by 'hiding behind irony' – the same techniques used in lad magazines - the performers construct themselves as risqué, edgy, or sexually unshackled without actually upsetting conservative and normative heterosexual values. That a woman (a real woman) elsewhere in the video performs fellatio *for real* upon a man further reiterates these heterosexual values as integral to the construction of masculinity within this video.

In another scene, a reference to lesbianism ostensibly challenges the underlying values of normative heterosexuality but, upon further consideration, actually works to reinstate the heterosexual matrix. The line "all the girls make out for the whole damn club to see" is matched with a shot of two attractive women in the foreground falling to the ground in a passionate embrace while Redfoo watches on with a smirk, all the while lip-synching. The women are on display as objects of the 'male gaze' (Mulvey, 2006). In addition to the lyrics, the experiential metafunction (Baldry & Thibault, 2006) which positions the women as objects to sexually entertain the male onlooker, is provided by the vector of Red Foo's gaze as he watches them fall to the floor and out of the frame (the rest is left to the imagination). The male sexual fantasy of two women 'making-out' helps construct a discourse of sexual liberation in keeping with the freedom and ironic disrespect for supposedly civilised conduct attempted by the video. However, in its promulgation of a typical male heterosexual fantasy, the imagery here sits squarely within the realm of heterosexual conservatism. The two young, white, slim women who 'make out' are examples of the 'hot lesbian' identified by Gill (2008, 2009) within much advertising. As Diamond (2005) asserts, "such images implicitly convey that the most desirable and acceptable form of female–female sexuality is that which pleases and plays to the heterosexual male gaze, titillating male viewers while reassuring them that the participants remain sexually available in

the conventional heterosexual marketplace” (p. 105). It is its complementarity with heterosexual norms that rescues this particular representation of lesbianism from pariah status (Schippers, 2007).

Similar expressions of sexual adventurousness within the confines of compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980) are delivered with a ‘nod and a wink’ in other videos. Pitbull’s most controversial lines are delivered with a knowing smirk. If you refuse to acknowledge the joke you are positioned on the outside, as conservative, unliberated, perhaps boring. In this sense, the irony in these videos echo McRobbie’s (2004) articulation of how the infamous *Wonderbra* advertisement of the 1990s worked to dismiss the concerns of feminism: “the younger female viewer, along with her male counterparts... appreciates its layers of meaning; she gets the joke” (2004, p. 259). There is pressure, not only for women to comply, but also men. Unfortunately there are few alternative discourses within such popular media that challenge ‘the joke’ or reveal its dangerous absurdity.

Flo Rida invokes sexual domination and coercion but without the ironic acknowledgement of transgression. He simply desires to “tear up that body” and “dominate you ‘til you’ve had enough” in a paradoxically musically sensitive part of the song. One might consider this normalization of domination as a product of postfeminist culture that, influenced by ease of access enabled by the internet, embraces and normalises pornography (Carroll et al., 2008), much of which depicts the “sexual dominance of willing women” (A. J. Bridges, Wosnitzer, Scharrer, Sun, & Liberman, 2010, p. 1080). The dominant, aggressive masculinities presented as either sensitive or ironic within the music videos, and the construction of complementary or complicit femininities in this gender order, might be attributable to the same post-feminist milieu; a culture that, for example, encourages young girls to proudly sport “T-shirts bearing phrases such as ‘Porn Queen’ or ‘Pay To Touch’ across the breasts.” (McRobbie, 2004, p. 259).

Hybridisation: metrosexuality

‘Music video[s] make a range of local hegemonic masculinities available at a global level... even performances of masculinity which at first sight seem to be questioning the unity and fixity of masculine subjectivity very often ... extend the ways of being a man who ‘acceptably’ oppresses women’” (Railton & Watson, 2011, p. 125)

The comments above remind us of the processes of hybridisation outlined by Bridges and Pascoe (2014), in which plurality exists in the variety of ways hegemonic masculinity can appropriate subordinate forms and thereby *appear* inclusive. An element of hybridisation is incorporated into the flamboyant style of the male artists within these videos, including their ‘loud’ costumes and traditionally ‘non-masculine’ drink choices. Not once are they seen consuming beer - the traditional marker of masculine alcoholism (Landrine, Bardwell, & Dean, 1988; Schroeder & Zwick, 2004; Stibbe, 2004). The modern hybridised aesthetic of the metrosexual seems to encapsulate the carefully crafted appearance of the pop musicians and their drink choices. The metrosexual is generally defined as an urbane form of masculinity that embraces concern with appearance, grooming and the use of

beauty products (Kaye, 2009; Pompper, 2010; Ricciardelli, Clow, & White, 2010; Stamps & Golombisky, 2013). These concerns are often considered in opposition to those formerly considered ruggedly masculine, such as “poor hygiene, disinterest in appearance, sagging physiques” (M. Hall & Gough, 2011). The carefully cultivated, groomed, ‘slick’ appearance of Pitbull, Flo Rida, Psy, or Snoop Dogg might be considered, by these definitions, as metrosexual. The metrosexual also shares an affinity with the playboy; Osgerby (2003) charted the historical development of a consumptive, stylish masculine identity running counter to the dominant breadwinner ideal: from the dandy, to the playboy, to the metrosexual.

For some, the metrosexual ideal developed through greater societal and cultural acceptance of homosexual masculinity. Perhaps this is a subtle point of difference from the playboy – the metrosexual was enabled by shows such as *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, in which gay masculinity was normalised (Clarkson, 2005; Sender, 2006). For instance, Ervin (2011) regards the metrosexual as a challenge to hegemonic masculinity’s hitherto exclusive heterosexuality. The associations with, and influence of gay culture on the ideal of the metrosexual is attested to by research with ‘gay-straight’ males who identified aesthetics, an over-interest in appearance, preference for wine over beer, and flamboyance as marking out gay men (T. Bridges, 2014).

However, such hybridised versions of masculinity are not inclusive, they re-inscribe heterosexuality through a variety of strategies (eg., M. Hall & Gough, 2011; Osgerby, 2003; Stamps & Golombisky, 2013). These disavow the associations that metrosexual ideals have with homosexuality or femininity (M. Hall & Gough, 2011), and serve to construct a “heterosexual masculinity compatible with neo-liberalism” (Sender, 2006, p. 132). Hall and Gough (2011) argue that metrosexuality within men’s magazines “draws on still powerful masculinised markers such as self-respect and heterosexual success” (p. 83). Within the videos, reaffirmations of heterosexuality within metrosexual representations are achieved through the objectification of women, and constitute a way to ward off the challenges to hegemony posed by feminism and homosexual masculinities (Stamps & Golombisky, 2013). Metrosexuality is ‘made safe’ for heterosexual men and this has positive spinoffs for marketers: “men are encouraged to partake in the carnival of consumption, to become concerned about their appearance, to get in touch with their emotions, and as male bodies become objects of display subject to the male gaze” (Patterson & Elliott, 2002, p. 241).

Hybridisation: race, authenticity, and gangsta-masculinity

Although they do not consider the hybridisation of ‘gangsta-masculinity’ hegemonic, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) observe that “clearly, specific masculine practices may be appropriated into other masculinities, creating a hybrid (such as the hip-hop style and language adopted by some working-class white teenage boys)” (p. 845). The artists in the four target videos have each incorporated certain ideals from gangsta rap, and through fusion with what might be considered

metrosexual ideals, repackaged then as mainstream pop/dance music for global dissemination. They provide examples of how hip-hop style and language can be hybridized and incorporated into 'radio friendly' chart toppers accessible to everyone. As such, gangsta-masculinity within these videos has become re-contextualised, separated from the conditions of poverty and structural racial inequality that, while not necessarily excusing its overt violence, misogyny, or aggressive individualism, at least provide a context for its understanding (Best & Kellner, 1999). Boasting of one's wealth, for instance, makes more sense in a community where other avenues for garnering status have been foreclosed. It makes slightly less sense when one has grown up in relative wealth as the immediate relatives of the founder of Motown (Berry Gordy) as LMFAO have. The artists may not reference 'drive-by shootings' and other associated gangsta violence, but they retain the misogyny and braggadocio common to much gangsta rap. But while these have been taken up, the political commentary that gives hip-hop its 'authentic' force has been all but forgotten in its pop-appropriation (Kitwana, 2006; Yousman, 2003). The videos in this study fail to "provide a voice to the voiceless, a form of protest to the oppressed, and a mode of alternative cultural style and identity to the marginalized" as Best and Kellner (1999, p. 1) suggest 'authentic' rap music should.

The current neoliberal philosophy that underpins western economics unites the boasting of those artists 'from the ghetto' and artists such as LMFAO, who glorify financial power for its ability to facilitate individual extreme consumption. As Johnson (2008) argues, the current commodification of rap music within mainstream pop makes sense. 'Billboard rap' "sits very comfortably within the conservative and neoconservative orientation of American economics and politics in the last quarter century" (p. 91). Even if the violence in rap music once represented a challenge to white, middle-class values, it was, and continues to be, voraciously consumed and appropriated by young white audiences fascinated with blackness (Yousman, 2003). Furthermore, it was easily subsumed because the differences were only cosmetic. As Dr. Dre pointed out, gangsta rap is merely another forum for the same violence that audiences seek out in the movies of Martin Scorsese or Clint Eastwood (LaGrone, 2000) and for this reason judgement should be reserved. Other media also promote consumerism, so gangsta-rap is not alone in this regard either. Ironically, however, commercialized rap music perpetuates the capitalist values of individualized consumption and capitalist production that gave rise to inequality in the first place, and thus helped provide the conditions that nurtured gangsta rap's development (Hess, 2005). Even those artists critiqued above, whose online bios reveal early lives defined by relative poverty or shaped by racial inequality (eg., Pitbull, Flo Rida, Snoop Dogg), have been seemingly co-opted by a largely white-owned recorded music industry with a history of marketing black music to middle-class white audiences (Neal, 1997).

In discussing here the separation of these artists from what might be considered 'authentic' rap an extant discourse of authenticity is drawn on. Authenticity results from a complex interplay between artist presentation and audience reception and is thus unstable and up for continued negotiation (Harrison, 2008). Nevertheless, Harrison identifies a prevalent dichotomous view of hip-

hop authenticity, where black is generally seen as more authentic than white, and in which the considerable hybridity (including the legacy of Latino communities) associated with the development of hip-hop, has been, and continues to be neglected. In addition to race, assertions of origins are often used as a basis for claiming authenticity (Harrison, 2008). Hess (2005), for instance, identifies a view from within underground hip-hop communities, that commercialized rap is inauthentic because it has become divorced from the social conditions responsible for its inception ('the ghetto'). The tension between the discourse of 'making it' (achieving commercial success) while 'keeping it real' (not separating oneself too much from one's early life or community) is constantly negotiated (Sköld & Rehn, 2007). Armstrong (2004) summarises three main factors within rap that lend authenticity to artists: a concern with "being true to oneself," the expression of "local allegiances and territorial identities," and "relation and proximity to an original source of rap" (p. 336). If these conditions are met, even white rappers such as Eminem, are able to claim authenticity (ibid., 2004).

The artists within the target videos make such claims to authenticity. Pitbull includes the line, "it's just me, ain't a damn thing changed," reminding us that he is still 'true to himself.' Such an assertion is a necessary reassurance that 'grounds' his global success, and attempts to legitimate his 'Mr Worldwide' branding. *LMFAO* boast of being 'diligent' with their money- thereby espousing the materiality of gangsta culture. Snoop Dogg references his own image, playing on his considerable legacy as gangsta rapper ("G.A.N.G.S.T.A., nothing more to say..."). Flo Rida does not make claims to gangsta culture, but it might reasonably be contended, based on the dichotomous white/black binary identified by Harrison (2008), that as a black artist his authenticity is relatively assured. Moreover, Flo Rida's moniker is itself a double entendre: a parochial marker of his 'local allegiance' and 'territorial identity' as well as a testament to his authentic skill as a rapper (he has 'flow'). The discourse of provision for his 'crew,' or group of followers and collaborators (as seen in *Wild Ones*) also lends authenticity to the artist (Forman, 2000).

Summary: Spectacular consumption

The dictates of capitalism can, in a sense, be considered the driver that unites the various discourses, positions, and fusions discussed above. Music videos share many similarities with advertisements – both in their aim of selling, and the methods they employ to do so. That Pitbull is part owner of Voli vodka is important here. So too are instances of product placement in which named brands are incorporated within the videos. These videos are, amongst other things, advertisements for alcohol. The music video as a promotional vehicle for a discourses of extreme consumption, freedom and provision, therefore needs to be considered within the economic context of capitalism. As Harvey (1989) has argued, "the promotion of a culture of consumerism sustain[s] sufficient buoyancy of demand in consumer markets to keep capitalist production profitable" (p. 61). Thus, the videos can be understood, in simple economic terms, as helping to satisfy profit imperatives through creating demand. As products of capitalist society, extreme consumption is valued within the videos and is tied

to fantasies of freedom. Moreover, the potent fallacy of being able to do it all over again is an essential driver of the insatiability that perpetuates economic growth.

Extreme consumption was not limited to alcohol. In fact, the particular product demanded is irrelevant to the 'metanarrative' of "the inevitability of market economies" that drives post-postmodernity (Braidotti, 2005, p. 169). It is more conducive to capitalist market economies if demand is not limited to any one product, but exists as a cultural value easily transferred to a range of commodities. As the videos enticingly promise, the hedonistic fantasy can be realised through the consumption of a range of consumables: clothing, BMW motorbikes, sports cars, overseas holidays, video games, *women*... In fact, as all the videos suggest, leisure itself can be commoditised. According to the critique of 'the commodification of leisure,' Benhabib and Bisin (2002) argue that "the mere distinction of consumption and leisure is blurred, as our preferences are 'manipulated' to choose forms of leisure which are complementary to consumption" (p. 19). It is not difficult to see how the discourses identified - provision, extreme consumption and freedom - lend support to this critique.

Extreme consumption bears some relation to Debord's (1967) notion of 'spectacular consumption' (eg., Hamilton & Wagner, 2011; McAllister, 2007; Peñaloza, 1998; Watts, 1997; Yousman, 2003). McAllister summarises "its image/appearance emphasis, large scope, foundation in commodity logic, artificiality, and ultimately its distracting and depoliticizing effects" (p. 245), all of which are features of the music videos discussed above. As part of the spectacle in the videos, extreme consumption is linked, visually, lyrically, perhaps even musically, to other powerful discourses of freedom and escape. Thus, consumption is depoliticized and elevated through a powerful montage of images which construct their own artificial reality *as real*.

