Embedded Commercial Technologies

The role of smartphones and alcohol marketing in young adult drinking cultures

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Abstract

As a result of the near saturation of smartphone devices among young adults, their drinking cultures are now effectively mobile. This expands the capabilities and potential for alcohol marketing embedded within those cultures, impacting on their development and the health outcomes associated with them. Couched within a growing critical literature on digital alcohol marketing, my research consisted of two related studies that investigated the role smartphones play in young adult drinking cultures. First, I attended the drinking events of 5 friendship groups (27 participants), and then conducted 8 follow-up interviews with a subset of individuals. Second, 9 participants downloaded a bespoke app on their phones that recorded phone activities across a drinking event. Within a week I showed these participants an animated video 'map' of their phone data from the night and interviewed them about the details.

The data consisted of observational photos and field notes, transcripts of interviews and smartphone data (e.g. location, apps used, notifications headers, timestamps). These data were analysed using discursive approaches. Four discourses were identified, namely *smartphones as social disrupters*, *smartphones as social facilitators*, *participatory marketing* and *constantly connected drinking cultures*. Together the discourses highlighted that smartphones were crucial to sociality. However, participants also described smartphones as potentially distracting from important face-to-face sociality and the constant connection as being overwhelming at times. Findings suggested that mobilisation of young adult sociality has exacerbated the relationship between alcohol marketing and young adult drinking cultures by providing means for brands and alcohol-centric content to be naturalised into their social practices. In particular, the apps Snapchat and Facebook Messenger played prominent roles in expanding participants' drinking cultures into cyberspace, while obscuring the commercial origins of marketing material.

Smartphones are an important aspect of young adult drinking cultures due to the ways in which they shape young adult sociality and allow alcohol marketers to engage with them. Commercial entities that design smartphone devices, social media platforms, and alcohol marketing all have vested interests in maintaining a strong presence in young adult sociality. There are tensions between young adult autonomy and their reliance on these powerful commercial entities for provision of integral cultural services. Empowering young adult voices and ensuring their participation in alcohol legislation that is relevant to them, as well as continuing attempts to legislate transnational social media businesses, are important directions for policy and harm minimisation strategies.

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I am eternally grateful to those that took part in my research and made it possible. It seemed a lot to ask and yet my participants were relentlessly welcoming and hospitable at every turn. Whether they were inviting me, a relative stranger, out to their drinking events or installing an app on their phones to do similar, their continued enthusiasm and engagement was uplifting.

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Chapter 1: Young adult drinking cultures, alcohol marketing and mobile technologies.

Young adult drinking, and the cultures that surround it, have been evolving rapidly amidst the social and technological changes brought about by the internet and mobile phones. Although a key area of interest for researchers and social policy makers, there is often a disconnect from the understandings of young adults themselves. Young adult drinking cultures are an important research area because young adults are developing drinking practices and understandings that will continue to influence and determine the role of alcohol and its consumption throughout the later stages of their lives (Dietz, 2008). The New Zealand Ministry of Health (2018) suggests young adults remain the most likely age group to drink hazardously[1] in Aotearoa/New Zealand[2], a pattern of drinking that is linked to an increased likelihood of alcohol dependence later in life (Tavolacci et al., 2019). The efficiency and efficacy of addressing young adults' drinking, before the effects of hazardous drinking are realised over the life course, makes them an ideal group to work with for public health and other agencies seeking to mitigate the negative consequences of alcohol in Aotearoa. Young adult drinkers are also a desirable demographic for alcohol brands to target because their recruitment helps ensure intergenerational alcohol markets (Babor et al., 2010) which means that their drinking cultures are often subject to interaction and influence from well-funded alcohol marketers. However, similar to other groups, young adults themselves report that one of the main appeals of alcohol is the role it plays in socialisation with peers (e.g. Hebden et al., 2015; Kelly et al., 2018). In this thesis I have defined "young adult" as an age between 18-28 years, this encompasses participants of legal drinking age in Aotearoa and mirrors the young adult age bands used by other studies covering young adults' usage of social media and mobile technologies (e.g. Crothers et al., 2016)

[1] Drinking in a manner that is likely to cause harm to the self or to others
[2] I will refer to the country as Aotearoa (a Māori name for these lands) for the remainder of this thesis

The contemporary landscape of young adult drinking cultures has entwined with social media in a way that has changed how drinking cultures are being represented and engaged with by their participants (Carah, 2017; Lyons, McCreanor, Goodwin, et al., 2014; Nicholls, 2012). Alcohol marketers have followed young adults to these social platforms, making use of them to develop new forms of interaction with young adult drinkers and further the assimilation of alcohol brands into young adult drinking cultures and everyday lives (McCreanor et al., 2008). The changing ways in which young adult drinking cultures are propagated and participated in is perhaps epitomised by the changes accompanying the shift to mobile internet enabled, application[3] driven, phones (smartphones) for communication (Goodwin & Lyons, 2019). These devices near saturation in many young adult cultures and they package social communication applications (apps) such as Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram together with a variety of sensors and functions (GPS, light sensors, camera, audio recorder) into one pocket-portable device. Users are provided with myriad flexible, always available, multimodal communication possibilities and at the same time smartphones enhance conventional online environments to provide marketers with an unprecedented amount of personal and intricate user data that they, or more accurately proprietary algorithms, might use to encourage brand engagement and their offerings to young adult drinkers (Carah & Angus, 2018).

The need to understand the implications of the increasing role that these devices play in young adult drinking cultures, in addition to other ideas discussed above, forms the rationale for the current research. In this introduction I outline young adult drinking cultures in an Aotearoa context with particular focus given to the influence of social media and other relevant digital communications development; I then consider the development of mobile technologies and their potential impact on young adult drinking cultures including the new forms and norms of communications and culture that have become possible with these ever present, constantly connected, devices. Finally, I consider how alcohol marketing has both influenced and followed developments in young adult drinking cultures;

[3] Discrete programs that are installed for non-operating system functionality and tasks.

adopting relevant practices and adapting to technological changes to remain relevant and constant in the lives of young adults.

Defining Drinking Cultures

What is meant when referring to young adult drinking cultures can differ depending on the aims and intents of those describing them. Savic (2016) offers a broad yet detailed definition for researchers in the field of alcohol studies that describes young adult drinking cultures as the regulations, history, behaviours and norms relating to alcohol that are socially learned by young adults. To this definition it is useful to include some of Appadurai's (1990) discussion of the globalisation of culture and the global culture economy which encompasses the interactions and relationships between the often dissonant yet also closely related contexts of "ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, and ideoscapes" (p.296). In particular the emphasis on both the complex and dynamic nature of any cultural drivers and influence, as well as the active role cultural participants play in the negotiation, entwining and propagation of their cultures is relevant to any understanding of contemporary young adult drinking cultures. Additionally Taylor's (2009) description of the continued elision of advertising, marketing, brands and culture as well as the increasingly active role that commercial interests have taken in the production and direction of culture is worth highlighting when defining influences upon young adult drinking cultures. Combining all the above we can describe young adult drinking cultures as existing at a range of scales, from individual to societal, and as intersecting with a variety of societal factors such as poverty, gender, ethnicity, health policy, commercial interests, and even other drinking cultures. As a result, young adult drinking cultures are fluid and evolving entities that are being constantly negotiated across a multitude of contexts by participants who, at the same time as they are shaping these cultures, are being shaped by them.

A key development in young adult drinking cultures is young adults' widespread uptake of social media technologies and the following shift to ever present smartphones that are used as a primary platform for communication (Zilka, 2020). These technologies allow, even encourage, large amounts of data to be continuously generated about consumers and their cultures. The process of surveilling and sorting user

data is the main commercial enterprise of mobile social media sites, as user accounts are usually free and many platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, generate nearly all their revenue from advertising (Srnicek, 2016). Once processed and packaged as user insights that are then sold on to marketers, these data increase the specificity and options available when targeting young adults. Social media platforms also prove a boon for the efforts of marketers who are able to transition from the role of 'external commercial voices' and into being more active participants within young adult cultures where they may gain agency and input into their development (Carah & Angus, 2018; T. Taylor, 2009). These changes in contemporary alcohol marketing, as well as the implications of young adults' own changing roles and engagement with alcohol marketing, are discussed later in this chapter.

Young Adult Alcohol Consumption in Aotearoa

The New Zealand Ministry of Health (2021) provides a snapshot of the state of alcohol consumption in the country reporting that, in Aotearoa around 3 million adults, or approximately 79% of the adult population, consumed alcohol in the previous year with 25% categorised as hazardous drinkers (scoring 8 or higher on the AUDIT[4] (Babor et al., 2001). However narrowing further to young adults, 40.5% of drinkers between 18-24 years were hazardous drinkers with more males (46.8%) drinking hazardously than females (33.6%). Young adults account for the highest incidence of hazardous drinkers across all the age groups measured by the Ministry and these figures have remained relatively stable across the past decade. It is easy to see, on the basis of these statistics, how media rhetoric and public opinion often ends up framing young adult drinking in Aotearoa as stereotypically risky and as having embraced a binge drinking culture. Yet while stories of hazardous young adult drinking are attention grabbing, Smith (2014) suggests they should be tempered with the less newsworthy examples of young adults who routinely drink in moderation or who are actively intolerant, as opposed to accommodating, of heavily intoxicated peers. This illustrates how highlighting the voices of young adults themselves is an important part of research into young adult drinking cultures as there are valuable contrasts with external perspectives to be considered and understood. Relatedly, where possible, the term 'heavy

[4] The AUDIT is a widely used, brief, screening questionnaire to identify hazardous or harmful drinking behaviours.

drinking' and its various forms will be preferred throughout this thesis as it is a less laden term than 'binge drinking' or 'hazardous drinking' and more appropriate for a thesis reliant on the experiences of young adult drinkers that do not tend to refer to themselves in these terms. This makes defining the term "heavy drinking" difficult because it is a term that will vary in meaning across young adults. However, similar to the AUDIT, there would typically be some overlap with outcome related measures (e.g. drinking to the point of vomiting or loss of bodily control), as well as quantity related measures (e.g. consuming 5 or more standard drinks in 2 or fewer hours) that denote consumption of a large amount of alcohol.

Many of the dangers and health implications for young adults who drink heavily are immediate (e.g. vomiting, accidental injury, drink driving, violence, blackouts and risky sexual encounters) (Kypri et al., 2009) and it appears that, for most, these drinking behaviours and their consequences often decline with age (Babor, 2010; New Zealand Law Commission, 2010) perhaps due in part to alcohol being treated as a 'rite of passage' for youth (Chainey & Stephens, 2014; Nairn et al., 2006). However for some, the concerns are less transient as heavy drinking can lead to the development of alcohol related issues with long term and costly health implications (Tavolacci et al., 2019). Recently there have been shifts in the drinking patterns of adolescents and teens, the precursors to young adult drinkers, with researchers such as Twenge and Park (2019) noting that fewer teens are actually choosing to begin consuming alcohol. They suggest this is a part of a "broad-based cultural shift" (p.648) and that US teens appear to be delaying their uptake and participation in many adult related activities (e.g. alcohol consumption and working for pay). Adolescents in Australia and Aotearoa appear to be similarly delaying their use of alcohol and their engagement in other risky behaviours (Ball, 2019) suggesting that, in many wealthy countries at least, there are a variety of factors (e.g. decreasing peer approval of activity, fewer opportunities to partake as a result of less time spent out at night with friends, and changing parental expectations) that are combining to delay the uptake of alcohol consumption in younger cohorts. In Aotearoa this has also led to a reduction in the amount of alcohol that is consumed when drinking does eventually begin (Huckle et al., 2020). While this means young adults in Aotearoa

may begin drinking alcohol later in their lives, the mechanisms underlying these changes in adolescent drinking behaviours are still not well understood. In addition the accompanying reduction in alcohol consumed is mostly seen among the heaviest adolescent drinkers - a group that remain at a high risk of experiencing harm even after this reduction (Huckle et al., 2020). In short, alcohol remains a key public health issue (Skegg, 2019) so it is important to understand what drives and shapes young adult drinking cultures.

What Influences the Formation of Young Adult Drinking Cultures?

There are many influences on young adult drinking cultures but Aotearoa appears to follow international trends when the relationships between demographics and drinking behaviours are examined. For example low social/economic status and low quality of early education are both associated with the development of risky drinking behaviours and related health issues (Denny et al., 2003; Grunbaum et al., 2001). However, for young adult drinkers there are changes in their social development and societal roles that could also play an important part in how their drinking cultures are established. Jones and Magee (2014) suggest some of the strongest influences on youth drinking behaviours and attitudes come from their family and friends. This makes it noteworthy that many young adult drinkers in Aotearoa are forming drinking behaviours and attitudes at the same time they transition from living at home to living with peers and, more generally, that their drinking cultures are forming at the same time they explore newfound developmental autonomy. In Aotearoa these changes also often coincide with young adults reaching the legal age for purchasing alcohol (18 years). The chance to experiment with new substances, social practices and behaviours in the context of these developments likely plays a role when it comes to thinking about - and making decisions regarding - alcohol and drinking (Dietz, 2008). Taken together, these factors make young adult drinkers a compelling group to study as they represent not only a group of interest in themselves but also the foundation from which a variety of drinking cultures in Aotearoa develop and a natural point at which we might most effectively intervene with any mitigation strategies (Tavolacci et al., 2019).

Systemically, dissonant public discourse and action form another part of the environment that young adult drinking cultures develop within. On the one hand are the moral panics that arise around heavy drinking young adults and the related campaigns for targeted, legislative, solutions (or restrictions) that attempt to chagrin and lay blame or responsibility solely at the feet of our youth (Brown & Gregg, 2012); while on the other, there is the relatively sparse public attention paid to the discourse and marketing that actively promotes young adult consumption and other aspects of behaviour (such as humorous, hedonistic, activities) that align with heavy drinking cultures (Goodwin & Griffin, 2017). Personal circumstances, shifting roles and new environments are important in the formation and sustaining of young adult drinking cultures but factors such as legislation, regulation and alcohol marketing also need to be acknowledged.

Alcohol Marketing

One ever-present influence upon young adult drinking cultures is alcohol marketing. The expenditure of alcohol companies on traditional alcohol advertising in Aotearoa for 2008 was estimated at $33 Million (New Zealand Law Commission, 2010) and historically young adults have been well courted by alcohol marketers (Jernigan et al., 2017; Jernigan & Rushman, 2014; McCreanor et al., 2008). However this figure was almost certainly an underestimate of overall marketing expenditure as it did not include sponsorship nor did it include the rise of non-traditional, harder to measure, strategies for alcohol promotion including online activities. SPARC Ihi Aotearoa (2010) provides a better estimate of between $73-165 million spent yearly on alcohol advertising in Aotearoa and while it attempts to incorporate sponsorship figures, it still does not include many forms of non-traditional marketing. This figure is still being cited despite being outdated and it relates to an industry that is innovative, resourceful, and only likely to have increased their marketing expenditure in the 12 years since, as they continue to adapt new strategies to engage consumers. Alcohol marketers are gatekeepers to relevant data on marketing spend and have very few incentives to share it, which is an ongoing problem for researchers in the field. While finding accurate estimates for total alcohol marketing expenditure is difficult, it is clear that large

amounts of money are being spent and it is also likely that any estimates that are made do not account for all the forms of marketing and promotion that are currently employed.

Problematically the regulatory guidelines around the marketing of alcohol in Aotearoa are essentially self-enforced by an Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) comprising 14 representatives from media and advertising industry groups. The code relating to alcohol advertising nominally limits the amount of alcohol related media that youth and underage drinkers are exposed to and it sets a standard for what can, and cannot, be a part of marketing practices or advertising messages. Yet at the same time this situation has meant that those responsible for mitigating any alcohol-related harm that occurs from exposure to alcohol marketing are also closely linked to those that actually produce this marketing and those who stand to benefit from the promotion and consumption of the product (Babor et al., 2010). It is understandable then that researchers such as Noel and Babor (2017) have found that the protections offered by a self-regulation approach to alcohol marketing standards are not sufficient with content often breaching guidelines around associating alcohol with social success, as well as being routinely viewed by underage demographics.

Alcohol marketing is often downplayed, or justified, as companies investing to cordon off a market share of existing consumers, as opposed to an attempt to increase the total pool of consumers from which to draw a share. Regardless of marketers' intent, Snyder et al. (2006) show that increased spending by alcohol marketers, as well as increased consumer exposure to alcohol advertising, is correlated with increased alcohol consumption in youth and young adult populations (Babor et al., 2010). A less generous interpretation of alcohol marketing activity might proffer the opinion that marketers are actually purposefully targeting underage drinkers while maintaining the appearance of adhering to self-enforced restrictions and guidelines (Jernigan & Rushman, 2014), a strategy that would both groom specific brand awareness and increase the likelihood of future consumption in an underage demographic. Babor et al. (2010) infers similarly that alcohol advertising aids in recruiting new

consumers and encourages increased consumption and they describe how extensive alcohol advertising restrictions are likely to reduce both the recruitment of youth drinkers and consumption rates.

Finally, whilst the majority of studies in this field provide cross-sectional correlations (e.g. Bain et al., 2022; Patil et al., 2014) and thus cannot directly ascribe causality between alcohol promotion and alcohol consumption, data from the few longitudinal studies that do exist add to these findings to provide strong support for the idea (Meier, 2011). In a review of 12 longitudinal studies Jernigan (2017) found that each study supported the theory that increased exposure to alcohol marketing leads to both increased consumption and increased likelihood of developing hazardous drinking. Additionally, some of these studies also supported the notion that increased exposure increased the likelihood of initiating alcohol use in young adults – a relationship that was more variably supported and illustrated other mediating factors such as only being present in males for one study (Ross, 2014). Despite the accumulating evidence from longitudinal studies, the lack of standardised definitions around variables (such as how exposure to marketing is operationalised) and variability in methods means that many findings are still tenuous in nature and there is inherent difficulty in attempts to consider their findings as a whole. For example, in those countries that bring in stricter regulations and alcohol marketing reforms we would expect to see subsequent reductions in consumption and hazardous drinking, something that is often, but not always, the case. In their study, Baccini and Carreras (2014) found reduction in consumption in only one of five countries that implemented restrictions on alcohol advertising, even finding evidence to suggest that restrictive policies were associated with an increase in consumption in Norway. Although the authors point out that this latter case had complexities surrounding measurement and the differing policies enacted near the measurement periods, it illustrates the issue of comparing the findings of different studies in which complex relationships are examined. Pegg (2018) for instance supports the general model of exposure increasing consumption but suggests that online social identity (a proposed measure of affinity to an individual's online social groups) is an important moderating variable between the variables of exposure to alcohol related content and consumption. Importantly this is not the case for those who spend high amounts of time on

social networking sites, the assumption being that this group has already reached some form of ceiling effect. It is impossible to conduct the randomised control trials that would provide what is known as 'gold standard' evidence to demonstrate a causal link between exposure to alcohol marketing and consumption. However we are likely at the point where the quantity, quality, and breadth of research should allow the same standards for causal inference that have previously been applied to advertising cigarettes and young adult smoking to be applied to alcohol marketing and young adult drinking (Sargent et al., 2020). Regardless, while evidence supports the stance that alcohol promotion and exposure to alcohol related content plays a role in the development and encouragement of alcohol consumption (explaining marketers' satisfaction with their continued spending in this area), there remains work to do in unpacking and highlighting the various factors present in the relationship between the marketing and consumption of alcohol.

Young Adult Engagement with Alcohol Marketing

Young adults use portrayals of their alcohol consumption and the socialisation that they do around alcohol as part of the identity work they do online making use of the meanings and associations that alcohol marketers have attached to their brands (A. M. Atkinson et al., 2017). Alcohol branding works as an adaptive, cyclical, thing. Alcohol branding penetrates young adult drinking cultures by drawing on values and associations relevant to those cultures (e.g. sociality, friendship, disinhibition, humour). Once this penetration is achieved, brands and branded content become increasingly available, and desirable, for individuals to use as a reference to their cultures because of those same associations and values present in the material and these assimilated brands become disseminated by young adults to young adults. Brands have always been about building these relational, emotional, associations via a "cultural feeding frenzy" (Klein, 2000, p. 30) that identifies marketable niches which are then targeted and assimilated relentlessly.

Social learning and cognitive theories propose that social media represents a prime interactive learning environment where young adults may observe alcohol posts being rewarded with likes and peer interaction and then seek to emulate these social successes with their own posts (Alhabash et al., 2022).

However Niland et al. (2017) suggest that young adults are in a complex relationship with alcohol marketing on social media. They argue that alcohol marketing and brands are used to represent the self as a social drinking being but at the same time many young adults recognise the encroachment of brands into their online sociality, activities and spaces and wish to distance themselves from doing work for the commercial entities behind these brands. Atkinson (2017) suggests that young adults resist the impression of being manipulated by brands by casting peers as immature when their online identity work uses marketing in ways that draws too overtly on the commercial products present, appears to give up too much individual agency, or makes use of brands that are not thought of as appropriate. There is a tension present for young adults wanting to associate identities with alcohol brands online. Alcohol marketers have researched young adult drinking cultures to the point that their brands provide useful, desirable, culturally specific, content that young adults can use as part of identity work and their sociality online. But this content is also inherently risky because if it is too overt or they post too much of it they may risk interpretations of immaturity or commercially 'selling out' (Purves et al., 2018). This creates a space for young adult drinkers that act as cultural bricoleurs to thrive – by successfully and actively reshaping, renarrativising, and repurposing branded material into their constructions of identity and their online activities, young adults can more easily eschew the commercial origins of content and still reap the rewards of engaging with materials that are built to be culturally authentic (Holt, 2002).

Young Adult Perspectives: Why They Drink and What They Gain from It

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many young adults, when asked about influences and reasons for drinking or the appeal of taking part in their drinking cultures, suggest aspects quite different to those often portrayed so negatively in media coverage or wider public discourse. Young adults enjoy drinking -pleasure and excitement is associated with the actual act of alcohol consumption (Lyons, McCreanor, Goodwin, et al., 2014). Additionally, young adults consider their drinking a social practice, gaining similar pleasure and fun from the maintenance of valued friendships and bonding which the activity brings (Hebden et al., 2015; Lyons, McCreanor, Goodwin, et al., 2014; Szmigin et al., 2008). The dissonance between young adults' perceptions and understanding of their drinking and wider portrayals of their drinking activities

may go some way in describing the difficulty public health campaigns have had in effecting change to these drinking cultures (Herring, Berridge, & Thom, 2008; Hutton, 2011). This in turn highlights the necessity of understanding young adults' motivations for consumption and what it is that they gain from participation in their drinking cultures.

Young adults have described alcohol as a "4th friend" (Hebden, 2011, p. 33), as it serves to keep friendship groups together, provides something for friends to do while encouraging group bonding, and (like any good friend might) it nurtures new friendships by virtue of being a shared experience that lubricates the integration of newcomers into the fold. This entwining of alcohol and key outcomes of socialisation likely plays a role in softening the perception of harms arising from heavy drinking behaviours among young adults (Guise & Gill, 2007). Stories relating to occurrences predicated on heavy drinking can rise above the expected norm for social drinking and can be used as a form of exemplar for an event's happenings: They can become beacons of successful socialisation, excitement and fun (Brown & Gregg, 2012; Chainey & Stephens, 2014; Hebden et al., 2015). These narratives of 'excellent-times-had' can also become integrated into young adult drinkers' lore or oral histories. As particularly memorable experiences (for onlookers at least), recounting these drinking stories can be an enjoyable post event bonding experience. This bonding further conflates alcohol and heavy drinking behaviours with socialisation but it is an activity that can occur outside the context of immediate consumption which extends the development of these close associations into other parts of young adults' days (de Visser et al., 2013; Hebden, 2011).

Young adult drinking cultures are also entwined with the development and expression of identity. For example Laghi et al (2013) describe adolescence as the developmental period where young adults start to define an individual identity that better represents a shift away from parental control. For many young adults, the exploration of alcohol and drinking cultures is seen as an important part of this experimentation with identity and many researchers have concluded that alcohol is often treated as a

rite of passage that marks the transition from childhood to adulthood with consumption playing a role in the discovery of new forms and expressions of social identity or status (Beccaria & Sande, 2003).

Research suggests that other facets of identity also play significant roles in young adult drinking cultures, further changing the experience of drinking and the expectations surrounding it. For example young men tend to drink more alcohol than young women in Aotearoa (Ministry of Health NZ, 2021). Some of the reasons for this may be linked to the notion that for men, drinking heavily can be tied to the expression and practice of masculinity (de Visser & Smith, 2007). By extension the same is true of many drinking related behaviours and outcomes (e.g. Sex, other drug use, violence, and injury). Together this leads to the notion that excessive consumption, and anything that results from it, is a normal part of 'men being men' (Hunt & Antin, 2019) and the problematic constructions of 'doing drinking' as being a masculine skill and something that it is masculine to compete at (de Visser & Smith, 2007).

However while Aotearoa still has a gendered drinking gap where young men consume more than young women, it appears to be following international trends as this gap is slowly closing with women increasing their consumption levels (Ministry of Health NZ, 2021). Changes to drinking environments and shifts in the public perception of young adult women's drinking behaviour have coincided with changes in young adult women's expectations and understandings of their alcohol consumption to create drinking cultures where their heavier drinking is more acceptable and expected (Hunt & Antin, 2019; Lyons & Willott, 2008). These factors have been accompanied by the acknowledgement of women as a new, growing and lucrative market by alcohol marketers and their subsequent, mobile multimedia enabled, pursuit of this demographic (Hunt & Antin, 2019). These changing perceptions and expectations alongside better acknowledgement and targeting of the demographic in alcohol marketing on digital media likely continue to play a role in the closing of gendered differences in alcohol consumption. That is not to say that young adult women drinkers are treated similarly, or even fairly, in wider public discourse. It seems quite the opposite, as their experiences and participation in drinking cultures often requires a constant juggling act. This can involve negotiating inherited systemic gender

expectations, subverting and parodying those same expectations, and then reaping the positive social benefits of alcohol consumption while still avoiding the negatives such as pariahdom and stigmatisation that can accompany any opposition to perceived gender norms (Griffin et al., 2013). While some of the gendered differences in consumption levels appear to be slowly eroding, gender likely continues to influence the drinking practices, expectations, and understandings of young adult drinkers.

The neoliberal context in which many young adult drinking cultures are situated and the accompanying societal expectations that surround young adult drinking can also influence how aspects of these cultures (e.g. heavy drinking) are enacted, framed, and experienced by participants. Within a neoliberal context, young adults are seen as responsible for moderating their own drinking cultures to align with socially acceptable drinking ideals (Goodwin & Griffin, 2017) and those who do not are considered solely responsible for any repercussions, health or otherwise. At the same time, structurally, alcohol marketing is given the loose reins it requires to encourage the promotion of 'intoxigenic environments' – environments where young adult drinkers are constantly exposed to, and can assimilate, alcohol centric discourse as part of their routine social exchanges (McCreanor et al., 2008). An absurdist tension seems to exist between the punitive judgement, or pressure, societies place on young adults who do not moderate their drinking and the tacit societal acceptance of these intoxigenic environments that actively encourage this activity. In this context the norm-challenging aspect of heavy drinking and the freedoms associated with it, could appeal to young adults seeking to explore both their identities and the boundaries of the various societal limitations in place around them. Likely too this results in some complex negotiation as young adults encounter and accommodate wider societal norms or systems and experiment with the ways in which they are allowed to challenge them.

Goodwin and Griffin (2017) agree that heavy drinking cultures are often established with an air of the 'carnivalesque', that appears to challenge the norms of society. However, the developmental context and societal status of young adult drinkers means these heavy drinking cultures can manifest as a form of authorised anarchy. Societies set boundaries for young adult drinkers giving them the freedom to

enjoy the pleasure and lack of control that accompanies drinking, while also deciding through legislation and selective law enforcement what the acceptable forms of these activities may be. This places the burden on the individual within these drinking cultures to properly judge what is acceptable practice and to do so within an environment that, as above, could be described as goading young adult drinkers to drink very heavily. Relatedly, the term 'controlled intoxication' highlights an outcome of neoliberal drinking environments and a motivation for young adult drinking (McEwan et al., 2011). Here a desired and specific state of intoxication - one that curbs social convention, encourages more hedonistic social activity and exchanges, and yet does not incapacitate the individual - is often considered the goal of alcohol consumption. However controlled intoxication remains something the individual can be better or worse at achieving and so the responsibility for attaining this state (and for any punitive outcomes when too much control is lost) can again be laid squarely at the feet of the individual.

Social Media and Young Adult Drinking Cultures

Another key development in young adult drinking cultures is their inclusion or uptake of social media. Social media is a broad term that encompasses any form of internet-based communication including blogging sites, social networking sites (SNS) based upon user profiles and newsfeeds, instant messaging services or even virtual reality environments. I will use the term social media to cover a narrower range of sites and apps than this broad definition but will occasionally make the distinction between this term and the narrower SNS when discussing sites such as Facebook and Instagram. Social media have been used by young adults for a range of activities such as: to develop connections to peers; conduct identity work; propagate digital content (particularly photographs); and to participate in drinking cultures. Facebook is one of the oldest and largest social media platforms and a wide range of users across age, gender, income and ethnicity demographics check in to it on at least a daily basis (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Facebook's popularity among young adults has plateaued in recent years and total Facebook users even declined for the first time in 2021 before increasing again (BBC, 2022). Yet 23% of its user base is 18-24 years old and a further 31% are within the 25-34 year age band (Dixon, 2022), so while Facebook is not the prominent site for young adult cultural production and reproduction that it once

was, it still retains relevance in young adults' social lives. Different social media platforms have different norms and aesthetics associated with their use and this leads to differences in interactions that are expected to occur, the material shared, and the cultures that develop upon them. For example, posting drinking content to the highly curated, image centric, Instagram can serve a different purpose and create different meanings when compared to posting alcohol material to Facebook (Boczkowski et al., 2018). Likewise, breaking down the differences in how social media are used Boyle et al. (2017) show that young adults have defined expectations about content that is posted to different social media. They note that the two image centric platforms of Snapchat and Instagram are now probably more relevant than Facebook for research into young adult drinking cultures and suggest Instagram is used for material that glamorises alcohol consumption whereas Snapchat, which is often used to communicate with a smaller friendship circle, was more likely to include the risqué alcohol material that, as described previously, is still valued as enjoyable viewing among peers.

The commercially focussed, technological structures that form the background of social media platforms also comprise the framework that young adults' must make use of within their drinking cultures. This change in context, to an environment that has been shaped with the commercialisation of sociality in mind, brings change in the way young adult cultures occur. For example boyd (2007) argues that in making the shift to social media, new factors such as the permanence of material that is shared and the ease of which this material can be found using digital search tools represent new considerations and hurdles for young adult socialisation and interaction in these spaces. This is a point made clear by those studies that show the tension between associations with drinking cultures on social media and the knowledge that "invisible audiences" (boyd, 2007, p. 9) such as employers (or future employers) who may not share the same enthusiasm for this material are also present on these sites (Bohnert & Ross, 2010; Peluchette & Karl, 2008; Stieger et al., 2013).

Social media platforms are usually businesses modelled upon the collection and sale of user data or attention and this reinforces the tensions between the users of these sites and others who wish to

access their data for commercial gain (Srnicek, 2016). For example the aims and expectations of platform users may vary from platform owners when it comes to topics such as privacy and exploitation as platform owners seek to monetise the sociality and interaction that users generate rather than partake in it (Fuchs, 2012). This difference in perspective and perceived function of the sites can lead to different expectations of what is acceptable practice for the owners of them. One extreme illustration of this issue is the emotional contagion experiment that Facebook conducted where users' newsfeeds were manipulated to show increased or decreased amounts of emotionally charged (positive or negative) content and which led to supressed or increased amounts of similar affective material being posted by those users (Kramer et al., 2014). Facebook's broad data use policy was taken as sufficient notification for informed consent and led to users being treated as experimental subjects – being subjected to active, experimenter-led, manipulation of their social feeds – without their knowledge. The manipulation of users' behaviour, social interactions, and access to information by social media has concerning implications for many aspects of society including political elections, the tribalisation and polarisation of public opinion, and the normalisation of disinformation (Seargeant & Tagg, 2019; Sunstein, 2017). There are also implications for young adult drinking cultures upon these platforms. As social media companies continue to hone tools such as the algorithms that are used to personalise material shown to individual users, they are increasingly able to fine tune the ways in which marketers can interact and influence these cultures (Carah & Angus, 2018).

Given the positive identity associations that alcohol consumption and, more generally, associations with social drinking cultures can have for young adults (MacArthur et al., 2020) it is unsurprising that young adults have made use of social media to participate in, and depict, many aspects of their drinking cultures (Lyons, McCreanor, Hutton, et al., 2014). In doing so, they have extended the pleasure and sociality associated with alcohol consumption into these digital spaces and this has meant that they have become spaces that are inundated with peer related alcohol content (Hendriks et al., 2017). Research also suggests that this abundance of material could have implications for the drinking cultures that are produced and engaged with on social media. Combining identity work and drinking cultures on

sites such as Facebook and Instagram can create a skew in perceptions of peer drinking habits and consumption norms (Pegg et al., 2018; Steers et al., 2019) which in turn are linked to increases in individuals' own consumption (Vanherle et al., 2022). The overrepresentation of alcohol related content on these sites is likely due to the desirability of sharing content that links young adult identities with the fun, sociality, and hedonism of alcohol consumption (Lyons, McCreanor, Hutton, et al., 2014). In particular, sharing heavy drinking content with close friends (i.e., those most likely to be influenced by the norms it reinforces), content that might otherwise be deemed inappropriate for wider audiences, is often appreciated as it can serve as the foundation of bonding and sociality within these spaces and reaffirm existing relational ties between peers (Boyle et al., 2018; Hebden et al., 2015).

Young adult drinking cultures extend beyond the point of alcohol consumption or past the events where alcohol is consumed. They are maintained in the preparation or expectation of consumption as well as the debriefing and recounting of it, but they also intersect with other experiences in the day to day lives of participants; for example when in-group drinking practices (e.g. pointing with an elbow or moving glasses more than a finger distance from the edge of a table) are adopted to non-drinking contexts (Hebden, 2011). These activities that extend young adult drinking cultures are used to illustrate aspects of personal and group identities (McCreanor et al., 2008). Where previously the social exchanges that constitute these indirect, but just as essential, enactments of young adult drinking cultures needed to happen face-to-face (or across one-to-one telecommunications), now a large portion of young adult communication occurs in the hybridised personal/commercial spaces of social media. Young adults have made use of social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram as well as social communication apps such as Snapchat to discuss and display alcohol related material and to affiliate themselves with perceived norms surrounding alcohol consumption such as heavy drinking behaviour (Moreno et al., 2013; Niland et al., 2014). Contemporary young adult drinking cultures are being developed or negotiated online and within the confines of these highly commercialised spaces, spaces where the presence of alcohol marketers is particularly established. This gives alcohol companies increased access to young adults going about the business of conducting their identity work and constructing their

drinking cultures online. Researchers need to understand and include these spaces when conceptualising the influences of alcohol marketing upon young adult drinking cultures and behaviours.

Young Adults and Smartphones

While the Internet is still primarily accessed from more traditional platforms such as desktop and laptop computers (Díaz Andrade et al., 2018) in many developed countries, including Aotearoa, there has been a rapid shift towards access through on-the-go mobile platforms including tablets and smartphones. Smith et al (2011) show access to the Internet from mobile wireless devices in Aotearoa nearly quadrupled in the four year period of 2007-2011, rising from 7% to 27%. In 2021 the world internet project New Zealand (Díaz Andrade et al., 2021) noted that 89% of their sample had accessed the internet from a smartphone and this was the most common way for them to access the internet. Furthermore, these figures are likely under-estimates when we consider younger adults and youth. Younger groups tend to be technologically avant-garde, adopting new mobile communications earlier and saturating rapidly (Lewis et al., 2008). This finding is particularly prevalent in the case of smartphone adoption with the likes of Madden et al. (2013) finding that teens who owned a smartphone were more likely to use it as their primary internet access point than other age groups. Additionally, Taylor and Silver (2019) show this is a widespread phenomenon as the uptake of the smartphones by youth and young adults outpaces other groups across countries of varying economic and developmental statuses.

Accessing the internet through smartphones changes the experience in terms of material offered, norms of use, possibilities and practicalities for use (Taber & Whittaker, 2018). For example, mobile access to the Internet is a constant; smartphones are far more portable than other traditional wired internet access or even other wireless options like laptops. As well as allowing traditional browsing from any location on the go, these devices also offer versions of other internet services through a diverse range of apps. This variety, and the synergy with users' requirements that is created by the multiple offerings, has led to social media technologies being primarily accessed via mobile devices and social media sites becoming 'mobile first' in nature - the majority of the activity or interaction upon them now comes from

mobile only users (Clement, 2020). There has been a shift in youth and young adults towards these internet enabled apps as they seek to replace older, more restrictive, forms of communication (Shih & Oreskovic, 2013). Apps such as Snapchat, Facebook messenger and Whatsapp offer free web based chat amongst contacts whilst allowing the inclusion of video and image media, thus supplanting older SMS communication technologies (Constine, 2013). In some cases, this shift offers extra benefits such as the seemingly secure messaging utilising end-to-end encryption that Signal and Whatsapp offer, although this is arguably a veneer of security as the messenger apps themselves may still link or sell user data – a relevant point when considering Whatsapp as it is owned by Meta whose revenue is largely generated from selling advertising.

The apps Instagram, Snapchat, and Tik Tok are particularly popular in young adult lives (Auxier & Anderson, 2021), something that becomes apparent when we consider the use of differing social media across age groups. For example Auxier and Anderson (2021) show that once Youtube is excluded, Facebook remains the most widely used social media platform for older adult age groups. To illustrate the gap in penetration, the next closest platform is the 48% of those aged 30-49 years old who state they use Instagram – a figure that is 29% below their Facebook usage. However, usage of social media that is not Facebook was much closer among young adults aged 18-29 years old. 70% of this demographic still used Facebook but 65% of the same group used Snapchat, 48% used TikTok and Instagram use was 71%, making it the only instance where another social media platform was more widespread than Facebook within any age band.

This uptake of these mobile social apps has led to more of the daily communications and exchanges that make up young adult sociality occurring in social media environments that have specific, identifiable, cultures and norms developed around them. What this means for the communications technologies that have embraced the ideals and capabilities of smartphone platforms is that the content and purpose of material exchanged, as well as general usage patterns, are often blends of traditional and contemporary communications technologies. Snapchat provides a good example of this. Users of Snapchat send and

share short videos and photos, usually with a brief message overwriting a portion of the imagery, but this material deletes itself from a recipient's phone after a short time (often ranging from 5-10 seconds). Snapchat employs the familiar multimedia enabled communication of social networking sites but usage tends to be more frequent in a day and in shorter bursts than that of sites such as Facebook (Gillette, 2013). By removing the permanence of material generated via the app, it also seems to have captured the fleeting, casual, nature of traditional SMS interactions. However the reliance on photo and video material, coupled with differences in the perceived audiences for that material (Snapchats are often sent to a selection of contacts), raises the importance of this content making it central to communication as well as creating differences in the purpose of these exchanges. When compared to traditional SMS more of the identity work that is a hallmark of social media usage becomes entwined in these routine exchanges on Snapchat (Lavin, 2013; Taber & Whittaker, 2018).

Smartphone enabled social media has proven popular for the continued production of, and engagement with, young adult drinking cultures. The role of Instagram and Snapchat has already been discussed but it is worth noting some of the broader perspectives that accompany the shift of young adult drinking cultures to mobile social media. For example, Lyons and Goodwin (2021) suggest there has been an intensification of the processes surrounding young adult drinking as the devices allow for continuous, richer, forms of communication preceding, during and after young adult drinking activities. Similarly, Quintero (2019) conceptualises smartphones as devices that have their use shaped by young adult drinkers' needs whilst simultaneously shaping those young adult drinking cultures they are a part of, by way of what they allow, and encourage, young adult drinkers to do. Quintero points to the significance of the device's camera and instant internet access when it comes to the expectations around what, or how, social bonding and identity work can be performed around contemporary drinking events in addition to what they change for attendees' expectations of digital privacy at drinking events. Clearly, ever-present access to these internet-enabled devices and the complete shift of social media to mobile friendly and frequently mobile centric platforms, allows young adults continuous opportunities to take

part in their drinking cultures as part of their routine socialisation online and normalises the use of information rich media such as photo and video as a part of these exchanges.

Young adults have embraced mobile, social, communication apps (Thulin, 2018). Perhaps unsurprisingly the integral nature of these devices to contemporary young adult lives has also given rise to concerns about phone addiction, the overuse of the devices and the changes in behaviour that the mere presence of smartphones can bring about in a person (Ertemel & Ari, 2020). Unpacking these ideas is not simple. For example Pivetta et al. (2019) show that smartphone use may account for a sizable portion of user-hours in a day and some of this use appears addictive or problematic. However, the factors underlying this use such as a need to keep in touch with peers, the fear of missing out (FOMO), and boredom each may be considered to exacerbate existing personal issues – there are users who experience these factors both problematically and unproblematically. Likewise while the term nomophobia is used to describe "the fear of feeling disconnected from the digital world" (Rodríguez-García et al., 2020, p. 581) and the condition may be prevalent amongst young adults (León-Mejía et al., 2021), it is one that is still in its infancy in terms of our understanding of its measurement, the factors that contribute to it, and interventions. It could also be argued that the term is detrimental in the way that it appears to burden the individual with a 'phobia' that needs fixing without properly acknowledging the wider context this technological dependence stems from. This is an important acknowledgement to make as modern social media are founded upon an 'attention economy' where the sites, sociality, and other exchanges with users are funded by selling users' attention to advertisers and other parties that vie for it (Williams, 2018). Under these conditions attention becomes a scarce resource and this incentivises social media companies to make their products addictive, so that they may capture and sell as much of users' attention as is possible (Bhargava & Velasquez, 2021). With the increased access that mobilisation of social media allows and the ability of the devices themselves to call for attention, potentially even to train user's device checking behaviours (Ertemel & Ari, 2020; Pivetta et al., 2019), these issues would only seem to be exacerbated. Whatever the case, these new forms of communication and new ways of accessing existing social technologies, technologies that are already a part of young adult drinking

cultures, provides marketers with increased access to a young adult population that is increasingly attentive to these devices (Truong, 2018).

Online Alcohol Marketing

Online alcohol marketing has tended to target younger drinking demographics, often at the expense of exposing underage drinkers to alcohol marketing (Jernigan & Rushman, 2014). This makes sense as these are the ages at which youth become legally able to buy and consume alcohol and so they represent the largest population of new drinkers that marketers might entice into what they might hope is going to be a lasting brand loyalty (Hastings & Sheron, 2013). With young adults having so enthusiastically adopted an online presence and made use of it to socialise, communicate and to further propagate and engage with drinking cultures, it is also no surprise that marketers have turned to social media to increase their access to the valued demographic. In doing so alcohol companies quickly became key influences on the evolution of these platforms (Carah & Angus, 2018). This encroachment development is likely a primary contributor to the positive relationship between social media use and alcohol consumption (Alhabash et al., 2022) and the accompanying increase in popularity of the Internet across all other age groups just serves to bolster the benefits of such a move.

Marketing alcohol online continues to evolve as the online environment changes but also as the craft has been developed and refined. Marketing online has moved from traditional, static, approaches (i.e. billboards-on-a-webpage) and toward more interactive multimedia augmented approaches that allow alcohol marketers to draw upon the advantages accompanying pre-established conventions in existing online cultures. For example, marketers have made use of existing online forms, such as incorporating emoji into consumer interactions, to appear more relatable and to strengthen the relationships between brand and consumers (Hayes et al., 2020). It is now the case that in addition to having a webpage many major alcohol brands develop a social presence and brand identity on social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook (Gordon, 2011). These sites allow marketers to set up brand profiles that can mimic other users and that then allow marketers to engage in conversations and posts with users of these sites (McCreanor et al., 2013a). Combined with the previously mentioned wealth of

user data that social media platforms collect and the ability to slice user demographics in increasingly finer, more targeted ways, online marketers can engage in a range of personal and tailored interactions with potential consumers across a variety of platforms.

Previously, alcohol marketing online was often only one part of a 360 degree strategy (Chester et al., 2010). This strategy attempted to tie online and offline marketing together seamlessly, particularly in ways that fed into each other, so that brands could be ever present in consumers' lives. In practice complete seamlessness was difficult to achieve but marketers still managed to create coherent brand identities across multiple platforms and media. Branded material was present in many facets of consumers' lives and drew upon the same meanings and ideals to help solidify a consistent brand identity (Chester et al., 2010). While consumers were offline, they encountered promotional events, sponsored sporting activities, traditional billboards, and product placements. Once online, consumers were then faced with a similar onslaught including sidebar advertising, paid placement of search engine results, branded social media activity, branded pages, and sponsored product placement in software (e.g. computer games). However, as is discussed below in *mobilising marketing*, smartphones now mean that distinctions between offline and online marketing have become blurred. For example, offline content at festival events can be designed to encourage users to generate immediate, brand associated, content on social media. This depth of coverage can make alcohol marketing inescapable as well as a normalised part of everyday experiences and this solidification of coherent brand identity occurs across both online and offline environments (Jernigan & Rushman, 2014). The fluidity and flow between online and offline marketing content is important to understand as the mediums used change the consumers' experiences of this material and marketers often make use of the specific strengths and capabilities associated with mediums to contribute holistically to brand development.

Contemporary social media marketing is quite different to older forms of marketing and is usually trying to achieve different goals. It has been suggested that the participatory marketing strategies used on social media highlight what users might gain from interacting with branded content and promote the

benefits of incorporating brands as a part of the production of a drinking identity online (Steers et al., 2019). The contemporary trend of young adults using these platforms for identity construction and performance helps personify any brands that also choose to work in these spaces because this brand work will be done using the same means of communication and in the same social space as the authentic social exchanges occurring between platform users. This allows them to leverage existing young adult cultures in order to encourage interactions with branded material (Martín-Quevedo et al., 2019). Interacting with brands on these platforms as if they were human serves to strengthen the relationships between them and users in novel ways often by encouraging more publicly visible emotional and affectionate user interactions with brands (K.-J. Chen et al., 2015). These interactions also elevate the visibility of branded material to users' peers – furthering their reach and generating more data that can then be used to optimise any future marketing opportunities created. Previously this marketing activity would be solely to disseminate product information to those seeking to purchase it, but often the purpose of marketing on social media is not actually about making a direct pitch for a product, rather to cultivate these affective relationships and attachments to the brand (Carah, 2017; Hayes et al., 2020).

This shift in the activities of alcohol marketers, from producing static, one directional, media to creating more holistic, nuanced and responsive marketing materials, has further encouraged their entanglement in young adult drinking cultures. That so much young adult identity work is now done within these commercialised, online, social platforms changes not only the possibilities for marketing but also how young adults do this identity work. For example young adults may incorporate their awareness of the performative nature of these platforms, changing the ways in which they construct their identities online in order to reap social benefits across both digital and physical environments (van Dijck, 2013). By creating branded opportunities that can be used as part of this identity work and media creation, alcohol marketers consolidate their presence in young adult cultures. McCreanor et al (2013a) argue that this form of commercial presence gives alcohol marketers an active voice in the spaces where youth

drinking practices and their attitudes surrounding alcohol are being explored and co-constructed and that in doing so, brands and alcohol are further reinforced as an integral part of social interaction.

Another factor that aids this entanglement of brand and drinking culture is that these platforms are designed to record, analyse, and adapt to user behaviours or interactions generated upon them and which present as a trove of personalised digital data. Carah (2017) suggests that contemporary online social platforms are an ideal playground or laboratory for alcohol marketers as they provide the tools and an environment that allow for constant, iterative, adaptation to the cultures that are active upon them. Marketers can experiment with the available data relating to individuals, their preferences, and their wider associated networks to sculpt enticing environments or opportunities for marketing engagement. Klostermann et al (2018) provide a glimpse of what this technology driven marketing can look like. Combining the large amounts of user generated images accessed through Instagram's application programming interface (API) with advances in machine learning and AI categorisation software (their example makes use of Google Cloud Vision), these researchers were able to conduct a broad analysis of what branded, user generated, content exists on the platform, and analyse the finer relational elements present across this content. Gauging and comparing user sentiment toward the actual products of a brand alongside other content such as what specific meme bases the brand was being used as a part of, they identified the products and the specific meme microcosms that the brand was being positively associated with. Both instances provide valuable user-brand impressions and information that could directly inform future marketing content. Importantly these methods for better understanding user-brand relationships on social media are continually improving. Machine learning based methods can increasingly analyse complex contextual elements of material, such as that which is present in user generated photographs, and while the aforementioned trained algorithmic feedback model of classification usually requires human input to begin with, it rapidly results in completely autonomous classification (Carah & Angus, 2018). Overall these methods are efficient and adaptive processes that are well suited for application to the large and valuable data sets that user interactions upon social media provide.

As previously discussed, a goal of marketers in these contexts is to encourage participants to organically engage with their brands as a part of their everyday identity work upon these platforms and the implications of this are far reaching. Users of the platforms are reconfigured as not just potential customers but as networks of influence – online word-of-mouth – able to market brands more effectively than brands themselves and to anyone they share online affinities with (Carah & Angus, 2018). Harnessing users' informed knowledge of their peers, 'earned advertising' (e.g. Park et al., 2016) is a term that describes brand related interactions between users that are initiated by, or originate from, those users as opposed to marketer led interactions. As a term, earned advertising represents marketers' acknowledgment that these peer interactions are imbued with a relevance, and oftentimes authenticity, that makes them valuable and influential for building brand relationships and presence on social media (Moran et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2012). Importantly earned advertising also encompasses the notion that users themselves tend to find value in marketing that is designed to be used by them as part of their ongoing peer interactions on social media as opposed to marketing that is paid to be placed obtrusively in front of them (J. Y. Park et al., 2016). A benefit of this approach is that brands are continually taken up and used by young adults as part of their socialisation and identity work in these spaces, instilling their presence and increasing the spread of branded material.

Another important aspect of this turn to user generated content and brand affiliation is that the onus of content regulation and management is removed from alcohol marketers as they are not held to account for material produced and shared by individual users, despite the likelihood that these actions inevitably result from brands carefully sculpting users experience and engagement on the platforms (Esser & Jernigan, 2018). Not only does this loss of control over the content create the opportunity for brands to shirk responsibility for it but it allows them to be integrated into young adult drinking cultures in ways that would not be possible were commercial brands being held accountable for the content (Carah & Brodmerkel, 2021). For example users may propagate content that associates alcohol brands with depictions of social success and heavy drinking in a way that brands legally could not directly be seen to do. Similarly, the algorithms that sort what is priority viewing for individuals on these sites, and that

curate user experience, provide a unique challenge for both regulation and research in the field. This is particularly true when it is paired with the ephemerality of the digital experience. Material that researchers and policy makers might find relevant and worth addressing could be passed among young adult users of the platforms in a semi-public fashion without the algorithms ever deeming it relevant viewing for these other interested parties on the sites. As an example, the branded alcohol content that shows up in the Instagram, and Facebook feeds of young adult drinkers can be markedly different to the material these platforms choose to display in the feeds of alcohol regulators and researchers. It is also dynamic ephemeral content, placed to be viewed at an optimal time before then being removed. Thus, Carah and Brodmerkel (2021) describe contemporary digital alcohol marketing as dark – it is now so highly selective that it is potentially invisible to anyone outside of the demographics targeted by marketers on contemporary social platforms. Worryingly, Goodwin (2022) builds upon this invisibility by suggesting that the reliance on these modern marketing tools creates a situation where even marketers and social media platform owners cannot determine the specific processes and decisions that have lead up to any pairing of content with user that occurs. Increasingly it seems as if social media marketing systems are one of obfuscation at all levels as algorithmic marketing black boxes receive and process user data then decisions about who should view specific content are outputted and enacted in a way that means other users remain oblivious to the content.

Mobilising Marketing

As discussed, smartphones change the way in which we communicate and are communicated with; they are internet enabled, sensor laden devices in which functionality can be customised via selections of apps oriented to a user's specific needs (Goggin, 2012). The portability of these devices means that they are easily kept on or near users, meaning that in contrast to other portable devices, smartphone owners carry these devices for most of their day-to-day routines constantly accessing and creating data through messaging, calls, sensors, and app use. These factors, alongside the trend toward becoming the primary device from which the Internet, and social media for young adults, is accessed (Díaz Andrade et al.,

2021; Droesch, 2019), mean that smartphone devices are continually generating data that is prized by contemporary marketers and social media companies.

Smartphones represent a technological nexus for alcohol marketers' pursuit of complex and innovative online strategies in order to encourage branded, participatory, social interactions on social media. They also assist marketers in achieving what Nicholls (2012) describes as continued attempts to tie together the various facets of their activities in order to normalise alcohol and brands as an everyday presence in the daily lives of users. Smartphones bring these ideals together in the hands and pockets of consumers, adding an immediacy of accessibility and a wealth of previously untapped, predictive, personal data. Similar to the advances that followed young adults' move to online social media platforms, the prevalence of smartphone use amongst young adults has meant that marketers have innovated their craft in a highly effective way as they accommodate young adults' uptake of these technologies (Gao et al., 2020).

Smartphone centric marketing strategies can now incorporate demographic and locational data, alongside social media data and other web based behavioural markers. This allows marketers to increase the personalisation and relevance of any material that users might interact with as well as to add increasingly granular detail to the data that is harvested from the devices and put to use for predicting consumer behaviour (Tong et al., 2020). Conti et al. (2012) describe "just-in-time ads" (p.215) - where the intersections of immediate device data and existing user profiles that have been built up over time are leveraged to provide exactly the right marketing material for any particular moment. Both Tong et al. (2020) and Gao et al. (2020) provide examples of how the amount and variety of this data increases marketers efficacy as they blend predictive data (e.g. past purchases, notification modes that are likely to be attended to, predicted life stage, and similarity to other user profiles/contexts) with instantaneous phone data (e.g. weather, location, other people who are present) to provide bespoke, hyper-relevant, material to users. Tong and Gao's examples were predicated on providing the most accurate product match to present a potential buyer with. However, this data could equally be used to

identify optimal moments and materials to further the work of building brand relationships and presence in young adult social exchanges. An increasingly popular rationale for this wide scale harvesting of user data is that it is in the interests of users as well as marketers for this data to be collected and then put to use in this manner. For example Yartey et al. (2021) suggest that consumers are more amenable to the idea of their data being used as part of big data mining when it is presented to them as a process resulting in exposure to better, more relevant, marketing material. While this seems a form of forced choice or false dichotomy (one may have either relevant or irrelevant advertising but certainly not a cessation of advertising), this does highlight that the work of commercial interests includes a form of 'meta-marketing' to better the public perception of marketing in addition to upgrading their technological capabilities.

The constant presence of smartphones also creates greater opportunities for users to share material with peers, allowing the non-traditional forms of marketing that already occur on SNSs such as branded interactions and content passed amongst friends (e.g. McCreanor et al., 2013a) to be extended onto smartphone platforms and integrated into the cultures of mobile SNSs. With this migration, marketers continue to experiment and adjust, evolving their activities on smartphone platforms to incorporate novel aspects and features of these technologies. Sung et al. (2022) illustrate what the avant-garde of this experimentation might look like as they incorporate the augmented reality capabilities of users' camera and speaker enabled smartphones to allow marketers to re-narrativise users' immediate environments. By overlaying user's mundane reality with marketing driven content via screens in a way that accentuates the appealing, escapist, capabilities of smartphone devices they argue that there are untapped possibilities for creating the positive branded experiences that elicit unprompted social media association and influence future consumer behaviour. Smartphones allow marketers to continue making their approaches to young adults more appealing and relevant (Sharmin et al., 2021) and as such, they represent a major area of growth for alcohol companies, and therefore public health researchers too.

Summary

Young adults as a group continue to report engaging in heavy drinking and as such, they are a relevant group of interest for health promoters seeking to curb the damage alcohol does in Aotearoa. Young adult drinking cultures are enacted and engaged with at more than just the point of consumption. There is an abundance of alcohol centric material online and social media users are likely to share and socialise over material that promotes both specific brands and their drinking cultures in general. Alcohol marketers have taken advantage of social media to solidify their presence in the daily lives of young adult drinkers who in turn often describe their engagement and propagation of alcohol branded content as part of the fun and sociality that occurs on these platforms. Marketers carefully balance the mediating and nurturing of users' social exchanges around their brands online. Encouraging engagement while also shaping the potential of what these exchanges might look like they craft materials and interactions that tie their brands in with forms of young adults' cultural capital. Tracking the incidence and effects of modern forms of marketing is inherently difficult due to the increased complexity of these strategies, their non-public and non-visible nature, and their tendency to stretch over multiple platforms or media. We need to continue building our understandings of marketing activities, as well as how and why users engage with alcohol marketing material in these environments, and what their experiences of this engagement are.

While there is research relating to young adults' smartphone ownership and related norms, the role of these devices in young adult drinking cultures remains a relatively under-investigated area; as are the broader implications of widespread device ownership amongst young adult drinkers. There is a need to understand the implications of the shift to mobile technologies and mobile marketing strategies, as well as the uptake of these technologies by young adult drinkers. Importantly this needs to consider the perspectives of young adults themselves, and their understandings of this material, including its pros and cons; for example, whether young adults find these new forms of marketing to be better at providing some form of give and take in these exchanges and if so, why that might be the case? Young adults' impressions of these new forms of marketing are important to understand because theirs are

critical voices that should inform any developing regulation or prevention strategies that are aimed at curbing harmful alcohol use. There is also the need to continually inquire about young adult drinkers' attitudes and motivations because they are likely changing, along with the environment and influences upon their drinking cultures around them. Their voices may also represent the clearest window that we have into the increasingly opaque marketing activities that are operating within young adult drinking cultures.

Aims and Research Questions

My research aims to add to our understanding of the role of smartphones in young adult drinking cultures. These constantly on-hand and internet connected devices are a growing factor in the development of young adults' understandings around alcohol, drinking behaviours and alcohol marketing. Investigating young adults' smartphone activities enables more in-depth insights into how individual consumers are part of large-scale marketing strategies, including how marketers extend the participatory strategies of older internet-based approaches, including interactions and sharing of material online. It is important to investigate how smartphone technologies are being used as a part of contemporary drinking cultures and to investigate the alcohol marketing that occurs within these mobile technologies. There are two related sides to this:

1. **Young adults and drinking cultures**

   Examining young adult drinkers' meaning making surrounding their drinking practices and identity work is important because these are what constitute the drinking cultures I am investigating. I need to consider how smartphone devices are used as a part of these cultures as well as young adults' understandings of how mobile technologies are used by alcohol marketers. This will involve investigating experiences and norms surrounding alcohol consumption and smartphone use, the proliferation of alcohol related material online and offline, and consideration of the function and appeal of both drinking and engagement with alcohol marketing within the context of mobile devices. These understandings all relate to the

participants of these cultures and are a perspective that will be beneficial to any attempts to identify problematic issues within young adult drinking cultures, as well as potential solutions or interventions that might come from within these cultures.

To explore young adults' drinking practices, drinking cultures and the role of mobile technologies, the project was guided by the following research questions:

1./ How do young adults integrate smartphones into their drinking cultures and related identity work?

2./ How do young adults understand alcohol marketers' use of mobile technologies?

3./ How do young adults engage with alcohol marketing and brands as a part of their smartphone enabled drinking cultures?

2. Marketing activity within young adult drinking cultures

This research seeks to examine marketing reach, activity and interaction with young adults' alcohol-related experiences. Given the increase in uptake of mobile technologies, it is essential to examine how new technologies and forms of communication are used as a part of alcohol marketing activities.

Therefore the final research question guiding this work was:

4./ What forms of alcohol marketing and engagement are present in young adult drinking cultures and how do these make use of smartphone-enabled young adult drinkers?

Chapter Summary

To answer these questions, the remainder of my thesis is structured around two separate but related studies. The first was an observational study where I observed young adult drinking events and

interviewed participants afterward. For my second study I used a mobile app to record smartphone use across drinking events and interviewed participants afterward.

In the next chapter I explore the methodology that accompanies my approach to both studies. This includes the epistemological underpinnings to my project as well as the rationale for the ethnographic, discursive, and multimodal elements throughout. This chapter ends with some reflections on the influences and perspectives that I brought to this research project and how they may have shaped it.

In *Chapter 3: Study one - Observational study of drinking events* I provide an overview of what the observational study involved. This includes a method section that outlines the ways in which I designed, collected and analysed the data for this study. This chapter finishes with some of the ethical issues I considered and encountered as part of this study.