In their analysis of the spectacular nature of the film *Mamma Mia*, Hamilton and Wagner (2011) argue that "consumption as spectacle allows us to move one step closer to our imagined utopia" (p. 379). Part of the spectacular success of *Mamma Mia* lay in offering viewers 'escapism,' 'relief from personal' and 'general societal and economic problems,' and 'transcendence of spatial location.' A similar feeling is gained through the exotic images of Pitbull's idyllic Bahamas escape, Flo Rida's action packed Dubai holiday, or even perhaps through Psy and Snoop Dogg's 'night on the town' in South Korea. Spectacular consumption also helps account for the hybridization and commodification of gangsta rap. For Watts (1997) gangsta rap is defined by "a spectacularly symbiotic relationship between the dictates of the street code and an energetic American consumerism" (p. 50). In simple terms, the violence that is promulgated within gangsta rap as a core value, is turned into a spectacle; the more violent, the more spectacular. While largely divorced from gritty ghetto 'reality,' watered-down violence in the form of misogyny and sexual objectification is retained within these videos and forms part of this spectacle. Likewise, the materiality originally valorized by gangsta rap as a visible sign of one's success and status is retained.

Connell's (1995) notions of complicity and the patriarchal dividend suggest that men can avoid overtly displaying misogyny in everyday life when media representations, such as the videos above, maintain it in an overarching way. Through the widespread dissemination of post-feminist ideals, imbalances in hegemonic gendered power relations remain intact, and men reap the dividends that such power relations offer. *Everybody* sexualises women. Everybody 'gets the joke'. But it is men who stand to gain the most. The four videos analysed in this study invoke a sense of fun and freedom, a sense of liberation from a feminist puritanism that might be seen as boring. It is permissible in these videos to not only 'enjoy looking' (McRobbie, 2004) but to enjoy touching too. Yet, in keeping with the observations that hegemonic masculinity is not a singular monolith and many versions exist, it would be premature to assert that the versions of masculinity proffered in these videos are hegemonic. Certainly, they are misogynistic and seek to preserve imbalances in gendered power relations. But, as some have observed (eg. Mullen, Watson, Swift, & Black, 2007; Wetherell & Edley, 1999), men in discourse often distance themselves from such ideals. Thus, the extent to which the representations of Pitbull, Flo Rida, LMFAO, or Snoop Dogg and Psy are taken up by young NZ teenage boys as authentic representatives of hegemonic masculinity *in a local context* remains to be seen.

Stage two research questions

In pursuing the aim of exploring the above concerns, the research questions for stage two included: to what extent do teenage males accept, reject, or resist discourses of masculinity constructed in popular music videos? More importantly, it asks, how do teenage boys do this – what discourses do they themselves draw on, and what similarities do they share with those constructed in stage one? It also seeks to explore their relationship to alcohol by asking: how do they talk about drinking, in the videos and more generally? Again, in keeping with the binary of masculinity/femininity, it asks: do they construct their own masculinity in response to representations of femininity implied in these videos? By way of answering these questions, the subject positions constructed by the participants are also considered.

Chapter five: Reception of the videos by teenage boys

In this chapter the methods for stage two of the research are outlined. Information on the research design, participant recruitment, researcher reflexivity, ethical concerns, and data analysis approach are included. Following this, the discourses drawn on by the teenage participants are presented, as well as the positions they construct. Discussion of the results is provided in the final chapter.

Research approach

In stage two, groups of teenage boys watched and then discussed the music videos to explore their responses and whether they drew on, negotiated or resisted the dominant discourses identified in stage one. Discourse analysis (DA) was employed to analyse the discussions. This methodology stems from the writings of Foucault (Hook, 2001), although in the interests of avoiding the type of prescription that would limit the scope of DA, Foucault himself neglected to lay out methodological injunctions (Graham, 2005). This task has, however, been taken up in the work of others, such as Burr (1995). Burr's definition of discourse as "a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements, and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events" (Burr, 1995, p.48) provides particular utility as an entry point for analysis. As this study is concerned with gendered power, the Foucauldian DA approach as outlined by Parker (2004, 2014) and Willig (2001) was appropriate. However, at times a discursive approach analyzing the more micro features of talk-in-interaction can be useful, (Willig, 2001) and thus attention is given at some places to the performative aspects of discourse within the focus groups, not only the discourses and their subject positions.

Recruitment

The participants were recruited from a co-educational secondary school in the Wellington, NZ region, following Massey University Ethics Committee approval (Massey University, 2006). Permission was sought from the deputy principal of the school to place an advertisement in the school notices (see *Appendix B* for notice) requesting that interested participants respond to the researcher via email. Times were arranged, by email, to meet with interested participants. At the meetings, parent consent forms (*Appendix C*) and group confidentiality forms (see *Appendix D*) were distributed. The parent information leaflet (see *Appendix E*) and a participant information brochure (see *Appendix F*), which outlined the aims and type of research to be conducted, accompanied the permission slips and group confidentiality forms. The information brochures also advised that movie vouchers worth \$20 would be provided as a thank you for participants' time. Aside from the age criteria of 13- 15 years old, and male identification, there were no restrictions placed on who was eligible to participate.

Table 1: Focus group composition

	Pseudonym	Age	School year	Ethnicity
Group 1	William	14	9	NZ European
	Eddie	14	“	“
	Mosin	13	“	“
Group 2	Alex	13	“	“
	Naruto	13	“	Australian/ European
	Jim	14	“	NZ European
Group 3	Archer	14	10	“
	Dexter	14	10	“
Group 4	Max	13	9	“
	Owen	13	“	“
	Steven	13	“	“

Groups and Participants

Eleven boys returned permission forms. Nine of the eleven participants were year 9 students, aged 13- 14. Two of the participants had just started year 10, and were aged 14. All of the participants identified as predominantly New Zealand European/ Pakeha, while some cited various European ancestry such as Scottish, Irish, and Dutch. The participants were organised into four focus groups. Summaries of the participants and groups are provided in Table 1 and further detail is given below.

Group 1

Three friends made up group one. As they were friends, they tended to be more comfortable talking with each other than the other groups. They professed a common interest in gaming. They stated that they listen to a lot of music, primarily on mp3 players, in their lunchtimes and between school; sometimes even when gaming. William admitted that he does not watch a lot of music videos, while Eddie and Mosin each revealed watching them ‘sometimes.’ Mosin watches the official video before watching a parody of it; parodies were appreciated by all the members of the group. The group members use a variety of internet based programmes to listen to music or watch videos including Spotify, Youtube, itunes, and itube- a free app that allows you to download and store videos from the internet. Group one participants preferred dubstep, ‘old school’ music such as The Doors and ACDC as well as local NZ artists. Also, William revealed an interest in ‘Mozart and stuff’ and asserted that he doesn’t ‘know any modern people.’ They were, however, mostly familiar with the songs used on

the study. Eddie admitted to listening to ‘some Pitbull and Flo Rida music.’ Both Eddie and Mosin had seen *Hangover*.

Group 2

Three participants who shared a class but were not friends comprised group two. They had disparate interests. Jim enjoyed the arts, particularly music, Naruto played some sports, while Alex steered clear of sport but professed an affinity for gaming. This diversity extended to music preferences. Jim had never heard of any of the artists, preferring less ‘mainstream’ music, ‘some New Zealand music,’ and older artists, such as the Beatles. While Naruto was familiar with some of the artists, he did not listen to their music by choice; he preferred alternative metal bands. Alex, however, enjoyed all the artists used and was familiar with the songs and their videos. Jim and Naruto estimated the amount of time spent listening to music as between one and three hours each day; Jim preferred to play music himself. Alex estimated spending around six hours a day listening to music, some of which included the music used for this research. All said they did not watch many music videos. For Jim, the visual element was distracting and detracted from the music. Naruto might watch to “see what the world has gotten to.” Alex was likely to watch a music video if he ‘felt like [he was] missing out,’ such as when LMFAO’s *Party Rock Anthem* came out and his friends were discussing it. The participants stated that they overwhelmingly used Youtube to view videos.

Group 3

Group three included only two participants, as one other participant originally interested did not arrive for the focus group session. The two did not know each other and expressed divergent tastes and interests. The conversation dynamics in this group tended to be more oppositional, and less driven to arrive at consensus compared to other groups. Archer enjoyed some sport, professed an interest in philosophy and a desire to travel. He enjoyed listening to music every day and considered it a large part of his life. Dexter was interested in medieval reenactment, and used music to calm him while going to sleep. Archer did not watch many music videos because he thought the visual element detracted from the music. Dexter “only watched the stupid [music videos] that [his] classmates put on when the teacher’s out of the room.”

Group 4

Three year 9 students comprised group four. Max expressed an interest in sociology, and philosophy amongst other things. Steven and Owen were “sort of friends,” and although they knew Max, they did not spend a lot of time with him. Max listed his hobbies as taking long walks and painting *Lord of the Rings* figurines. Steven was interested in sports, gaming and collecting stamps, signatures and sports memorabilia. Owen also described himself as quite sporty and music as very important to him. The participants had diverse music preferences; Owen liked rock music from the 80s, Steven also enjoyed rock music, such as Green Day, and mentioned Eminem, Katy Perry, Ed

Sheeran, and Taylor Swift as artists he enjoys. Max preferred classical music, and listened predominantly to Concert FM, in addition to “novelty comedic songs” (e.g. Weird Al Yankovich). The members of this group did not watch a lot of music videos, but would do so using Youtube for songs they were interested in.

Procedure

The research was conducted within empty rooms at the students’ school, as this was practical. Two of the groups took place in November 2014, with the other two taking place in March 2015. No other teachers were present, and the rooms used in the sessions were closed to other students. A relaxing, informal atmosphere was attempted through the provision of snacks and beverages. Before viewing the videos, the participants’ confidentiality and permission forms were collected. They were reminded of their commitment to confidentiality, provided through their signature on the focus group confidentiality agreement. Explanations and rationale for confidentiality were provided, and all participants indicated that they understood the reasons for this. The participants were reminded before commencement that they were under no obligation to answer any questions that made them uncomfortable, and that they could leave before the focus group began. Participants were given the opportunity to ask any questions, before being instructed to choose their pseudonyms. An audio and a video recorder were set up and used to record the conversations so as to provide greater ease and accuracy of transcription.

Following these preliminaries, the interviewer asked some basic questions about the participants’ hobbies, sports, music tastes, and listening habits in order to create a chatty, informal tone and establish rapport. The participants were also asked what they understood by the term *masculinity* as a way of gauging their ideas of this construct before discussing it. Following this, the videos were shown, and questions were asked in response to each video. (see *Appendix G* for interview schedule). These pertained to their thoughts, feelings and reactions to each video. Discussions ranged in duration from 50 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes. The first two groups were conducted, with the permission of the teachers concerned, during some class time in the relaxed environment of the last week of school. The other two groups, in March, took place during lunch time so as not to interfere with the students’ class time and were slightly shorter.

Ethical considerations

The Massey University Code of Conduct for Research, Teaching, and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (Massey University, 2006) provided ethical guidance for this research. The main ethical considerations stemmed from the use of children younger than 16 in the study who were considered to have reduced capacity to give informed consent. Therefore, students were required to sign confidentiality forms before participating and the reasons for this were fully explained. Parental permission was sought and granted for all students. The research was granted approval by the Massey

University Human Ethics Committee on the 25th November, 2014 (see *Appendix H* for approval letter).

Reflexivity

I was initially drawn to a focus on music videos through my work as a secondary school teacher at a boy's school. I was aware of much of the music that teenage boys were listening to, and noticed that many of the songs had content that painted alcohol in a positive light, and also presented imbalances in gender. I wondered to what extent the music and its content impacted on how the boys talk about alcohol, how much they identified with the ideals of masculinity constructed within the videos, and how it impacted their views of women.

My awareness of the power of music was also informed by an active interest in music. As a musician, I have strong personal views on what makes good music. The types of pop music videos chosen for this video were concerning for me on the grounds of personal preference; even so, through analysing them I did come to begrudgingly accept how effective they were as pop music. It is likely that a certain disdain for the music coloured my responses in interactions with the participants, despite my best efforts to remain neutral. This personal preference may have influenced those participants who enjoyed the music to respond accordingly, by curbing their effusiveness.

A concern with alcohol use was part of my concern with the music videos. For several years I did not drink for health reasons, and experienced 'peer pressure' to drink. Part of this pressure, I came to understand, was related to living up to being an ordinary, normalised male within a significant NZ drinking culture. Also, as a male, I feel a certain amount of shame and surprise at the stories I hear from female friends of mine, who have experienced sexual assault (however minor) within drinking situations; having their bottoms pinched in bars for instance, by men they didn't know but who nevertheless felt entitled to do so. This behaviour is seemingly widespread, with many women having a story of this happening. Again, I wondered to what extent the images and understandings provided through media that explicitly promote such behaviour (see *SFPR*) might have in normalising it – or perhaps even contributing to serious sexual assault - much of which, regrettably, passes without comment. Although this type of sexism and sexual assault occurs in everyday situations, it seemed more pronounced in situations where alcohol was involved.

When it came time to conduct the research, I was aware, also, of a position of power relative to the participants in this study. Although the participants were not students whom I had taught, they were aware that I had been a teacher, and that I knew the deputy principal. This placed me in a position of authority. While I tried to create an informal atmosphere, it is likely that this status difference affected how the participants responded. This might have prompted socially desirable responding. Certain discourses are rendered less likely to appear through the mere presence of a teacher (or possibly even an adult).

Analysis of focus group data

Parker (2004) summarises and condenses his earlier twenty steps (1992) for DA into seven key steps that he argues should be involved in carrying out DA. These guided the current study:

(1) turn the text into written form [...] (2) free associate to varieties of meaning as a way of accessing cultural networks [...] (3) systematically itemize the objects, usually marked by nouns, in the text or selected portion of text; (4) maintain a distance from the text by treating the text itself as the object of the study rather than what it seems to 'refer' to; (5) systematically itemize the 'subjects' – characters, persona, role positions – specified in the text; (6) reconstruct presupposed rights and responsibilities of 'subjects' specified in the text; (7) map the networks of relationships into patterns (p. 310).

The focus group conversations were converted from audio-visual format to written transcripts using guidelines provided by Silverman (2001; see *Appendix I*). The free association suggested by Parker for 'accessing cultural networks' was in some sense already enabled through the CMDA analysis in stage one. This analysis helped provide a framework of understanding which was subsequently used to help analyse the transcript. Following transcription, the transcripts were read, re-read, and objects were highlighted and itemised according to nouns, metaphors, figures of speech, or other salient features. This process yielded 44 codes across the groups. These codes were examined for similarities, overlaps and contradictions and from here were organised into discourses. For instance, the 'animalistic/biological discourse' included the codes of risk taking, toughness, impulsivity, competition, physicality, dominance, and lack of emotional receptivity. Subject positions were identified within discourses and discussed in the findings below.

Findings

Five discourses were identified in the talk of the participants. These include enjoyment, animalistic/biological discourse, feminist discourse, slut discourse, and a moralising/health discourse. These discourses were used to construct several key positions including the 'critical commentator,' predominantly occupied by the participants themselves; the 'stereotypical man,' from which the participants distanced themselves; the fun loving, 'everyday guy' position, inhabited both by certain artists and participants; the 'music fan' and 'ordinary adolescent male' inhabited by the participants, and the 'imposter,' a position largely inhabited by inauthentic artists. Subject positions for women included the 'skank, slut, or whore,' and the 'acceptable female.' In various ways these discourses were negotiations around the dominant discourses provided by the videos, identified in stage one. Each

discourse is described below using quotes from the focus groups to highlight specific points (each quote notes the group it was from and the video being discussed).

Enjoyment

“Good song, terrible video” (Eddie, Group 1, Hangover)

The extent to which the boys accepted the discourses varied. Those participants with pre-established positions of resistance to mainstream pop music in general were dismissive, while those who identified with the videos, the music, and/or the artists, used a discourse of enjoyment to conditionally accept them. Enjoyment includes the participants’ own enjoyment, but also the sense of enjoyment of the artist. The separation of the music from the content was used to defend the pre-established position of the ‘music fan’ while constructing a critical position. It achieves a balance. Often, for example, the music was isolated and constructed as ‘catchy.’ In other instances the videos were praised for their humour or aesthetics. Its use, therefore, might be considered a form of hedging (‘I like the song *but...*’). Four participants (Jim, Naruto, Dexter, and Max) from three groups (groups 2, 3 and 4) overwhelmingly rejected all the videos and wrote them off wholeheartedly. Such a resistant position does not necessitate discursive strategies that would allow one to ‘have it both ways.’ It is all discredited. Accordingly, the following analysis largely focuses on the responses of the participants who drew on the enjoyment discourse in various ways.

Upon finding out that *SFPR* was the next video to be viewed, Mosin stated:

Mosin: I love the zebra – and I love the clothing they wear. I love the leopard skin

Eddie: oh yeah

Mosin: I love the leopard skin and the zebra and animals and stuff. Love it.

Group 1, SFPR

The appreciation for aesthetics and presentation was also seen in Mosin’s response to the vodka bottles within *Wild Ones*:

Mosin: yeah I like those Vodka bottles they’re all like, kind of faded eh?

INT*: so you think the bottles look [cool

Mosin [they look cool (...) I just like the glass

Group 1, Wild Ones

*INT=interviewer

Through focusing on the aesthetic qualities of the vodka bottle, or on the costume and set design of *SFPR*, Mosin is able to distance himself from the meaning-laden content, while remaining a fan. But through aesthetic enjoyment, the seductive and manipulative aspects of these videos for younger

viewers begin to emerge. The appearance of this discourse suggests a partial acceptance of the video that carries significance; studies have demonstrated the power of packaging aesthetics in alcohol marketing and branding (M. C. Jackson, Hastings, Wheeler, Eadie, & MacKintosh, 2000; Purves, Stead, & Eadie, 2014). In these videos an affinity for the ‘coolness’ of the look *might* signal an affiliation for the accoutrements of alcohol consumption.

While aesthetics was important for Mosin, catchiness was a common element amongst all the participants who liked the songs. Alex (group two) sang the hook to *SFPR* and nodded his head along as it was playing. Steven and Owen (group four) noted they liked *Timber* before it was played:

Steven: Yes! {raises hand in air in response to seeing that the next video is Timber}
[Timber is a good song
Owen: [this song is really good and catchy
Steven: I’ve seen the video and it sucks. The video sucks but the actual song’s good

Group 4, Timber

As Steven’s response above shows, the music is viewed positively, while the video itself “sucks.” In group two, Alex’s emphasis on ‘catchiness’ was maintained in talk about the unsavoury aspects of the video, possibly as a way of reconciling an individual position of enjoyment Naruto’s resistance, as seen below:

INT: (...) any differences between male and female drinking?
Naruto: kind of, getting drunk and kind of just hitting, on women and just being, like, a dick to them I guess
INT: okay, um, do you think there’s anything appealing about this?
Jim: [um
Alex: [it’s still catchy

Group 2, Timber

For Steven, *SFPR*’s suitability for dancing is cited as a reason to enjoy the music, and is separated from the negative content of the lyrics or the videos:

Steven: I think it’s a really good song to dance to just ‘cause it’s, like, the beat is so easy to dance to and its really fun to say and then like “sorry for party rocking” I think it’s good but I don’t like half of the lyrics and I really don’t like the video
INT: what lyrics don’t you like?
Steven: um (2) it’s sort of hard to say

Group 4, SFPR.

That Steven distances himself from lyrics he can’t recall suggests that a repositioning strategy is at work here. Despite finding it “hard to say” what lyrics he dislikes, he dislikes them all the same. In addition to catchiness, humour was an important aspect of the boys’ enjoyment of certain of the videos, in response to *SFPR* Mosin says: “the music video is really funny.” Group one as a whole

frequently laughed and pointed to *SFPR* while watching. Facilitated by their friendship, their freedom to express and tendency to construct consensus, they took-up the video's tongue-in-cheek tone, suggesting openness to the content of the video that belies their critical talk elsewhere.

In the following extract, Archer (group 3) takes up the freedom discourse within *SFPR* as an aspect that he envies, or would enjoy himself if it was attainable:

- Archer: I dunno, I think, I think, as a guy I... would have moments where I would envy (1) um, the situation and envy... or wish I was there
INT: what aspects of the situation?
Archer: um (2) I dunno you get (1) you get a lot of freedom in (...) in this little world they've made, and you get a lot of... like there's not a lot of responsibility or a lot of um (1) commitment which is a good thing in the real world but I suppose if you're not looking for the real world then you'd get what you want

Group 3, SFPR

Archer's talk constructs an 'ordinary guy' position. It is, to a certain extent, 'anti- PC' in its frank opposition to an overly critical stance. Freedom from responsibility and perhaps monogamous commitment is expressed as naturally desirable ("as a guy") – but only 'momentarily.' Archer's comments also express awareness of the video as unrealistic and fantastical through its contrast with the 'real' world. While a desire for the fantasy is constructed here as part of being 'a guy,' realistic acknowledgement of it *as* a fantasy is also commensurate with a down to earth, ordinary guy position.

The discourse of enjoyment was also employed to discuss the women and men in the videos. As Archer discusses, the women are seen to be enjoying themselves too:

- Archer: well (1) either way you put it, um, they both happen. The music is complementing the women's bodies and the women's bodies are complementing the music
INT: right
Archer: so they work well together
INT: okay=
Archer: = which is why... most artists would use it
Dexter: mmm
Archer: but, what I said before (2) the women aren't being held against their will and they're not, they're not um... being forced to do anything by the looks of it they're quite happy
INT: sure
Archer: um, so I wouldn't think this is exploiting at all, um (2) I mean I wouldn't lie, because I did enjoy watching the video

Group 3, Timber

Archer's frank admission of enjoying the women's bodies deviates notably from the overt distancing of other participants. He confidently accepts the visual presentation of women, and does not reject the content of the video as 'exploitative' as others have done. It is the post-feminist discourse of female

enjoyment and the willingness of women in displaying their “excessive femininity” (McRobbie, 2007, p. 725) that enables this positioning. The women’s complicity (happiness) ensures that it is not objectifying, as such, to appreciate looking. Here we can begin to see the power that enables post-feminist discourses, such as enjoyment, to perpetuate. They enable male subject positions that can enjoy objectification guilt free, while disavowing an explicitly misogynistic stance. Enjoyment is a useful discourse for negotiating a complex cultural milieu that simultaneously derides overt sexual objectification while ubiquitously disseminating graphic examples of it. Archer has to negotiate conflicting discourses that, in a post-feminist context, posit heterosexuality and its associated values (taking, dominating etc.) as normative, while also censoring against overt sexism.

This negotiation can be seen further in the following excerpt, in which Archer reconstructs Pitbull mid-sentence, from “womaniser” to the less critical ‘woman-liker.’ This amendment accords with a position that suggests Pitbull’s masculinity represents a natural (and non-manipulative because it is reciprocated) heterosexual affinity for women. ‘Womaniser’ is not strictly accurate because the women want this too. Heterosexual enjoyment helps construct the position of the ordinary heterosexual male. *Pitbull’s* enjoyment here is posited as a reason to accept him, or at least not vehemently reject him, as Dexter does:

INT: what did you think of the, what did you think of Pitbull in that?
 (...)
 Dexter: an annoying (1) dick
 Archer: I thought (...) he was presenting himself as (2)
 Dexter: playboy?
 Archer: well, yeah, or a womaniser or a woman... liker, in the, in the sense that he was... enjoying himself (1) and the situation that he was in

Group 3, Timber

Pitbull was ‘enjoying himself.’ And, because the women were enjoying themselves too, there could be found no reason to reject their sexualisation within the video. Thus, the ‘objectified woman’ position was ‘translated’ and subsequently accepted through the discourse of enjoyment. In response to *Wild Ones*, the participants in group one also deployed shared enjoyment as a reason to embrace the video as non-exploitative:

William: yeah it was more about [the fun
 Eddie: (they) were like “let’s have a good time together, and lets, and lets=
 William: =have fun

Group 1, Wild Ones

For Archer (group three) the fun of *SFPR* trumped consideration of the drinking and sexual aspects. Again, enjoyment is deployed selectively to accept certain aspects of the video while disavowing the negative content:

Archer: I think this video had a bit more to do with, um (4) like, fun over (2) drinking and everything else, um, so they enjoyed themselves more than, and they knew they were enjoying themselves (1) like they weren't blacking out or, passing out or, hanging over. They just (1) partied.

Group 3, SFPR

The emphasis on enjoyment here leads Archer to overlook contradictory evidence; Redfoo does in fact pass out in the end. Given the ubiquitous use of alcohol in the video it is interesting that it is minimised here. Archer's selective response might be considered, again, as a positioning opposed to excessive political correctness. But it still retains a *degree* of political correctness in not endorsing extreme consumption of alcohol. It again helps construct an ordinary guy position- in which enjoyment is very reasonably valued. Alcohol is a minor, almost irrelevant part of this.

Animalistic/ biological discourse

“A dominance like in the wild, and the alpha lion” (Dexter, Group 3)

The participants drew on an animalistic discourse to construct a stereotypical masculinity subject position, from which they distanced themselves. Animalistic discourse is located in opposition to humanistic discourse, which valorizes rationality and agency, and “asserts the privilege of human beings over non-organic (or organic but nonhuman) entities” (Han-Pile, 2010, p. 118). In opposition to stereotypical men, the participants implicitly possess the humanist qualities of sensitivity, rationality, and criticality (Todorov, 2009), and this enabled them to comment on stereotypical men. While the use of animalistic discourse to position fellow humans might be considered un-humanistic, the quasi-fictitious nature of the position and its very construction *as* animalistic means there is no chance of offending anyone. The animalistic discourse includes excessive physicality, aggression, deficits in reasoning, lack of impulse control, and inability to regulate emotions. The understanding of these behaviours as animalistic has been traced to Protestant theology, which promulgates “the power of reason and self-regulation to overcome ‘animalistic’ impulses” (Vatne & Holmes, 2006, p. 591). These values manifest today in the ideological imperative for individuals to restrain themselves. McAvoy (2015) summarises this: “through the discursive practices which produce and reproduce autonomous, psychologised, responsibilised, subjectivities, a subject has been made responsible for that deviance” (p. 31). The self-control promulgated by men's health magazines (Crawshaw, 2007) is a modern form of this, and in its opposition to animalistic lack of control, partly characterises the participant's own positions.

A key element of the animalistic discourse for participants in group three was competition. Competition had important ramifications for ‘general’ risky behaviours including, most notably, drinking. It constructs a kind of ‘pack mentality’ in which men, in large groups, amplify their behavior

and lose control. The discourse helped make sense of *Hangover*; specifically, the scene where the two artists inadvertently initiate a bar brawl through recklessness caused by extreme consumption:

- Dexter: = you have one male, he'll just go about his business normally, and probably just stay quiet and stuff. They don't always and stuff but, you know, wouldn't be too bad. You get two and things just sky rocket. You get three, and, there's no point in counting
- INT: okay {laughing} okay. I wonder why that is?
- Dexter: they want to impress each other. They want to, outdo each other (...) the more you drink the more masculine you are. The, ah, more you drive while drunk the more masculine you are (2) um, the more risks you take while drinking slash driving, the more masculine you are (...) just the more risks you take in general

Group 3, Hangover

Extreme consumption of alcohol is interpreted through masculine relationships defined by animalistic competition. Psy and Snoop Dogg, like other stereotypical men, spur each other on when drinking. But this has little relevance to the boys. Archer's use of the third person 'male' and 'they' implies a certain detachment.

A lack of emotionality - or rather, a type of repressed emotionality that finds vent in aggression and rage - was identified by Max, in group four, as characteristic of a stereotypical masculinity. As Max is also at pains to point out, this version of masculinity is a construct:

- Max: the whole idea I think mostly would be that they are (2) they (1) drink a lot, are paradoxically completely unemotional but at the same time prone to great bouts of rage and very physically fit, um, (1) have a lot of sex, get drunk a lot that kind of thing. Very, I disagree to it but that's what I think the construct is

Group 4, general discussion

Here Max shows critical awareness of the construct of masculinity, but also the notion of a divided self whereby men are (stereotypically) non-emotional but also prone to rage. In group two, another component of the stereotype was impulsiveness, whereby men "act first, think second" (Alex). It is commensurate with the oafish, emotionally stifled type of masculinity constructed in other groups:

However, in response to *Wild Ones*, coolness and disinterestedness, rather than aggression and impulsivity become features - in addition to muscular physicality. Flo Rida is described below:

- Alex: normal, like, stereotypical guy
- INT: yep
- Naruto: kind of got the girls come in and he was kinda like there {mimics wide open stance with hands far apart} he wasn't taking too much interest in them and they were kind of like all around him
- INT: okay
- Jim: he had like a, didn't he have like a, a singlet on and his {slaps arm referring to biceps}

Group 2, Wild Ones

Alcohol tolerance based on increased physiological capacity was also drawn on to construct stereotypical masculinity by some of the participants. Below, stereotypical men consider themselves immune to the detrimental effects of alcohol:

Steven: I feel like men wouldn't really care how much they drunk or what they did to their body because they'd think "oh I work out every day to get these giant muscles, or this beer might just go through me sort of"

Group 4, general discussion

The implication is that Steven himself, in contrast, *would* care about alcohol's negative health effects. Alcohol tolerance appears in the following excerpt, in which the participants relate a line from *SFPR* ("A hundred bucks she won't outlast us") to stereotypical masculinity while rejecting it as false:

Jim: it's saying [women
Alex: [girls don't have as strong a stomach
Jim: are weaker
INT: okay, yeah?
Jim: which, isn't true
INT: okay
Jim: it, yeah, it's, I guess that's what its [saying
Alex: [depends, like=
INT: =yeah?=
Alex: =some women can't handle alcohol and, they'll just immediately throw up and (?)
Naruto: but that's the same as some men
Alex: yeah=
Jim: =yep=
Alex: = as well, but, there's also the typical guy that's strong an (1)

Group 2, SFPR

Here Jim is quick to point out that, despite the video's suggestions, it 'isn't true' that women are weaker and less alcohol-tolerant. Alex articulates a position at odds with this ("depends"); in which he suggests that these differences might have some truth validity outside the world of the video. Biological observations have the certitude of fact, singularly standing above pluralised social discourses (Haraway, 1988). However, the 'biological fact' that some women will "immediately throw up" is swiftly countered by Naruto's riposte: "but that's the same as some men." This forces Alex into a disavowal of the position he constructed only moments earlier. Further elaboration of the biological discourse is stymied by a censoring feminist discourse of gender equality.