Chapter 4: Introduction to the discourses and a discourse of smartphones as social disrupters briefly introduces the findings of the observational study. The analysis of the observational study data led to an identification of three discourses the first of which is written up here as a discourse of *smartphones as social disrupters* and describes how participants constructed their phones as risky devices.

The remaining two discourses are covered in the following chapters and *Chapter 5: Discourse - Phones as social facilitators* illustrates how smartphones were constructed as an integral part of participants' sociality, whereas *Chapter 6: Discourse - Participatory marketing* focusses upon how alcohol marketing and brands were taken up and engaged with by participants before briefly summarising the study as a whole.

Chapter 7: Study two - App study marks the beginning of my second study where I developed an app that recorded how participants used their phones when out drinking. After an overview of the study, I provide some detail around the app, its development, and the method of this study. This section finishes with some consideration of the ethical changes that accompany my change in methods from the first study.

Chapter 8: Introduction to app study results and a discourse of constantly connected drinking cultures provides an overview of my results, followed by a summary of the quantitative phone data I collected. I then illustrate some of the overlap in data between study 1 and study 2 and finish by looking at how participants drew upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* when talking about their phone use and drinking. Here I consider specific differences between the various modes of communication and apps used by participants. I also discuss some of the ways in which participants resisted this discourse.

Chapter 9 – Alcohol marketing and constantly connected young adults looks at how a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* relates to young adults' engagement with alcohol marketing on their phones and finishes with a summary of the app study.

Finally, *Chapter 10 – Discussion, implications, future directions and conclusion* uses my research questions as scaffolding to consider links between my study and contemporary research. I discuss some of the implications and interplay between the various findings I have identified and then look at some of the limitations and gaps present in my project. I finish this chapter with some thought toward future research and a conclusion.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Project Structure

My project comprised two separate but related studies: a tag-along study conducted between 2016-2017 using observational fieldwork data gathered as a participant observer with friendship groups (groups of 4-8 friends) that were drinking and socialising, and a smartphone app study conducted across 2017-2018 using the data created from participants' phone use during their drinking events. Both studies are accompanied by follow-up interviews with participants. The observational study was run before the app study and each study used different participants. These two studies focus on mobile smartphone use in young adult drinking cultures and some of the related marketing activities that also make use of participant's devices. Together, the two studies may be considered a form of digital ethnography.

Digital Ethnography

A key aspect of ethnographic research is the goal of providing a rich description of a cultural phenomenon or sector of society (Naidoo, 2012). Ethnographic research seeks to provide this representation from a variety of sources including: field-based observational reflections, interview data, and documents (Wilson, 2006). The definition of an ethnographic field has broadened as a result of technological developments as well as the depiction of virtual realms as spaces suited to ethnographic investigation (Hine, 2008; Leander & Mckim, 2003). Burrell (2009) suggests that digital ethnographies, those situated primarily online, should resist a temptation to define the field as being solely situated in the online environment, and instead allow for a more flexible conceptualisation which might better illustrate the complex relationships that exist between online and offline spaces and the activities of participants across each. This approach suits investigating contemporary drinking cultures and alcohol marketing practices as each makes use of both online and offline spaces, often blurring the distinction between them (Hebden, 2011; McCreanor et al., 2013b). Likewise, Pink (2016) notes that smartphones exemplify this elision as material from online social spaces is now often seamlessly incorporated into

face-to-face sociality as it happens. The digital ethnography conducted for this project was not just about collecting digital data from new media sources such as smartphones and internet enabled apps, it also made use of more traditional ethnographic data sources including participant interviews and observations of participants' activities. The intent was to provide an account that could encompass the complexities of young adult drinking cultures, digital technologies and any alcohol marketing, as well as provide the means to illustrate some of the entwined relationships between participants' alcohol-related activities and the spaces they occur in. The overall aim of this research was to progress an understanding of young adult drinking cultures and the role that smartphones play in them. The interpretive epistemology that ethnography works from furthers this aim by creating an in-depth investigation of drinking cultures, device use, and marketing that draws on the perspectives of participants in those cultures.

Epistemology

Social constructionism acknowledges the subjectivity of individual experience and the accompanying difficulty of separating 'pure' knowledge from the media through which it is disseminated (Lyons & Chamberlain, 2006). The focus of social constructionist research turns towards investigating the shared meaning and understanding that occurs when people interact and the processes that underlie these interactions (Rogers, 2011). These interactions play a critical role in the formation of knowledge about the world around us, serving as sites where meaning and understanding are negotiated and resulting in social realities that are co-constructed (Gergen, 1985). Additionally, social constructionist perspectives acknowledge the role of context in the construction and interpretation of knowledge and the knowledge that research generates as being products of specific cultural and historical contexts (Misra, 1993). Approaching research from a social constructionist perspective means methodologies that privilege language in its various modes are often favoured as it is through the use of language that the social interactions, so foundational to this epistemological approach, can most easily be observed - particularly when they are written or spoken (Gergen, 1985).

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis (DA) was employed as the main analytic approach in this project. A discursive approach to analysis is predicated on the idea that language is active and functional and that language use does not occur in a vacuum but rather in dynamic, contingent settings (Parker, 1990). The context of an interaction influences the meaning of language used in that interaction i.e. to understand what language is doing in an exchange requires looking at more than just the words used in isolation because meaning making in social exchanges is not limited to the strict definitions of the words employed (Willig, 2013). Discourses are clusters or patterns of language (sometimes more broadly defined to include a wide range of semiotic systems) that can be drawn upon in a variety of ways to assist in the negotiation of meaning during social exchanges (Iedema, 2003; S. Taylor, 2001). Discourses can function as linguistic structures, shaping the way in which the subjects they encompass are presented and often privileging particular constructions of a subject while limiting others (Parker, 1994). One of the tools we can use to understand the negotiation, interpretation, and explanatory use of language is the *interpretive repertoire*. This is a term Wetherell and Potter (1988) use to describe a small, coherent, summary or "building block" (p.173) – a smaller pattern of language than a discourse, that speakers draw upon and use as a part of their discursive work. Under a discursive approach, people entrench or normalise discourses through consistent, continued, and prominent use. As a result discourses can solidify as frameworks that others can then draw on unreflexively. It can require effort to resist or subvert these discursive constructions but doing so creates the space for alternative discourses and subject constructions to be explored (Parker, 1990). Discursive approaches aim to identify how specific instances of language draw upon various discourses and what the effects of doing so are. As a result of this process the 'work' that is being done by these discourses is made more explicit and their impact, or any alternative discursive constructions, can be more fully considered. Wetherell and Potter (1988) suggest that we should consider discourse as a social practice - by analysing text, language, and other forms of meaning making we can observe how they are used, what they do, and gain a better understanding of the processes that are a part of constructing the world around us.

Discourse analysis is suited to the aims of my study and its research questions because of its orientation to constructionist theory and especially to textual elements present in smartphone exchanges. As a methodology that focuses upon language in use it is consistent with the focus of the projects' aims and research design. Secondly, DA is flexible enough to accommodate the multimodal texts present in smartphone exchanges, that is, the various exchanges that blend modal types (e.g. image, audio, spatial, and written word) together to convey their meaning using the unique semiotic resources each mode offers, as well as making use of the interactions between these modes in the construction of meaning (Kress, 2010). Discursive approaches also fit well with my own conceptualisation of how drinking cultures are maintained and propagated by their participants. They can include the meaning making that occurs in textual and image-based spaces such as social media, alongside language from face-to-face interview data to prioritise, privilege and leverage participants' understanding of their own drinking cultures and progress a broader understanding of them. This vantage point can create research that is more accessible to participants as well as recognising implications they are more likely to relate to. Issues that are identified may be more relevant to the views of participants and, in my case, this can aid groups such as researchers or health advocates by identifying more meaningful ways to interact with young adults about their drinking cultures. Discourse analysis can also help identify resources already present and relevant to young adult drinkers that might be used to encourage cooperative solutions to problems identified and foster approaches that are tooled towards including young adult perspectives in their own affairs.

Multimodality and Mobile Platforms.

Kress (2010) suggests that multimodality can be considered the norm for human communication – that communication often involves drawing on some of the many available systems of meaning making that span a variety of modes e.g. spatial, textual, visual or aural. My project includes some aspects of multimodality both in terms of what is considered relevant data, and in how these data are analysed. Broadly, this is because the communication that sustains and propagates culture does so across a

variety of modes (O'Halloran, 2011) but specifically, as a particular subset of this idea, because many of the default forms of communication via smartphones are so explicitly multimodal. Smartphone communication exemplifies Kress's norm of multimodal communication and through their ubiquity and portability smartphones further encourage and accentuate multimodal forms of communication as a norm for communication (Kress, 2010).

Some obvious instances of multimodal communication were already present in SMS texting but the flexibility and increasing capabilities of smartphone communication apps have broadened what may be conveyed through phones. As a result of this spaces have opened for new semiotic resources to be developed and integrated into communication. Where texting or calling were more constrained forms that did not allow users much in the way of choices about how they communicated, smartphone communication is different. Smartphones have numerous media-related capabilities and are increasingly powerful pocket-sized computers. This allows the communication apps present on the devices to blend modes of communication and meaning making as text, image, and audio as well as perform other functions such as editing before communication. The platforms also allow users to choose which app or apps they wish to use to communicate with others – and the offerings here are varied in terms of aesthetic, modal capabilities, and other factors such as encryption and level of saturation amongst peers. Users may choose a form of communication that best suits their needs and as multiple apps can be present on a device, this assessment can be a decision made at every instance of communication and one that prioritises different incentives. As the exchanges and activity on, and around, these devices are central to my research questions, multimodality is a necessary inclusion to my project.

One of the complexities of this inclusion is not so much identifying what modes are present in any instance of communication but understanding and analysing the systems of meaning related to each mode as well as how they are pieced together to form a coherent whole. Kress (2010) suggests that the fluidity of communication and instability of meaning, inherently part of any discursive analysis and the

result of differing historical, political, and cultural contexts, becomes particularly noticeable for researchers looking to understand the grammar of multimodal communication. This is a salient issue when trying to understand young adult communication across smartphone platforms as the usage and understood conventions may vary across groups of young adults even though the means for communication and modes utilised are nominally the same. Brock's (2018) suggestion for addressing this issue is that, together, the participant and researcher represent the pieces required for these localised beliefs, understandings, and meaning making practices to be investigated and unpacked. Brock's (2018) work accentuates the flexibility of applying discursive approaches to the analysis of 'technocultures' while also acknowledging both that we can never have the perfect tools for the job and the fluidity of the phenomenon under investigation. However, when done well, multimodal discursive approaches can centre participant understandings in such a way that the unique cultural microcosms that exist across users of contemporary communications technologies can be represented coherently and respectfully (Brock, 2018).

My analysis makes use of some elements of a multimodal approach to discourse analysis. I work from the understanding that multimodal discursive analysis is not so much a different way of doing discursive analysis as it is about expanding the definition of language that discursive techniques are applied to (Gergen, 1985; Kress, 2013). For example, there are texts and interpersonal exchanges present on smartphone devices that can be analysed with discursive analysis and the issues accompanying this endeavour would be those that are applicable to any discursive analysis: the medium and context of these exchanges needs to be considered a part of any resulting analysis and as such these exchanges are different in subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) ways to the same material written in a book or spoken as a speech to a crowd.

While analyses in both my studies focus primarily upon interview transcripts about specific instances of socialising around alcohol, this is not the only form of data my project recorded. These other forms include images, text, video and audio from participants phones; photographs and videos of participants

engaging in gesture and speech; and my observations of the environments or contexts each of these occurred within and which in turn adds an aspect of spatial composition to the data I analysed. A lot of this data was used to augment and enhance the interview process and the resulting transcripts are the primary data for the analyses that I applied. Some of what I include are participants' understandings of multimodal information; some is more my understanding of how multiple modes are present and a part of the construction of meaning and understanding. My analysis also attempts to account for the various representations and reconstructions of this material from a variety of sources. These include participants as active and knowledgeable producers and interpreters of these exchanges, the devices themselves as digital recorders of these exchanges and myself as observer of context and interactions. By leveraging the cooperative meaning making that participant-centred discursive analysis encourages, with my multimodal conceptualisation of the ethnographic field, my aim was to help weave these distinct forms of meaning-making together coherently.

Reflexivity

Social constructionist approaches to research acknowledge the active influence the researcher has upon the research process. Research requires that many decisions be made throughout a project and the various choices the researcher makes as a result of these shape a project around them. Accordingly, my project is a description of young adult drinking cultures, smartphones, and marketing that I've engaged with but it is also *my* description of these topics. It is useful then to reflect on the role I have played in this research project and what I bring to it.

I am an older male PhD student of New Zealand European ethnicity with a partner and two children – one 5 years old and one 10 months old. I came to this project having completed a Masters in Psychology that looked at tertiary student drinking cultures and social media use. My Masters was undertaken at about the same time Facebook released their mobile app and both developers and users were just beginning to experiment with what they wanted and how the platforms could be used. Material relating to the role of phones in this space caught my attention even though it was tangential to my research

questions at the time. When selecting a PhD topic I wanted to continue looking at young adult drinking cultures but to do so while including the increasingly relevant area of mobile communications technology.

Like many, my topic choice is also shaped by my own interests and needs as well as the interests and needs of those around me. In my undergraduate studies I majored in both psychology and media studies and my topic mixes these two continuing interests. As a newish parent and one with friends that have been, or currently are, in similar situations I have had a lot of conversations about youth, alcohol, and technology. Topics have ranged from social media, when to get children smartphones, norms of alcohol consumption, cautions relating to these technologies, commercial interests across these physical and digital platforms, data privacy, the inevitability of usage, and appropriate practices that can be encouraged. So, like many, one of the reasons I chose this topic was to add a little more to our understanding of issues that are immediately relevant to me and those close to me.

As a man I am certain there were aspects of my data collection that were influenced by my gender. For me the notable examples include multiple academics suggesting that the data collection and observational methods I had planned would not be as likely to be approved by a Human Ethics Committee were I a woman – mainly due to the shift in perceived personal danger that would accompany other genders attending parties with strangers who were drinking heavily. Then at the events themselves I was sometimes approached as a clearly sober man who could be used to remove or dissuade the unwanted attention of others. Despite having attended plenty of similar events socially, coming to these nights as both a researcher and a sober attendee made me acutely aware of my gender (more than I'd ever been at a party). In terms of my data, I am as sure that my gender opened the door to some conversations (for example an excerpt is included in the observational study from an attendee who approached me to talk about some problems they perceived as relating to contemporary women and their phones) as I am that it closed the door to others.

My expectations about what I would find in my data and the identification of relevant material in there for analysis were processes that were always going to be influenced by my own experiences and understanding of drinking cultures. Smith (2006) suggests that there are commonly espoused strengths and weaknesses that accompany both the insider and outsider status of researchers. One example of this is the trade-off from a better understanding of process and protocol that allows an insider easier interpretation of phenomenon yet may also manifest as an assumption about the essential unreflective nature of these phenomenon. However, there are also eddies or currents of political and institutional pressure that are applied to the role and responsibilities of both an insider researcher working to interpret and represent their own community in an academic setting and an outsider leveraging their distance from the community whilst maintaining their interests and wellbeing as a primary concern (L. T. Smith, 2006). I have been an active participant in various drinking cultures since around 15 and have enjoyed drinking and socialising for a large part of my life; for example, with friends, as part of my student experience, and as an ever-present aspect of the competitive sports I play. This means I have had experiences like those that were shared by participants, which is useful in that I could draw upon a basic understanding of drinking cultures to build rapport with participants and their peers at events and to know when there was material that could be drawn out further in interviews. But it also meant that I needed to continually reflect on whether I was ever pushing for specific conversations to eventuate or leading a discussion towards constructing material and happenings as I knew them to be as opposed to letting participants lead conversations and describe their own experiences. I attempted to do this through little breaks of active reflection during interviews, for example when we stopped to collect more of the shared food, as well as listening to interviews in their entirety once they were done. With so much of the data including experiences that contrasted with my own, although while also feeling strangely familiar, I think this was a worthwhile concern and hopefully one that led to the data better representing participants' experiences and understandings of their drinking cultures.

Chapter 3: Study one - Observational study of drinking events

Method

Overview

For this study I used a conventional ethnographic observational approach accompanying participants on their night out to collect data about the settings where drinking occurs and to investigate participants' interactions while drinking. I paid particular attention to observing the roles of smartphones within these settings. For example, whenever participants used their smartphones, I recorded notes (on my own phone) on how and when participants used the devices as well as the surrounding context of this use. Similar, but more general, notes were taken about phone use by non-participants at the events and interactions relating to them (e.g. some of the intricacies involved in people lending and swapping devices to provide a party with music). Observations included notes written on my phone as well as video and photos of participants, attendees, and the environment.

Generally, participants invited me to observe and take notes at a drinking event that they had organised in their personal spaces, such as homes and flats. On nights where drinking occurred or moved into commercial spaces, instances of alcohol marketing and participants' interactions with this material were also recorded. I then conducted follow-up interviews with a selection of participants who met predetermined criteria (see follow-up interview section below for criteria) to expand on the material from my observational nights and to introduce other topics for discussion that were relevant to the aims of the study (e.g. alcohol marketing if it had not been present during their event).

Observational Tagalong

Observational data gives researchers first hand material useful for both analysis directly and when used as a comparison to participants' personal accounts. This distance – the ability to compare and contrast researcher impressions with participant accounts of material – can create a good space for discussion to occur in an interview (Pink, 2006). Drinking cultures often include specific activities that are associated with peer group drinking and that are expected to be undertaken or enforced when attending drinking

events. These can include: drinking games, dancing, 'shenanigans' and other peer-encouraged behavioural rules (Guise & Gill, 2007; Hebden, 2011; Ridout et al., 2011; Tonks, 2012). Observational notes and on-the-spot impressions serve to capture relevant material relating to these activities that might otherwise be deemed too mundane for participants to note in a follow up interview.

Observing the language and context surrounding smartphone use while participants were drinking allowed a more complete consideration of their role in participants' drinking cultures than would be the case if I had solely relied upon data present on users' phones in interviews or participants' recollections of their activities. As well as creating a record of any interactions that centred upon smartphone devices and the beneficial comparison material noted above, observational data provided a record of other material participants could not be expected to notice or remember such as the emotional states and behaviours of others present, mundane phone usage, and passive or environmental marketing material.

Recruitment

Recruitment was conducted through word-of-mouth and flyer (both digital and physical – see Appendix A) in areas that young adult drinkers might frequent (e.g. supermarkets, bars, Facebook or universities) and any eligible participant who contacted me was recruited and then used to recruit those friends who would be drinking with them. Participants were required to be between 18 and 28 years of age, own and use a smartphone, consume alcohol, and speak English. Groups were limited to 8 people to balance having enough variety in participants' activity to observe at an event with maintaining a manageable number of participants to keep track of at events. In each case a single person contacted me via email, text, or Facebook messenger and from there they served as the primary point of contact between me and their group of friends. We organised a time and day before the proposed event for me to meet with the group and talk about what the study entailed and why I was interested in tagging along. At these preliminary sessions each participant was given an information sheet (see Appendix B) to read through as well as the opportunity to ask questions, to opt in or out of the study, and to sign consent forms (See Appendix C). I also checked to make sure that all were happy to be interviewed at a time after the event,

if they were selected to do so (see follow-up interview section below for selection criteria). To thank them for giving up their time and being involved in the study, each participant was given a $20 gift voucher (petrol or grocery) and I brought pizza and non-alcoholic beverages, or an equivalent, to the events I attended.

Participants

27 participants (14 female, 13 male) across 5 different friendship groups invited me to one of their drinking events. Participants in these groups were aged between 20 – 28 years of age (N=27, M=22.3, SD=2.1). 22 participants identified as either New Zealanders or British Europeans, 3 as European/Māori, and 2 as Māori. Table 1 provides more detail about the composition of each group.

Table 1

Group Demographics and Information for Observational Study Participants

Group	N	Gender	Mean Age in Years (SD)	Employment Status	Mean AUDIT (SD)	Reason for event
1	7	7 male	21 (0.6)	7 Students	24.4 (2.7)	Keg Party
2	6	3 male, 3 female	24 (2.0)	1 Student 1 Unemployed 4 Employed	11.0 (5.2)	End of Week Drinks
3	4	1 Male, 3 Female	23 (3.3)	4 Employed	15.0 (4.2)	21st Birthday
4	4	4 Female	22 (0.5)	3 Student 1 Employed	9.25 (4.0)	21st Birthday
5	6	2 Male, 4 Female	23 (1.8)	2 Students 4 Employed	16.5 (6.5)	House Party

The AUDIT scale was used to provide information on participants' alcohol consumption and it was not used for any purpose other than that of conveying a broad idea of the alcohol consumption and practices of each group of participants. The AUDIT is a brief screening measure developed with the aid of the World Health Organisation to screen for hazardous alcohol behaviour and dependence. A score of

8 or more is an indication of hazardous drinking and harmful alcohol use, scores above 16 are the point where recommended actions start to include counselling and then specialist referral is recommended for scores above 20 (Babor et al., 2001). Participant scores on the AUDIT ranged from 4-28 out of a possible total of 40 (M=16.0, SD =7.1). For participants the AUDIT suggests that on average, students (N=16, M = 16.9, SD=8.5) drank more hazardously and were more varied in their consumption as a group, than their non-student counterparts (N=11, M=13.9, SD = 4.9). Additionally, all scores indicate drinking behaviours that are either at hazardous levels or above.

Drinking Events

Participants' reasons for holding their drinking events and the attendance at these varied. For example one event consisted of 6 participants drinking at their flat to socialise and relax at the end of the week, whereas at another, several participants had organised a keg party to celebrate a university course finishing; this involved nearly 100 people turning up to celebrate with them across two neighbouring flats. Data at these tagalongs consisted of observational notes (e.g. spatial aesthetics, participant discussions, follow up enquiries with those present), video, and photographs all of which were taken using my phone. Hebden (2011) and Tonks (2012) show that creating records of drinking nights via text, photographs and video is an established, even expected, part of many drinking occasions. When piloting the observational process, I began by taking notes using pen and paper alongside photos and recordings on my phone but quickly realised the phone, while slower for some notetaking purposes, was a better fit for recording everything. Purely phone-based recording reduced the overt intrusiveness of the data collection process and participants seemed to be more comfortable with this method. Each event occurred in the evening starting between 5-6pm and ending anywhere between 2-6am. Each started in a private venue (three houses, two hireable event premises) but in four out of five instances participants moved into town to frequent clubs and pubs, typically between 11pm and midnight. Events took place within a large or medium sized city of Aotearoa. After events the photographs I took were uploaded to a sharable folder and participants were given access to their folder to consider the material and whether they were happy for me to include it. They were able to download any they wished to keep and at this

stage they were also given the option of removing any or all of the photographs from the study, which no participant elected to do.

Follow-up Interviews

After the drinking events, interviews were conducted with individual participants to expand upon their experiences and understandings of their night out and, more generally, their drinking cultures. One rationale for prioritising individual interviews, as opposed to group interviews, was that individual interviews can encourage more sensitive data to be shared safely (Gaskell, 2000). Given it was possible that some drinking experiences may have been both relevant and of a sensitive nature, the use of individual interviews was preferred. Additionally individual interviews allowed me to focus more fully on elements of the discussion with participants and to consider their specific understandings of what happened over a night rather than a group consensus. Likewise, any behaviour or material that lies outside of group norms may be easier to share in an individual setting. An exception to this was made for one interview where two participants felt more comfortable doing the interview together and this was agreed to after consultation with my supervisors.

Interviews were conducted between two days and a week after each of the tagalong nights. From each of the nights of observation 1 or 2 people were invited to participate in an individual interview. Originally, participant selection for these was supposed to be determined by a variety of factors including: obvious use of smartphones throughout the night; use of smartphones in noticeably routine or novel ways; active disengagement from phone use; and the amount of alcohol consumption (heavy drinking or if a participant had decided to have an alcohol-free night at the last minute). However upon attending events, these factors often did not exist (e.g. no participant was noticeably inactive on their phone across a night) or they did but were not observably different among participants. This usually meant the original point of contact participant was the first to be invited to an interview with additional participants being similarly invited if any other selection criteria were present. No one that was offered an interview at this stage declined it.

As a result of this selection criteria, 8 participants were interviewed from across the 5 groups. My interviewees consisted of 5 females and 3 males aged between 20 and 28, 4 were students and 4 were employed elsewhere. These interviews were semi structured (see Appendix D for a copy of the interview guide) and drew on participant-centric data from the previous observational phase, using this familiar material as a starting place for further elaboration. Participants were encouraged to explain or discuss aspects of their drinking nights, including those that I might not have seen or that I might have misconstrued. They offered their opinions and experiences around open-ended questions relating to three broad topics: participants' drinking cultures, smartphone use, and alcohol marketing activities. Participants were also encouraged to make use of their smartphones and provide examples of their activity by showing me various apps, social media feeds, and image galleries present on the devices. Interviews were held in a place convenient to the participant, usually either an interview room at one of the local universities or the residence of the participant. To thank them for their time each interviewee received another $20 gift voucher. Interviews used both a video camera with audio and video capabilities and a separate audio-only device to record discussion. I gave participants the option to choose their own pseudonyms for use in the study and each of my participants made use of this option. These data were then transcribed for analysis and when requested, a transcript was sent to the participant if they wished to check and return it or to keep it.

Transcription

I transcribed each interview using the video camera recordings, with the audio recorder serving as a backup of conversations that was referred to when material was unclear in the video. Video material allowed transcription to include notes about body movements and other non-verbal expressions as well as creating a record of any material that participants displayed from their devices. I transcribed each interview using VLC and Microsoft Word, with any material that was not verbal discussion (e.g. notes on verbal tone, body movements, material displayed on participants' phone) described alongside relevant sections of the discussion (See Appendix E for the transcription notation guide).

Discourse Analysis: Analytic Procedure

After transcripts were read over a few times to become familiar with them, excerpts that might hold relevance to my research topic were highlighted and then collated. Using OneNote as a scrapbook I created sections for the broad themes of my study: marketing, smartphones and drinking and within each were sub-thematic groupings that these excerpts were placed within and that were increased in number as needed, to accommodate the topics covered. Excerpts could be present across multiple thematic and sub-thematic groupings. To these subthemes I added my photographs and notes from the observations, again expanding the sub-thematic groupings as necessary to accommodate any potential new groupings of meanings. After my subthemes had been expanded to fit my data from this sorting and grouping I had my three major themes under which were 15 sub-thematic groupings and under these were a further 94 potential clusters of excerpts around various topics. E.g. under the theme of "*Smartphones*" I had a subtheme of "*Culture and context*" with nine topics further nested in this subtheme, one of which was labelled "*Appropriate usage of the device: The rules of 'being there*'" and into this topic I added relevant excerpts as I found them (see Appendix F for a full list of themes, subthemes and topics). I appraised each subtheme and its topics to identify key aspects within it and as part of an attempt to capture the essence of what it represented. I then wrote an overview or vignette of each subtheme including potential areas of interest that it related to, implications and overlaps that might occur with other themes. Here I returned to my research questions to help identify those clusters of subtheme and topic that were most relevant to my study.

Alongside discussion with my supervisors, I began to consider potential discourses by rereading and regrouping those excerpts within the material I had identified, focussing on the patterns of language that were present and my understandings of the work that was being done. Sometimes subthemes and topics would merge with others as they appeared to relate to the functioning of a particular discourse and at times I needed to return to the transcripts and my notes as I remembered material that I had not included but that might be relevant. As I formed my discourses I attempted both a granular account of the language and meaning making present – one that focuses on the form and function of language and

activity as Potter and Wetherell (1995) and Taylor (2001) describe – as well as including some analysis that aligns with Parker (1990) and Willig's (2013) accounts of the wider functioning and implications of the discourses – an approach commonly associated with a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis. I considered how language, broadly defined, was being used to construct subjects, negotiate, contradict, or support participant understandings, as well as how it drew on existing discursive structures for authority, to strengthen existing power relationships, or in ways that restricted or encouraged potential meanings and interpretations. From this analytic process, I identified three primary discourses from the interview and observation data.

Ethical Considerations

My study often involved observing participants who were intoxicated to varying degrees. This presented an ethical issue because participants during my observations were in a different state of mind from when they provided consent. There is the additional possibility that they could not reasonably have predicted what behaviours and activities they were consenting for me to observe when they agreed to be part of my study. Therefore I ensured that at the outset I described the entirety of my procedure to participants when we met before the events, outlining that I would be taking photos as well as notes and to obtain informed consent at this point while noting that, in addition to their usual right to remove any data as they saw fit, I would be following up after the event to give them a more formal opportunity to express reservations or remove material from my study. Then, to account for the unpredictability of any drinking related activities or occurrences, I contacted groups after their events to provide them with a link to their photos/videos and to confirm that my attendance and what I had recorded were things they were still comfortable with. Doing this meant that I collected informed consent from participants that could give it prior to data collection, and I then created a situation where that informed consent was revisited after the relevant content of my observations was more clearly known to participants.

My study made use of pseudonyms for participants and all place or establishment names have been renamed or redacted for participant protection and privacy. While this distances ownership and perhaps in some instances removes a source of pride for participants, I considered this the safest approach. The

material covered in my study includes photographs and discussions with inebriated participants and my interviews could also have covered a range of sensitive topics. For photographs that I have included in my study I removed a lot of identifiable detail by converting them to line drawing 'sketches' after participants had checked through them and agreed to their use. Additionally, participants were reminded that they did not need to provide a reason for removing any or all of their data from the study and that they could do this at any time prior to it being written up. As a small gesture aimed at adding back in some of the ownership that is lost from anonymisation of data, I gave participants the option to choose their own pseudonyms with the proviso that they could not be overtly offensive or inappropriate. One participant I interviewed from group 5 read their interview transcript during my analysis stage and requested that it be removed entirely from the study because it covered material they did not want included in the project. I removed their data and checked that they were still happy for my observations from their night to remain a part of the study, which they were.

All physical materials such as consent forms and demographic surveys were kept in a locked filing cabinet in my office on the Massey University campus. All digital materials were kept securely online on Massey University's staff network.

My observations with participants represented a potential source of harm. Prior to conducting them it was clear that my presence could potentially exacerbate heavy drinking behaviour in those around me. When I went out with groups this issue did manifest itself as I was certain that I was occasionally 'shown off to' through either the consumption of alcohol or by a participant doing something particularly interesting. I decided to put in place some small practices beforehand to alleviate this, including to ensure I didn't pay a lot of attention to any such instances and to try to remain engaged with groups that I was talking to instead of overtly breaking off when a moment presented itself; that is, I tried to remove the possibility of myself becoming a known 'photo opportunity' at events. This mostly worked but there were still 'outbreaks', such as at the beginning of group 1's event where participants were keen to be observed drinking, that made me aware my presence might be encouraging more drinking

than was usual. Fortunately, these instances often settled quickly as my presence was either accommodated or, in the case of larger parties, forgotten.