Dominance and aggression are recurring aspects of the animalistic discourse. Dominance is not necessarily purely physical; it can involve "taking charge."

INT: What would manly be?
 Alex: [strong
 Naruto: [brave, strong, um
 Alex: takes charge most of the time
 Naruto: yeah
 Int: okay
 Naruto: the dominant, yeah
 Alex: species

Group 2, general discussion

Here Alex again draws on a biological discourse in using the term ‘species’ to apply to men, and perhaps posit such differences as influenced by nature, by urges, as immune to civilising influences. Below, stereotypical masculinity is infused with “gangsta’ images of coolness, tattoos, drug and alcohol use, and violence. These constructions bear some relation to the construct of hypermasculinity (eg., Parrott & Zeichner, 2003), a form of masculinity associated with dominance and aggression and so dysregulated as to be almost animalistic:

Eddie: Like a big puffed up (...)
 I get the picture in my head of, like, some big gangsta guy walking down the street thinking he’s all cool
 William: I just think of the word
 Mosin: yeah, I kinda like think of a gang, like with tattoos on their arms and face [like that picture that was on the... with like marijuana in their mouths and like massive whiskey bottles and stuff, wearing like really loose clothing and basketballs
 William: [yeah, I’ve never actually encountered masculinity
 Eddie: And like if you look at them they’ll hit you cause they think they’re so tough.

Group 1, general discussion

While William considered it “just a word,” Eddie and Mosin’s constructions attest to the infiltration of gangsta-rap into global popular culture. While ‘gangsta masculinity’ retains hypermasculinity and animalism in its construction (D. Iwamoto, 2003), it has the added descriptor of ‘coolness’ and hence a greater degree of calculation or ‘human-ness.’ Psy and Snoop Dogg embodied these aspects for Naruto (group 2) who also linked ‘coolness’ to substance use: “they’re just gonna kind of casually drink there, it’s kinda like, too cool.”

The playboy sexuality identified in the CMDA section was identified as a component of stereotypical masculinity also. The following extract occurs in a context in which Dexter is rejecting the video:

Dexter: I think they’re trying to portray men as (1) um, sex symbols and stuff (...)
 yeah, and, you get drunk and, every woman in the room will sleep with you.

Group 3, Hangover

In summary, an animalistic/biological discourse has been used here to understand the ways that the participants constructed stereotypical masculinity. Yet, as can be seen, it is not simply the case that stereotypical masculinity was animalistic in all instances. Rather, it is what stereotypical masculinity is *not* that is important - because this defines the participants' own positions. In general discussion descriptions of masculinity were animalistic and where stereotypical masculinity was constructed in response to the videos, it was deployed as a basis to reject them. However, in response to the videos, stereotypical masculinity was informed by what was presented, such as disinterestedness or 'coolness.' This suggests that the simplistic, animalistic, or even hyper-masculine constructions were not entirely sufficient to discredit the masculinity observed within the videos. Nevertheless, it would seem that 'stereotypical masculinity' is fluid enough to be invoked in rejecting the artists. However, those who accept certain artists can also find reasons why their preferred artists do not occupy this position, as will be seen below.

Authenticity

"I like that guy's name: Redfoo, I think it's so stupid but it's funny" (Owen, Group 4)

As noted in stage one, claims to authenticity were made in some cases by the artists within the videos. However, authenticity depends on audience reception (Harrison, 2008); accordingly, authenticity was deployed in places by participants to reject, or accept, the artists. Authenticity included the artists' appearance, effort and talent. However, certain artists were sometimes endorsed as authentic over others despite visibly embodying characteristics of stereotypical masculinity previously critiqued.

It was earlier suggested that the 'neo-minstrelsy masculinity' of Psy (Park, 2015), and the comical nature of *Hangover*, might influence how Snoop Dogg is regarded by association. William (group one) hints at this, while also attesting to Snoop Dogg's iconic status. Snoop Dogg's standing breeds a 'first name basis' familiarity, and his appearance here seemingly subverts a pre-formed idea of what, or whom, he represents. His disregard for law 'precedes him' – and he is constructed as causing the mayhem in the video. While watching the video, William asks:

William: Snoop what are you doing? [a little later] What the hell Snoop Dogg? what have you caused?

Group 1, Hangover

Even though, or because he "is thug life personified" (Powell, 2011, p. 466), his appearance in this comical pop video is questioned. And although Snoop Dogg is African American and has a real

history of violence and incarceration (markers of authentic gangsta-masculinity) William's questioning is carried out on the basis of authenticity. This becomes clear in the following extract, in which Eddie cites and laughs at a Youtube parody (Baker, 2014) which ridicules Snoop Dogg's over-appearance in a variety of pop videos for financial gain. In citing it and laughing, he endorses its sentiment:

Eddie: In the parody about of one (of the major songs?) about Snoop Dogg I won't do a piece of shit pop song unless you pay me (chuckles)

Group 1, Hangover

Snoop Dogg has, perhaps, travelled too far from an authentic gangsta persona to become a comical cliché, a visible example of capitalistic excess within the music industry. He is 'in it for the money,' appearing in "piece of shit" pop songs. Furthermore, although perhaps intended as ironic, *Hangover* is rather comedic in a slapstick sense. The artists themselves, therefore, are also rejected as jokes. The fact that Snoop Dogg is dismissed for 'trying' to be a gangsta again suggests that his appearance with Psy *has* damaged his authentic status. He is "almost" and "kind of" a gangsta:

Eddie: they were trying to portray, like, almost kind of gangstas but not really

INT: yeah?

William: yeah, like they thought they were gangstas

Group 1, Hangover

Thus, effortlessness was valued as a quality that delineated authentic artists from imposters. Pitbull was positioned as an imposter in group one:

Mosin: (look at his costume?) just clashes with everything

William: oh dear God

Mosin: thinks he's the man.

Eddie: yeah (3) he's trying to act like Flo Rida too much I reckon

Group 1, Timber

Pitbull's attire is condemned for its garishness, and his style is derivative. He is not 'the man' but merely thinks he is. This resistance to Pitbull occurred several times, particularly in group one. Below, Psy and Snoop Dogg are similarly rejected for acting in a way that is not authentic, but 'imbecilic' because they are drunk:

Archer: well exactly like, I'm not, I'm not really sure (1) what they're trying to portray. Men as. But, apart from, like, drunk imbeciles

Group 3, Hangover

Here, perhaps, their lack of control is rejected, and the humour attempted by Psy and Snoop Dogg is refused, or Psy's clownish, 'neo-minstrelsy' version of masculinity (Park, 2015). 'Imbecile' as a term has particular resonance with 'joker,' 'clown,' or 'minstrel:' Snoop Dogg and Pitbull stand in direct contrast to Flo Rida and Eminem, who can *actually* rap and 'pull off' the toughness:

- Eddie: he's trying to act, like, a () Flo Rider coz he can rap and he acts sort of tough but he can pull it off and he's trying to act like Eminem where he can just, like (2)
INT: okay and do you think=
Eddie: =he's like a rehash

Group 1, Timber

It is unclear why Flo Rida can 'pull off' the toughness, but perhaps it is bound to his status as a Black (i.e. authentic) rapper (Harrison, 2008). This possibility is tentatively supported by a question during the viewing of *Timber*:

- Mosin: is Pitbull white? Or black?
Eddie: Mexican

Group 1, Timber

The question is framed as a dichotomous choice. To this Eddie replies with another category outside of this 'box:' "Mexican." The group is, at the point it is asked, identifying negative elements of *Timber*. Although speculative, it may be that this inability to decipher Pitbull's ethnicity plays a part in his rejection. Pitbull is neither White nor Black, and thus does not occupy a position in a binary that demarcates authenticity (Harrison, 2008). Rap is more often associated with Black artists, or the one famously legitimated exception to this: Eminem. It is an interesting question considering Eddie's comparison above. Interestingly, Eddie states at the beginning of the focus group that he listens to "some Flo Rida and Pitbull music." But during the viewing of *Timber* his view of Pitbull's talent began to be compromised, largely in relation to the oppositional positions the others were taking, suggesting that talent is secondary to other markers of authenticity, despite also being used to construct it. That Pitbull is neither 'White' like Eminem, nor 'Black' like Flo Rida may be purely coincidental to discussions of his talent. In any case, Pitbull is a "rehash" in attempting to approximate both. Moreover, although the overt discussion of ethnicity occurs only once in their discussion of the videos, it is worth noting that Mosin's questioning of Pitbull's ethnicity contradicts later comments, in which the participants suggest that ethnicity does not matter to them.

Wild Ones was accepted by some as not being ‘all about the women’ and although fun was a unanimous feature of *all* the videos, Flo Rida was seen as more genuine for this reason:

Eddie: well, he wasn’t trying to act cool [like Pitbull was
William: [he, he actually genuinely seemed like=
Eddie: =he was having fun

Group 1, Wild Ones

The view of Flo Rida as an authentic artist was also (partially) taken up by Steven, who recognised a double entendre in the title (*Wild Ones*), while consciously and deliberately rejecting the meaning within it that might point to *Flo Rida* as a womaniser – and therefore a stereotypically (negative) exponent of masculinity:

Steven: this song, the lyrics, they’re not great, but they’re not terrible. Like, ‘hey I knew you were a wild one’ that could just mean, like there are two sides to the story, there’s the women then there’s the wild adventures that he’s doing like he’s doing all these amazing adventures which I would have loved to do that would have been real fun (...) you can sort of interpretate the lyrics differently

Group 4, Wild Ones

Thus, it cannot simply be concluded that certain participants who might be considered stereotypically masculine (by the participants’ own standards) were rejected. Of all the artists, Flo Rida embodies the muscular physicality of the ‘alpha male’ identified across some of the groups as stereotypically masculine. He presents frequently in a singlet, and in this regard contrasts with the others who wear suits (Pitbull, Snoop Dogg and Psy) and do not possess the same bulging biceps of the ‘six-pack’ masculine ideal (Gill, 2009). However, Flo Rida was also embraced the most wholeheartedly for his effortlessness. Despite the fact he openly displayed his muscularity, this reading of Flo Rida as more authentic was possibly influenced by the participants’ appreciation (sometimes envy) of the adventurousness and physical activity depicted in his video. LMFAO, too, were seen by some as more authentic for their effortlessness. Perhaps, their authenticity was also influenced by their irreverent humour and irony or the fact that, physically, they were not stereotypically masculine. Another possibility is that the discourses regarding authenticity are merely employed as a way of defending or shoring up pre-established subject positions. The boys who expressed affinity before the focus groups for the artists were more likely to deem them authentic. Ultimately, for whatever reason they are considered authentic, such artists are taken more seriously. This implies that their messages or discourses (regardless of any similarities) are not resisted to the same extent.

Feminist discourse

“The portrayal of women wasn’t... I didn’t really like that.” (Jim, group 2)

The participants drew on a feminist discourse in discussing the women in the videos. Much of the boy’s talk displayed an informed awareness of the ways in which women were depicted as less powerful than the men in these videos. As such, feminist discourse was used to reject the objectified position of women identified in the CMDA analysis of the videos above. The discourse positions the participants, once again, as critical commentators on society. Indeed, much of the resistance to the videos was framed in feminist terms, as the extract below shows:

Eddie: it’s not fair for the women to be treated like objects, like, they’re pretty much just sex toys, like [I paid these women to do whatever I want it’s like
Mosin: [“now, now just get in the truck” (puts on voice as he says this)
Eddie: you’re an idiot (referring to Pitbull)

Group 1, general discussion

The use of the terms ‘fairness’ and ‘objects’ draw on understandings and awareness of feminist concerns. This discourse is used to reject Pitbull. Group four also resisted the objectification within the videos, citing the imbalance in numbers between men and women, and the attire (or lack thereof) of the women:

Max: note how she touched that phallic necklace
Steven: notice how
Max: =objectification test, passed
Steven: how it’s like 95 per cent of these actors are women
Max: over 95, there are, this guy, and there’s a couple of other guys who dance with the women (?)
Steven: most of these women are half naked
Owen: exactly

Group 4, general discussion

Here Max also draws on the significance of the female lead stroking Flo Rida’s necklace, by invoking the notion of the phallus, showing awareness of semiotics and feminist discourse. Moreover, for Max this is a symbol of objectification. The ‘test’ has been passed, indicating an awareness that such objectification is a common feature of contemporary media. Other groups also drew on feminist terms such as sexualisation to reject the positions on offer:

Naruto: they were sexualised they were kind of dancing around them and it wasn’t like a, yeah it was really sexualised dancing, it’s like it was (2)
Jim: yeah, th, the (1) the portrayal of women wasn’t (1) I didn’t really like that.

INT: what didn't you like about that so much?
Jim: well, like (1) they, they had like, I dunno they were doing all the dancing and they didn't really have any clothes on
INT: yeah?
Jim: and, like, generally (1) um, like no self-respecting person would really... do that I guess, I dunno. Yeah maybe

Group 2, Timber

Jim's talk, while resisting the objectification of women within the video, simultaneously constructs the boundaries of acceptable femininity. The women who objectify *themselves* in such a way are no longer respectable ("no self-respecting person would do that"). An emphasis on individual agency and choice surfaces here, while social and structural influences fade away.

The degree to which women were demeaned within the music videos was used by members of group one to compare the videos as to whether they were good or not. *Wild Ones* was evaluated more favourably within group one for this reason:

William: it wasn't as (1)
Eddie: it was wasn't as demeaning to women as the other ones

Group 1, Wild Ones

Interestingly, the CMDA did identify objectifying, sexualised depictions of women in this video. Perhaps it was more favourably evaluated for its post-feminist depictions rather than overt misogyny. Alternatively, this view can be considered as a way of justifying or defending a previously expressed acceptance of Flo Rida as more authentic. Part of the feminist-informed discourse was a concern with the way society is infatuated with slim body images and weight, as exemplified by Kesha's manager:

Max: you see that woman? referring to Kesha
Steven: yep
Max: her manager told her she was fat

Group 4, Timber

Finally, another aspect pinpointed and used to reject the videos was the portrayal of the women as needy and overly concerned with men. In the following extract, Steven from group three draws attention to the neediness of the women who 'fuss' over the men as evidence of power imbalances, and as a reason to reject the content. The extract is also notable for the sophisticated critique from Max, of the irony within the videos, as also discussed in stage one:

Steven: those girls were all fussing over the men, being "oh my gosh you're so handsome"
like they were like dancing around them and like "yeah I wanna be yours basically"

(...)