My observations also presented an ethical query when considering the role of non-participant data. By design, I attended a gathering where participants had agreed to my presence and my observations, but any other attendees had not. Additionally, these other attendees were often in an intoxicated state and inextricably entwined with participants' contexts as well as making valuable contributions of their own. Their complete absence from my data would create issues of incoherence and was something I considered undesirable. One of the ways I decided to deal with this was to introduce myself and my reason for being at each event to people I interacted with, this likely would have occurred as a natural part of any introduction but I tended to make it an overt part of mine. Another step I took was to maintain a primary focus on participants during my analysis stage. This proved reasonably successful as my interviews organically centred on participants and their understandings of activities that occurred. Any remaining non-participant data I included at this point was completely anonymised and only material from attendees that were aware of my role as a researcher was considered for inclusion.

My interviews and pre-observational interactions with participants represented a source of potential discomfort or harm. Participants were given the AUDIT and some information relating to their scores as I outlined the various thresholds for the AUDIT to them and described where their scores would place them. During interviews we also covered some of the downsides to participants' drinking and their drinking cultures. To alleviate some of these issues I made it clear the AUDIT was a single measure among many that could have been used and that it is one best used as a screening tool rather than an authoritative measure of individual alcohol harm. I also identified local alcohol support agencies and resources and provided every participant with these in the form of an information sheet that they could take away (see Appendix G). For issues that arose in my interviews and that I could not deal with through acknowledging and listening to the participant's experience I planned to use the food I provided as a natural 'break and regathering' time, to move the interview onto another topic if one proved

particularly problematic, and to remind participants that they need not disclose harmful or distressing issues unless they wished to. As a final measure we could decide to halt the interview with the options to resume it again on another day if the participant decided they would like to.

Finally, any research done within Aotearoa needs to acknowledge and make considerations for the fact that it is being conducted in a bicultural country. Specifically, there are obligations set out under Te Tiriti o Waitangi that relate to any research that has the potential to involve or impact Māori as the indigenous people of Aotearoa. Responsible researchers in Aotearoa realise that they must consider any risks or benefits that might result from research with Māori participants and necessary care must be taken to acknowledge, and not exacerbate, the lasting detrimental impact that colonisation has had on Māori as a people (Came, 2013). Māori were not excluded from taking part in my study and while I collected ethnicity data, it was only used to describe my sample and was not used as a part of any analysis I conducted. To the best of my knowledge my study did not hold the potential to be detrimental to Māori nor does my research represent a placing of burden upon Māori, a furthering of any deficit-based comparison model (Groot et al., 2018), or an instance where any potential benefits of the research will be withheld or inaccessible to Māori. My supervisors, along with their colleagues in the SHORE and Whariki Research Centre at Massey University, also provided me with consultation and guidance on aspects of my topic that were problematic or that could be modified to better represent appropriate research practices in Aotearoa. As an example of this my interview process was modified to include aspects of tikanga (protocol) that were appropriate for me to integrate, including a more formal introduction session at the start of interviews as well as the sharing of food. Likewise, my supervisors were available for further consultation for any instances that I identified as needing adjustment after I had begun approaching participants. Five of my participants identified as either European/Māori or Māori and no issues or discomfort were evident in a manner that justified further consultation.

Ethics for this study was approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC). After discussion with the committee and providing for some of their concerns ethics was granted in October 2015 (HEC: Southern B application - 15/59).

Chapter 4: Introduction to the discourses and a discourse of smartphones as social disrupters

At the events I attended phone use was commonplace to the point where such activities were often visible in the photos of participants and other attendees that I took. Even photos where I intended to record some spatial aspect of an event, or the spread of various groups of people across an area, frequently showed sprinklings of phone screens glowing and the associated illuminated faces of their users. People used their devices often over the evenings and, for the most part, this widespread usage seemed accepted and unremarkable behaviour.

However, when I talked to event attendees about why I was there and what it was I was doing, those conversations would sometimes offer a seemingly conflicted account of the role phones played at drinking events. Sometimes these discussions would distance the individual themselves from engaging in high device use; at other times they would provide a rationale and justification for that perceived level of usage for the individuals and their friends. Although widespread and constant use of the device was a norm in these contexts, it seemed that attendees did not always think of this as a desirable element, or they were at least wary of it as an association that could be attached to their drinking and social practices. I followed these conversations into the interviews undertaken with individual participants, which highlighted some of the nuances and tensions present in participants' constructions of phone use at social drinking events. This tension is explored below through the study of two particular discourses.

The first discourse, *smartphones as social disrupters*, focuses on participants' constructions of their phones as barriers to fully engaging in an activity or drinking event. While the phone was described as a necessary device by most participants, it was also one that could be relied on too heavily – sometimes being constructed as a disruptive presence and often in ways that highlighted the potential for the device to interrupt the user's engagement with the activities of the night. Further, excessive phone use by an individual was constructed as a signifier of too much attention being given to building and

maintaining one's online presence. For example, taking too many selfies that showed the user in novel, desirable (fun, drinking, dancing, sociable) environs but without being seen as actually engaging in the event could be derided as a personal failing.

This discourse seemed to also function as a form of self-surveillance – participants and other attendees were aware of this possible interpretation of their activities, and it was one they minimised or avoided either by explicit rejection or by drawing on alternate constructions of activity that could otherwise be read as excessive use. Likewise, this discourse was used to show, and to reflect upon, the need to balance acceptable levels of phone use and other social activities when drinking with peers. The enjoyment and ambience of an evening for the wider drinking group were described as at risk or undermined by individuals engaging in too many phone-related activities at the expense of those that might be undertaken with peers who were physically present. Constructions of phone use that criticised perceived over-use often eroded some of the nuance around socialisation and smartphone devices. Indeed, they sometimes created stark distinctions between online and offline socialising, that seemed to contradict the ways in which phones and usage were constructed in the *smartphones as social facilitators* discourse outlined below.

The second discourse, *smartphones as social facilitators*, was drawn on by participants to position their use of smartphones throughout their drinking events as being socially active with peers. It was used to construct their device use as not just normal and acceptable but oftentimes as beneficial and empowering. For example, phones maximised the enjoyment of drinking nights by allowing participants to be aware of immediate opportunities as they arose or alternate activities they might not otherwise have access to. Participants' phones were instrumental for sharing important knowledge with peers, they solidified or expressed social connections, and they contributed to various aspects of contemporary identity work. In addition to socialising with peers who were not physically present, devices also played an important part of sociality with those whom participants were drinking with. Devices were entrenched in physical spaces and face-to-face conversations in ways that participants constructed as

either beneficial or complementary to their face-to-face socialisation. The immediacy of connection and information availability through smartphones, coupled with their prevalence, contributed to constructions of them as an integral part of socialisation during participants' drinking activities. Their frequent use at events was described as a factor that could maximise the entertainment value gained from a night as well as enhance the socialisation that was inherent in these events.

These two discourses cover participants' understanding and meaning making around the virtues of smartphone use for conducting their identity work and socialisation as well as their reflections on the limitations and liabilities of the technologies in those same areas. They alternate between being contradictory, often positioning the phone as a device that is both a valued addition to socialising as well as potentially antisocial; and then complementary when the same discourses combine to position an individual as informed of this tension, rational and purposeful in their device use (i.e. contributing something valuable to a night through their use of the phone), and ultimately engaging in behaviour that should be accepted in their drinking cultures.

A final *participatory marketing* discourse helped participants construct their engagement with branded and commercial marketing as activity that was beneficial and meaningful to them. Displaying, sharing, and interacting with branded alcohol marketing was often discussed in ways that supressed commercial constructions of the material and instead focussed on the social interactions and the pleasurable associations that these interactions brought with them. As part of the analysis of the *participatory marketing* discourse, I unpack the benefits for brands that encouraged, or provided for, user led interactions and user generated content as doing so provided authentic integration of brands across a range of environments in which young adult drinking cultures are being negotiated and enacted.

Discourse - Smartphones as Social Disrupters

In this discourse, participants constructed excessive phone use as problematic and as removing the individual from the 'now' of current social activity. This removal is described as part of either a deliberate prioritising of online connection and identity work over other socialising that occurs in

physical spaces, or the passive result of the individual's inability to contribute and attend to any face-to-face socialisation when they are using their devices. Alongside these broad constructions, participants focused on a specific repertoire of the 'selfie-loving youth' – users who are always on their phones and who use their devices while drinking to primarily portray themselves to other peers online rather than for dyadic interaction with peers that are physically present. As part of this repertoire participants often used descriptions that included narcissistic, addictive and vanity laden terms.

Peers who were described as being overly isolated or distracted by their phone use were also positioned as potentially problematic to participants' socialising as they were seen as being not sufficiently invested in making the night social and fun for everyone in attendance. An awareness of these negative associations surrounding excessive phone use was reported in interviews as well as in many of the conversations I had while attending drinking events. Often aspects of the 'selfie loving youth' were used as a contrast to more acceptable usage or other rationales for usage, such as when participants focussed on addictive constructions of smartphone use.

Participants negotiated an interpretation of narcissistic or vanity driven activity when describing their own, and others', phone use. This often involved justifications for their own use (usually constructing it as minimal, as socialising, as the necessary act of recording of the night, or as essential coordination and information gathering activity conducted with peers) while making it clear they were aware that excessive phone use is something that could also be interpreted as a vain activity or as a prioritising of digital socialising and identity work at the expense of the chance to engage with peers in physical attendance. Mackrel and Filigree (Group 3) discuss this balance below in their follow-up interview:

Ross: Sweet and then do you think they add or subtract from the experience of drinking?

Mackrel: It can do both, I feel, cause when you got people you know like sitting in a group and everyone is like this {hunched over with phone up at face} it's like "fuck, why are you even here?" Pretty much "can you not put your phone down?" They're good for if you want to capture something, but it can go the other way and it's too much, and you get people just flicking through their Facebook.

Filigree: Like my friend Daphne, you know the other one that was part of this, she is like, I honestly, she did pretty well that night 'coz she is usually on her phone from like before she gets there until, like, she's like standing

there with the charger, and like using it, taking photos. Takes a lot of photos of herself, she's like "*I've deleted 2000 photos of myself yesterday*", and we were like "*oh yeah how many are left*?", and she was like "*1900 and something something*".

Ross: woah!

Filigree: I'm like, see, she's quite a vain person but that night she didn't take very many photos at all. So um.

Ross: You mentioned that I should keep an eye on her.

Filigree: Yeah! I honestly thought she would do well! But she was a terrible subject.

Ross: She used her phone but definitely didn't seem like totally glued to it.

Filigree: See honestly that's just a totally different Daphne to what I usually...

Ross: She was on good behaviour?

Filigree: Mmmm yep yeah maybe she was.

Ross: Like an important kind of night?

Filigree: Good. Good. Cause I've been drinking with her sometimes and it's like "you're not even there" It's just like "oh don't worry then, you can just drink with your phone". Lovely girl, lovely girl, but she just yeah… she takes a lot of photos of herself.

Together Mackrel and Filigree describe how people can go too far with their phone use and how the devices can detract from the socialisation rather than contribute. By setting phones up as being great for "*capturing something*", their value as part of the night is acknowledged at first; however, most of the discussion here focuses on the frustration with those people who cannot manage to put them down. When people are described as focussed on the connections available through the devices to the detriment of those connections presently available face-to-face, it is questioned why a person would even show up to a gathering. This focus on the importance of physical attendance emphasises that the connections available through these devices are available anywhere and anytime, whereas being in the same physical space as friends tends to require more coordination and effort. The choice to attend this socialising is one that the other attendees have made too, and in showing up they have made a commitment to making the night worthwhile for all and have invested in displaying and confirming these close, social, bonds. A person that is seen to be spending *all* their time on their phone is considered disengaged from the socialising occurring and might even detract from the possibility of others properly engaging in it too. This disengagement may be interpreted as negative commentary on the current social setting – signalling boredom or disaffection which may affect others enjoyment. Given

sociality is a highly prized part of young adult drinking cultures it makes sense that 'killing the vibe' of these sessions by observably not taking part, in addition to overshooting a tolerable amount of phone use, would be so undesirable as to warrant reproach.

Daphne (Group 3) is then described as being a friend who uses their phone a lot. That they literally cannot put their phone down (even when the battery is low and they have to be plugged in and charging) and that they have thousands of photos of themselves they need to clear off the phone constructs their phone use as being excessive and crossing a threshold of acceptability. Filigree's description of Daphne's typical phone use scales up her 'transgressions' and positions Daphne as being part of the selfie-loving youth interpretation that is to be avoided. On the specific night in question though, Daphne was not observed by the participants (or myself) as being overly absorbed by her phone and Filigree mentions that she "*didn't take very many photos at all*" which seemed to be genuinely surprising. The fact that it was her friend's 21st birthday and that this was particularly meaningful was something that on the night Daphne alluded to stating it was "*My girl's big night!*" and she was often instrumental in getting various parts of the night back on track or moving – dragging people onto the dance floor when it was slow, or quieting the crowd so that speeches and announcements could happen. Overall, Daphne conveyed the impression that the event was important or novel enough that she felt the need to be more obviously a part of it. To do otherwise may have been interpreted as failing the friendship. In the context of the 21st, overly attending to her phone seems a different level of failure to doing so at the more mundane social drinking events she attends with Filigree. Another factor may be that there was more than one dedicated photographer at this event. It is plausible that if she engaged in her usual amount of phone use then that would be permanently captured and visible to a wider audience of family and peers as the photos from the event would be disseminated widely. In contrast to the more standard drinking sessions, this wider dissemination of what might otherwise be considered a minor issue could move it to being a more serious and undesirable faux pas when viewed by older persons and people that she was not so close to. Potentially the combination of social stigma,

exacerbated by generational divides, and various forms of surveillance at the event might encourage Daphne to limit her phone use.

Similarly, in the discussion below Mackrel and Filigree negotiate some of the reasons people might have for using their phones at drinking events, while also emphasising the importance of smart phones for "recording the night":

Ross: Hah yeah ah sweet. Alright so the last one is kind of fairly general one. How do you think smartphones are being used while people are out drinking? What do you think people are using them for?
Filigree: The same, pretty much the same as I am really. Just for them recording the night
Mackrel: Yeah recording themselves and taking photos selfies
Filigree: Oh wooah! Is that the only reason other people use their phones?
Mackrel: Yeah For narcissism!
Filigree: That's quite. So yours is ok, yours is all good but theirs is narcissistic
Mackrel: I don't take selfies
Filigree: Yes you do.
Mackrel: {whispers} No I don't
Filigree: I call bullshit. I call it.
Ross: No that's cool that's ah, it's pretty reasonable.
Mackrel: But yeah pretty much the same.
Ross: like using it to keep in touch?
Mackrel: Selfies, take photos of stuff, of themselves

Mackrel's construction of others' phone use as a narcissistic act, specifically selfie-taking, is immediately questioned and critiqued here by Filigree, negotiating the balance between what is acceptable use, as part of recording the night, and what is narcissistic use. Filigree draws attention here to Mackrel's positioning of peers within the 'selfie loving youth' repertoire, while defending his own use ('I don't take selfies'), teasingly suggesting some hypocrisy within this statement.

This excerpt comes from a 21st event where many of the older adults (e.g. uncles and family friends) were set up at more traditional pub tables in a room next door, watching the rugby being played on TV, while the 21st and bar and dance floor operated nearby in an adjoining hall room. I went and talked with them about the divide and why they were not part of the main room and among their comments were:

Attendee Group 3: "we're here, they took a photo of us so it counts" (it is about the appearance of the thing)

Attendee Group 3: "{laughing} No-one has noticed" (We're not the focus of the event, the others are too distracted to notice, and a bit of having 'gotten away with' their distancing from the main event);

Attendee Group 3: "yeah no-one cares that we're away from the young ones dancing to their shit music and selfies" (referencing a generational divide, and specifically the construction of the youths present as being too preoccupied with their phones and selfie-taking to notice their absence);

Attendee Group 3: "no harm, no foul"

These comments and observations construct the younger party-goers as more concerned with the appearance of the night than actually socialising with the older generation, and thus the older generation's job as being complete once they have been observed attending. There is the suggestion that as long as there was the photo to point to that portrays the event as a success, as being well attended, and as enjoyed by all, the younger generation would be happy. These photos are representations of the event that may make their way onto the various social media and communications platforms that are important parts of young adults' socialising. Underlying many of these comments then is the 'selfie-loving youth' repertoire that is used to dismiss the importance of these platforms by constructing them as part of a generational shift towards online vanity and prioritising the appearance of things over their 'reality'. A particular type of phone use, the selfie, is archetypical of this perceived divide. Emphasising this interpretation and rationale for their division also helps obscure or detract from any anti-social constructions that might accompany the choice to isolate themselves in a room that was showing the rugby instead of attending a 21st event that, for most of the night, had a wide range of ages socialising together.

This 'selfie loving youth' repertoire was also one that participants had to navigate when describing their own smart phone use. BDGrl (Group 4) describes her choice to leave her phone in her bag, in order to avoid falling into this 'antisocial phone use' trap:

BDGrl: Umm Nah I'm pretty good at just leaving it in my bag now. I used to be pretty bad oh cause when Snapchat first came out everyone was like "oh this is the coolest thing ever!" and you'd spend your whole night living

through Snapchat rather than actually living the night but I think I've gotten better at not really caring so much that everyone knows what I'm doing. So…

Ross: Right so when you say 'good', it's, as in not kind of just using… the phone continually out?

BDGrl: Yeah like I would check if we were waiting for someone or you know if we were trying to organise something or I will check my account balance but other than that it normally just stays in my bag

Ross: And I assume that's because you're talking to the people around you?

BDGrl: Yeah and dancing. Living the night instead of making sure everyone knows I'm there, which is what I feel like a lot of people do with Snapchat, Facebook, and stuff. They want everyone to know what they're doing, is like a bit of a brag and oh, not into that so {shrugs}

The dichotomy here is presented as exclusive: one can *either* be on Snapchat, *or* one can actually experience the night. This constructs heavy phone users as disengaged from the 'real' events or only taking part superficially in a night - partaking at the minimum level required to get the photos that can then be used for a "*bit of a brag*" on Snapchat. In contrast, BDgrl positions herself as having moved beyond this to "*actually living the night*" and focusing less on displaying this living on social media or "*making sure everyone knows I'm there*". BDgrl suggests she has moved past the 'living the night through Snapchat' phase that others around her are still going through. This phase being something that is in the past and behaviour she describes as something she was "*pretty bad at*" constructs this kind of phone use as both a negative but also as an issue of maturity or learning to 'do' phone use properly. BDGrl also describes the active choice she makes to avoid the distractions of her phone on the night – to avoid "*living through Snapchat*". By leaving it in her bag she removes the possibility of temptation in the moment, a precaution that also helps build upon the meaning making around the devices as addictive objects as she must physically separate herself from it to avoid this temptation. Throughout, phone use is not constructed in social terms that emphasise dialogue and coordination with others but instead it is constructed in terms that highlight the awareness of an audience and the potential to display material that aligns with desirable representations of the self to this audience.

Likewise, Armand (group 1) noted the tension between what smartphones can offer and what they can remove from drinking experiences:

Armand: I would say if smartphones weren't, like, if you had a night of drinking without smartphones it'd probably be more fun? Cause everyone sort of gets engaged, you don't have that option to sit out and scroll through those things? I mean every time we've been away somewhere without reception, phones just get thrown away in the bedrooms and then everyone's sort of focussed on having fun? Um rather than sort of just sitting out on the side? I also do think they add to the experience in terms of… that's all good when you're away with a group of friends in the middle of nowhere but if you want more people to come in and make the thing bigger you kind of need the phones.

Armand suggests that by encouraging people to "*sit out on the side*" instead of engaging with the socialisation going on, phones make the peak, or maximum, enjoyment unattainable – their presence lessens the total possible buy-in from attendees and a potential goes unrealised. Here the most engaging and fun experiences have been had when circumstances force phone abstinence upon him and his friends, such as when there is no reception or internet access for the devices. However, this is also linked to the intimacy of the event as well. The level of engagement and fun that is lost when the devices are available and being used is only something that *can* be lost when the event in question is one where a group of close friends have decided to go off and do something novel. When contrasted with the more mundane parties that he and his friends regularly host (where the aim is to have as big a party as possible) this social isolation that the device encourages is described as a lesser issue than what abstinence would bring - a smaller, more mundane, less desirable, party. The detraction accompanying a few more attendees being disengaged with the night is outweighed by the increase in the total pool of potential attendees that smartphones facilitate.

Despite the novelty of her night and the desire to engage fully with it, BDGrl also expressed some reservations about her choice to go phone-free. Here the importance of the device as an always available camera is highlighted:

BDGrl: Yeah, Other than that when it was *my* birthday I didn't care I didn't even have my phone on me the whole night,

Ross: Oh awesome

BDGrl: Yeah I just left it in my bag, which was good but also bad. I should have taken photos with people and stuff.

Ross: Oh yep but surely people took photos with you?

BDGrl: Yeah got a couple, we don't have many but that's alright. Memories not photos

Ross: *Laughs* some photos are nice

BDGrl: Yeah yeah. Got a couple. Got some of the family so mum was happy.

BDgrl describes the conflict between wanting to capture the night on her phone - because it was her 21st which is important and because she had some friends present with whom she does not always get to spend time - and her desire to do the "*good*" thing and leave the phone in her bag in order to be at the party creating "*memories not photos*". Immediately this tension highlights the shifting context into which photos are placed. Traditionally, photos would go hand in hand with creating memories, and indeed BDgrl also laments the lack of them to begin with. But by describing them as split in function from memories, she draws on another function or context in which photos are shown – presumably the environment of social media and the additional interpretations surrounding identity work and management that accompanies taking photos to display on these platforms. On such a novel occasion - one where she was the focal point of the night - the need to be seen as 'good' around device usage and to be taking part fully in the night is contrasted by a mild disparagement of the photos that ended up being taken on the evening. The importance of the phone as a personal device is something that is highlighted here. In addition to others at the party taking photos on their devices, as noted above, this 21st actually had an official photographer who went around taking professional photos as well as photos that others would ask them to specifically take. Often the hailing of this service was in order for group photos to be taken but occasionally someone would call out to and ask the photographer whether they captured a particular humorous happening (e.g. spilling drinks or exaggerated dancing) and in these instances it was rarely the case the photographer recorded it either through their judgement or the moment passing too quickly for them to capture. Therefore, while many photos were taken of the event and attendees, BDgrl constructs these as being lacking in some sense when compared to the material she might have captured on her own device. There are a few factors that might help explain BDgrl's derogation of the existing photographs.

Firstly, the formal nature of the photographer role and the necessity of actively calling on them to take photos, particularly if overused, may begin to shift toward undesirable constructions of antisocial vanity

and self-interest discussed above. To utilise the photographer was not an offhand matter, certainly not a task as simple as opening the camera app on a phone and certainly less spontaneous. Instead it required calling the photographer over and, usually, directing them. This is a very different level of effort than simply taking out a phone to capture a moment on an app like Snapchat and it could convey a different, inappropriate, attachment to the material generated. Similarly calling the photographer over could detract from proceedings as it was quite an explicit act and may have called too much attention to both the moment and the importance of its capture. Here prioritising the choice to record and display these moments over the choice to fully engage with them draws on similar negative constructions as the 'selfie loving youth' repertoire.

The effort of engaging the photographer also appeared to influence the material that attendees called them over to capture. The subjects of the photographer often broke from their existing activity to pose for the photo together, with all eyes on the camera, before resuming whatever they were doing. In this, there is the potential for relevance or personal connection to be missing from the material that was captured by the photographer. BDGrl would likely be capturing photos that instead exhibited the spontaneous, unfiltered, moments of her night. This more formal content consisted of photos that were clear, clean, and captured subjects who were aware of the shot and obviously wanted to look good for it. When talking about how she used her phone whilst drinking BDGrl suggested that "S*napchat is for gross selfies and photos of funny surroundings*" and "*if I'm taking a selfie, then it's not nice*" both of which emphasise content that is distanced, and purposefully so, from the more obviously staged photos that the formal photographer took. At the very least BDGrl redefines what 'looking good' is in terms of the photographs she takes on Snapchat. Unsurprisingly her definition is one that that also distances itself from constructions of vanity through either a focus upon the surroundings or capturing aesthetically jarring photos of herself.

Finally, when compared to the content that BDgrl might have generated on her phone, the dissemination and social function of these official photos differs. The instantaneous communication via

image based social media apps like Snapchat and Instagram fulfil a social role that contributes immediately to the night and the sense of connection to peers. This is unable to be emulated by the more sanitised material of the photographer, both because of the content captured but also because that material would not be immediately shared and interacted with; or when it finally was, this would take place on platforms that shape the meanings associated with the act of sharing this material in different ways. Posting these often aesthetically pleasing, and sometimes highly sculpted photos, to a platform such as Instagram after the event creates a different meaning to Snapchatting little moments of the night that, on the face of things at least, have occurred spontaneously.

Regardless, through questioning the quantity of photos and the extent of their appeal, BDgrl bypasses any potential interpretations of vanity. Instead, the missing sociality with peers who are not present and the inaccurate perspective or chronicling of the night is constructed as the issue. By offloading the photo taking responsibilities to the professional photographer the quality of the photos is likely going to be exceptional but they will not be capturing the same sort of moments, nor be used for the same purposes that BDgrl would have if she were directing her phone's camera over the night. The photographer has obviously fulfilled the expected stereotypical 21st photos (e.g. capturing the family in attendance) and this official documentation of the night is dismissed as being good for her Mum but not as important to BDgrl as the material that went uncaptured.

The photographer at these events was usually roaming and became a focal point wherever they were. Reactions to their presence also highlighted the desire to dissociate with being a heavy phone user at such an event (i.e. an event that is novel; particularly special in meaning to the organiser; and is attended by a wider range of people than just young adults). One example of this is that people who were present in group conversations yet had switched to attending to their phones for a period of time, would put their phone away when they noticed the photographer starting to pay attention to their group. Being captured on the official photographer's camera whilst using their phone seemed to be unwanted and undesirable. Part of this may be the wider range of attendees and the special function of

these specific, formal photos. For example, phone use is something that is sometimes constructed as a filler activity, a distraction, or an expression of disinterest or disengagement with current happenings, and these associations are ones that most attendees would likely prefer to avoid contributing to any 'official' record of the night. Likewise the notion that these photos may end up in more formal places and viewed by quite a different audience (e.g. physical 21st albums or shared digital albums that are all viewed by wider family and friends) to similar material taken by peers and shared on Snapchat likely alters what is a desirable depiction of the self in attendance at the event.

As mentioned above, participants would sometimes, as part of their descriptions of socially isolating phone use, draw upon an addictive behaviour repertoire to describe certain ways phones were used. The interaction of this kind of addiction talk with the wider social disrupter discourse is one of the rare times the device itself comes under any form of scrutiny; however, even in these instances it was still primarily the individual who was described as being at fault and any addictive properties of the phone itself, when mentioned at all, were considered a secondary issue. For example, Armand touches upon this when describing the phone's capacity for timewasting:

{Discussion turns to in app advertisements}

Armand: Yeah yeah if it was something like you know if I saw Yik Yak[5] or something it was like "oh that's kind of interesting, maybe have a look at it". But generally I ignore them because they are just games that I'm not don't really play many phone games they don't interest me that much

Ross: Pretty much mostly just for conversation?

Armand: Social media and convenience like banking and google searching and stuff. I don't really waste a lot of time playing on games. If I'm wasting time it's on Snapchat and Yik Yak and Instagram and stuff like that.

Here to begin with Armand is discussing the advertisements he is likely to pay attention to on phone platforms, but he positions them as mostly irrelevant and things to be ignored because they are usually for social game apps. He draws on the notion of the phone as a time sink where the heavy usage is either due to convenience (immediate banking and searching) or otherwise just "*wasting time*". The

[5] We had discussed the old Yik Yak app that allowed users to post events, such as parties, that were happening live and then used users' geolocational data to determine what events within a certain proximity were happening that they could attend.

former is quickly passed over perhaps because little justification or explanation seems necessary for these. These activities are expected, mundane, and necessary uses that are unlikely to be questioned by most. Whereas the kind of wasting of time that Armand engages in on the phone is also worth explicitly delineating, and isolating, from other phone use that might have more problematic associations. "*Wasting time"* socially on the phone positions his use of the device as something that is likely to resonate with a wide range of people as a worthwhile and justifiable pursuit. Catching up with friends is an important activity and one that holds universal appeal. Whereas "*wasting time*" playing games on the phone has connotations of asocial engagement with the device and may also be undesirable as it risks interpretations of addiction to the device and a preference for escapist pursuits over other forms of socialising perceived to be more valid. Thus mobile gaming seems to be constructed as not being an adequate reason to spend time on the phone, despite often making use of the very same social platforms and peer networks that are described as desirable uses of the phone to provide gamers with known players and human interactions within these. By contrasting this type of use to his own, more social, time-wasting on the device, the issue can become one of people misusing their devices – a construction that lays the problem squarely on the individual and occludes any fault that might lie with the purposeful design and function of the devices and apps.

Participants sometimes described their own use, or reliance on the device as problematic as well. In these instances medicalised or addictive terminology that aligned with some aspects of the selfie loving youth repertoire but, importantly, distanced themselves from any vanity related associations helped negotiate an awareness of their own high use or any perceptions of reliance on the device:

Mackrel: When I don't have my phone I get anxious

Ross: Yeah?

Mackrel: mmm

Filigree: Like literally. Freaks out

Mackrel: Like if I don't have it like here {points to couch side} or if I don't immediately know where it is I'm just like where's that phone? Where's my phone

Filigree: Or even if I've got it he'll just sit there and look at me till I give it back. Be like are you done? No. are you done? No and you can just tell he's just real uncomfortable with the fact that he's not holding the phone

Mackrel: It's not {muffled}

Filigree: Its weird man, I lose this all the time to be honest.

Mackrel: Yeah no see I can't, I can't handle that.

Ross: {Laughs} it's like a part of you?

Mackrel: *Smiling nods* Unhealthy yeah. Unhealthy attachments.

Filigree: So he's crazy in love with his phone to answer that question

Mackrel: Mmm

Here Mackrel is describing his "*unhealthy attachment*" to his phone and in contrast to the constructions of vanity previously attached to others' socially isolating use of their devices, he describes his attachment using medicalised and addictive language that focuses on the proximity of the device rather than the apps it hosts. In this way the emphasis is not on the loss of digital visibility or the inability to produce and receive content for an audience of his peers but instead on the loss of his physical connection to the phone. Filigree adds to this addictive construction when she suggests Mackrel is "*crazy in love*" with the device itself, distancing any interpretation of Mackrel's constant attendance to his phone from the content-focussed selfie loving youth repertoire.

As is evident in many of the previous excerpts there were also interactions between the *smartphones as social disrupters* discourse and gender. These interactions encouraged instances of high device use to be interpreted as either acceptable in a particular context or an indicator of individual failing. In these interactions constructions of women's high device use drew upon more derisive terminology or undesirable associations (e.g. often drawing upon the selfie loving youth repertoire) and were sometimes also directly contrasted to a perceived paragon of men's usage. One example of this was a conversation that I had with a young adult attendee at Xia's (Group 5) party who began by suggesting the devices were good, but not universally so:

Attendee Group 5: I love my phone but I hate the way it affects socialising. Apps are the way you talk nowadays, not face to face, that's what people are losing. Yeah, they can't do face-to-face. And ahh I don't have time for women that are addicted either. No time for them if they think it's okay to whip out a phone in the middle of a conversation. I mean, it's mostly a female problem. If I meet up with a girl and she can't talk to me without pulling out her device, I'm out. I don't want her, you know?"

And after I asked why he thought it was particularly women that struggled with this:

Attendee, Group 5: "Oh I know guys that are vain on, like, Tinder but their level of addiction is lower, they can put it down easier."

What starts as a wariness of the contributions the phone can make to socialising and a broad condemnation of any of his peers who cannot socialise without the devices, quickly narrows into an issue that is described as primarily relating to how women, in particular, use their devices. Eliding vanity and high device use, men are described as being capable of these on their devices but the example of this as it pertains to Tinder constructs them as both less addicted to this type of usage as well as more capable of properly channelling any addiction that *is* present by directing it toward what is, presumably, the more appropriate app for device centric vanity – Tinder, a dating and 'hook-up' app.

These negative constructions of women's antisocial and vain phone use were often a normalised part of conversation where the gendered nature of the descriptions was not reflected upon and yet gender was often explicitly a part of any contrasts that were made. BDgrl's event was attended by a wide range of her friends and one table of friends from her university days spent a lot of the evening socialising exclusively in their own group while also making use of their phones more frequently, and more obviously, than many other attendees. This group then became a source of mild tension and disapproval from other attendees when formal speeches began. The group remained oblivious to these speeches and continued passing around their devices while engaging in loud discussion which created an unwanted distraction for other attendees and led to some attempts to quieten the group. This distraction was easily read as originating from the device centric interactions of a table of young adults and onlookers were quick to point this out to me as a thing I needed to note – there was disappointment that they could not put their phones aside for these special formal moments. However the obvious socialising and fun that this group were undertaking together meant that BDgrl was completely fine with their activities suggesting that "*Yeah that's expected"* when we discussed their disruption of her event. Yet BDGrl had other friends that attended their devices in ways she described as being less endearing, or suitable, for the event:

Ross: So interesting to see that like it seemed like people would get a little bit embarrassed at like using their phones at something like a 21st which seemed a little bit different maybe? To a normal party? And so they'd sneak off into corners to kind of...

BDGrl: Yeah, it's kind of worse ay? It's like you're bad enough using your phone and being antisocial but then making yourself antisocial to do something antisocial.

Ross: But then it sort of seemed like it's like um almost they know that they're being 'bad' {fingers air quotes} so they'll remove themselves so that they're not interfering with the socialising or something?

BDGrl: Yeah that's true, that's true. I didn't really notice but other people did. It's like a couple of friends when they get drunk they'll Snapchat everything. Just themselves if that's what you're talking about. Just a couple of girls that sit in the corner and just take selfies.

BDGrl describes a couple of her girlfriends as going too far with their device use and once again constructions of this use as antisocial and a result of vanity are prevalent. The friends in question are described as Snapchatting everything which focuses not on the social dialogues that are possible via Snapchat but more on a usage of the app that is a continuous, one-way, broadcasting to any peers that are there to view their content – the friends are described in terms that emphasise more concern about portraying their circumstances than conversing with peers. It is not an overt construction of gendered behaviour but provides an example of how women's high device use might be more readily associated with undesirable associations of vanity or an inability to properly balance phone use. That they are "*a couple of girls that just sit in the corner and just take selfies*" quickly makes apparent the unbecoming attention paid to depicting the self on these platforms and negates any of their other activities or contributions to the night.

BDGrl also suggests that alcohol plays a role in this reduction of her peers' capacity to identify what is appropriate behaviour for the circumstances. Alcohol was often described as an explanatory factor and later BDGrl expanded on this idea:

BDGrl: And the same with the stories, people go a bit ham[6] when they're drinking and then I don't know if they wake up and regret the 120 Snapchats that they put out? I don't know, cause I've never done one, so I don't know if it'd be like "oh delete that" but…

[6] "Go ham" is similar in meaning to "go overboard" or "go nuts"

Here excessive Snapchatting is consigned to a similar position as other risky or embarrassing behaviours that are undertaken whilst drinking. BDGrl suggests there should be regret and shame when those who go a bit "*ham*" on the app look back on their contributions the following morning. The excessive use that is described as being exacerbated by intoxication is once again constructed as moving this content creation away from constructive, acceptable socialising and toward being less desirable content creation. Talking to Daphne while at Filigree's event, she suggested that this regret does indeed occur for her, however because this activity was undertaken while being intoxicated helped to make this a more acceptable aspect of her night:

Daphne: Watch out for later! {when she would be more inebriated}, I'll Snap anything. Snap the ex, send him 20 selfies. Everything to my story too. Wake up. {Motions checking phone wide-eyed} Shaaaaame. Delete it all. Do it all again {laughs}.

Daphne notes that the regret and shame that BDGrl mentioned does result from her increased, inebriated, Snapchatting. However the context of her drinking adds an element of entertainment to the expected pattern of use for the night. That these communications – deemed regrettable enough to warrant deletion when sober – occur whilst she is inebriated appears to be similar in entertainment value as other embarrassing or detrimental activities that express a social drinking identity and thus can also be repositioned as markers of a 'good night' post-event (e.g. vomiting in inappropriate places, accidents resulting from a lack of coordination, spontaneous sexual encounters). Filigree also drew on the idea that being drunk mitigates, or diminishes, the severity of any social consequences relating to what might otherwise be seen as excessive Snapchatting.

Filigree: Yeah when I'm drunk my Snapstory just goes fucking like {makes an explosion with her right hand} like I maybe have like 30 or 40 separate ones throughout the week and then in the weekend it gets to 300 in 50 seconds sometimes cause I just go crazy. I take hundreds of random shit. Or I'll just video my friends just sitting there drinking.

Contrasting their previous discussion around people who cannot put down their phone to enjoy the moment Filigree describes how once she is drunk, her use of Snapchat increases dramatically. The potential for this being considered antisocial and excessive use of the device is minimised through both

the idea that this is an increase that is tied to a level of intoxication (presumably where inhibition and self-regulation is lessened) but also through emphasising the type of content she is Snapping. She describes taking Snaps of "*random shit*" and of her friends "*just sitting there drinking*" which once again helps distance this usage from appearing too self-serving or indulgent. Here her phone is capturing the random in-the-now-moments and the sociality that is occurring and so while obviously this amount of Snapchatting is described as excessive, it is an excess that draws on other, more social, aspects of her phone use to show it as both entertaining drunken behaviour and more socially acceptable use of the platforms. The social potential of the phone is something that many participants drew upon and it was in evidence across every observational night. This formed the basis for the *smartphones as social facilitators* discourse that is discussed in the next chapter.

A discourse of *smartphones as social disrupters* was drawn upon to construct participants' phones as capable of removing them from sociality on offer. People that used their phones in undesirable ways (such as playing games or reading newsfeeds) or circumstances (e.g. choosing to prioritise the device when there was face-to-face sociality and drinking activities on offer) were often positioned as disengaged from drinking events or as overly focused on themselves which could possibly detract from peers' on hand sociality. Physically, phones were removed from sight on occasions where their presence would open the user up to undesirable interpretations of disinterest or of excessive phone use and this was particularly the case for the more formal events I attended or for instances that were being photographed by others. As an example, excessive use of image-based apps such as Snapchat risked associations of vanity and of too much emphasis being placed on representing aspects of identity to peers via smartphones. These associations of vanity also appeared to be gendered as they were more likely to be made when describing women's use of their phones. However, participants' reticence around certain types of device use while drinking was not solely about constructions of vanity. Apps and the devices were also described as a temptation or addiction that needed to be managed and negotiated to keep usage within an acceptable bound. The role of alcohol here was one of both disinhibition and rationale as intoxication was frequently described as leading to greater than normal

phone usage and the state of being intoxicated lent an acceptability to this increase by allowing for associations of vanity to be displaced by associations of humorous self-deprecation. Similarly, the context and intimacy of peer relationships present were described as important factors in determining what was and was not appropriate phone usage.

Chapter 5: Discourse - Smartphones as social facilitators

While participants were aware of the negative constructions that were possible around phone use at social occasions, the frequent, visible, and varied use of the devices at the events I attended suggests that they still considered the devices worthwhile, perhaps even integral, additions to their drinking nights. During the events, attendees would keep in touch with others about what else was happening amongst their peers – glancing quickly at their phones and back as they pinged, buzzed, or lit up. The devices were also used to avoid periods of social downtime. Smartphones allowed access to socialising with peers not physically present when lulls in current conversations occurred and were devices that could serve as focal points or catalysts to socialising with others who were present. Finally, they were used as an excuse to extract owners from groups or conversations they were no longer engaged with. These uses were social in nature as attendees made use of the devices to augment socialisation with peers.

The visibility of the devices and the extent to which they were made a part of socialising varied across events, but phone use still waxed and waned following a broad, recurring, pattern at each event I attended. While they were constantly used throughout the nights, the devices were more obviously a central focus for attendees at the beginning of events and then again around 11pm as groups of attendees would splinter off and head into town. Some events also ended up having informal but recognisable areas emerge where users would break from the wider proceedings to check in on, or just more overtly make use of, their devices.

There was an obvious appeal in having the devices present at the various types of events I attended including those where 'being present' – socially engaged and available – (which the use of devices might interfere with) was important. Conversations I had at the events tended to suggest that alongside apps for recording various happenings (e.g. stock camera apps), communication apps were regularly used; and the most common app I actually observed being used at these events was Snapchat. This is unsurprising given that the app is primarily a visual medium that incorporates text over the top of either

video or photographs and it is an app that is set up as an instant communication tool with the appearance of ephemerality – something that removes at least some of the onus accompanying users' consideration of their self-representation on the app and instead emphasises the in-the-now connection to peers. Adding to its visibility from observations, Snapchat usage is likely going to be more notable than other forms of messaging as it involves pointing the phone's camera at subject matter. However, smartphone use was not limited to Snapchat or, more broadly, communication apps; instead, the flexibility of the devices in these social settings meant that they played a variety of roles across an evening of young adult drinking. For example, as shown in the quote below, Lessie (Group 2) acknowledges the potential for phones to disrupt the evening by distracting or engaging the user (drawing on the previous *smartphones as social disrupters* discourse). However, she then summarises a tension that is present by highlighting the role of social catalyst that the phone can play, in particular the ability to share the device screen and content, something she appreciates when drinking with her friends:

Ross: So do you think they add anything to the experience of drinking? Or subtract is the other question?

Lessie: Ahhh I guess they can take away, I dunno the word for it but like some people will sit there on their phones rather than engage with people there, yeah so it takes away that sort of social aspect.

Ross: Right

Lessie: But at the same time it can be like "ooooh guys look at this" you know so it adds that aspect to it too

Ross: yeah definitely, like even just around here {participant's house where the event had taken place} there was a lot that kind of... Like people would find something interesting and show it?

Lessie: and hand it round. yeah.

Phones were often used as Lessie describes across the events I attended, moving between being used as personal devices to being a form of collective device upon which material was handed around those present to become the focus and drive of conversation for a time. One participant, Xia, started a conversation with me at the party by introducing me to the Reddit forum she had been trawling, before then using it as a platform to move our discussion to one of feminism in Marvel movies and some of the

various lines that were drawn on the topic of gender-bending cosplay[7]. The phone material was used as an initial point of contact, but by pointing out a thread topic it was also a slightly distanced 'feeling out' of a subject that we might then discuss further if desirable. People also brought content from their phones into conversations when something deemed worthy of sharing was found or just when something related to the discussion 'needed' to be viewed or passed around. For example, at Lessie's event a discussion about mixed martial arts (MMA) accidents and extreme contact in the sport started which then had people finding examples they could recall and handing their devices around for comparison to previous material amongst the group. This device-centric, face-to-face group socialising tended to occur at the beginning of the night as everyone settled into their drinking and it served as a form of icebreaker, enabling fewer lulls in conversation. In this sense the smartphone, by fostering the conditions required for socialising and providing activity to stave off any potential awkwardness, parallels the role of alcohol in many young adults' socialisation.

At Lessie's event the drinking mostly occurred in a small kitchen-lounge combination area. Here also, conversation and various forms of media were blended using the TV with an attached laptop and participants' phones. When it was deemed worthy, the group would decide to play a clip or show something on the larger screen so that no one had to wait for the device to be passed around. This would often be someone finding something related, or that one-upped, the material currently going around on a phone and this new material would then be presented to the group on the TV so that another device did not need to orbit alongside the current one. Later, when the night had progressed and people were more intoxicated, the devices were still used to show and display content to others, but they rarely left users' hands and the type of content being shared appeared to change in nature. Instead of material sourced from various content sites (e.g. Reddit, Youtube, Vimo) that exceeded a certain threshold of interest, now the content being shared later in the evenings tended to be social updates relating to mutual acquaintances and their current whereabouts or activities. Below, Armand

[7] Portmanteau of "costume play" and involves dressing up as characters from a variety of sources, often popular culture.

describes how personal Snapchats can fulfil this role once they are deemed interesting or unusual enough to share with others.

Ross: Yeah coolcoolcool. Oh so the other part of that is like some of the times people would just be going through it and then like just bring the phone into the conversation and [incoherent wording] J was like "fucking check out this!" {motions displaying phone to Armand}

Armand: Oh yeah that does happen. Yeah if you um, usually you get a crazy Snapchat "Oh man check this out it's pretty cool"

Armand notes that the kind of Snapchat that is going to be worth sharing with others is likely a "*crazy*" one. The peer group all have phones too so when showing others something on his phone, the action is one that takes them away from their phones and puts the focus on his. Content that draws on shared experiences and relationships or that is particularly novel is more likely to be content that is desirable to view on someone else's phone and unusual Snapchats are likely to be both. "*Crazy*" material is obviously more likely to be appreciated and engaged with by whoever Armand shows it to. Some of the material, potentially a lot of it, will come from peers who are also engaged in drinking which means this interesting, desirable, and 'crazy' content helps normalise drinking material as content that is worth sending to peers via Snapchat. The relevance and novelty of this content also helps normalise the act of sharing this material, when it is received, with others present who did not receive it. Here some of the escalation of material that can occur around this sharing is illustrated as this becomes a similar context to the one-upping of content on display at the beginning of these nights. This 'local splash' of Snapchat content on arrival – content that is viewed by people in the vicinity of the recipient – allows for a culture of comparison and escalation to develop and many participants deemed this type of material appropriate to share with me on these observational nights. Conversations would pause to show those around them, including me, their peers' varying drinking feats (e.g. competitive speed-drinking, 'chopping' or consuming a large amount of alcohol all at once, and fortunate beer pong shots). On occasion I was even sought specifically as 'that drinking and phones researcher' to show some Snap that had been received on the night.

Another app that participants made use of as a shared experience with those around them was Tinder. The digitally-modified photograph below (see Figure 1) depicts K-Bar and Gim (Group 5) at the beer-pong table discussing Gim's matches on the app, analysing the profiles together and laughing at various features of users' profiles as they were swiped past.

Figure 1

Two Participants from Group 5 (standing) Discussing Tinder Activity.

Shared Tinder use was also a recurring part of the night for group 2 and in this smaller drinking session the bonding that was augmented by the shared phone activity was something that all 6 participants took part in without hesitation. Below Svelt (Group 2) discusses how they tend to enjoy this activity:

Ross: Interesting, what about the Tinder? Will you hand round the Tinder?

Svelt: Oh yeah. Yeah all the time. Definitely. Everyone's interested in that. We'll talk about different images, whether or not they're worthy of a response. And we'll talk about the conversations had. Yeah if someone's got something exciting going on with someone else, like a potential relationship or an interesting relationship, and there's a conversation with it, I'll read out the conversation to the group and we'll discuss it.

Ross: Nice {laughing}. Is there… are there group decisions made on, um, where to go?

Svelt: Like there is group feedback. This is just with my flatties.

Ross: Oh yeah

Svelt: I mean, fairly open yeah.

In a similar vein to Armand's "*crazy*" Snapchats above, the conversations that group 2 have around the potential relationship, dates, and hook-ups that Tinder can be used for are ones that focus the group on a specific phone to the exclusion of other devices for a time. These conversations break the one-to-one communication that is the intended use of this app and instead a single device and the content upon it becomes central to the wider group. Bringing Tinder connections that are personally tailored for the individual out into the group setting for the group's enjoyment is constructed as an activity that will always be appreciated because "*everyone's interested in that*". This is especially so when "*someone has got something exciting going on*" which illustrates that such content tends to surpass thresholds of relatability and desirability. While part of this appeal could be understood as stemming from the viewing of the potentially risqué and private one-to-one conversations of their peers, Svelt instead constructs this activity as an expression of closeness and social bonding between the group. The conversations are not described in voyeuristic terms, rather they are constructed as meaningful discussions and as "*fairly open*" expressions of the group ties that are present. This is an activity that is done only with her flatmates which means that it depends on the safety of close friendship and that it reinforces those social connections. The nominally private one-to-one connections present on the device and the app Tinder are subverted here, as they are repurposed by Svelt and her friends while they drink, instead becoming a social phone-based activity that emphasises the connections and conversation of the group over the connections and conversation present on the device.

The context of a night changed some of the ways in which participants shared or made use of their devices over their nights. The shared device use described above was common at the beginning of the casual drinking events I attended but phone use at the beginning of the more formal drinking events often involved various forms of checking into the event itself (e.g. taking photos of the quite stylised setups, selfies with friends and hosts, and using messaging apps to contact other peers). Phone use at such events later aligned with the informal events as the nights and intoxication progressed. This might have been in part due to them passing through the more rigidly defined stages of the nights, such as speeches and presentations, and into a more casual socialising stage in which this shared type of device

usage was more encouraged, desirable, or appropriate. Additionally, while the formal events started with a much more diverse demographic, by the later stage of the night the majority of remaining attendees were younger adults – most of the older age groups having left by 11pm – which meant the groups for whom socialisation and phone use are more entwined were once again in near homogenous attendance instead of being amongst people of a range of ages. Whatever the case, by the end of most events there were instances of, brief, shared screen socialisation or witnessing of another's phone activities amongst peers and this formed a part of their ongoing face-to-face conversations.

Similarly, at events that had different peer groups mixing and interacting, phones were used as a safety net and catalyst for socialisation. Common spaces were often used for people to check in with their devices, send and reply to Snapchats or messages, and browse apps like Facebook. As people entered and exited these areas, they would often engage in (usually, brief) conversations with other phone users present. The conversations I was present for mostly revolved around topics such as mutual connections amongst those present, a quick acknowledgement of the shared need to use their devices, or smaller inquiries about matters such as the type of alcohol being consumed for the night. These brief social interactions concluded, and users then moved back into their device activity. At the 21sts this occurred while attendees waited or finished their drinks at the bars as well as in some of the less visible spaces including the side rooms, exits near the toilets, or corner tables away from the well-lit dance floors. In these instances, the incorporation of phones into the sociality of the night seemed to be tempered by the notions of their isolative anti-social nature discussed in the previous chapter. A balance was found where extended phone use was expected, and so accounted for, but pronounced visibility of this use (and the potential for it to be read as disengaged with the evening) appeared to be undesirable. These semiformal phone spaces seemed to allow participants to tend to their devices without the possibility of detracting from other's enjoyment or the ambience of the events. They also remained nominally social areas as those who frequented them usually struck up passing conversation with others who were already there.

At the informal drinking events these phone-centric areas were also present. For the informal events they usually developed a little away from the public and noisy areas (such as the beer pong tables, the kegs, the kitchens, and the dancing areas) but occasionally they would mirror the formal events and be even more removed from ongoing sociality. Again whenever the drop-in conversations occurred as a result of someone approaching, users' devices were often made use of as both a lead into socialisation (e.g. icebreaking with content being viewed) and an exit out of it (e.g. motioning the need to get back to attending the devices or returning to them at a pause in conversation). Here the role of phones seemed to be one similar to a form of social safety net that users could attend to or take a break from as required.

Devices were integrated into participants' socialising in many ways with one of the more prominent means being the 'ussie' (a group selfie). The digitised photograph below (see Figure 2) from Xia's event, shows a couch that was positioned next to the well-attended beer pong table and that became a drop-in photobooth of sorts.

Figure 2

Beer Pong and Selfie Couch at Group 5's Party.

A selfie stick that had previously been used to do a walkthrough of the party at the beginning of the event had been left next to the couch and people started bringing friends to occupy the couch and to use the stick for 'ussies' (group photos). After one person took photos, the stick was often given to the other(s) and more photos, using their various phones, were taken. Most of this material was captured and sent directly using Snapchat but some Facebook messenger and standard camera app use happened here too. Material was predominantly photos of friends together with the occasional video clip that panned to show the beer pong match taking place while the people on the couch commentated the action. Talking to the attendees, this kind of device usage was both novel, in that the selfie stick couch was not something that had happened before, but it was also unremarkable outside of the specific opportunity it provided – an interesting device or device accessory being present at events was not unusual. Considering the ussie couch, many elements came together that help highlight the social facilitation enabled by phones at events.

The ussie couch was an emergent content generation and sharing spot and it was one that was not set up for its eventual function but rather formed that function gradually over time. It was also a space that actively encouraged people into it to use their devices through the appeal of creating content that was shareable and represented group values associated with partying, sociality and alcohol use.

The ussie couch was quite simple in terms of the elements that seemed important or pronounced in its composition. The relatively novel selfie stick, accommodating seating, and proximity to the beer-pong provided an opportunity to easily bring multiple people into selfie styled photos. This was already a popular social space and one that had reasonably obvious physical bounds which demarcated it from the rest of the lounge. The selfie stick, which was already linked to representations of the good times being had at the party due to the earlier walk-through, provides an example of the setting and technology combining to create an explicit and obvious instance of device use that encouraged a pattern of use to develop across the night amongst attendees. The stick was moved about at standing eye-level while photographs were being taken of people, making it clear to other attendees that later an

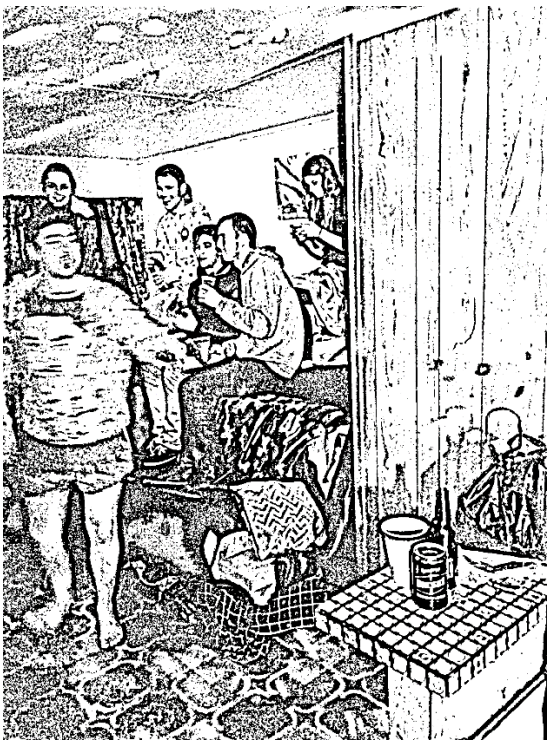
opportunity would exist for *them* to partake in the same activity. The act of taking these couch-bound photos was also one of the more obviously, or explicitly, enjoyed activities taking place around the house and as such it became an activity of choice for many. As it was clear to all that most of the material was being immediately used on the couch sitters' Snapchat accounts there was also an incentive, or at least the highlighting of possible social reward, for engagement in this activity.

Holistically, this entwining of social technology use with the hotspot of the beer pong table normalises a very obtrusive and explicit instance of phone use into the evening and may even have been beneficial to a broader range of peers and attendees than those who made use of the couch. This is because people used the space and activity, as well as the chance to spectate and commentate the beer pong, as a shared bonding experience with other partygoers. From this they generated content that was obviously deemed worth Snapchatting and that could also serve as the basis for social connection to absent peers who might otherwise have been excluded from the event. Simultaneously, the obviously social nature of the shared activity, as well as the enthusiasm of attendees taking part, added to the already energetic atmosphere surrounding the beer pong table to the benefit of the event as a whole. In contrast to the previous descriptions of excessive phone use and detraction from events, having the phone as a focal point seemed to add to the ambience or 'vibe' of this night. The synergy between device use and space reinforces the utility of these devices as social enablers as well as illustrates the blended nature of socialising that occurred across various mediums at these events.

These emergent and device centric phone areas that were a part of, or at least were adjacent to, a popular activity or physical social hotspot were common at events. The digitised photo below (See Figure 3) shows makeshift bench seating that had been set up overlooking a small, improvised, dance floor at one of the parties.

Figure 3

Makeshift Grandstand Space Overlooking the Dance Floor at Group 1's Party.



This space was used for resting, talking, and checking phones. Most attendees' device use in this area was related to instant social connection, taking pictures of interesting action (e.g. the notable dance moves and others' inebriated attempts at replication of these that occurred on the dancefloor) for Snapchat and messaging, or looking over these with others who were seated in this space. However, it was a relatively secluded spot in which it was possible to isolate a little and this meant that some attendees would also spend time scrolling various social feeds such as Reddit, Imgur, and Facebook. Again this space, and the various ways that devices were used in it, helps illustrate the entangled nature of socialising across each event and across a variety of digital platforms. Smartphones are necessary for this entanglement as they provide a personal, instantaneous connection to peer groups, (regardless of location) as well as the means to capture, send, or contribute the content that forms the basis of this socialising. But the nature of apps such as Snapchat and the importance of socialising to young adults

creates an environment where smartphones go further than this and they could be seen as fostering or even actively promoting this entanglement within the young adult drinking cultures they are a part of.

Below, as part of our discussion around his Snapchatting at the event, Armand expands upon the idea that a threshold of interest or novelty needed to be met before something was worth recording. This desire for novel material was broadly present across participants' constructions of photo and video recordings and particularly around recording material that was to be sent to peers immediately via Snapchat.

Ross: Yeah. So in the party again like places people seemed to be taking photos were sort of out in where there were shitloads of people in that middle section, but also there were some on your, you had the grandstand to the dance floor?

Armand: Yeah yeah

Ross: So like people would be up there taking photos of the, like um, oh! the guy that was losing his shit doing the robot and everything?

Armand: Oh the dancing, yeah yeah yeah. Well I mean if someone's busting up the dance floor you're going to sit up there and video them {uses imaginary phone}. Anywhere where the sort of action is happening I guess, where the attention is centred.

Armand notes that a good source for Snapchat material are those places "*where the sort of action is*" (e.g. someone "*busting up the dance floor*"). Similarly, when reflecting on what kind of material justified a Snapchat photo, Lessie suggested "*If someone's doing something stupid or if, I don't know, if we're doing something out of the ordinary or if we want like a group photo of the occasion or something like that*". In some ways this represents an almost traditional use of cameras at drinking events; they are being used to record the memorable moments that will be worth recalling or sharing with peers. However, this entertaining material is also valuable for creating moments of immediate social connection to peers who are not physically present. This in-the-moment sociality serves to keep peer groups informed and aware of happenings across members' drinking nights and the instantaneous information sharing provides a useful reference for others out partying or for those trying to decide where they should be going. By sharing materials such as those suggested by Lessie or Armand, the impression of an event is differentiated from a routine drinking session and so is likely both more

desirable as an association for any identity work being done on these platforms as well as a more enticing event for others to show up to.

The normalisation of constant device use, and here the accompanying normalisation and convenience of spaces used to 'check in' with devices or attendees' wider peer networks, means that device use is not only possible at events but also desirable. At events I attended there were numerous nearby spectacles to these spaces including well attended dance floors, competitive beer pong with attentive spectators, shotgun races (i.e. using specialised receptacles to drink alcohol competitively in a 1 vs 1 race) and other novel occurrences. In one instance a misappropriated concrete duck was attached to a rotating washing line and was flogged with bits of wood by a group of inebriated attendees. The aim appeared to be to make it 'fly' in a manner that was damaging to the washing line (and the duck) while the floggers and crowd of onlookers repeatedly cried out "quack!" in support – and recorded everything on their phones.

Certain people were also known for providing material that was particularly sharable which meant that the spaces around them were often full of phone use that was more likely to be capturing sharable material. One such innovator was J, one of my participants from group 1. J was well known to many attendees as being "*The loosest*[8] *guy out there"* (Party attendee, Group 1). At this party he was heavily intoxicated and for half the night he substituted his starting attire for some very high cut, feminine, ripped jean shorts, a necklace of large plastic flowers, and a low v-cut top. This was a change that attracted the attention of a lot of attendees and their phones. He moved between various groups present and as he did, attendees would take photos with him and get him into their Snapchats. Being obviously inebriated, a highly visible person whose dress contrasted with many of those assembled, and prone to hedonistic activity (he also started multiple beer funnel competitions; was an enthusiastic dancer, rapper, and conversationalist; and tended to energetically join in with whatever was going on around him), J was an easily recognisable signifier of good times being had as well as heavy alcohol consumption. The novelty of many of his activities and behaviour encouraged a lot of content

[8] Here loose is slang for a particular type of person. Usually it is one that is some combination of unconventional, unpredictable, bold, humorous, hedonistic, and eccentric.

generation and sharing – material which featured him prominently and likely served to cement his renown amongst attendees and their circles of friends. Phone use in these instances was inherently social, being used to acknowledge a particularly good part of the night was occurring and to instantaneously record a moment shared with J. The emergent phone centric areas then afforded participants the time and space to make the most of this type of content. In these spaces material can be quickly reviewed, curated, and then shared to various networks via communication and social media apps. The association with sociality that is authentic, ludic, and fun coupled with clear representations of the event that show it as a well-attended heavy drinking affair made for content that was desirable to both share and view and attendees would disengage from the night at times to share it with peers via their devices.