Max: another thing that makes all these things hard to fight is irony, is the increasing rise of ironic stuff the c... all those versions of masculinity you saw there, they were ironic {makes inverted comma gesture} doesn't actually make them any less (1) expectations and stuff but (1) they, but you can't really fight them 'cause they'll just say "oh it's all ironic"

Group 4, SFPR

The awareness of feminist discourse was evident across all the groups. The concern with equality and disavowal of negative, stereotypically masculine positions are strongly related, and were overwhelmingly used to reject the video content. Awareness of feminist discourse was such that, in some cases, it policed the boys' talk, as a type of hedging used to distance oneself from commitment to the 'truth value' of a position or statement (Markkanen & Schröder, 1997) This is evident below:

INT: femininity, what would that mean? To you guys?

Alex: feminine. If you're not talking about tom boys then... girls that like make-up (1) girlie shiny jewellery

INT: okay, right

Alex: {quietly} I'm being sexist now

Group 2, general discussion

The conflicted nature of these articulations and the ensuing self-correction again suggests conflictual discourses are operating. Iterations that invoke or construct different versions of femininity are immediately disavowed for the possibility of being labelled sexist. Alex's articulation above reveals a dichotomy between acceptable non-normal femininity. While using them, he displays an awareness of 'tomboy' and 'girlie' as terms that serve to reaffirm gender divisions (Reay, 2001).

Slut discourse

"Yeah, go away, blimmin... skanks" (Eddie, Group one)

A discourse that drew on terms such as 'sluts' and 'skanks' contradicted the feminist discourse used elsewhere. This discourse, which was largely confined to group one, demarcates respectability and constructs acceptable femininity through its application to women who are sexually provocative. As pariah labels, such terms have been discussed by Shippers' (2007) in relation to women who subvert or challenge the heterosexual matrix. Although 'slut' has been appropriated and embraced by women to subvert traditional expectations that women should negate their sexuality (Attwood, 2007), it is clear from its appearance alongside other derisive comments regarding Keshia, that group one's participants used the term to reject her. As Attwood argues, "It is the lowly, dirty, sleazy quality of the slut that marks her out, a quality that suggests that overt sexuality in women is

precisely not ‘classy’” (pp. 238- 239). In light of this, it is perhaps significant that *Wild Ones* with its ‘classier,’ polo-playing female lead was evaluated more positively by participants in groups one, three and four.

“Skank” and “slut” were used to describe the women within *Hangover*, as well as “prostitute” in discussing Kesha. The following excerpt is in response to *Hangover’s* narrative thread, which follows the two protagonists as they make the humorous alcohol-induced mistake of ‘picking-up’ two older women. Conflict between desire to use slut discourse, and the knowledge that this would be a transgression that carries a risk of being ‘rude’ (perhaps sexist) is also apparent below:

William: I don’t wanna say, something rude
 Eddie: I can think of a word but I don’t want to say it out loud
 INT: you can say something rude
 William: slut
 Eddie: skanks

Group 1, Hangover

A sense of release upon being given permission to talk freely was notable here, and seems indicative of the tension built through a conflict between maintaining contrasting subject positions. The participants simultaneously bemoan the video for its objectifying portrayals, while positioning the women as deviant for being thus depicted. The subjective position constructed through slut discourse might be considered as the ‘ordinary adolescent male.’ In its self-awareness of its own ‘rudeness’ and political incorrectness nature it is similar to the ‘lad.’ Reluctance to “say it [slut] out loud” is largely due to its incompatibility with the critical commentator position, but the obvious pleasure in using it arises from transgressing this very incompatibility.

Having drawn on notions of the ‘slut’ and ‘skank’ to describe the women in *Hangover*, they were again utilised extensively to ‘slut-shame’ Kesha - even before watching *Timber*. This seems to also indicate a pre-established position influenced by pre-consumed media representations of Kesha:

Eddie: but don’t even get me started on what I think of Kesha=
 Mosin: man she is the definition of
 INT: why not? I, I wanna get you started on it. What do you think [of Kesha?
 Eddie: [no no=
 Mosin: = she is the definition of slut, man. [She
 Eddie: [yeah ()
 INT: why do you say that?
 Mosin: WEARING ALL THESE JEANS AND PRETTY MUCH UNDERWEAR=
 Eddie: = she might as well just be walking around naked (...) the queen of (1) being a=
 Mosin: = prostitute {brings hand to mouth imitating cough as he says this }

Group 1, pre-Timber

The cough that accompanies Mosin's utterance of the word 'prostitute' constructs this position as the 'lowest of the low' as almost unutterable, but also attests to the conflicting feminist discourse which provides an awareness that such a label is not socially sanctioned. The pre-position regarding Kesha is shored up during the viewing of the video. The 'slut' is constructed through the operation of the 'good girl' discourse that serves to regulate female teenage celebrity sexuality (Jackson, 2013). However, Kesha is not considered by the boys as a teen celebrity:

Mosin: coz Kesha's older than Pitbull ()
Eddie: is she? (incredulous), aww that's disgusting
(...)
Mosin: you know, Pitbull's 32 and Kesha's 36

Group 1, general discussion

Although this is in fact untrue (Kesha was born in 1987), Kesha's sexuality is seen as 'disgusting' by the boys because of her age. This suggests that it does not violate the 'good girl' discourse associated with teen celebrities, but is rather a violation of a similar, naturalising heterosexual discourse which dictates that older women conform to notions of nurturance, or caring rather than overt sexuality. The 'good girl' discourse becomes a 'good woman' discourse; both represent a 'double bind' in which there is no way for women to win: they are shamed as sluts if they are young and sexualised, and labelled as disgusting sluts if older. Yet in its sexual obsessiveness, post-feminist culture expects overt sexual displays from women.

It seems that there is no corresponding term that applies in the same way as 'slut' to men. Perhaps 'dog' is the closest any term comes, but, as noted this has been embraced by Pitbull in a way that assumes that it as a badge of honour, not a source of shame. This discrepancy has been termed the 'sexual double standard' (eg., Kraeger & Staff, 2009). Flood (2013) points out that this double standard appears to be shifting within an Australian context, but its use is still evident in the following excerpt:

INT: okay cool. Um so how does this clip portray men?
(...)
Archer: I wanna say studs
INT: studs yeah?
Dexter: I kinda wanna yeah
INT: Yeah? Studs in what way?
Archer: well exactly like, I'm not, I'm not really sure (1) what they're trying to portray men as. But, apart from, like, drunk imbeciles

Group 3, Hangover

As this excerpt indicates, the use of ‘stud’ aligns most readily with the playboy position elaborated on in the CMDA video analysis. Archer ‘wants’ to say studs to refer to the fact that the men are surrounded by women; but then, in a repositioning that diverges from this position, he disavows it (‘I’m not really sure’) before relabeling them as “drunk imbeciles.” Archer’s shifting here is perhaps evidence that ‘studs’ is not adequate for rejecting the artists. It is not interchangeable with ‘imbecile’ because it still carries positive associations. Thus, the difference in language available to the participants in discussing the artists’ sexuality is stark.

Moral and health discourse

“It’s not appropriate for the kids (...) under our age (...) I think if our parents had seen this video they would have stopped us watching it”

(Steven, group 3)

Participants drew on a broad moral and health discourse in their discussions of alcohol and the sexualized aspects of the videos. Participants in group one, despite having clearly enjoyed aspects of the videos, constructed them elsewhere as evidence of a decline in standards of taste and decency using a ‘good old days’ type moral discourse, in which they cite enlightened figures from bygone eras. This serves to position them, again, as critics of society and upholders of civilized values:

Eddie: we’re going to hell in a hand basket everybody
William: Oh God, the human race is doomed! It’s just=
Eddie: how did we get from Johnny Cash to this stuff?=
Mosin: yeah! How did we get from nice classical [music to this
Eddie: [from Elvis Presley to this=
William: = how did we get from Mozart to this?

Group 1, Timber

Max, (group four) ‘regrets’ to say that he has an opinion on the popularity of pop music videos; people are drawn to controversy:

Max: (...) If it’s ridiculously sexualised enough there’ll be a newspaper for older people, rejection of authority this time of real life, and that creates marketing, people, I mean, probably half, I imagine at least half the views for Miley Cyrus’s wrecking ball was by people who just wanted to know, who were brought there by the controversy

Group 4, general discussion

The moral position constructed above does not partake in the spectacular consumption of the videos, (including the controversy surrounding them) but criticises it from the outside. Yet although positioning themselves on the outside of the spectacle, the boys in group one enjoyed it at other times through fascination with certain ‘pornographic’ elements. The laughter that frequently accompanied

sexual innuendo suggests they might be transgressing boundaries that posit a fascination with sex as morally corrupt. For instance, while watching *SFPR* Eddie responded to the bones held in front of the crotch of Red Foo. The accompanying line “I be up in the party looking for a hottie to bone” supplies the pun to which Eddie and Mosin respond:

Eddie: eww!
Mosin: he had a boner oh!
Eddie: Oh!

Group 1, SFPR

Eddie’s “eww” is one of mock disgust, and is carried throughout the rest of the focus group as a catchphrase that accompanies risqué suggestions:

Mosin: eww (in mock disgust)
Eddie: eww {follows suit, Eddie and Mosin laughter}
William: (groans in a tired fashion)
(...)
Mosin: PEEKABOO!
{Eddie and Mosin laughter}

Group 1, SFPR

‘Peekaboo’ here refers to the woman in *SFPR* lifting her head up to wave at the camera following the oral sex she has been performing on Sky Blu. The sense of an ‘in-joke’ to do with pornography is reflected further below, in Eddie’s accounting for *Timber*’s hits on Youtube:

Eddie: I can tell you what 200,000 of them are {Eddie laughter}
INT: yeah? What is that?
Eddie: I’m not gonna say, William (pats William on shoulder, William has head in his hands)

Group 1, Timber

The risk here for Eddie of explaining what the illicit ‘200, 000 views’ are to William is that of positioning himself as knowledgeable of a topic that is, in this context, slightly taboo. William maintains a moral position throughout, by groaning whenever the other two laugh at the sexual innuendo. Throughout these excerpts, then, a contradiction emerges between what might be considered an ordinary adolescent position, including a covert fascination with the slightly taboo, pornographic, or sexual aspects and a critical, authoritative position, which uses moral discourse to censor such fascination. Clearly, in front of an adult conducting research into gender, it is appropriate that one draw on a morally inflected discourse more explicitly than the ‘other’ one. Yet the slippages

with regard to pornography and acceptable femininities suggest that self-sanctioning may not be a profound feature of the boys' talk in other contexts - contexts not governed by the same rules.

Related to the emergence of moral discourse was an acceptance of the 'alcohol as bad' discourse. Chainey and Stephens (2014) observed a rejection of this discourse at work within the talk of 16-18 year old participants in a NZ context; whereas those participants mostly rejected it to embrace drinking, the younger participants in this research used it to reject drinking. This is, in many ways unsurprising. The discourse is put to work through public health and educational efforts, as well as regular news stories about drinking. Also, none of the boys professed to ever having drunk alcohol significantly. Some had had 'sips' of their parents' drinks, but much of their discussion of alcohol was drawn from observing it in older people, or through education.

Within group one there was an awareness of the harm that alcohol causes through associations with suicide and having sex with strangers. There was also awareness of a 'coping' discourse surrounding alcohol, and suggestions that the videos only present one side of the story:

William: somehow, um alcohol has become the answer to pretty much everything
(...)
INT: okay, what do you think the question is that they're answering?
Eddie: it's like "party!" like "drink alcohol and you can have fun" (...) but they don't show you that could (go home with a stranger?) you could get stabbed, you could get shot=
William: = they don't show you the bad things, they just show you all the good things
(...)
Eddie: That's what wife beating is. They get drunk and then go beat their wives
INT: okay
William: {to Eddie} it's bad. Don't, don't beat your wife

Group 1, general discussion

Again, the boys comment on alcohol from a position outside it, as social critics, and link it to a range of undesirable behaviours. For Jim (group two) the insinuation that "you should drink lots" within the music videos was not "good advice." An awareness of the skewed portrayal of the effects of alcohol can be seen in the extract below, where *Hangover* is rejected for failing to accurately reflect the fact that alcohol is bad; although, as Alex observes in defense of them, they do parody some of the negative effects of drinking in a way that draws awareness to them:

Naruto: hangovers aren't actually that bad they made it look like, but from what I've seen I don't think I would say that
INT: okay
Jim: ah, it's like... get drunk, and then (1) do it again
Alex: they do show the stereotypical hangover at points though, like you don't want to see the sun, it's all too bright, and you put some sunnies on and...but they didn't show headaches

Group 2, general discussion

The association between alcohol and sexual coercion did not go unnoticed by the boys as another way in which alcohol is bad. When asked if there was a relationship between drinking and sex, they answered:

Naruto: =definitely=
Jim: [get them drunk
Alex: [yeah, loads=
Naruto: =get them drunk and it's easier to (1) do that stuff

Group 2, general discussion

For members of group four, the over consumption of alcohol is bad for its negative health effects:

Max: although I think I want to just avoid it I think that for people who want to it's acceptable to, it is acceptable to drink alcohol although not to the amount, any amount that alters your state of mind
INT: right
Owen: I kind of get the thing of going out with some friends for a drink or something
INT: yep
Steven: yeah I get it
Owen: like you go and hang out but like I don't get the, getting totally drunk until you're like unconscious

Group 4, general discussion

Here, 'drinking in moderation' is a variation on the alcohol is bad discourse, and it is used by the participants to construct a *reasonable* position. For Max it is "acceptable" but ceases being so when it "alters your state of mind" – suggesting control is highly valued by this participant. The others in the group seem to agree, constructing the social aspect as holding allure, but only so long as one stops short of getting totally drunk and falling unconscious. As can be seen then, the participants showed good awareness of some of the negative effects of alcohol consumption – even if the threat of being "shot" or "stabbed" might be slightly overstated. In this way, they largely rejected links between alcohol and freedom in the music videos, observing them to be unrealistic. But although the discourse that alcohol is bad was unanimously expressed, there was evidence of talk that seemed to provide clues as to how rejection of 'alcohol as bad' might be facilitated by acceptance of certain aspects of the videos, as seen in the response to *Wild ones*, below:

Eddie: you don't need alcohol to have a good time. It's like you can (...) it's like, in the bar they're like, not drinking that much alcohol like (1)
William: yeah they're, not, they're only drinking in the bar
Eddie: it's like you don't need to take alcohol wherever you go
(...) like, you can have a good time you don't need alcohol but you [can
William: [only drink in bars
Eddie: yeah only drink in bars

Group 1, general discussion

It is worth a reminder that *Wild Ones* does portray excessive drinking. Flo Rida at one point pours two bottles of champagne into his mouth at once. Perhaps this is acceptable because it is context specific – occurring in the socially sanctioned drinking situation of a bar. It is slightly concerning, however, that alcohol is “just there,” as Ollie (group three) put it, and the minimisation of alcohol’s negative effects within the videos causes it in many instances not to be commented on. As mentioned, Archer’s ‘enjoyment’ of *SFPR* (see ‘Enjoyment discourse’) led him to ignore alcohol’s negative effects. Again, in response to *Timber* the alcohol is also initially downplayed. However its significance is realised in hindsight:

Archer: um, yeah, it’s also I guess, um (3) I mean I did, I did sort of, pick up on it
INT: yeah=
Archer: = but only when (2) they were trying to express a very particular point, like,
INT: right
Archer: like drinking or like, um (2)
INT: did you notice much alcohol visually?
Dexter: no
Archer: no I didn’t =
Dexter: = but then again, [I
Archer: [although there was a bar full of (1) tequila and (...) shots

Group 3, Timber

Thus, the lack of clear discourses alluding to the negative effects of alcohol and enjoyment of other aspects led alcohol to be constructed as secondary. This might reflect the lack of participant’s first-hand experience of alcohol. However it seems alcohol’s negative aspects were downplayed in many instances to defend the videos, which were accepted for other reasons. Nevertheless, the extracts below point to the possible benefits of actively attending to such media:

Naruto: a lot of people who are into pop don’t get how wrong messages are often, they’ll think it’s a great song and its fine they don’t get how it portrays women, how, like alcohol really isn’t that fun after, like it might be fun but like (1) how bad it could screw you over in the morning and it’s like, the consequences of it, it kind of like just portrays everything as (1) easy and, like, amazing and (1)
Alex: with Timber, I ... loved that song and until now, when I started paying attention and actually listening to it, it shows a lot

These types of comments were not restricted to this group, and suggest that actively attending to the videos can lead to a rejection of their content. They are no longer ‘just there.’