These activities and their accompanying spectacle create a wealth of material that blends social connection with the showcasing of desirable aspects of individuals' drinking identities when shared with a wide network of connected peers via apps like Snapchat and messenger. Doing so sculpts a particular picture of a night (e.g. hedonistic, alcohol centric, and fun) and creates desirable associations for identity work across the various social platforms and amongst peer networks. This is done so in a way that is positioned as authentic sharing and sociality as it is connecting, sharing experiences, and interacting with peers and thus avoids undesirable interpretations such as those of excessive self-promotion and vanity. Through their design, their apps, and their hardware, smartphones are devices that use an immediacy of connectivity to drive the entwining of online and offline socialising.

As previously mentioned other technologies were not uncommon to see entwined with drinking, phone use and socialisation at the events I attended. One instance of this occurred at Armand's event and it illustrated the widespread interactions and ripple effect of some of the content that is generated as part of young adult drinking cultures. Armand and some of his close friends began drinking before their party started and as part of this pre-drinking they clambered onto their flat's roof to consume their drinks from gumboots. What made this particularly novel is that they employed a drone to take footage of the

activity and so the resulting content was almost cinematic in nature - it panned around them gathered atop the roof and zoomed in to allow for clear detailing of the alcohol consumption from the footwear. While ground-bound onlookers took photos and videos of the drinking, it was the drone footage that served as a 'trailer' for the upcoming night, an advertisement of the fun, hedonistic, heavy drinking ahead and it was this drone footage that also recurred over the night, serving both as a reference, conversational opener, and a badge of pride for those involved. This gumboot-enabled consumption was a fully captured spectacle that echoed across the night after setting it in motion. For example Mikel (Group 1) pointed the roof out to the group we were standing with at the party noting "*yeah we pre-gamed from that roof*" to which others of our group responded that they had seen the footage and that it was "*epic*". There was pride in having been involved in this locally famous footage that depicted heavy, novel, drinking but discussion of the footage also served as an opener that reignited the conversation amongst our little group too. Likewise, I was shown the drone footage twice over the night from people that had saved it on their devices prior to arrival. When they realised I was present because I was interested in drinking and phones they brought it out as necessary viewing. This footage was displayed to many potential attendees beforehand and later reverberated across the night, surfacing as a catalyst to social interaction through either the shared experience of having viewed it, or the opportunity to introduce another person to it via one of the many phones present.

It is clear that participants used their phones for social communication in a variety of ways and while the formality of each event seemed to account for some of the differences in use, participants also noted other aspects of their context that changed the social norms surrounding phone use. For example below Svelt contrasts her understanding of various peer groups and the bounds of acceptable phone use during their drinking sessions:

Svelt: Yeah especially back in <hometown> with my friends where we do take photos and we do post them on Facebook and we do tag them, you know share it with everyone. Um not so much down here. Yeah nah. It wouldn't be photos, so um like if someone turned up. So one of our flatmates a girl turned up and they ended up going to the bedroom together, so we all got on our phones to text him and tease him along the way. {Laughing} so that would be something that we'd, you know?

Ross: {laughing} oh you lovely people you, I'm sure that was really helpful.

Svelt: Yeah so um. Or there is a flatmate that sometimes annoys us. So two of us might be texting about that particular flatmate about what an egg they're being. Um but nah, generally yeah I can't say with the flatmates we really take photos and stuff.

…

Svelt: But yeah when I think about <hometown> and drinking with my friends up there. Again, phones aren't a big thing because we're busy catching up with each other, I don't see them often so.

Ross: So is that, yeah I guess is that because it's more of a novel experience? Like you don't get to do it as often?

Svelt: Exactly. Yeah. So it means the purpose is spending time with them, and seeing them. Whereas when it's just your flatmates you see them everyday. Umm you've gotta kind of find things to fill the time. {Laughs}

Ross: {Laughing} When it's *just* your flatmates.

Svelt: Yeah!

While drinking with her flatmates, Svelt tends to use her phone messaging, often to communicate with people already physically present. The personal, unobtrusive, nature of the devices means that it is well suited to setting up private discussions and commentary off to the side of any main conversations or activities that are happening in person. This type of instant communication with people who are physically present also becomes a whole group activity in the above example where entertainment is gained at the expense, or inconvenience, of an otherwise occupied flatmate. Svelt describes this casual, heavy, integration of phones into the social processes of her flat's drinking sessions as a hybrid mix of instant digital communication and social activity involving those in attendance and which serves to fill in conversational gaps, creates something of interest for participants to engage in, and serves as the basis for a drinking evening to coalesce around. The phone was also still used to maintain connections to other peers who were not present but these connections often require moments of disengagement from the group and, as described in the *smartphones as social disrupters* discourse, run the risk of appearing disengaged from the event itself if an acceptable balance is not maintained. This communication via their phones to each other avoids these potentially negative constructions because the people present are also participants in the discussions taking place on the phones. This kind of usage is described as something done when it is "*just your flatmates"* and is combined with other language that constructs her drinking sessions with her flatmates as regular and mundane. This heightened level

of familiarity that is a possible obstacle to socialisation, and that detracts from the specialness or novelty of these drinking nights, helps to position the phone-centric group interactions as a beneficial social tool and as something that fosters the desirable conditions for the groups' regular drinking sessions.

In contrast Svelt describes her phone use when she is back home drinking with hometown friends as being more likely to involve record taking activity, such as capturing photographs, but she also starts drawing on more of the *smartphones as social disrupters* discourse by distancing herself from frequent phone use when with these friends. 'In-the-moment' capturing and sharing of this drinking context is instead replaced by Facebook connection where Facebook is used as a repository for photographs taken while drinking with friends back home. In this instance Facebook is the place where these publicly visible and lasting acts of relationship maintenance occur *after* the social act of drinking together has happened. This post socialisation activity consists of a variety of digital micro-actions amongst the friend group including sharing and tagging photos of their socialisation (presumably alongside liking and other forms of commenting/acknowledgement). There is an obvious contrast between the heavier phone use that counters the mundanity of drinking with her flatmates while progressing the night, and the constructions here of the devices and phone use as potentially detrimental to the experience of socialising with friends that are less frequently seen. Although phone use is reduced here, it is still a part of these social activities. Very specific phone use, for example taking photos, is exempt from negative constructions through the potential it holds for future social activity. These activities and the relationships of those present are archived, acknowledged, and reified digitally on Facebook and the infrequency of being able to socialise with this group of friends reverses the acceptability of activities such as taking photos for memories - something deemed unusual for her day to day drinking with flatmates. Using the phone to take photos while socialising with her hometown friends moves away from being something that is unwanted, unnecessary, and unlikely, and instead toward being something that not only occurs but is likely to be appreciated for what it adds to the group when it is shared with them. In this instance the phone allows the recording of material that can then be used to contribute to

repositories such as Facebook where the groups' shared history is represented and where interactions can reaffirm connections with friends she sees less frequently.

For other participants photographs and video were also referenced frequently when describing their drinking experiences. The increasingly prominent role of Snapchat as a part of young adult drinking is an obvious contributor to this and participants were often appreciative of the possibilities Snapchat offered for communication with their peers:

Ross: Do you keep in touch with friends that aren't at wherever you're at, while drinking? With… on the phone?

Mackrel: Um sending Snapchats ahm yeah probably Snapchat more than anything. If they're drunk and like oh {gestures surreptitiously taking a photo of someone sitting next to them} you know I'll just take a Snapchat and send it to this person somewhere else

Filigree: Yeah I used to drunk text a lot,

Ross: Oh yeah?

Filigree: But now that there's Snapchat it's a lot more entertaining. Like you can do a whole lot of different things rather than just texting them or something? To being like "You should be here" yeah.

Texting is constructed as having been eclipsed, or bettered, by Snapchat for immediate contact when Filigree and Mackrel are drinking. Snapchat is made use of to let others know that they should turn up to a party or to show what they are missing out on and it is described as the app that is most used to check in with peers while they are drinking. Filigree suggests that Snapchat has superseded text because of the entertainment that Snapchat adds to interactions and by contrasting the two mediums they illustrate how Snapchat helps entwine phones and young adult drinking cultures. Snapchat exchanges maintain the instant communication of texting but bring further layers of information to exchanges alongside text. Snapchat is a richer medium that allows (and even prioritises) images or video and in doing so makes it easy to convey information that would otherwise be difficult to convey via text. Additionally, text can still be added alongside these other modes of communication as commentary or additional information. When Filigree Snapchats, instead of sending the comparatively bland "*you should be here*" as a text to her contacts, the Snapchatted material shares more of the experience of the event through the provision of visual information and contextual cues including: foreground and background; drinks and brands being consumed; and the people present as well as any actions or interactions they are

involved in. The material that Mackrel discusses sending helps entice other potential attendees by drawing upon recognisable signifiers of the enjoyment and drinking activity taking place. A friend being recognisably drunk is funny and is described as worthy of recording surreptitiously and sharing to his peers via Snapchat – this material is suggestive of the kind of drinking that is occurring (heavy and fun) and likely captures some of the wider ambience of the event as well. Inebriation and the exhibition of drinking activities are embedded within the culture of Snapchat use through the desire to show material that will encourage peers to come and drink with them. The combination of Snapchat and camera-ready smartphones facilitates these instant social exchanges and ensconces both the phone and Snapchat, into young adult drinking cultures. Image based communication of their drinking contexts is far more efficient, nuanced and complex than written communication and is better equipped to convey relevant affective notes in order to help peers judge the event. The act of framing or 'selling' drinking events for peers that were not yet attending was often discussed in ways that solidified the importance of these shareable signifiers of the good times being had. This material was used to entertain peers, particularly when it was funny, as well as to inform them.

Using Snapchat, Filigree's previously texted "*you should be here*" is replaced by a multimedia presentation as to why one should attend and a more precise accounting of what, exactly, is being missed out on. The ability to capture and send interesting drinking photos and video via platforms such as Snapchat not only normalises this kind of material upon the platform but it also creates an economy of information that peers can make use of to decide where best to spend their drinking time. Armand discusses this idea below:

Ross: And then, so, specific apps that you'd say get more of a workout while drinking?

Armand: Definitely Snapchat, 100% that probably gets the most.

Ross: Oh yep? And that ups from like normal other Snapchatting?

Armand: Ummmm. Depends on the person I guess, like, it changes? Sometimes I'll have a conversation with someone on Snapchat when I'm just you know, sitting in the lounge or something? That would obviously be a higher volume probably … depending on how long the conversation goes. But when you're drinking usually everything gets put on the My Story so everyone can see it so in terms of reach? It's definitely *more* when you're drinking.

Ross: Oh okay, so you wouldn't actually Snapchat specific people, you'd chuck it on the story?

Armand: Usually if something good is happening like for example on the Saturday night people were smashing in the neighbours' kitchen, well… the neighbours were smashing their own plates in the kitchen floor.

Ross: {Laughs} As you do.

Armand: It was like pretty funny, so I videoed that and put it on my Snapchat story. So yeah that's sort of what I'd give as an example, or if a party is just raging there's heaps of people, I'll video that, put it on the story.

Ross: So what will you get back?

Armand: Um if I send it to specific people they'll be like, well depends where they are, if they're walking somewhere then you're just going to get a picture of a road saying "yeah yeah we're on our way" or if they're at their flat party they'll probably Snapchat you their party so you can sort of see how they compare sort of thing.

Ross: {Laughing} Oh sweet so do you actually compare them?

Armand: Um well I guess so, in your head you do, like if I see theirs and it looks pretty dull I'll be like "Oh Pfft yeah they're gonna be here soon" kind of thing, whereas if their one looks awesome and we're having a low key one I'll be like "oh yeah maybe we go over there"

Ross: Kinda move the group?

Armand: Yeah yeah like "oh what do you think of this boys? Their place looks like it's going off."

Armand describes how his Snapchat use is "*more*" when drinking in the sense that increased use of Snapchat's Snapstory feature means his drinking Snapchat material goes out to a wider range of people. Contrasting this wider one-to-many broadcast with the more selective one-to-one, multi-Snap, ongoing discussions he has with friends outside of his drinking, the material that is being shared while drinking is then constructed as being broadly applicable to all of Armand's contacts and is distanced from these other exchanges that can form the beginning of longer dialogue on the platform. Armand also suggests the use of Snapstory over more personal communications is important because it gets the material out to as many people as possible, and this positions Armand himself as a purveyor of information on his drinking nights. He still makes use of one-to-one Snapchat communication while drinking but even when he describes these Armand highlights the immediacy of the platform and the ability to convey a wide range of potentially relevant drinking information to his Snapchat contacts. Armand's drinking conversations are differentiated from the everyday 'catching up and hanging out' conversations on Snapchat he has at other times by means of being less intimate and more focussed on displaying his drinking context and comparing various drinking events.

In the above, Armand's descriptions of his Snapchat exchanges highlight the informational role of material being sent. Quintessential drinking culture occurrences (e.g. plate smashing and parties that are obviously 'raging') are again constructed as desirable material to record and share on the app for this purpose. The associations with easily recognisable signifiers of sociality and intoxication, as well as being able to use these as the foundation for a social 'check-in' with other peers, likely still factor into this desirability but Armand also describes this content as forming a practical part of negotiation with his peers. Together, the Snapstory broadcast and the ensuing personal communications are forms of socialising with his peers that are also constructed as part of a service that Armand provides to them and it is one that parallels contemporary marketing ideals in many ways. Armand uses knowledge of his drinking cultures and his peers to pick out and showcase the 'best' parts of his event while getting as many views as possible for this material via the Snapstory feature. The selfie stick that was used at the beginning of Group 5's event to do a walkthrough of the setup and attendees provides a similar 'advertising' of their event that frames it as a bigger than usual party (and so a place to be) where desirable aspects of young adult drinking cultures are on offer. Above, Armand's use of Snapchat is constructed as Armand ensuring his peers are sufficiently informed about their options for the night. When his contacts reply to these Snapchats with utilitarian photos of the road they are on and "*yeah yeah we're on our way*" this makes it clear that they understand his Snapchats once again occupy the same space as the *"you should be here*" that Filigree used to text. Through the immediacy of the communication and the variety of media employed, Snapchat is an important part of these negotiations. Armand also describes the benefits of this negotiation for his own circle of friends. Highlighting another instance of social, shared, device use among his group, these Snapchat-aided negotiations can help transform what is a "low key" night for them into one that is more exciting and memorable if what other contacts offer is considered worth moving everyone to.

Above, Armand describes every night as having the potential to be a 'big one'. While it may be the case that a quiet night of drinking with friends is sometimes chosen over something a bit more up tempo, the phone is constructed as an integral part of being able to optimise the night's fun by finding the "*raging*"

parties and providing access to any opportunities as they arise. The constant connectedness of the phone to social contacts provides the safety that if something better is occurring elsewhere, then the opportunity to partake in it will also arise. For example, one of the formal birthday events had an attendee drag a small cluster away from the occasion because "*my bro is on the piss!*[9]" (Attendee, Group 3) which was apparently a rare occurrence, enough so that they felt it was more appealing to be present there than at a 21st birthday party. This utilitarian role of the smartphone, and in particular Snapchat, during participants' drinking nights was often visible in this part of my project. When it became obvious the event was winding down, phones became more visibly used as participants leveraged the wider connections available to them to find entertainment elsewhere e.g. "*seeing where we're off to next*" (Regina, group 4) "*just checking where everyone is up to*" (Nyjah, Group 5). The groups I approached at these times were often renewing Snapchat and Facebook Messenger conversations they had been having during the event in order to find out where their absent peers had ended up and to assess whether they might join them.

At the two events that were more formal this shifting focus was a particularly abrupt change. As midnight neared in group 4, the conversations happening around young adult tables broke up and many of them spread out to the walled seating around the perimeter of the room. They then spent the next 10-15 minutes in smaller clusters using their phones to get in touch with peers and figuring out their next destination. From those I talked to the most common next venues were either town or another party. BDGrl and many of her friends organised a bus that was quickly dubbed "*the party bus*" (Regina) to take them from the venue to town and "*out for a dance*" (BDGrl). Once it arrived, most of the young adult attendees either boarded it or left the party by other means; but phones were used after leaving the venue to continue the socialising amongst those that had attended.

Ross: Alright so last bit about the night, everyone jumped on a bus. What went down with that?

BDGrl: Ummm just dropped us off near <Street name>.

Ross: Yeah so into the pubs?

[9] Their brother was out drinking elsewhere

BDGrl: Yeah and then we kind of all separated kind of, like stayed in clumps, but went into different clubs, so then my clump we just jumped around

Ross: And I assume that was for dancing and whatnot

BDGrl: Yeah, bit of smartphone use there, trying to find everyone else but that's alright

Ross: So if they're all split into groups, then do you all meet up over the rest of the night?

BDGrl: Yeah over the rest of the night yeah so we'd be like oh lets go into this club next and you'd find a group of people from the party and it's like "oh hi guys"

Ross: *Laughs* "we meet again".

BDGrl: Yeah it'd just happen like that the whole night

Here BDGrl describes how their phones allow the group of friends to keep in touch while also allowing them to visit different venues when they get to town. This highlights a traditional organising and coordinating role of the phone, particularly in town when members separate and then eventually want to meet up again. Through the phone the groups that began the night together at the birthday party can keep coming back together sporadically, in a sense reconvening the gathering of original party attendees throughout the clubs in town. BDGrl hesitantly suggests that this is "*alright*" device use presumably balancing the fun of re-joining the groups with the distraction from the engagement in dancing and with town that the phones represent. Participants who ventured into town also used their phones to keep in touch with peers who had decided to stay home. When I headed into town with participants from group 5, they used Snapchat to take short videos of themselves and each club we visited and they sent these to the people that had stayed behind at the party. This "*setting the scene for the pikers*[10]" (Arydia, Group 5) was a combination of media illustrating how lively the various places were and messages that attempted to cajole them out despite their previous reluctance. Once again here the immediacy and visual richness of Snapchat communication add desirable, persuasive, elements to such communications.

This transition in the night was less abrupt but perhaps even more visible at the informal parties as small groups of attendees were more frequently moving into town from these events. Rather than leaving organisation of town until the end of the night, across the night attendees frequently signalled their

[10] Pikers in Aotearoa are those that do not engage with a plan, or those that drop out after commitment to it.

intent to end the night in town as well as queried others about their town plans. However, there was still a broader clearing out period where, at around 11:30, attendees again started getting into lengthier phone exchanges via Snapchat and messenger (with some texting too) and device use became particularly prominent. Following this burst of use, more groups would start to break off from the party and head into town, jumping into taxis or choosing to walk in enthusiastic and vocal groups. Phones, and town, served to connect attendees with their peers that had not attended the same event but that were desirable to have as a part of their drinking nights.

Participants drew upon a discourse of *smartphones as social facilitators* to construct their smartphones as integral to accessing, creating or augmenting sociality. In doing so they positioned smartphone use as a social, rather than socially disruptive, activity. Phones were constructed as social facilitators through accounts of organising peers, by emphasising the value of the content that was being captured and shared to other prospective attendees, by continually referencing shared material in face-to-face conversations, or by physically integrating devices into conversations to accentuate points, add conversational detail, or entertain nearby peers. Participants described phone use as a particularly acceptable social drinking activity when it was either augmenting face-to-face conversations or was used to capture and share heavy, novel, and entertaining drinking material, as this was desirable viewing for peers. Similar to the *smartphones as social disrupters* discourse, changes in drinking contexts and interpersonal relationships that were present resulted in changes to what forms of device-centric social facilitation were appropriate. For example, the intimacy and familiarity of close friendships, or small informal drinking sessions, often allowed more mundane phone usage to be interpreted as a positive social activity.

Chapter 6: Discourse - Participatory marketing

Participants drew upon a discourse of *participatory marketing* to construct their engagement with marketing and the branded materials that they encountered on social platforms as engagement that they controlled, was informative, and was beneficial for both themselves and their peers. A *participatory marketing* discourse constructs positive partnerships between alcohol brands, the content they generate, and the users who encounter it. As such, marketing strategies that were designed to encourage richer, more authentic, user engagement or to be user-led in terms of the creation and dissemination of materials, were often constructed by participants as worthwhile, entertaining, or even 'good'. By allowing participants to have the appearance of stake or autonomy in the marketing process these strategies encourage interpretations of engagement as participating or taking opportunities. In contrast, participants described marketing strategies that offered little structure around which they might create authentic instances of connection, or where interpretations of content were limited to overt commercial readings, as undesirable and irritating. This irritation was particularly apparent when peers engaged with these strategies – an act that prolongs the lifespan and circulation of this content when it is circulated on social media. Peers who engaged with these materials were questioned or derided for their choice to do so and were often described as having exercised poor judgement. However, the brands that created these materials and that seeded them throughout participants' social spaces often remained free from reproach - despite creating these materials that were less desirable to interact with and that cluttered participants' social environments with obvious, commercially curated, marketing materials.

In drawing on a *participatory marketing* discourse, participants were able to suppress constructions of material that highlighted commercial aspects and to minimise interpretations of participants doing marketing work for brands when they engaged with or shared branded content. Participants used the associations this material had with fun, social, and heavy drinking to add novel or exciting elements to their drinking events as well as their interactions with peers on platforms such as Facebook and

Snapchat. This integration of marketing material within drinking practices often set drinking sessions apart from more mundane occurrences and provided digital content that was sharable and more interesting to view on social media and communications apps. Participants drew upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to blur the distinction between commercial and user-generated content, focussing on interpretations of their engagement with this content that highlighted their autonomous reworking, or repurposing, of branded materials into drinking cultures and sociality. Making use of a *participatory marketing* discourse allowed participants to position any commercially beneficial engagement on social media (such as tagging friends or sharing material to contacts) as authentic acts of socialisation while still qualifying for any commercial rewards or incentives that this engagement might offer. This blurring of boundaries that a *participatory marketing* discourse enabled meant that participants could position themselves as discerning engagers rather than unwitting marketing promotors or 'shills'.

Figure 4

Speights Sign on Group 1's Flat Wall

Participants discussed alcohol branded materials as being desirable and useful for the meanings and associations that are entwined with them. Below Armand draws on a *participatory marketing* discourse to construct branded items such as a Speight's beer sign (see figure 4 above) and branded coasters as adding prestige and a desirable appearance to his flat. Thus, instead of just Speights advertising on his wall, there is a deeper integration gained from actively including this material into their personal environment.

Ross: Cool, um so do you see much alcohol advertising? Marketing, branding, and where?

Armand: Not really I suppose, I mean you see it round like at concerts, Jim beam girls are out, and I don't, I only really see it in supermarket catalogues or on the front of liquor stores when you drive past or when you're walking through the supermarket you see cheap beer. But that's really it I suppose, you don't see it that often.

Ross: So, like, your flat's the back one?

Armand: Yep.

Ross: Above your sitting benches is the...

Armand: Speights {a beer brand} sign yeah yeah.

Ross: So like that, is that is that just like you guys grabbed it? or does it come with the flat?

Armand: Nah we grabbed it from somewhere. I suppose having alcohol signs is pretty desirable um, if we got like a, you get comments like "oh man that's such a good sign"

Ross: It sort of adds to the bar and disco feel of the dance floor.

Armand: Yeah it brings your flat a sort of feel? People have commented on it "oh that's a cool sign where'd you get that?" I dunno where we got it

Ross: yeah I was about to ask where did you get it?

Armand: J appeared with it one day

Ross: {laughs} so a bar is missing a Speight's sign somewhere?

Armand: Probably I mean they've nicked the bar mats off the table and brought them back to the flat so we've used those but they always get stolen from when we have a big party. People run off with them.

Ross: I was about to say, seems like that sort of thing will come around.

Armand: Yeah they sort of do the rounds between different flats I'd say. But yeah having a sort of alcohol sign is pretty desirable for flats.

Ross: Yeah like the other flat {they hosted the party too} has all their bottles lined up against the windows, so I assume that's sort of the same sort of thing?

Armand: Yeah that's sort of. I dunno, I suppose it does bring the bar or sort of feel like that to it. And generally the way that they're marketed, sort of Speights summit is on the big mountain, it makes quiet a nice sort of backdrop picture? And that's quite a nice thing to look at anyway?

Ross: Kind of cool scenery as well?

Armand: Yeah yeah. They generally are quite well marketed, so you don't mind having a sign. Like it's not just a hideous logo. It's a nice picture to put on the wall. I mean what else do we put on the wall? A rugby poster. That's about it unless you want to go pay $25 for some poster you buy in a shop which no one wants to do, you want something thing for free and those things seem to be the most accessible.

Armand draws upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to highlight alternate interpretations of marketing material that are more relevant to him and his friends as well as to rationalise their use and display of these materials at their flat. Speights branded signs and coasters are described as "*pretty desirable*" for what they bring to the appearance and "*sort of feel*" of the flat. Having alcohol branded

wares was not uncommon amongst participants. For example Lessie noted "*cause in our flat we have Johnny Walker cups, we have a Johnny Walker little shot cap thing, we've got quite a lot of alcohol products in the house especially in the kitchen*" and Group 5 had branded drinking vessels as well as a branded competitive shotgun drinking apparatus on display at their party.

However, while Armand discusses the general case of many Speights branded posters that include picturesque mountains and rural backcountry signifiers, their particular sign (figure 4) was appropriated from a bar and includes little other than the brand and the slogan for the beer. Despite describing a preference for branded materials that are "*not just a hideous logo*" Armand's sign is little other than the Speights logo, and it is instead the meanings and connotations that this branded piece is imbued with that he accentuates in the discussion. Armand draws upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to illustrate the beneficial functions and continued pleasure derived from their display of the sign and other branded materials. In doing so he also distances any appeal from their obvious commercial origins – pleasure does not originate from helping advertise Speights, advertisement which is then constructed as incidental to the group's purposes. This creates a certain amount of tension to negotiate throughout because it is the closely related depiction of alcohol, and the associations with drinking that the brand represents, that Armand prizes. By displaying these materials Armand creates moments of sociality where others inquire about their origins and J's acquisition of them can be recounted. This is a story that holds repeated social value as it adds to J's "loose", fun loving, reputation (as discussed in the *phones as social facilitator discourse*) and as a prominent kitchen feature, it helps convey specific associations with a type of drinking that sometimes results in these legally-murky excursions and group enjoyment. It is also a story that helps separate interpretations of the intent behind the group's display from the desires of commercial marketers because this theft is unlikely to be supported by the bars and this aids in constructing this acquisition as an authentic repurposing of these materials rather than direct, intended, propagation of branded marketing.

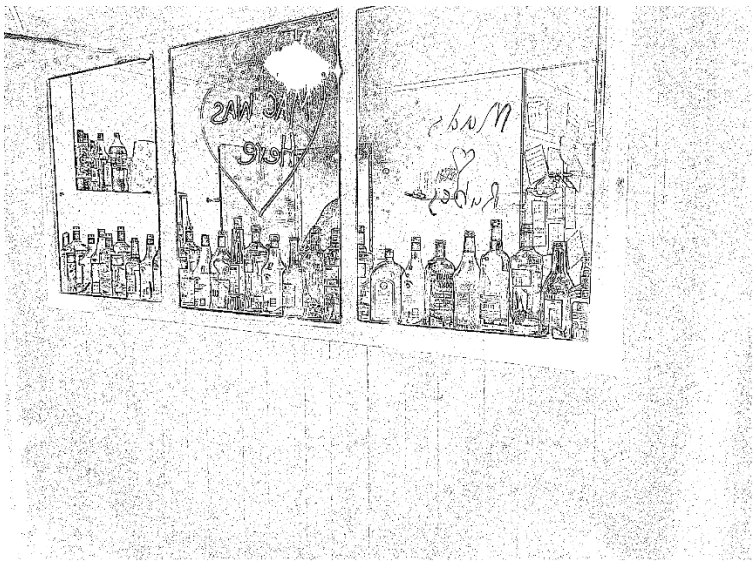
Group 1 were enthusiastic organisers of drinking parties and events, and Armand suggests that having a sign adds to this reputation. Speights is a beer that has built its brand among the students of Aotearoa through humorous marketing of stereotypical backcountry male bonding (e.g. 'campfire blokes and beer'), low price points, and frequent sponsorship of events such as orientation weeks[11] for universities. As such Armand's sign and coasters are unambiguous signifiers of heavy, student, drinking cultures throughout the country and it is these associations with his drinking culture and sociality that help Armand construct the sign as a desirable item to have on display and as something the flat can be proud of – it is a piece of marketing that has been reconfigured to suit their situation and now works for them.

Finally, the price of alternatives or the slightly more niche nature of a free rugby poster constructs their display of the sign as being the most rational option they had. Paying for wall art depicts a certain amount of investment in it and risks interpretations of paying money to advertise for a brand; but free posters, whether they are stolen or promotional, can be displayed as organic acquisitions – materials obtained through the natural course of the flat's functioning and drinking. That they have gotten these items for free is also another public display of how enmeshed Armand and his friends are within their drinking culture and helps negotiate the delicate balance between the desirable associations discussed above and maintaining an appropriate amount of distance from the commercial origins of the material. The window display of the flat next door, a line of empty spirit bottles (see figure 5), is described similarly. The bottles and brands are nice to look at and they add the right look to the place – but again, these are also easily recognised signifiers of heavy drinking cultures as they promote – via the highly visible windowsill – a tally of the range and quantity of alcoholic beverages the group has consumed. By focussing on the aspects of these branded drinking accoutrements that are meaningful and desirable to the friendship group, their commercial nature and any marketing work they may do is reduced in significance and Armand's friendship group are constructed as building coherent individual and group identities with the materials they have on hand.

[11] Student welcome weeks that include formally organised activities and gigs as well as informal street/flat parties

Figure 5

Empty Spirit Bottles Lined up as Window Decorations for Group 1.



Each of these branded materials function in a similar way to brand bombing an event when smartphones are taken into consideration. Together bottles, signs and similar items construct a sculpted, branded, but personalised environment. From a marketing perspective this environment makes use of the user generated content that parties such as this encourage. Although these materials were not placed with this explicitly in mind, both Snapchat and Facebook messenger were used heavily at Armand's event. These branded materials were prominently displayed and so they provided the background for many of the photos and communication occurring on the night. This presence embeds the brand further into Group 1's drinking culture but it also spreads the brand into the image centric sociality of contemporary smartphone communication and social media.

Branded and commercial marketing material was sometimes more readily identified as such when it was present on platforms such as Facebook and below Filigree describes some of their friends' engagement with this type of material:

Ross: And like you don't have any friends or anything that post photos of like or share like tui statuses?

Filigree: Nah not really

Mackrel: Only if there's a competition

Filigree: Oy yeah!

Mackrel: That's probably the biggest thing, that makes people aware of alcohol marketing is that they'll be like share this with on your timeline and um like it and tag 3 of your friends and you'll go in the draw to win a free box.

Filigree: And it's incredible what people will do for free stuff

Ross: For just one?

Filigree: For a dozen. Like, its 20 bucks you tight arse just go to the shop and stop annoying me {frustrated shooing of hand}. But yeah its quite a clever marketing tool for them because its just, like, clever! Because those three people that they tag are like oh yeah, like, share, tag tag tag.

Filigree's friends are not only described as miscalculating where the line between worthwhile and pointless engagement is, but they are also derided for being nuisances (for Mackrel and Filigree) on the platform. They have used the access to their peers' attention, provided by Facebook, to spread branded alcohol material that does not allow for much collaboration or participatory engagement. The material makes use of a common "*tag 3 of your friends*" to win, with the prize for doing so the opportunity to win a dozen beers.

The actions of Filigree's friends are constructed as inconveniencing Filigree, likely on account of her feed becoming filled with irrelevant commercial material (an issue that is only exacerbated as more of her contacts tag either her or people she knows and as this material continues to be shared), but when Filigree also states that it is "*Incredible what people will do for free stuff*" and that "*it's 20 bucks you tight arse, just go to the shop"* their sharing of this material is also constructed in ways that make it clear that Filigree also considers her friends have shared this material for a price that is too low. By constructing the act as undesirable and unworthy because the reward is not good enough Filigree allows for a point where engagement is both justified and desirable. Broadly, Filigree describes this exchange in terms that are suggestive of a cost to benefit ratio being applied and while it requires minimal effort for Filigree's friends to share and tag contacts in this material, Filigree suggests that they have misjudged the benefit of engaging with the content. Filigree's final observation here - that the marketing is clever - and her description of her friends' 'liking' and "*tag tag tag*[ging]" the material unthinkingly positions her friends as people who have been too easily duped by these strategies. For the chance to win 12 beers,

they have volunteered themselves to spread commercial marketing material across Facebook. In all of this, the material is not the primary target of derision or ire and there is no reproach for the brand itself. By focussing on her friends' lack of judgment, Filigree places the onus for making this social space engaging and interesting on them instead of the marketing or brands that permeate and profit from the space.

The always on and ever-present nature of the devices entwines platforms like Facebook and Snapchat with their users' lives as they can now be accessed at any time. Brute-force strategies such as the one that Filigree describes (i.e. strategies that may be less engaging and are thus more reliant on continued, frequent, exposure) seem to benefit from this aspect of mobile social media. Whilst Filigree derides it, this quick and easy 'entry ticket' form of marketing is still something her friends obviously engage with. The 'tag a mate' marketing strategy is lacking in subtlety but still creates an opportunity for users to draw on both the social associations of alcohol products and to create a momentary connection with peers. When working optimally, it would efficiently spread the material across Facebook as people tag their friends and those friends in turn tag others – raising both the direct reach of the post for each person tagged as new sets of friends are shown it, but also increasing the viewers of the post more broadly on the platform as Facebook's algorithms open up the audience for posts that are proving popular or trending. The material itself is also lacking in many desirable participatory aspects; there is little choice for users when deciding how to engage with it and engagement leads to propagation of the same commercially generated material repeatedly. There is little space for partnership here which may be why Filigree focuses on the trivial reward for engagement. However, there are still some facets of participatory marketing present in the strategy. Close contacts tagging their peers adds relevance to the action and raises the likelihood that the tagged user will at least look at what they have been tagged in, as well as the likelihood that they will add to the engagement metrics of the post by liking, commenting, or even tagging other friends in the material.

However, even when it is not working optimally, this kind of approach is highly effective. Brands use these strategies because the majority of the work to spread the material is done by people like Filigree's friends and not the brand. Once established, it is cheap, using the free labour of users. And for users, there is the possibility of both social and physical reward for their engagement so even a poorly performing post may still find some purchase on the platform. Another issue is that Facebook may also play a role in shifting the perception of what is acceptable interaction because posts like this accentuate any such immediately obvious rewards through their visual primacy and their presence in the feed of users; while at the same time, they obfuscate any negative aspects of engaging with the material. For example, Facebook does not highlight the attention seeking push notifications that might be directed towards the tagged person nor does it clarify that by tagging their friends in such material, it will be added to their feed in addition to the feeds of friends selected from the contact lists of both parties' involved. Thus, what may seem like a one-to-one interaction very rarely is, as sites like Facebook will show the interactions to other users in the hopes of generating further interactions.

Below Regina describes another instance of this form of marketing and the circular virality that can occur when content is being constantly re-exposed to mobile peer networks. Here engagement with the material begins as desirable and her peer's engagement with it, which helps bring it to her attention, is genuinely appreciated. However, as different pockets of her friends continually find it and engage with it for the first time, the lack of any personal benefits to their engagement repositions the material and engagement with it as undesirable:

Regina: Um like I've seen the ad for I can't remember what beer it is when they do his friends plumbing? Like his friends plumbing with the

Ross: Tui

Regina: Tui yeah.

Ross: They plumb all of his house with like a keg.

Regina: And like I've seen that come up so many times and the first few times I was like "it's real cool" and then after a while I was like "It's the twelfth time it's been on my newsfeed, it needs to go now".

Ross: And so is that like friends posting it? Or is it a suggested page?

Regina: No I think it's like friends liking it,

Ross: Right and so it comes up again?

Regina: cause it hits them all at different times

Ross: yeah yeah

Regina: I'm like oh I don't care anymore.

Regina's appreciation for the humorous content wanes with its repetition but a *participatory marketing* discourse is still drawn upon to show both how the original exposure to it is beneficial and appreciated as well as to reposition continued exposure to it as undesirable and unlikely to result in further benefits for Regina. At first Regina appreciates the novelty of the content (an advert in which friends plumb a person's house with beer instead of water while they are out) as it is interesting and something her friends obviously have enjoyed enough to like and bring to her attention. However as her friends' actions continue to expose her to it by tagging and liking it, the material shifts to being annoying and her friends' engagement with it makes her own experience of the platform less pleasant. The lack of any ability to meaningfully participate or engage with the material means that there is a very limited time where engagement with the material is fruitful or enjoyable but there is this time where it is appreciated content because it is novel, funny, viewing (with very high production values). The absence of any critique toward the brands that propagate this shallow engagement content, both from Filigree above and Regina here, suggests there are few drawbacks from a marketing point of view, although one potential marketing issue is that Regina cannot remember the beer brand responsible. When brands engage in this kind of marketing there may be a perceived lack of authenticity to the brand's attempts to procure likes or comments from users (e.g. becoming known as a brand that does bland social marketing) or more broadly they may be punished long term by creating an exodus of users from the platform as this commercial content drowns out more desirable and authentic social exchanges. Before that however, this strategy helps to normalise both alcohol content and the brand itself in young adults' feeds and social processes. This strategy also leaves individual users with most of the negative consequences, rather than the brands, because users can be constructed as late to the party and unfashionably recycling material that has already been viewed and appreciated.

Facebook and other platforms that employ algorithms to calculate how marketing content gains attention, how it is engaged with, and by whom, will also generate valuable data from users' interactions with this type of content. This data can then be used to further refine the original material or to inform subtler approaches that the brand might have planned in the future. Marketing approaches to users can make use of the structures and data provided by platforms such as Facebook to hone these posts, increasing their longevity as well as their reach across specific demographics. In this way even marketing materials that might otherwise appear unsuccessful (e.g. lack of engagement or derisive forms of user engagement) may yet prove valuable as they further refine models of user preferences. However this increased longevity and virality or spread is an aim that is at least partially at odds with Regina's descriptions of preferred exposure to such content. A *participatory marketing* discourse constructs engagement with novel, relevant, branded materials as interesting and worthwhile because Regina and her friends can appreciate the content together and in instances like this there is also the basic layer of the shared alcohol experience to even rudimentary marketing on Facebook. However, by engaging with such material they make it more likely that it enters the same recursive loop that Regina describes as annoying and undesirable. The structures of Facebook, including the algorithms that determine what content is shown and to whom it is shown, have prioritised increasing the number of views for these types of posts rather than creating a more favourable user experience for Regina and her friends. This means that their engagement with this type of branded material consigns them to a fate of repeatedly viewing it in the future as it works its way through their friend networks.

The 'tag a mate' content (Mackrel and Filigree above) is marketing that enlists Facebook users to spread standardised material that is obviously designed as an advertising strategy by the brand. This obviousness, coupled with the low potential for anything good to result, help Filigree and Regina position them as unworthy experiences – they are, or become, unenjoyable encounters on the platform and any friends who choose to engage with them are described as making poor decisions.

However, below Filigree describes another branded experience that enlists users to market the content in a similar manner. Once again a *participatory marketing* discourse is drawn upon but this time it is used to describe multiple aspects of the strategy as allowing more user-side control over how materials are engaged with and as creating worthwhile benefits for both her and her peers. As a result, the marketing and related event are also constructed as worthy of their engagement. This event was a 'pin-up girl' day, hosted by an alcohol brand, which invites participants (usually women) to dress up in glamorous costumes and clothing that often pay homage to the styles of the 1940s-60s with the hope of being judged the best dressed. Events like this usually have official judges to determine the overall winner and then they can have other categories such as 'the people's choice' where attendees and friends can vote for their favourite (this is the category described by Filigree). In this instance the pin-up participants were provided an event page on Facebook that displayed the photos they submitted to the competition. They then shared those photos from the event page to their friends so that they could gather 'likes' for them.

Filigree: Umm there was a Cruiser {brand of vodka RTD} pinup girl day at um <Bar> and um like the winner won like um 20 boxes of twelve Cruisers

Ross: Holy crap

Filigree: Which was pretty cool because, pinup girls? Yeah so do the hair up {makes hair up}, pretend they're modelling, yeah pretty cool. Yeah no it was a pretty cool night, I went and watched and then they won a chilly bin and then like Cruiser you know…

Ross: Paraphernalia?

Filigree: Yeah! And then someone in the audience won a Cruiser couch? Blow up couch, you know, which I thought was cool. So it got everyone there, and they had a special on Cruisers for the night, so everyone was buying their alcohol.

Ross: Oh true, so it's like sort of a Cruiser night?

Filigree: Yeah like they endorse the night obviously, I guess? I dunno if that was official or whatever. Um but yeah they came up with a competition and like you had to sign up through Facebook through the Facebook page?

Ross: Oh ok right. So when you sign up do you also share it?

Filigree: Yeah, oh, well yeah cause you'd want to! You had to get your photos done and then they'd put them on the Facebook page and then people liked them which helped them.

Ross: Oh so it's sort of a blend of competition…

Filigree: Yeah yeah the pinup girls were, so that would be their way of getting the people's choice, and then on the night they were judged. Yeah so that was probably the most interesting marketing for like an alcohol.

Ross: Yeah and for <city name>!

Filigree: Yeah I know, I know, they did pretty well ay? Yeah, no they did pretty well.

The event was a well branded affair as the specials on Cruiser drinks, Cruiser giveaways, and Cruiser prizes for participants each depict. However, Filigree relates some uncertainty about the official status of Cruiser's involvement in this event suggesting they likely had something to do with it. This softening of the official nature of the event helps distance its associations and any resulting engagement with it from more blatant forms of marketing engagement. A *participatory marketing* discourse is drawn on to highlight that engagement with this marketing event is desirable because doing so allows users some agency in determining the competition winners – there is a personal stake to engagement and a more collaborative partnership between brand and user results from this. Compared to the previous 'tag-a-mate' examples the promoted content here is closer and more relevant to those asked to share it. Here users engage with photos of either themselves or their friends and the nature of the competition allows the depicted users to directly benefit as the likes and shares of their material across peer networks increase and gain them votes (and potential alcohol-related prizes).

This event, while remaining relatively unsophisticated in the way it approaches users and the ways which they in turn can engage with it, is designed in such a way that the goals of those who might engage with it and the brand behind it are better aligned. A *participatory marketing* discourse makes available constructions of co-ownership of these types of events. Because the marketing materials relate to a physical event, engagement with this marketing material can avoid constructions of doing marketing for brands on Facebook and instead focus on the event that is being promoted. Getting friends engaged in the build-up as well as making them aware of it (and thus more likely to attend) helps users to create a night that will be bigger and more enjoyable for all. Engagement with this form of marketing requires sharing user content, as opposed to commercially generated materials, and this is done in an environment where specific users will prosper from any engagement by their peers. A *participatory marketing* discourse constructs sharing and engagement as authentic sociality, as the

shared material promises spectacle and interest for those engaging with it, comprising pictures of peers dressed up in novel and aesthetically pleasing ways. This promise of spectacle and entertainment also carries through to the event itself and in retrospect Filigree describes the event itself as a great experience "*They did pretty well ay?*" and one that "*got everyone there*", a positive association that seems to reshape aspects of the marketing that Filigree previously disparaged.

Throughout the description, Filigree emphasises the glamour and excitement of the evening itself. The ways in which the branded rewards are constructed, and the ways in which peers who choose to engage with this marketing are positioned, are in stark contrast with Filigree's previous example where a box of beer was the incentive for engagement. The 20 boxes of cruisers are described as "*pretty cool, because pinup girls*" which ties some of their value to their association with the event itself. The branded gear and discounted drinks are now recounted with enthusiasm, specifically being described as "*cool*" and while the 20 boxes of cruisers (worth approximately $500NZD) are a prize that is much larger than a $20 box of beer, many of the other materials such as a branded blow-up couch would be closer to the box of beer in price. While comparatively cheap, these materials can act as props for content generation that signal attendance at the event and then later they can serve as novel mementos of the night. This association with the experience of the event itself helps Filigree construct the Cruiser branded materials as more worthy of note than the equivalent priced box of beer.

Those who engage with this Cruiser campaign on Facebook (by liking and sharing photos of themselves or their friends) are now endorsed - Filigree suggesting "*you'd want to!*" because it is beneficial for them and their friends to do so. Filigree draws upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to show that the event in question is well aligned with what she wants out of both a simple 'like, share' marketing strategy (she is encouraged to share beneficial content of peers and opportunities for them rather than marketing materials that hold little relevance to her) and a drinking night (both she and Cruiser would like as many people to show up to the night).

The Cruiser and 'tag-a-mate' strategies both make use of Facebook's shift to a layout that prioritises image and video as the primary means of communication on the platform. There are obviously many differences between the two including implementation, scale and the engagement that they encourage but they also differ in the extent that they make use of their smartphone enabled demographic. The 'tag-a-mate' strategy benefits from the always on nature of smartphones that allows users increased access to their peers and encourages moments of micro-sociality – such as tagging peers in a relatively mundane piece of marketing material. However, the Cruiser event makes use of the devices more broadly. Users are again enlisted to help spread the content as well as news of the upcoming event which tracked (and scored) efforts to create engagement amongst peers with the event and brand-centric content. Yet in addition to users promoting and sharing content that is anchored by a branded event page, smartphones allow the event itself to become part of the payoff of this strategy as it too makes good use of mobile, participatory, marketing strategies. The spectacle of the event is prime material for those in attendance to share and use as the foundation for communication on platforms such as Snapchat. By providing the branded environments and the social occasion, and then allowing users to decide when, where and how to make use of them, the Cruiser brand is authentically integrated and normalised on more platforms than the original marketing platform of Facebook. The pin-up event will provide aesthetically pleasing material that may be worth sharing on Instagram and it will include many obvious indicators of sociality and heavy drinking that might be better suited to casual communication apps such as Snapchat.

Marketers can now make use of smartphone implementations of apps in order to add to their tools for engaging young adult drinkers. Marketing strategies benefit from the increasingly tighter optimisation that becomes possible when the predictive user data that is used to profile users is paired with immediately relevant information from their devices. Facebook could plausibly use locational data and device usage data to infer individual contexts and pair these with user profiles that include marketing demographics, engagement rates and linked peers. For example Facebook might:

- classify strengths of relationships between users based on speed of responses and whether they break from particular activities to respond to different contacts;
- use immediate contextual data to classify users as “currently idle/amenable” or “available to scroll/tag” then pair this with their known marketing engagement metrics or preferences to find ‘weak points’ where marketing might better penetrate circles of friends;
- Optimise trivial platform tasks such as the timing for notifications for better click-through rates or to determine which peer activities are most likely to elicit further, profitable, engagement when prioritised for notifications.

So far only Facebook, a platform that was originally designed with static (as opposed to mobile) computing in mind, has been the focus of this analysis. Although the platform has adapted to mobile computing, the mobile implementation of Facebook has necessarily been shaped by the web version that it all but supersedes. In contrast, mobile social apps such as Snapchat have been designed from the ground up and upon the assumption of mobility as well as with the web enabled communication needs of young adults in mind - often prioritising instant, visual, communication that can be made to tighter groups of peers. Participants constructed the previous, Facebook centric, marketing they engaged with in ways that often emphasised the benefits and participatory nature of their engagement. However, participants also drew on a discourse of *participatory marketing* when they discussed encountering alcohol brands and marketing on platforms such as Snapchat. On Snapchat, the absence of overt commercial influence and presence in the exchanges between peers removed marketing interpretations of branded content that was shared, and further strengthened constructions of these interactions as authentic socialisation. As a result, branded and alcohol centric material was often discussed as adding exciting, novel, and meaningful elements to sociality on the platform but rarely was it described as doing work for these brands. For example, BDGrl below describes how she and her friends have repurposed branded content meaningfully as a part of their Snapchat sociality:

Ross: And do you ever notice that they’ve also, as well as sending a photo of them drinking, if it’s a Snapchat or something, they’ve also managed to include what they’re drinking?

BDGrl: Yeah sometimes. Like I can't think of specific examples but I imagine so. Like especially when people are out on the town and you'll like buy a cocktail "I better send it to people so they know I've got a cocktail". So, like I guess so? Oh no yeah I do! My friends did that last night actually. I think I opened it at 3am so I don't really remember. But every time we go to this one club they have $5 shots and they're American honey shots?

Ross: Ooo what's American honey?

BDGrl: Um like bourbon maybe?

Ross: Oh yes. Okay yeah honey and bourbon.

BDGrl: Um horrific. I would never drink that, like never. If I could buy a bottle of alcohol I would never ever pick American honey but when we're in this club we're like "oh absolutely! American honey please, $5 shots" but these friends are like, they work and when they go out they don't really limit themselves on how much they spend. So they'll double park their American honey and be like "2 each" and I'm like "no get me one, 'cause I'm not buying you guys two when I get my round". And then they'll always send photos of that because, then I know they're in <bar>.

Ross: So it is, it is sort of like a "it's what we do here at this particular bar"?

BDGrl: Yeah, we'd never go to another bar and be like "can we have American honey shots"?

Ross: *Laughs* And so is it because <bar> is an American style bar?

BDGrl: I think so.

Ross: And it's just like, American honey, you're like…?

BDGrl: Honestly I've no idea. It's so disgusting and I still just do it, I'm like "I did not even enjoy that". Ugh anyway.

BDGrl draws upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to construct the inclusion of these specific shots (Wild Turkey American Honey Bourbon) as a shared reference between her and her friends. The shots appear tied to the American themed club that has special price deals and this is the only place that the group drinks them. It is also a popular club amongst the group and was the first stop after the 21st for the bus load of friends that headed into town from it. Despite BDGrl's description of them as "*horrific*" and "*disgusting*" these shots are also constructed as pleasurable, meaningful, links to both the bar and the group of friends being out together. These American Honey promotions serve to differentiate the bar from other venues and tie the theme of the bar to a unique offering that BDGrl and her friends have fashioned into an enjoyable experience and ritual over time. Drawing on a *participatory marketing* discourse BDGrl highlights the social function of their friendship group Snapchatting these branded shots to each other. The shots draw on the shared experience and connections between members to create both a status update (that her friends are out drinking at this bar they all frequent) and a social

moment that acknowledges the member of the group who is missing as well as potentially acting as an incentive or invitation for them to join in. Through repeated association the specific branded shots have become a recurring part of the group's social functioning on Snapchat. The visual primacy of Snapchat means that a photo of these branded drinks is an information rich foundation for a Snapchat that is enjoyable as well as meaningful to the friendship group. It is also content that authentically embeds the American Honey brand into sociality occurring on the platform, with users recognising and creating these marketable moments by drawing on the meanings present in their specific cultural microcosms. There is an authenticity added to these exchanges that comes from the brand's appearance of complete passivity in them. Users are constructed as the sole driving force of content generation as well as the direction it takes – there is no 'ask' from the brand to do anything.

Snapchat was also used in ways that embedded alcohol branding and marketing into the platform in less mundane ways. Below, Regina discusses an event her friends held where the theme of the party was an alcohol brand (Speights beer). The drinking activities for the day, as well as fixtures, clothing and other paraphernalia were all Speights branded and, while she did not actually attend this event, she engaged with it via Snapchat as her friends frequently shared material from it with their contacts:

Regina: Umm I just don't like it in general. Like I don't like most advertising in general on smartphones

Ross: Yeah, so if they could encourage it to be more like kinda just people randomly wearing Tui {a beer brand} t-shirts and whatnot?

Regina: Yeah if they made it a little bit more subtle. Instead of being like *does spirit fingers and then waves* "Hey! Tui here".

Ross: *Laughs* "buy my beer".

Regina: Pretty much. Then I'd be more influenced by it. I'd be like *points* "Tui… I see… I see". My friends have just done the Speights keg thing and they all had the hats for it. I have to say they kind of advertised it a lot.

Ross: Yeah, as you do, because it's kind of exciting?

Regina: Yeah, it was a full day event and everything and it was real cool. And after that I was like "I could do with a beer"

Ross: *Laughs* "Speights, yeah. I haven't had a Speights for a while".

Regina: I'm like "I don't like Speights… but I might now".

Ross: So was that them doing a keg day? Or was it like a Speights organised thing?

Regina: No it was like a, no it was just in their backyard. So it looked real cool.

Ross: And they had like hats and everything?

Regina: Mhmm, Hats, t-shirts

Ross: Right so they went out and bought all of the Speights paraphernalia?

Regina: Yep and they had the sleeves {for cans/bottles}. It was very well organised.

Ross: Oh ok cool. Oh wow, Speights would have been quite happy with that as well I'd imagine

Regina: I know and there's so many photos as well. Cause I'm like friends on Snapchat with a lot of the guys that went. And they all made it part of their story and like it was everywhere. And usually if they all Snap about the same thing I'm like "uh okay, keep going" *Motions scrolling past* but I actually sat and watched it cause I was like that's really cool.

Ross: Yeah it's like an event?

Regina: Yeah I was like "it's awesome".

Ross: Yeah I guess that's what I'm kind of interested in. If all marketing was like that would it be considered marketing to you?

Regina: Umm to a point, but yeah not the purposeful stuff.

Ross: It's a bit more relevant?

Regina: Yeah, nice job guys

This heavily branded, peer-centric content shared by her friends is something Regina describes as worth stopping and watching as it unfolds on her Snapchat. However, throughout Regina also qualifies her engagement with this material through comparisons with other types of branded materials on the platform. Regina carefully constructs the material that her friends generate as being worthwhile and something that is enjoyable to engage with while simultaneously distinguishing this material from more purposeful marketing overtures from brands. Marketing material that is not "subtle" is described as unpleasant and unlikely to influence her. This description contrasts with her constructions of the heavily branded Speights event her friends put together, which also appears to lack subtlety in terms of how the brand is incorporated with the material but is instead described as "*really cool*" and "*awesome*" as well as something that tempted her to drink Speights despite her not liking the beer. A *participatory marketing* discourse limits, or softens, overt associations with brands and instead prioritises the benefits of engagement and interaction with the content as well as the associations that accompany engagement with the material. Whilst from a brand perspective the event markets Speights, Regina draws upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to highlight her friends' autonomy in choosing and setting up the event. There was no input from Speights and instead the incorporation of the brand into the event is

described as her friends appropriating the Speights brand to add novel elements to their drinking session. Rather than constructing her friends as marketing Speights, Regina draws upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to highlight how this incorporation of the brand creates a novel, shareable, spectacle – a spectacle that is about showcasing her friends having a good time and one that is a desirable watching experience when it is shared via Snapchat to people like Regina. Regina also notes that in contrast, "*purposeful*" marketing content is the kind of material that she does not have time for, whereas the Speights event is a "*nice job*" because it is her friends and an event that they have coordinated – it is relevant to her. Engaging with this material via Snapchat, or even just watching it, is not constructed as engaging with marketing. This event is described as enjoyable watching because it is her friends and the heavily branded content is constructed as assisting the exhibition of the novel, heavy, drinking context rather than as any form of commercial endeavour. Harnessing the instantaneous updating capabilities of Snapchat, her friends have made use of an overabundance of Speights branded material to differentiate their drinking session from more mundane sessions. While it is not a Speights driven event, the friends have purchased Speights branded materials for it and then continually piggybacked the brand into their sociality upon Snapchat in a way that is unreflexively consumed by Regina and in such a way that unavoidably associates any accolades for the entire event with the brand as well. The setup work required by Speights for young people to hold this kind of event is to create a brand identity that resonates with them, which will prompt the type of appropriation Regina describes, and then make sure they have enough novel, branded, materials available for purchase. While Speights has little control over the event, they are being paid by Regina's friends who in turn create authentic, Speights branded, experiences that are then shared with a network of peers across Snapchat. A *participatory marketing* discourse is used to construct this branded material as a desirable aspect of the event and it helps construct engagement with it on platforms such as Snapchat as enjoying the escapades of friends and their drinking shenanigans rather than as proliferating Speights marketing material.

Figure 6

Promotional Somersby Straw Hat

Other participants described this use of branded materials to increase the appeal and novelty of drinking nights. For example Armand below mentions a night where they all went and bought a brand of cider because they got free straw hats (see figure 6 above) with every purchase:

Armand: Yeah when they were doing things that they were, basically it all comes back to if they're giving stuff away you're just like "oh yeah, I'm going to go buy that, to get the thing" like Somersby {a cider brand} were giving away straw hats. And ah we all collected these straw hats which were funny for a while but I mean I've completely forgotten about.

Ross: I was about to say, not the kind of thing that you'd normally dress in?

Armand: No but on the night when we all got them everyone was wearing them because it was like "haha this is funny". But yeah.

Ross: Straw hat drinking night.

Armand: Hard

Armand also showed me some of the photos that he had saved from the Snapchats they had taken that night and most of these focussed on the hats that he and his friends ended up wearing. These photos included him and his friends enjoying 'relaxed drinking' poses that paid tribute to the 'on vacation' aesthetic of the hats as well as some larger group photos where everyone was wearing them. Here Armand draws upon a *participatory marketing* discourse to show that the addition of the hats to their drinking was something they found funny enough to be worth purchasing this specific cider for and to highlight the novelty these hats added to the night. The hats were not only novel enough to be worth creating in-the-moment Snapchat content that featured them but they were also interesting enough to be worth saving some of those same Snapchats from the night. However, Armand also draws upon a

participatory marketing discourse when he positions these purchases as a one-off collaboration they undertook for this specific night. He describes the rationale for buying the cider as being grounded in the entertainment they were going to get from having a night where they all wore the free hats that came along with the purchase. Yet it is also something that he describes as "*completely forgotten*" which helps dispel the notion of any lasting loyalty or relationship with the brand having developed from this simple marketing hook. Through a *participatory marketing* discourse Armand and his friends are positioned as making use of whatever promotions are out there and if they discover something worthwhile that they do want to incorporate into their drinking culture, then any participation with these forms of marketing materials is constructed as a short-term relationship and a form of engagement that is undertaken on their terms.

Again, it is easy to see the benefits for brands that manage to create these marketable moments that are then taken up by young adult drinkers. Somersby reap the benefit of Armand and his peers' work around their brand on Snapchat. This work garners broader attention for the brand and develops their brand image authentically on these platforms that are among the most relevant and used social platforms for young adults - all for the price of a free straw hat added to each box of cider purchased.

Participants drew upon a discourse of participatory marketing to construct the marketing they engaged with in various settings as allowing them autonomy over when, where, and how engagement occurred. By emphasising the control afforded to them they also deemphasised any interpretations of being coerced into doing marketing work and this helped construct engagement as acceptable or even desirable at times. Participants drew upon this discourse to highlight aspects of marketing content or materials that aligned with their interests or drinking cultures. This was done in a manner that illustrated how these materials had been repurposed to be cultural tools, a process that also imbued them with shared, in-group, meanings and positioned them in opposition to being marketing materials that participants propagated. In this way, a *participatory marketing* discourse was drawn upon to empower participants and other users that engaged with commercial alcohol content. However, a

participatory marketing discourse also eroded problematic and exploitative aspects present in the relationship between users of social platforms and commercial alcohol interests. Drawing upon a *participatory marketing* discourse, participants de-emphasised aspects such as: The ways in which these social spaces are actively engineered to compel young adult engagement; the reach, funding, and research behind commercial content present which helps identify and then refine its value to young adult users; the high value that young adult engagement holds for commercial alcohol content in terms of both the profiling and predictive data generated from engagement; and the authentic cultural embedding of brands that occurs as a result of any engagement. Additionally, and as part of meaningful embedding of branded content, my participants often drew upon the positive associations that accompanied alcohol centric materials and activities to create and share entertaining content on their smartphones as well as to highlight any novel drinking that occurred. In this manner alcohol and brands were an established part of the sociality that occurred through their phones as well as during their drinking events.

Summary

In this study I aimed to investigate the role of smartphones in young adult drinking cultures as well as young adult understandings of both the phone and alcohol marketing they encountered. By attending events where participants were drinking, I was able to engage with them and observe their drinking cultures in situ giving me at least an outsider's understanding of phenomena as participants experienced them. My process also created a shared experience that meant I could bring directly relevant, bespoke, discussion material into follow-up interviews, that contributed crucially to my data sets.