Chapter six: Discussion, limitations and future directions

“Now, whenever I hear it I’m just gonna puke” (William, group 1, *Timber*)

Discussion

This research began, rather broadly, from a concern with excessive alcohol consumption by NZ youth. It was noted that gender has a long association with masculinity, in this country and elsewhere, and that media is an important way in which gender ideals are disseminated. The research not only explored masculinity’s relationship with alcohol, but its relationship to femininity. With this in mind, four pop music videos - a media type likely to be influential for teen boys - were explored for how they constructed gender and alcohol together. Their meanings around masculinity, femininity, and alcohol were also examined through an analysis of boys’ talk after watching them. This exploratory research is important given the relative dearth of previous studies exploring the discursive patterns and connections between these constructs for this particular age group. All three areas the study explored (media, gender, and alcohol consumption) are complex fields within their own right. The complexity is only heightened when these are considered together. Contradictions were revealed in each stage and although attempts were made at teasing apart discourses, the discourses are interconnected, circular, fluid and ‘messy.’

The videos that were chosen for this study are extremely popular, and their level of saturation provided another important driver for their critical consideration. They have been disseminated around the world and have been taken up in diverse countries, including NZ. That most of the participants in this research were familiar with the songs, if not the videos, attests to their ubiquity. Pop songs such as these can be heard resonating through the tiled surfaces of shopping malls, thumping through massive stadiums during sports fixtures, or on high rotation on commercial radio station playlists. The videos are easily accessed through Youtube, or might be seen on big screens behind bars in nightclubs, or in fast-food restaurants. As exponents of pop-culture, these songs and their videos are everywhere.

Male dominance - sexually and financially - was constructed in stage one as a key feature of all the videos. The similarities between the videos, despite apparent surface differences, were both profound and troubling. Extreme consumption of alcohol, the commodification of both leisure and women, and the ‘consumption’ of these; various types of freedom; and the ability of alcohol and money to facilitate these freedoms - these are heady, powerful fantasies that are in many ways not unique to ‘post-postmodernism’ (Braidotti, 2005). What distinguishes post-postmodern representations like these videos is the complex ways in which contradictory discourses are hybridized and power is masked. In the four music videos chosen, eclectic discourses, images, references, and allusions emerge side-by-side, rapidly cut and held together by music. Feminist

empowerment appears alongside objectification; traditional markers of masculinity are interspersed with modern hybrid forms like ‘the metrosexual;’ the negative effects of alcohol are presented but in ironic or humorous ways – or as celebrations of a lack of control. However, the whirlwind of discourses, while seemingly multi-faceted and varied, actually obscures the ways in which the videos perpetuate existent, global, patterns of masculine domination (Railton & Watson, 2011). As was explored, capitalist wealth accumulation is a powerful ‘metanarrative’ within today’s western society. These videos can be considered as attempts to manipulate in similar ways, and for the same commercial reasons as advertisements. Upon critical examination they are in fact remarkably similar in the ways they ‘push buttons’ (Austerlitz, 2007) in their audiences and assemble discourses in ways that promise deliverance through consumption.

It is concerning is that such aggressively (or sometimes subtly) misogynistic discourses as those contained within videos, are so easily dismissed or ignored as mainstream. Moreover, the target audiences of such videos are young teenagers who may not yet possess the critical resources with which to negate such discourses – although this point should not be overstated: there were also sophisticated understandings deployed by the young teenagers in this research. It is remarkable that feminist discourse can appear so visibly within today’s western society, yet Pitbull can sell millions of singles by suggesting that alcohol will help coerce women into sex; or that LMFAO can boast of having a ‘bunch of bad bitches in the back,’ and of ‘grabbing booty’ whenever the urge takes them. It was shown that post-feminist culture enables such entitled, dominant versions of masculinity. Post-feminism is contested, and provides complex cultural constructions that are not *necessarily* disempowering for women (Genz, 2006). But from the videos, the ways that post-feminist discourses can be exploited for the benefit of men are clear. Connell’s (1995) concept of complicity suggests that many men are loath to challenge their own entitlement to social authority: ‘the patriarchal dividend’. Post-feminism enables such complicity without the appearance of sexism, and might therefore be considered as a manifestation of the process of hegemonic masculinity. The apparent benefit for women who subjectify themselves in the ‘right’ way might arise from a temporary offering of phallic power (McRobbie, 2007) or a secure place within the heterosexual matrix. The risk of refusing these positions is to be afforded pariah status (Schippers, 2007) or be positioned on the ‘outside of the joke’ (McRobbie, 2004) between poles of acceptability; as a prude, a ‘feminist,’ or, at the other extreme, a ‘slut,’ ‘skank’ or ‘whore.’ These processes ensure that part of what defines post-feminism, is women’s complicity.

As part of a consideration of capitalism, the ties between the record industry, the artists and big business were explored. Specifically, the use of music videos to sell alcohol was highlighted as problematic, particularly considering that these videos circumvent the restrictions sometimes placed on alcohol advertising by legislative bodies - for instance in the hours in which alcohol commercials can be shown on NZ television. Although product placement is nothing new, it is again the widespread dissemination of such messages, the targeting of young people, and the linking of alcohol

with sexual fantasies or other fantasies of freedom, fun and enjoyment that is problematic. Alcohol as a way of coercing women into sex is particularly troubling in perpetuating a culture of rape. (Abbey, Zawacki, Buck, Clinton, & McAuslan, 2004). The ways in which this is sanctioned within post-feminist culture include its dismissal as ironic, which makes it difficult to counter.

Yet power is not a unidirectional dynamic, and the temptation to simplistically view media as ‘hypodermically’ influencing audiences (Gill, 2008) must be resisted. For this reason, the videos were explored for how they were taken up by their target audience. The reception of the videos by the young teenage male participants in this study provided mixed results, suggesting the importance of a range of factors, not least of which is context. The boys overwhelmingly took up critical positions that allowed them to comment from a position of exteriority to negative elements of the videos, or masculinity in general, including the tendency to sexualise women, excessive consumption of alcohol, disregard for one’s health, and dominant, aggressive masculinity. This criticality is encouraging. It reveals an arsenal with which to counter the pernicious discourses within the videos. Armed with an awareness of feminist concerns, some of the participants drew on notions such as ‘objectification,’ ‘sexualisation,’ and the ‘male gaze’ to condemn the videos as skewed in their gendered portrayals. Despite inconsistencies, an awareness of how participants are *supposed* to regard the videos is at least a first step towards rejecting their (potentially) harmful messages.

And yet, the construction of a stereotypical masculinity position diametrically opposed to the participants seems a little too easy. It suggests, partly, a response to the specific context in which the research was carried out - a contention that is bolstered by certain noted inconsistencies within some of the talk. The participants were aware of the aims of the research, and thus, were likely aware that endorsing negative qualities would be seen as undesirable. Further, the ease with which such a position was constructed suggests that its ideals are slightly ‘unrealistic.’ Stereotypical masculinity encompassed qualities that could be considered contradictory – coolness and aggression, for instance. With its outmoded machismo ideals, stereotypical masculinity is almost a caricature (Gough, 2006); but it is also a catchall for a variety of negative qualities that the participants were, unsurprisingly, loath to embrace. It was an effective positioning strategy in this particular context

Based on the rejection of stereotypical masculinity, one cannot with any confidence assert that hegemonic masculinity any longer bears any relation to those negative macho qualities formerly considered hegemonic- if indeed it ever did. Instead, as others have noted (eg., Wetherell & Edley, 1999) the rejection of these ideals might be seen as hegemonic in itself. However this is not to say that hegemonic masculinity no longer serves to maintain the imbalances inherent within the heterosexual matrix. If any of the included artists could be said to be ‘more’ hegemonic than the others, it is Flo Rida. Despite the findings of the CMDA, *Wild Ones* was constructed by some as less harmful than the other videos. The reasons are not entirely clear, but are bound to Flo Rida’s authenticity. Unlike Pitbull, he did not *try too hard* to act cool but offered freedom, adventure and,

perhaps, a subtler, less sexually oppressive form of masculine power - this despite embodying the 'coolness' and muscular physique so vehemently derided as stereotypical.

For similar reasons, LMFAO were also more acceptable for some. They *just* had fun, and did not try too hard in doing it. For one participant, the fact that they were non-stereotypical 'stick figures' facilitated their acceptance. Their (partial) acceptance) also seemed based the video's overall tone and aesthetic. With its colour, animations, and allusion to drinking games it is more in tune, perhaps, with youth culture. Despite positioning themselves as critics, the 'spectacle' of these videos was also consumed by some of the participants – particularly those in group one. Participation in the spectacle included partaking in humour and innuendo, or appreciating aesthetics, or envying the activities. It is interesting, too, that *SFPR* arguably represents a scenario closer to the boy's own (potential) experiences. Being too young to drink, the bar or club settings of the other videos are less immediately accessible than the house party that provides the setting for *SFPR*. The 'high adrenaline' activities in *Wild Ones*, too, might be closer to the boys' interests. It was embraced more readily than the glorified Korean pub-crawl and comic buffoonery of *Hangover*, or the romantic getaway scenario of *Timber*. These suggest that hegemonic masculinity might be defined by (subjective) judgements of effortlessness, fun and enjoyment of life. The differential take-up of the videos suggests local factors are important, but it is worth considering that despite apparent differences, the videos were, in important ways, uniform in their promulgation of dominant masculinity.

The contradictions inherent within post-feminist culture were also evident in the appearance of feminist discourses alongside those that construct acceptable femininity. Despite overt recognition of the inequality that permeates the representations of gender in the videos, this inequality was recreated by certain participants- even as they discussed it! Concepts such as 'slut' and 'skank' are all too readily and easily invoked in a postfeminist setting that seems to glorify the sexual availability of women. Whether this availability is enabled through coercion of reluctant women, or through the exploitation of women who are 'up for it,' it is imperative that boys are continually encouraged to critically examine and resist these messages. That no corresponding terms were available for men ('stud,' 'playboy,' 'dick,' and 'imbecile' lack the same connotations) suggests the gender double standard stubbornly persists. Discourses are taken up or rejected within a local context according to their productive power or ability to produce pleasure (Bordo, 1993). Contextual demands and group dynamics, such as saying the right thing in front of a researcher, making a joke with a friend, or positioning oneself in opposition or accordance with other group members, encourage the iteration of different types of discourse. Where participants recognised post-feminist discourses such as feminine enjoyment, the videos were more readily embraced. One possible reason is their seeming ability to negotiate or straddle conflictual contextual demands

In response to the extreme consumption of alcohol in the videos, the manifestation of contrasting discourses could be seen in the boys' responses. For the most part, the boys' talk was

governed by a health and moral discourse that judged excessive alcohol use as bad. And there was awareness that the videos did not portray the negative effects of alcohol realistically, if at all. Where the artists' extreme consumption was coupled with a lack of control, they were rejected. In several instances drinking in moderation, or drinking in bars, was deemed acceptable; and through this, the participants positioned themselves as 'reasonable.' However, that alcohol was downplayed in some of the videos suggest that ideal, or authentic forms of masculinity are more successful in making alcohol acceptable. Acceptability, for these particular participants, of this particular age, and within this particular context, was largely constituted by fun, action and adventure and envy. Where such attractive lifestyles are paired with alcohol, there is the potential for association – for alcohol to be subsumed as part of the commodification of leisure and ripe for a construction of identity through consumption (Rose, 1996). The appreciation of aesthetics by at least one participant extended to the images associated with drinking. If the videos were enjoyed, alcohol was 'just 'there, as an unremarkable aspect of the video. These observations preclude the possibility of un-categorically stating that alcohol was rejected as bad.

Limitations

Several caveats must be considered with regard to findings of this research. Firstly, the sample is comprised entirely of Pakeha boys from one particular school. The potential effects of culture or ethnicity upon the take up of these videos could not, therefore, be explored. The notion of intersectionality stresses the importance of ethnicity, culture, class and sexuality as aspects as important aspects for understanding gender (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). Thus, in future research of this nature it would be extremely valuable to explore the responses of boys from different cultural, class, or ethnicity backgrounds, or perhaps different sexual orientation for how these factors 'intersect' to construct discourses when discussing or viewing music videos. Particularly, given that rates of paid subscriptions to music streaming sites in NZ are highest amongst Maori and Pasifika teens (Gibson, Miller, Smith, Bell, & Crothers, 2013), it would be informative to explore their take up of the discourses within the music videos.

The school in which the research was conducted is a co-educational school with a strong culture of awareness regarding gender. This is evident from observing the work and posters on the wall around the school, and through personal knowledge of the teachers and their areas of interest. This is a contextual factor that is bound to have a bearing on the critical responses of these participants to the videos. It is feasible that boys from single-sex schools would respond differently – although in what ways and for what reasons is currently unclear. The very fact that research was conducted in a school was also important in perhaps influencing participants' to respond in 'correct' ways – despite attempts to create an informal atmosphere. Further, the boys participated in the research knowing that they would be discussing gender and alcohol with a researcher who was concerned with these. These factors possibly encouraged the boys to be guarded in some respects.

The boys were quite aware of the aims of the research before beginning and would have been aware of the interviewer's standpoint before partaking, perhaps (again) leading to socially desirable responding. This seemed apparent with an overtly critical stance that was contradicted by an affinity with the videos. Moreover, such awareness undoubtedly resulted in selection discrepancies. For example, some participants who volunteered already had a critical interest in this area.

No suitable NZ music videos could be found in which alcohol and masculinity were paired so strongly. If such videos could be found, it would be interesting to explore the take up of these, for differences perhaps between the 'levels' of masculinity proposed by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005). Also, considering the response of some participants towards Kesha, it would perhaps be informative to explore boys' responses to videos by female artists in order to explore the ways they positioned themselves in relation to powerful female artist. It may be that, in light of the heterosexual matrix's restrictions on women who challenge hegemonic power, female solo-artists are chastised more readily, as Kesha was by some participants.

Implications and future directions

This research has shown that the act of critically attending to the videos provides the participants with a way in which to do reject the discourses. Many of the boys had not previously considered in any depth the songs or videos, but having done so, became resistant to them. For some, certain of these songs were at one point their favourite, but through actively paying attention, the videos and the songs became abhorrent. This suggests the importance of critical media education. Although audio-visual material is frequently studied as part of the English curriculum in NZ, media studies and critical approaches that examine in greater depth the manipulative nature of popular media for teenagers are generally not offered until senior secondary school. The results from this research suggest that it might be beneficial for younger teenage students to critically examine such media. While the participants were able to recognize and reject overt objectification in some instances, a more critical examination of the subtleties of post-feminist discourse and culture might be warranted.

Despite labelling it as stereotypical and distancing themselves from it, the fact that negative conceptualisations of masculinity were so apparent in participants' talk reveals the need for the development of alternative masculinity understandings. Why should sensitivity, caring, nurturance, compassion, or other qualities not be so readily available when considering this construct? Perhaps, as Butler has so comprehensively charted, the binary between masculinity and femininity, based on the heterosexual matrix is itself the problem. As long as such a binary exists, as long as heterosexuality remains normative and associated with natural differences, such qualities will be ascribed to masculinity. That masculinity is considered in such a way – even by a group of boys with an inclination to criticise it - suggests that it is a powerful construction. Those less inclined to

position themselves in opposition to it may therefore engage in some of those practices that are derided by the participants in this research.

Moreover, this research revealed that, at this age, participants are still largely resistant to alcohol. Intervention strategies at this age, when boys have not engaged with drinking themselves may therefore be particularly important in preventing them. Although they can only be one factor in a complex equation that also includes supply factors and other legislative measures, critical awareness of the media that exposes young boys to positive portrayals of alcohol can only be beneficial. At some point, the discourse drawn on by the NZ boys in this research, that 'alcohol is bad' becomes resisted (Chainey & Stephens, 2014), suggesting that intervention might be most effective at earlier ages. Finally, given association between authenticity and the minimisation of alcohol in the videos, further research into factors that affect constructions of authenticity within NZ contexts by NZ audiences, may be informative in targeting interventions.

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Appendix A: Extract for multimodal analysis

VISUAL ELEMENTS

Flo rider (WILD ONES)

- Opens with establishing shot Dubai (with Dubai on screen- sets it in specific location)
- Cut to Ferrari (Flo rider driving)
- Helicopter shot of Atlantis the Palm hotel
- Flo Rider getting out of Ferrari
- Long shot of a group including Flo rider walking to a helicopter with sky diving packs on
- Close up shot of him in helicopter giving (hang loose) up looking at camera
- Shot of helicopter taking off
- Close up of helicopter control panel (altitude and pitch dials etc.)
- Mid shot of female singer Sia strapped to sky diving instructor
- Another shot of Dubai skyscrapers from above
- Shot of FR inside helicopter bracing for skydive
- Another high angle shot of Dubai landmark (palm islands)
- Close up Shot of FR putting on his glasses ready to jump
- Cut to same shot of sia
- Hi angle shot as Flo rider's about to jump showing him and ground below
- Shot of them jumping out
- Cut to them in air from go pro on helmet?
- Shot of FR as he's flying through air
- Another shot of him in the air doing "hang lose" gesture
- Another shot of him in air
- Another
- Another this time with chute coming out
- Then high angle above palm islands
- Another of him from below in the air
- Another of chute fully opening from below
- Cut to him singing on air boat (mid shot surrounded by women)
- Cut to three shot him dancing with arms around two women
- Point of view shot from camera mounted to front of air boat speeding through narrow water channel – more excitement
- Back to three shot with two women
- Then long shot of the three of them on the air boat (people in background) fist pumping
- Cut back to them parachute landing
- POV shot of them at speed landing through a flock of birds (busy/ hectic/ fast/ energetic)
- Back to mid/ long shot of him sitting down on airboat with two girls beside him, two behind him (and one guy in very back)
- Mid shot of him fist pumping his "friend" on the airboat surrounded by women
- Back to parachute scene with him giving a "bro shake" and hug to Sia following the parachute
- Back to low angle mid shot of flo with the two women on the airboat
- long shot on boat, him looking to woman on his right who is dancing next to him
- Long shot from behind airboat of it speeding down the channel
- Tracking shot from side of airboat as its speeding down the channel
- Shot to close up of him rapping with city scape in background, early evening, presumably after the day' excitement
- Then to two shot of him with arm round woman (female lead) with city scape in background, early evening
- Back to airboat three shot with him women sitting and dancing beside him (middle of day)
- Shot of crocodile in water
- Low angle close up of him on airboat
- Back to long shot him on airboat
- Shot on crotches of him and two women who he has his arms around
- Then to airboat mid shot with a different woman sitting to his right
- Then to crocodile close up
- then to two shot profile him singing to female lead with fountain behind
- then to racking shot at night him driving a fancy car
- close up profile of him driving with woman in the front seat with him
- then to close up him rapping in front of city scape early evening ("gotta be the man I'm the head of my band")
- then two shot him close dancing with female lead city scape in background early evening
- then to him in front of fountain two shot dancing with female lead

- then to long shot in club, people dancing around him holding bottles of champagne, he's pouring two bottles into his mouth at once (shutting down)
- To low shot, him in foreground, three women dancing on bar behind him, dressed in bikini tops and hot pants
- Then to him standing round (mid long shot)with guys (playboy"), one of whom is holding up champagne glass in toast
- Then back to full club, him in foreground, people dancing behind him
- Slight low angle in club, smoke machine close up on main, with lead by his side
- Cut to medium close up of two revellers (women)
- Mid close up him and lead holding champagne flutes up (out the bottle)
- To medium close up two shot of two revellers (women)
- Close up to him in club with champagne in one hand, mic in other (we all get bent)
- Medium close up in club with female lead holding bottle of champagne to camera, slight low angle with smoke machine in background
- Back to fountain two shot profile
- To mic/ champagne
- Revellers dancing/ club (women dancing, hands in air, slow motion- "a hundred supermodels")
- Close up of him on phone tweeting, and checking his followers ("last bit of hundred super models line)
- To him tweeting while sitting on stationary motorbike, low angle long shot
- Back to CU him tweeting from his Flo official account" come party with me & the IMG/STRONGARM family for a #Good feeling on Miami beach!! Calling all "#wild ones" for this one
- Back to him putting his phone back in pocket on motorbike
- To close up on BMW insignia on bike
- Back to motorbike long shot
- CU putting helmet on looking at camera
- Long shot in club, hi sitting round table with bottles on it, next to female lead, another man
- Then to 2 shot fountain
- Then to him and a friend long shot in empty club miming a golf shot in unison (lyrics "homerun")
- Then to long shot tracking shot of motorbike rider
- Then to club, circling hand held high angle showing revellers round table with bottles on it
- To bunch of revellers tightly packed dancing singing along (slow motion)
- To CU Flo early evening city scape in back
- To motorbike tracking shot
- To club tightly packed two shot with revellers in background dancing
- Low shot man (not Flo) holding vodka arms spread while woman runs her hands over his chest and sinks down while looking at the camera
- To dance scene mid shot women in club strobes
- To motor bike tracking
- To mid shot of who we assume is Flo on bike
- To fountain 2 shot
- To bike tracking but bike doing a wheelie
- Close up on bikes headlights doing wheelie
- To mid shot in club dancing, woman's cleavage foregrounded (circular motion of camera)
- Close up of female lead from car interior getting into buggy (no helmet, daytime- next day?)
- Mid shot from car bonnet of flo getting into buggy- (helmet)
- Medium long shot of buggy, her buckling up
(Fast cutting her in time with music between club and buggy scene)
- 2shot from side of buggy
- Club (dancing revellers)
- Buggy (2 shot)
- Club (close up on guy dancing smoking cigar)
- Buggy taking off (medium long shot)
- Club (close up on booty with male hand with expensive watch near it)
- Buggy taking off (medium long shot)
- Club mid shot with dancers (women and men) strobe on showing face, strobe off
- Long shot buggy doing donuts kicking up dust
- Back to circling camer in club midshot height showing revellers dancing, strobe lights in time with increasing tempo of music
- Buggy donut
- Club (strobes, sitting round alcohol table with flo and female lead)
- Buggy
- Club table
- Close up of flo rapping in club (packed behind him)
- Long shot him with champagne bottle in each hand, at least 5 round him holding champagne bottles
- Buggy donuts
- Club close ups him and some buddies dancing
- Close up womans bootie with man's hands (of the guy she's dancing with) holding a bottle of vodka by her booty, they're grindin
- Mid shot Flo sitting at table, women dancing around him (standing up)

- Buggie racing/ donuts
- Fountain 2 shot
- Buggie donut
- Close up him with lights of the city in background
- Long shot dancing by bar, champagne bottles
- Close up night lights in BG
- Club two shot dancing with buddy
- At table sitting down women dancing around him
- Buggie doing jump
- Fountain, dancing together
- Him and another male friend dancing
- Club high angle, hand held swirling selfie CU dancing
- CU of him taking a selfie
- Back to airboat image from earlier, putting shades on with line about shades
- Helicopter shot of Dubai sunset “when sun comes up”
- Airboat woman dancing, him sitting down
- Mid shot him sitting down singing to camera, woman leaning over him with cleavage “its on like...”
- Club revellers dancing
- Airboat, long shot women dancing shaking booty in face
- Different guy in back also has two women beside him
- Club revellers dancing (2shot CU hand held)
- Mid shot him sitting down singing to camera, woman leaning over him with cleavage, turns to look at cleavage (lyrics: “what happens to that body is a private show)
- Mid shot air boat (he’s addressing woman looking at her, continues rest of line what happens to that body is a private show)
- CU club womans booty (same woman as before) (finishes rest of line “what happens to that body is a private show”)
- CU city scape in BG early evening
- 2 shot him with other guy night
- Buggie jumping
- 2 shot him with other guy night
- Club circular hand held showing womans cleavage
- Fountain 2 shot
- Mid shot woman dancing enthusiastically
- Low angle long shot him and female lead early evening city scape in BG
- Medium close up him and lead cityscape early evening
- 2 shot him with other guy night
- Club 2 shot him and other guy fist pumping
- Wide highish angle club
- Him outside sitting down mid CU, other woman wearing skanty tops dancing round him, you see their mid riffs and cleavage, raises hands like he’s about to grab butt (“we get insane”)
- Back to long shot bar with champagne
- Motorbike
- Airboat long shot
- Airboat 2 shot with girl on other side (in black) this time
- Motorbike wheelie
- Extreme low angle looking up at sky scraper (from speeding vehicle- motorbike?)
- 2 shot fountain, they’re closer this time, he’s dancing close to her)
- Long shot bar champagne
- Buggie
- Club female lead mid close up dancing, hand held
- Mid shot Flo sitting at table peeps dancing round him
- Club female lead mid close up dancing, hand held, circular/swirling motion (arms up)
- Dune hover craft thing early evening him and lead female
- Club female lead mid shot dancing, hand held, cleavage
- CU male screaming into camera
- Motorbike
- Club close up woman dancing blue lipstick
- Flo sitting at table holding champagne up to camera, peeps dancing round him
- CU guy in club dancing
- Low angle long shot three women dancing on bar? Tables? Dressed skimpy (bikini tops, hot pants)
- Airboat CU flo
- Mid CU female lead and Flo early evening city scape her hands on his chest intimate
- LS buggie pulls up to where ferrari’s are parked
- Mid shot him taking buggie helmet off
- Airboat mid/LS him holding hands raised with two ladies

- Mid CU female lead looking at him smiling anticipating Ferrari ride having so much fun nodding in agreement to go for Ferrari ride
- Long shot from behind Ferrari them running to Ferrari arms raised in glee and anticipation
- Low angle MS women in black airboat dancing hands in hair cleavage and face
- Airboat him in centre sitting, girls dancing around him, all 6 seen (including guy in back)
- Two women at front give hi five over flo's head mid cu of them doing this
- Black screen
- Cut to airboat crew Wide angle standing on pontoon in middle of marsh waving arms like stranded as camera circles (3 guys, four women) Composition= guy, woman, guy, 3 women, flo
- Low angle mid CU him rapping solo with night light sin BG
- To low angle tilt shot of female lead on horse dressed in polo gear
- Mid close up low angle her looking into distance
- Black screen
- L S her on airboat driving it (this is her time to shine- corresponds with solo in song)
- Cut to 4 shot flo with three women beside him on pontoon beckoning for her to rescue them
- Cut to low angle mid shot her on air boat waving to him
- Long shot him climbing up towards her, she's on top seat with her foot up on the seat below her, dominant, he crawling over seat towards her
- Cut to fountain she looking at camera he dancing beside her and rapping
- Airboat the two leads hugging
- Fountain romantic they dance, he puts his hand under her chin in affectionate gesture
- Mid cu him solo night lights in bg
- Mid shot three women on pontoon getting left behind
- Long shot profile her on back seat behind him driving him in airboat, her hand on his shoulder she's smiling, his hand in the air waving goodbye to those stranded on pontoon
- Two hot profile og one man on ponton next to woman waving hands in the air saying "come back! Don't leave us" incredulous
- LS them racing away from the others stranded on pontoon
- 4 shot man in middle of women all sitting down relaxing, smiling
- Club CU flo rider, woman head level with crotch of woman dancing on table behind him
- High angle mid CU flo with female lead he's smiling and fist pumping
- Mid shot on airboat she's on his lap running hands over his chest, he's looking down at her breasts
- Cut to mid shot from behind of man arms raising the two Ferraris either side of him about to race and he about to set them off.
- Mid CU of Flo with woman from airboat (not lead) and his arm round her
- Mid shot female lead in bar now with top of in bra, low angle, (beside her is a screen with the women in bikinis dancing on it
- Reverse angle from behind Ferraris showing man with arms raised and.. (he doesn't drop them yet – ooh the suspense)
- Back to club and female lead dancing again, strobes, and she's joined by two other women in bikinis
- Back to shot behind man and... he drops his arms and they're off!
- High angle Flo in club
- Low angle mid shot flo with lead at night, lights behind them
- Fountain 2 shot , fist pumping
- Club. Lead dancing on table with two other women, skanty, flo in foreground down bottom- his woman's getting loose! Smoke machine, zoom out
- Cut to Ferrari race, Ferraris speeding past
- To club two shot man and woman dancing
- Long shot Flo on airboat in front of woman who's driving him while he stands victorious and pumps his fists in the air
- Back to club lead dancing on stage in bikini top low shot mid, tilt down to flo rider
- Helicopter shot of hotel (world's fourth tallest)
- High angle shot of table, hand pouring champagne into ide bucket that holds a bottle of vodka, someone from side puts their flute underneath it, zoom out to reveal it's a woman
- Back to long shot of lead on stage next to other bikin top woman beckoning for flo to join her on stage, he has arms outstretched looking up but doesn't get up
- CU Flo holding champagne glass towards hand held camera with his arm round lead goes to close up of female lead
- Long shot of the two of them on airboat
- Then to close up of them on airboat, camera tilts from close up of her above and behind him looking down at him to CU of him with his shades on (why do the girls never wear shades?)
- Back to stage low angle ans this time it's four guys in sweatshirts and hoodies
- Fountain
- Stage with lead dancing and flo holding up champagne bottle towards her, she's surrounded by the two others scantily clad and dancing
- Back to her on his lap on airboat, she's grinding on his lap
- To club her dancing on stage with the others
- Motorbike wheelie
- Him with his buddy two shot dancing night lights behind
- Club him in foreground gesturing/pointing), she behind and above him on stage dancing/ clapping
- Long shot bar with the champagne bottles

- CU him on motorbike in helmet
 - Club her dancing on stage long shot, many revellers in foreground pumping fists in air
 - CU flo rider hand to ear as in "what you say?" female lead dancing behind him
 - Club mid shot homies dancing with bottles looking into camera
 - High angle over table dude showing off his watch, bottles on table
 - CU flo sol low angle, night lights
 - Low angle airboat with womann sitting behind him
 - Long shot airboat from side
 - Fade to dune hover craft thing- heaps of fun, her hand in the air!
 - Back to city scape early evening her running her hand down his chest
 - Dune hover craft thing
 - Fountain intimate
 - Dune hovercraft thing
 - Club, him in foreground, scantily clad women in the BG on stage
 - Dune hover
 - Highish angle club table him sitting down doing that thing with his hands pointing to the booze on table
 - Dune hover thing
 - And... fade to black!
- (253 shots, 3: 54 secs) 253 234

ASL 0.9 per second

Appendix B: advertisement for school notices

WANT TO TAKE PART IN SOME RESEARCH ABOUT MUSIC VIDEOS?

Are you interested in taking part in a Psychology research project? A student from Massey University invites boys in Year 9 or 10 to take part in a study looking at the messages contained in RnB and hip-hop music videos. It will involve watching video clips with 2 – 5 other boys and discussing some of the things they contain. If you are interested, please email: samuel.lindsay@gmail.com with your name and form class.

Appendix C: parent consent form

PARENT CONSENT FORM

Teen boys, music videos, and drinking.

If you consent to your son participating in the proposed project, please read the following carefully and sign in the space provided.

- I have read the Information Sheet and understand what my son would be asked to do if I agreed to his participation
- My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.
- I understand that any personal information my son provides will be kept confidential to the researcher and the research supervisor.
- I understand that I will not be provided access to my son's focus group information.
- I understand that my son, or myself on his behalf, may withdraw from the project at any time.
- I agree that the group discussion will be sound and video recorded.
- I agree to my son's participation in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Name of Son

Appendix D: focus group confidentiality agreement

Teen boys, music videos, and drinking

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

- 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 to not to disclose anything discussed in the focus group, and know that doing so could cause harm to myself or others
- I understand that I can leave the focus group at any time.
- I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Appendix E: Parent information letter

Parent Information Sheet

Research Project: Teen boys, music videos, and drinking.

Who is conducting this research project?

My name is Samuel Lindsay. I am undertaking this research as partial fulfilment towards my Master's degree in Psychology, at Massey University. This project is being supervised by Dr. Antonia Lyons, an Associate Professor for the Wellington School of Psychology.

What is this research about?

There have been concerns raised about the harmful effects alcohol consumption can have on teens, such as sexual risk taking, links to violent assault, mental illness and other dangerous activities. Teenage boys have been shown to drink in larger amounts than their female counterparts and are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, including assault. Why teenage boys choose to drink heavily isn't clear, making attempts to prevent dangerous drinking in this demographic difficult. The early teenage years (ages 13-15) is the time when many start to experiment with alcohol and develop their own ideas and views about alcohol, making it an important area of study.

What are the aims of the research?

This research aims to explore how teenage boys talk about popular music videos, and the ways in which they portray men, alcohol and drinking. Teenagers listen to a lot of music, much of which increasingly includes visual and lyrical references to alcohol. Other studies show that music and music videos do influence drinking for this age group but we currently don't know much about how this happens. Some studies suggest that drinking is practised as a way of constructing gender- of 'being a man'; it may be that music videos provide messages about drinking that are bound to these ideas.

As far as we are aware, this research is the first attempt to explore the role that music videos have in teenage boys' views and ideas about alcohol and drinking in New Zealand

What happens if you agree to your child taking part?

Your son would take part in a school based focus group with 3-6 other boys his age. The study would require approximately one to one and a half hours of class time. In the focus group session, your son would be shown three music videos depicting the consumption of alcohol. You should know that there may be offensive language in some of these videos, as well as depictions of drinking. The boys will then be asked to comment on the videos. Group discussion will mainly focus on how they respond to the content of each of the videos including how men, alcohol, and women are portrayed. These conversations will be video and audio recorded so that the data can be transcribed and then analysed. Soft drinks and snacks will be provided during the focus group sessions.

It is hoped that the discussion group will be relaxed and fun for your son. However, if for any reason you or your son wants to withdraw from the project he is welcome to do so at any time before the end of the focus group. There is a very small chance that taking part might raise worries for your son, or the discussion brought up sensitive information. In this case Sam would consult with your son first and refer them to the school counsellor if necessary.

Sam will keep in touch with you and your son to ensure you are up to date with the project. He will provide you and your son a summary of the main findings. To show our appreciation for your son's time spent on the project he would receive a \$20 iTunes voucher.

Where will the research take place?

It will take place at school, in a quiet, empty classroom or seminar space private from other students.

What happens to the information provided by your son?

We will make sure that your son's privacy is protected, so:

- Only the researchers will have access to the audio and video recordings. These will be stored in the researcher's password protected computer and destroyed upon completion of the project.
- The transcriptions will be kept for 5 years in a password protected computer, after which time they will be destroyed by the project supervisor.
- During transcription all identifying information such as names and places will be changed. Transcripts will not be able to be linked back to your son's name.
- Other potentially identifying information will also be omitted in all outputs from this research (such as the Master's thesis), including the names, locations and images of the contributing school.
- Neither you, nor your son will be able to access the focus group information. This is to protect the rights of other participants to confidentiality.
- I am unable to discuss your son's information with you.

What are my and my son's rights as participants?

You and your son are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you agree to your son's participation, he has the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question or opt out during any part of the discussion;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- withdraw from the study any time without reason or penalty during the focus group discussion;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- ask for the audio or video recorder to be turned off at any time during the discussion;
- be given a summary of the project findings after the research has concluded. I'll ask you to give me your email address if you are interested in receiving this.

What is the next step?

If you agree to participate, please complete a consent form and ask your son to return it to your school office. Once we have your consent form with your contact details we will be in touch with you to ask if you would like to meet us prior to your son's participation in the focus group.

Project contacts

If you are considering agreeing to your son's participation but wish to ask questions or discuss the project further before deciding, you are very welcome to phone or email either one of us:

Samuel Lindsay
Lyons
Email: samuel.lindsay@gmail.com
A.Lyons@massey.ac.nz
Tel. 021 189 4253

Project Supervisor: Dr. Antonia
Email:
Tel. (04) 801 5799 ext 63604

Appendix F: Participant Information Brochure

Participant's Rights

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;*
- *leave the focus group at any time*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- *provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used and the information you share during the focus group session will not be shared with anyone, including your parents*
- *be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.*

How to contact us

If you have any further questions regarding the research please contact:

Sam Lindsay (Researcher)

Email: samuel.lindsay@gmail.com

Phone: 021 1894253

Dr. Antonia Lyons (Project supervisor)

Senior Lecturer

Email: A.Lyons@massey.ac.nz

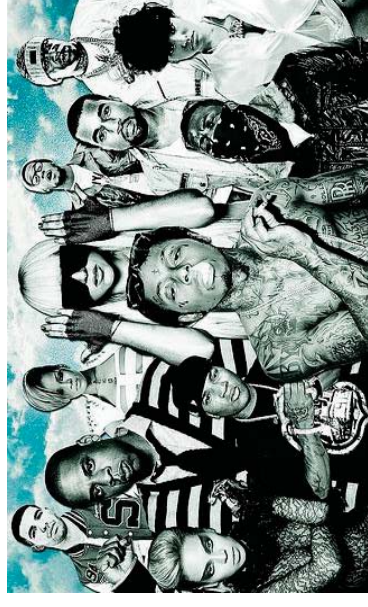
Phone: (04)801 5799 ext 62164



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

- ### What to do if you want to take part:
- ✓ Take home an Information Sheet for your parents to read and a consent form.
 - ✓ Talk about the project with your parent/s or caregiver.
 - ✓ If your parent/ caregiver agrees they need to sign the consent form.
 - Bring the consent form back to me when we meet for the focus group discussions.

Teen boys, drinking, and music videos



Hi! This sheet is to tell you about a research project so you can decide if you want to be a part of it.

The research...

Are you into music? If you are, you probably watch quite a few music videos of your favourite singers or rappers.



Appendix F: Participant Information Brochure

You may have noticed that heaps of them involve partying with dancing and alcohol in them. In fact, music videos these days have a lot more alcohol in them than they used to, and boys your age watch music videos much more than your parents will have, so might be more exposed to some of the messages in them. Although we know that lots of you enjoy music videos like these, it is unclear what you think about some of the things that go on in the videos, like the images of awesome cars, women, dancing... and the drinking. I want to know a bit more about what you think of the fact that men in the videos drink quite a bit, and how you view these artists. What do you reckon about them as men? Do they represent the type of man you'd like to be? This is the kind of thing I'd like to talk with you about.

Who is doing the research?

My name is Sam Lindsay and I will be doing the research with you. My supervisor is Antonia Lyons. We are both researchers at Massey University in Wellington.

What you'd be doing if you chose to participate...

In discussion groups of 3-6, we would watch three music videos together then discuss aspects of the music videos; what you thought about them and the things you have to say about being a man.

You will be video and audio recorded.

To thank you for your time, you'll get a \$20 iTunes voucher.

What if I decided I didn't want to do it anymore?

That's absolutely fine. You could pull out at any time before or during the focus group.

What happens to your talk?

After I've recorded our conversations, they get written down, or transcribed. I will use the written transcript to look for main ideas that emerge from all the groups.

It is these main ideas that I will focus on when writing up the project.

I will talk and write about the research, which will be examined as part of completing my university study. I won't identify you in any of the things I write, so no one will know that it was you who said those things!

If you want a summary of the things that we've talked about, or have any other things to ask about the research, you will be able to contact me personally.



Privacy and Confidentiality

To protect your privacy:

The information you and the other members of the group provide will not be discussed with anyone outside of the group discussion room. What you say in the group will not be passed on to your family, teachers, headmaster or anyone else.

If you're worried about anything that's said in the group or seem embarrassed, I will talk to you on your own about seeing if it is something the counsellor could help you with. I will not approach the counsellor without your permission.

The consent forms and the recordings of our conversations will be kept in a computer that only the researchers have access to. The transcripts will be kept for 5 years, but the recordings will be destroyed after the study is complete.

We will take every step to ensure that you cannot be identified in the research project. Your real names, the names of your parents, and the name of your school will not be included in the write up.

Appendix G: interview schedule

Introductions and rapport building questions (remind participants they do not have to answer, and that they must keep all information private)

- (for each group member) what pseudonym would you like to choose?
- Some background information about who you are – age, year group, how would you describe your ethnicity?
- What sort of things are you into?
- What sort of music do you listen to?
- Do you play any sports?
- Do you guys all hang out together? Are you friends outside of this group?
- What are your favourite types of music?
- Can you tell me some of the artists you are into at the moment?
- How much music would you listen to each day (as an estimate?)
- Do you watch a lot of music videos?
- What are some of the main ways that you listen to/ watch music? (eg. Ipod, Youtube, Spotify, Pandora, TV, Radio, Music Videos)

Following each song: how would you describe this song?

- How would you describe the video clip?
- What do you think of it?
- What jumps out at you?
- Is there anything you particularly like or don't like about it?
- Why?
- What do you think of the lyrics?
- What do you think of the artists?
- What do you think of the images?
- Can you tell me how this clip portrays men? Why?
- What do you think is appealing or unappealing about this?
- What do you think of the way men are portrayed in this?
- Can you tell me how these portrayals are similar to men in everyday life? Or if they're not, why not?
- Can you tell me how this clip portrays women? Why?
- What do you think is appealing or unappealing about this?
- How are these portrayals similar to everyday life?

Following all videos

- What sorts of messages do you think the songs put across?
 - Can you tell me about them?
 - What sort of messages do you think the video clips put across?
 - Can you tell me about them?
 - Do you think the messages would be the same for all audiences? How might they be different? Can you explain?
 - Does it make a difference to you as to what ethnicities the artists are? Do you tend to like artists from specific ethnic backgrounds?
 - Do you think there are differences between different cultural groups in terms of what music they like?
 - What do you think the music videos tell us about drinking and alcohol consumption?
 - Do you think they send any kind of messages about alcohol?
 - Have you tried alcohol? Why? Why not?
 - Is music tied to drinking? Do you listen to music when/ if you drink?
-
- How would you describe today's youth drinking culture?
 - How do you think these songs/ clips are relevant to that culture?

Appendix H: Ethics Approval



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

25 November 2014

Samuel Lindsay
33 Carlton Street
Melrose
WELLINGTON 6023

Dear Samuel

**Re: HEC: Southern A Application – 14/83
Teen boys' talk about masculinity and drinking in music videos**

I thank you for your letter dated 25 November 2014.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, 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

Dr Brian Finch, Chair
Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A

cc A/Prof Antonia Lyons
School of Psychology
PN320

Prof Mandy Morgan, HoS
School of Psychology
PN320

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council

Research Ethics Office, Research and Enterprise

Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T 06 3505573; 06 3505575 F 06 350 5622
E humanethics@massey.ac.nz; animalethics@massey.ac.nz; gtc@massey.ac.nz www.massey.ac.nz

Appendix I: Transcription guidelines

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