Smartphone use was a visible constant at each event I attended for this study. Smartphones were used to take photos and videos of activities and people while they were drinking and messaging apps were the most frequent, observable, use of the devices across the nights. One of the threads that winds through my data relates to the relationships present between spaces, users, and their phones. Smartphones were more frequently used in some spaces than others and informal 'phone use spaces' developed at many of the events I attended. Participants used their phones to augment discussions or

as catalysts for them, they were used with peers that were present and taking part in the drinking as well as those that were elsewhere. At times phones elided any distinction between their users' differing localities – rich, detailed, communication apps allowing peers to socialise with one another and coordinating post event meet-ups seamlessly and continuously across their diverse social events, while taking part in various other drinking activities.

Often during my observations it felt as if smartphones were an unnoticed part of participants' drinking, being so naturally entwined with the sociality and organisation of peers and the evening itself that their normalisation and continuity helped them hide in plain sight. However, my conversations with event attendees and follow-up interviews with participants dispelled this impression as they described having expectations surrounding both appropriate use of their own devices and how peers used theirs while they were drinking. Similarly, alcohol brands were a natural and oftentimes normalised part of these drinking events. From 21st birthday events that took part in pubs adorned with alcohol marketing, to the collections of drinking related paraphernalia at participants' houses that had accrued over time and that now symbolised participants' immersion in their drinking cultures, overt alcohol marketing materials were visibly present at every event I attended without exception. Upon further discussion with participants, it was clear that alcohol brands were also present in their interactions with peers through their phones while at these drinking events, further highlighting how brand presence is piggybacked into these spaces and used as a part of the socialisation and identity work young adults do while drinking.

The three discourses I outline in this study entwine and interact with each other. The allure of the phone as a social facilitator - the potential it had to create a night that was well attended or to etch it into the recounted digital and oral histories of a group - can be seen as constructing phone use as a beneficial act for participants and their peers and thus as something desirable. However, apps such as Snapchat and Messenger are not simple communications tools and they are used to do more than converse, they are also used to represent the self and a wariness accompanied participants phone use as they negotiated interpretations of self-promoting, or vain, device use.

Likewise, the use of smartphones to capture, communicate, and share with peers is a large part of a participatory marketing discourse. Yet for participants, engagement with alcohol marketing material also runs the risk of falling into inappropriate, socially disruptive, device usage as whether engagement was worthwhile or provided sufficient 'reward' was also something to be negotiated. In this way, a participatory marketing discourse was drawn upon to empower participants and other users that engaged with commercial alcohol content. However, while emphasising these aspects of engagement a *participatory marketing discourse* also eroded problematic and exploitative aspects of the relationship between commercial alcohol interests and the users of social platforms upon which alcohol content is shared. Drawing upon a *participatory marketing discourse* participants obscured or de-emphasised aspects such as: The constantly evolving and engineered nature of these social spaces and the ways in which this hones their ability to compel user engagement; the reach, funding, and research behind commercial content present which refines its value to users; and the high value to commercial interests of user engagement. These three discourses illustrate some of the tensions participants navigated around smartphone use in their drinking cultures. Additionally, the meanings and understandings relating to these tensions were conveyed via spatial elements at drinking events. Device use was either ushered away out of the main social and drinking areas when it was deemed inappropriate and detrimental to sociality, or it was entwined – set front and centre alongside other social activity – when it facilitated sociality and spread drinking events or activities to peers elsewhere. The interplay between these discourses helped highlight the fluidity that was associated with contextual factors that play a role in determining where usage or engagement with alcohol material becomes inappropriate (e.g. formality of event, purpose of interaction with peer). These were factors that participants continually evaluated and re-evaluated as their social contexts changed over drinking events and as what was, or was not, deemed appropriate device use changed as a result.

Chapter 7: Study two – App study

Method

Overview

For my second study I gathered information from participants' smartphones to further investigate how the devices are used as a part of young adult drinking cultures. Data consisted of device recordings such as GPS, participant communications (e.g. text and call logs), notifications, timestamps, and app usage. This captured a detailed picture of what was occurring on, and being experienced through, the devices across participants' drinking events. This data was analysed and also discussed in follow up interviews with participants.

App Rationale and Development

The primary reason for using an app that recorded participants' phone activities was that this data was likely relevant to any understanding of the role these devices played in young adult drinking cultures. Additionally, I knew the type of data such an app would capture was that which a more traditional observational study would only have limited access to. Even if being present to physically, visually, observe participants' use and activity on their phones as it occurs were available as an option, it felt too intrusive and disruptive to pursue for my purposes.

The rationale for including detailed phone data in my project was similar to the rationale for my observations in the previous study: this data provided material that participants might deem too banal or mundane to recall but that was still relevant to my research questions. Recording smartphone generated data also helps alleviate for participants (in diverse states of intoxication) the issues of trying to recall, categorise or prioritise the sheer quantity of exchanges that might occur across a drinking session. As with my previous observational notes and photos, I hoped that taking this type of data into an interview setting would allow comparison of 'directly' observed phenomenon – in the form of material the app recorded from the night – and a way to explore participants' understandings of these phenomenon.

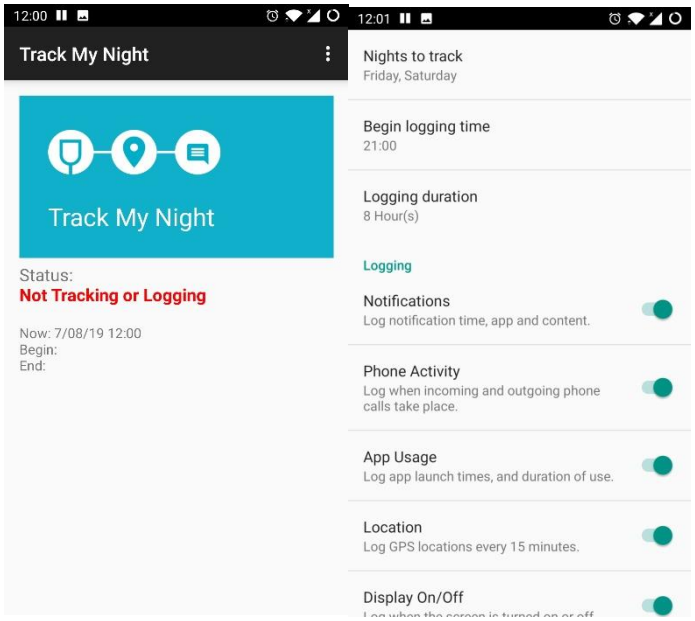
Once I had decided an app would be suitable for my research the matter of balancing ethics, cost, and functionality was a primary issue. Of the apps already in existence there were some that might have been suited to obtaining portions of the material I wanted to include, such as the affordance of being able to export copies of texts and photos and some unique app data that is stored on the phone. I considered these unsuitable as they did not generate the desired holistic illustration of device usage over times and places. Other apps fulfilled nearly all my requirements, sometimes exceeding them, such as the various versions of parental monitoring apps that are available. However, these would have allowed me too much active control and monitoring, remotely, of participants' phones. I considered this too large a risk for participants if anything went wrong and did not believe this option granted participants enough of their right to privacy while taking part in the study. Additionally, these apps often stored users' phone data on servers that had no listed terms for their data privacy and data ownership policies; even worse, others specifically stated that the data created and stored by them was considered owned by either the company selling the app or the server company. Each of these instances was too nebulous or risky to justify their use. At this point it became clear that I would either need to scale back what data I wanted my app to collect, or I would need to develop my own. I proceeded with the latter option.

In the lead-up to development I learned some very basic programming with Java to get familiar with the language that the Android platform was based upon and to determine what might be possible on that platform. I realised it was not plausible for me to develop something myself within the timeframe I had by making use of the various community code libraries and sharing sites available. I designed a basic outline of what I thought the user interface should look like, descriptions of the features I wanted to include, and assigned a priority of inclusion to each of these features e.g. essential requirements included GPS, timestamps, and logs of specific app use; whereas non-essential possibilities included timed screenshots or recordings. I contacted an Android developer I knew and he agreed to build the app with direction from me on features and design. He also secured the backend data collection and access from the app on a local server. I retained all ownership of participants data, and it was removed

from the server after it was copied to Massey University Onedrive storage. After a period of testing, piloting, and rewriting, the app was ready to use. This part of my project relied on the goodwill of friends and acquaintances as the funding available for it was minimal in comparison to the normal cost of app development. Along with making for a longer development phase than was intended, this compromise meant that while the app was functional, even exceeding my expectations in many ways, there were still cuts in functionality and convenience that were required. These were based on an appraisal of the complexity to develop, cost, and the overall benefit of the feature in question. Similarly, there were times when the app came back as functional and usable but with room for improvement and I did not have the resources to improve it further. For example, the user interface (UI) for reading the logged data was workable but exporting data from it was a lengthy, manual, process and the app itself had a minimalist appearance that was not at all polished (see figure 7 below).

Figure 7

Examples of In-app Appearance and User Settings.



Key App Features

Once complete the app had features that allowed it to record a variety of user activities. Using the phone's GPS (or the less accurate backup of available known wireless networks) it logged users'

locations every 15 minutes. In addition, it recorded whenever the display turned on or off (to estimate phone checks), when the device was plugged in or unplugged from charging, or whenever it connected to a network. Similarly, every time an app was accessed the app name and any readily available information (e.g., call recipients, or the app status of "composing a message") were recorded. Any notifications on the device were logged to include the app that had 'pushed' them, along with the header content of the notification (e.g. the beginning line of an incoming text message was recorded). Each of these records was also timestamped to allow for them to be ordered and to help reconstruct usage across participants' events.

Recruitment

Word-of-mouth recruitment and flyers (see Appendix H) were used to recruit participants ranging from 18 to 28 years old who drink alcohol and speak English. For this study they also needed to be using a phone running Android OS 4.4 or above to be able to load the app. Physical and digital flyers were disseminated in relevant areas for my demographic (e.g. social media, universities, supermarkets and other publicly accessible noticeboards). I recruited each potential participant who contacted me via text, email, or Facebook Messenger to express interest (3 people who approached me after data collection had finished were declined). Participants were sent digital versions of the information sheets including a summary of what would be required of them (See Appendix I), and a short list of the recording capabilities of the app including an example to illustrate the quantity and types of data that would be collected (see Appendix J). I did not physically meet participants before they used the app during their events. All communication and coordination occurred via email, text, and Messenger. To show appreciation for their time and contributions, each participant was given a $50 petrol or grocery voucher.

Participants

10 participants were recruited for this study. One participant withdrew their data after the interview stage, citing the underestimation of data collected as a reason for this withdrawal (I have included more

detail about this as part of my ethics section below). In total five males and four females contributed their phone data to the study. Participants were aged 21-25 years (M=23, SD=1.22) with four students, one unemployed, and four in full time employment. Seven identified as NZ/European, one as Māori and one as European/Māori. Each contributed data that was generated during nights out in a medium to large city in Aotearoa. AUDIT scores for this group of participants ranged from 4-16 (M = 9.75, SD = 3.41), suggesting participants tended to be classified just above the hazardous or harmful drinking threshold.

App Data Collection

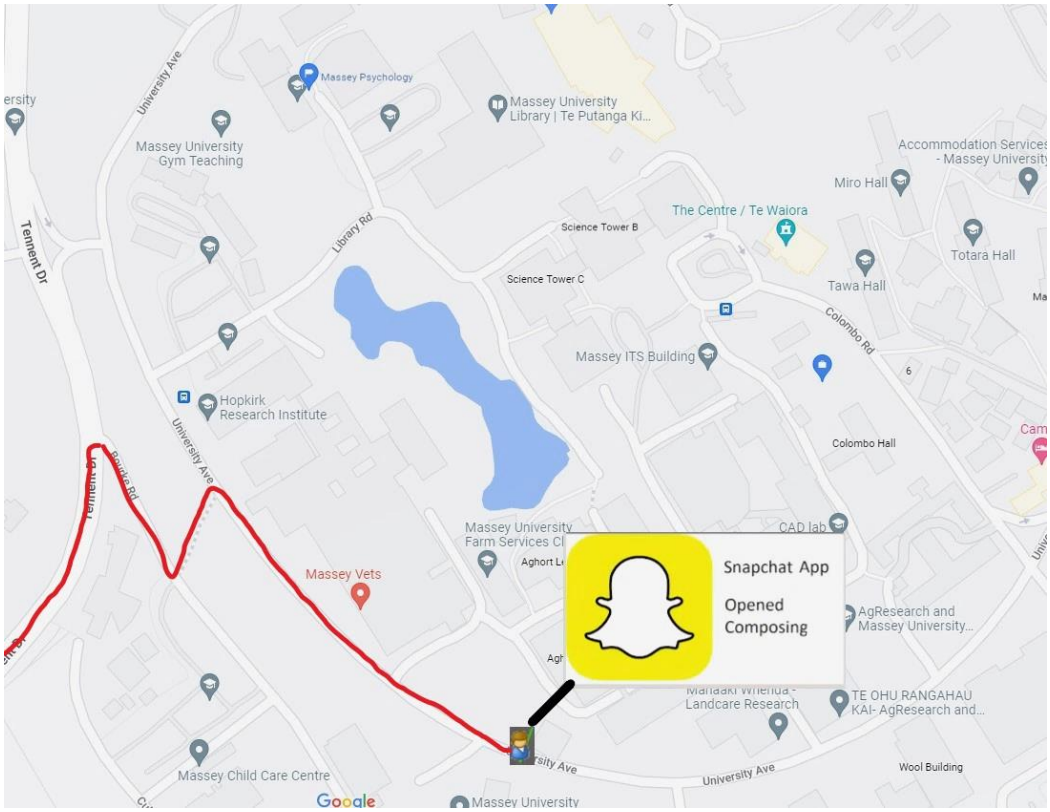
After any queries about participation or the study were answered, participants were provided with instructions for side-loading[12] the app on their phones. In starting the app for the first time, participants were presented with a consent form that needed to be read and agreed before use. The app allowed participants to set the date and time that recording should start and finish as well as to select which functions of the phone would be recorded. No participant decided to limit the functions the app could record. Participants chose the event that would be recorded and the only direction I gave them was that it needed to be one they were drinking at (see Appendix H). They picked a time they would be drinking and then they told me the day and approximate time they were going to set the app to record. I then sent them a reminder via SMS close to this time to make sure their phones were sufficiently charged and I told them that this was all they needed to do until after the event, whereupon they would need to press the manual upload button for their data (a step that was used as extra insurance alongside the automated uploading capabilities of the app). The day after the event participants were notified via SMS text to remind them of the manual upload and I texted them again to confirm that the data had been collected properly. At this point they were asked whether they were still happy for the data to be used and they replied by text. As a final step they were told they could now uninstall the app.

[12] Side-loading refers to the act of installing an app manually on a device rather than downloading it from an online store like Google Play.

Data from the phone was set by default to upload when charging and in the presence of a wireless internet connection. Data was uploaded and stored on a secure private server and then used to create animated video walk-throughs of participants' activities over their night. These were short videos (a maximum of 5 minutes long) that used Google maps and the GPS data provided by the app to show an animated tracing of participants' movements over their nights. Added to this I also animated relevant participant phone activities (e.g. when they opened an app, charged their phones, received a message) that were logged over the night so that they popped up at the appropriate times and places during the video walk-through. Some activities were only displayed when it seemed relevant, for example the screen on/off activity was recorded by the app but only presented in these videos when it seemed unusual or relevant. In this way participants were provided with a video representation of their device usage over the night as it had been 'observed' by the app (see figure 8 below for an example of a frame from these videos or a more accurate example of animation is available here: https://youtu.be/I_fxtj7N4kU). After generating these videos I took notes about specific instances of phone use and times during the video that I wanted to stop and discuss material with participants in more depth.

Figure 8

Fictional Example of a Frame from Participants' Animated Phone Data Videos



Follow-up Interviews

Interviews with participants were organised for times that minimised the period between the event and interview yet also provided sufficient time for the phone data to be processed and used as a part of these follow up discussions. I interviewed 9 participants within a week of their event and the remaining participant was interviewed 13 days after their event. It was at this stage, after their interview, that one participant withdrew their data from the study. Of the participants that contributed data to my final analysis, 8 were interviewed face-to-face at either their residence or a local University campus, with the final participant interviewed via a private, recorded, Google Chat. Face-to-face interviews were recorded using both audio and video recorders whereas the virtual interview made use of the recording and screen sharing functions of Google Chat. Recording began after a brief introductory period accompanied

by food and drink when possible. Participants introduced themselves and stated some basic demographic detail before the discussion turned to the prepared material. These interviews lasted between 1 and 2 hours.

These interviews followed the questions from the interview guide in Appendix D with one notable exception. Each interview began with the participant and I watching their animated phone-use videos together, with pauses for discussion throughout, before carrying on to open-ended interview questions relating to their alcohol consumption, phone use, and alcohol advertising. The animated video that showed the participant's drinking timeline helped them to recall specific details of the night with the replay of phone activities and specificity of this content (e.g. times, locations, contact names and message contents). This information reminded participants of the context the data was generated within and, oftentimes, other activities that had occurred around this data. These videos also allowed me to pause to make inquiries about app use or participant activities at various times and places over their drinking sessions. My questions usually related to the contacts participants were communicating with as well as the nature of these communications, but I also enquired about specific content, motivations for use, and the activities that may have been going on around device use. Ultimately, these recordings of phone use were used in a similar manner to my in-person observations in study one – they formed the basis of discussion points and were brought into interviews to highlight, compare, and contrast with participants' understandings of their drinking cultures and phone use. They also proved an excellent icebreaker as participants enjoyed 'reliving' their drinking event by watching these reconstructions of what they had done during the night. After these animated videos and some summary discussion of them, we then moved on to semi-structured questions. Participants were given opportunities to show me examples of relevant content they had saved on their phone during this second stage of the interview process.

Interviews were largely good-natured discussions and although I had not previously met participants in person, they were conducted in an environment that felt conversational and relaxed. While the data

from the recording app led to a lot of interview material that was broadly similar to study 1, having access to timestamps, location, and some content of participants' app use meant additional, more detailed information was discussed. Beginning these interviews by showing participants an animation of their recorded data from the night obviously shaped how the interviews progressed. Interviews often focussed on aspects of participants' phone use that were more specific and detailed (e.g. why a particular app was used in a specific place, or why certain people were communicated with via text rather than internet enabled apps) and, overall, this tended to place participants' phones more overtly as the focal point of the interview even when we progressed on from the videos to the broader questions and discussion topics.

Transcription

Transcription of these interviews relied on the recorded video which allowed me to describe material that was shared on the phone, gestures and responses participants made toward resources such as their animated videos or phones, as well as body movements and expressions that were a part of our discussions. I used Word and VLC to transcribe my interviews, including any nonverbal cues that I thought were relevant to interpretations of the text. A transcription notation guide is available in Appendix G. All identifying features and names were anonymised.

Discourse Analysis

Transcripts of interviews and written language were the primary modes of text analysed in the app study, but other forms of language were also included. For example, for some images that participants shared on their phones in interviews, the spatial composition of material was noted and the apps used for various forms of communication were also considered (e.g. the inclusion of a drink's position in a photo and when Snapchat was noted as the preferred app for a message). Thus while some elements of a multimodal approach were part of my analysis, they were not so prominent compared to the analysis in study 1. I used OneNote as a searchable, flexibly organised, scrapbook as I collated excerpts into subthemes and topics including screenshots from interviews to allow me to remember, and include, shared phone content in my analysis. After the iterative process of shifting and combining various levels

of data and notable excerpts, 5 themes emerged with a further 36 topics of interest nested under these (See Appendix K). Many were similar to the themes from study 1 and I began thinking of ways to acknowledge this overlap while still accentuating the novel contributions present in the app data and interviews. In consultation with my supervisors, I chose not to analyse for discourses and instead undertook an in-depth exploration of my data through the lens of one, broad, discursive structure labelled a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*. In this analysis I examined the function of language as it was being used in these contexts, both in participants' descriptions and explanations of their understanding as well as the content they generated and used to communicate with their peers on their phones. I included some analysis of the micro-macro discursive elements in these texts, including identifying the work that language was used to do around these topics as well as some of the wider institutional relationships that were represented in participants' constructions of subjects and objects.

Ethical Considerations

Collecting data remotely via an app altered some of the ethical issues in my first study and created new issues to consider. One major issue was the data being generated by unknowable, inebriated, participants. Participants could have only a broad idea of the data they were agreeing to share with me in advance, as well as the state of mind they would be in when they were generating this material. They could consent to the study while sober but when they were taking part in it, they may not have been in the same state of mind as when they gave this consent. Therefore, I added a formal rechecking of their consent for me to use their data the day after they had shared it. My limited resources also proved beneficial here. I had originally wanted the app to automatically upload material after the night's recording, but it was notoriously bad at doing so (the process for managing this upload was often suspended indefinitely by the operating system). Only one participant had data that automatically uploaded while the rest submitted data to the study only once the manual upload button was pressed. This had the unexpected side effect of allowing participants a better idea of what they were sharing with me before they gave me access to it, and I altered my reminder for them to upload it to me to re-state that they need not do so if they were uncomfortable with the activities that the recording covered.

Similarly, I considered it prudent to keep to using pseudonyms for participant protection and privacy as the data included many personal communications from their devices – material that would rarely be seen by other people and comprising incoming content from friends, the nature of which they had little control over.

All physical materials such as consent forms and participant demographic surveys were kept in a locked filing cabinet in my office at Massey University. All digital materials were kept secure online using Massey University's access to OneDrive. Participants' phone data was uploaded from the app to a personal, secure, server and once exported to my university OneDrive it was removed from this server.

To minimise the potential harm around the exploration of participants' drinking and some of the resources I employed, I used the same debriefing methods as I did for study 1. I talked participants through what their scores on the AUDIT represented and the broader testing context these screening measures are used within. I also had procedures prepared for moments of participant distress in my interviews. The only change I made from my first study was to update some of the local and national alcohol help resources that I included in the materials that participants took home from interviews. In the case of my online interview, I included them as a part of an email I sent them afterward. No participants became distressed before, during, or after interviews.

Māori were again not the focus of my app study and while I recorded ethnicity, and Māori were welcome to participate in the research, I did not use this data for anything other than describing participants as a group. The addition of my app-based data collection methods did not seem to change the impact my research could have on Māori populations. Neither did it change any of the concerns I needed to remain aware of from those described in the method section of study 1.

As has been referred to above, issues existed around the scope and nature of the data I collected. This data was by no means a comprehensive record of participant phone activity across these periods of time, but it still represented a lot of personal data and exchanges. Sensitive app use, messages to partners, personal discussion of intentions of other peers without their knowledge - all of these were

present. While my specific participants were happy talking about these, this data encompassed a lot more than participants' drinking activities and drinking related exchanges and it is very plausible that a different group of participants may not have been so comfortable with discussing this material. This breadth is something I could have done better at explaining to participants before they used the app to record data. My description of what the app would record focussed solely on the application of this recording to participants' drinking activities. I did not fully account for the fact that some of the participants' peers may not be drinking when they were and that they might still choose those times to reach out to participants for other, personal, reasons. I had one participant withdraw from my study after the interview stage when they realised the scope of the recordings and they noted that this breadth of coverage was a part of their rationale for doing so. However, tracking their night out drinking was also more discomforting to them than they had anticipated. I dealt with the breadth of coverage issue by showing participants their video walkthrough section at the start of the interviews and then immediately asking if there was anything in the video or recorded content they felt uncomfortable with including as part of the study. Aside from the full removal of one participants' data after the interview stage, no other data was removed.

Finally a very practical ethical concern was the safety of participants and the presence of my app on their phones while they were out drinking. Smartphones represent a safety line for many people. They can be used to call a taxi to leave a venue, they can provide contact for friends that have separated in town and are trying to find each other, they can be used to call for ambulances or police if circumstances warrant these actions. The study app did not use a lot of battery, running in the background as it did, but it *was* continuously running on their phones and still impacted the device's battery life. The risk here is that a participant who was reliant on their phone for some measure of coordination or safety would misjudge their battery life using their estimation of normal usage and fail to account for the additional load placed on their battery by the study app. I mitigated this risk by sending reminders to participants about charging their phones before their drinking sessions. It was also

less of an issue than expected because participants would periodically charge their phones during their nights regardless of whether they were drinking at their homes or away from them.

Ethics for this project was approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC). After discussion with the committee and responding to specific issues outlined above, ethics was granted in October 2015 (HEC: Southern B application - 15/59).

Chapter 8: Introduction to app study results and a discourse of constantly connected drinking cultures

Compared to study 1, in this study I had little interaction with participants before interviewing them. One of the unforeseen benefits that emerged from beginning these interviews by viewing the participants' animated videos together was they derived a lot of enjoyment from watching a sped-up version of their night from the point of view of their phones. Mirth, fascination, nostalgia, and ponderings about their state of mind at particular times all occurred as we began interviews by tracing through their nights. This process meant that the interviews provided a great deal of unique material which is demonstrated in the following analysis.

Bringing animated videos of participants' movements and phone use into an interview setting also provided some of the hoped-for opportunities to focus on specific instances of phone interactions and use. In addition, basing these conversations on data that had associated metadata (e.g. timestamps, geolocation, and recipients) made it easier to identify where and when these interactions occurred over participants' drinking events. This in turn created a different perspective of participants' nights and changed the focus of some aspects of the resulting interviews. For example this level of detail was useful when discussion centred on the nuances of Facebook Messenger and Snapchat use as, of all the apps, participants described multiple distinct social functions of these two communications apps. Additionally, some apps and app use were discussed in these interviews that were not covered in the first study. Perhaps this is because these apps were perceived as less significant when compared to offerings such as Facebook Messenger and Snapchat and perhaps certain usages of the phone were not very memorable or were not easily associated with drinking activities. Whatever the case, these data helped inform the direction of the resulting analysis and broadened the understandings of material in the previous study while further highlighting the importance of smartphones to young adult drinkers.

The constant connectedness of participants to peers and continual activity on their phones was the most consistent feature across participants in this data set and is consistent with findings in the previous

study as part of 'smartphones as social disrupters' and 'social facilitators' discourses. However, for the reasons described above, the data here was well suited to an in-depth examination of some of the material and understandings that were only touched upon in the previous study. This analysis built on the first findings, identifying and exploring a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*. I have anchored this analysis around the forms of communication and communications apps that participants made use of during their drinking.

Broadly speaking I discuss how participants drew upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to show the immediacy, efficiency and, sometimes, obtrusiveness of calling as a means of communication. This is followed by a focus on Facebook Messenger where participants' descriptions of their group conversations often broke away from the organisational or planning exchanges that made up most of their one-to-one texting and became, instead, extensions of groups' social drinking spaces. After this participants' use of Snapchat is the last of the communications platforms focussed upon. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* highlights the role of Snapchat as an app for momentary fleeting connections to peers (overlapping much of participants descriptions of their Messenger groups) as well as an app that was a whimsical, fun, activity participants undertook with peers who were already present. This served to chronicle their nights, share individuals' personal perspectives of noteworthy happenings, and solidify group bonds through the creation of bespoke communications material. Finally, I consider the role of alcohol marketing and participants' constructions of it within this discursive structure.

In the following sections I provide an amalgamation and summary of the individual data collected from participants' phones, brief coverage of material from this data set that illustrates discourses previously covered in the study 1, and then I discuss a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* overlaps with the discourses discussed in the study 1 as participants described attending to the various activity, notifications, and communications occurring on their phones in order to stay connected and up to the minute with wider peer networks. As

previously described, this activity created access to opportunities as well as the potential for distraction that could leave participants feeling like they had not engaged in their drinking nights fully. However this discourse also covers the broadening of participants' immediate social spheres and my analysis provides an account of the ways in which multiple forms of communications were described as a part of participants' constant connection to their drinking peers both physically present and not. Lastly participants drew upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to construct alcohol marketing as a constantly available resource. Participants constructed the persistent potential to connect to peers as sometimes creating a pressure to do so. Together this created opportunities or openings for alcohol material, particularly material that was not risky to associate with, to be integrated into participants' sociality and meaning making.

Summarising Participants' Phone Data

While the main purpose for the data from participants' phones in this study was to provide discussion points and material to take into interviews, a summary of participants' data provides some background context and a brief illustration of their phone use over drinking nights. Table 2 below summarises the apps used across participants' nights. Excluding incidental background apps that were logged over the nights (e.g. connections to wireless networks, charging apps, or instances of participants' default launcher app that occurred when leaving an app or turning the phone on), the eight participants used 18 unique apps. Although no app was used by every participant, asynchronous communications apps make up a large proportion of use. Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, and default texting/multimedia messaging service (Text/MMS) made up 335 of the 535 instances of purposeful app use and the web enabled Snapchat and Facebook Messenger were both more popular than the various texting apps users had on their phones. "Misc. social media" in Table 2 includes apps such as Reddit, Tinder, and Instagram which, even when grouped together, had no more than five uses in a night by any one participant. "Other apps" includes games (prominently Pokémon Go), money related apps (prepaid public transport apps and banking apps), Google's offerings (such as Maps, Keep, Drive and Chrome) as well as the clock app and any usage of a dedicated camera app. As is demonstrated by the large standard deviations relative

to their means and the ranges of values, there was a lot of variety in what apps were used and the frequency of use across participants. Participants travelled a mean of 7.37 kilometres (sd = 3.53) and shared a mean of 7.31 hours (sd = 3.23) of recorded phone data relating their usage over their nights. The start times participants selected for these recordings varied from 17:00 to 20:00.

Table 2

Summary of Recorded App use over Participants' Drinking Occasions

App	Total instances of use	Mean (SD)	Minimum individual use	Maximum individual use
Facebook (Messenger)	132	16.50 (13.56)	0	32
Snapchat	105	13.13 (13.10)	0	33
Text/MMS	98	12.25 (12.54)	0	28
Facebook (main)	38	4.75 (7.66)	0	17
Calling	33	4.13 (4.58)	0	13
Misc. social media	16	0.50 (1.39)	0	5
Other apps	113	12.56 (9.45)	0	22

Extending Study 1 Findings

Similar to the observational nights out, participants in this study used their phones a lot over their nights, primarily to communicate with peers. In follow-up interviews participants discussed a lot of material similar to that identified in study 1, often filling in detail around previous findings or extending them.

As in study 1, participants drew on a smartphones as social disrupters discourse to construct specific uses of the phone as less desirable and to position people using their phones in this way as disengaged

from the drinking events they attended. For example, while Teefren made use of her phone a lot before getting to her event where she was drinking, she then actively left her phone in her bag while there and only checked it again once she was headed off from the venue:

Ross: How do you think phones are being used while they {other people} are out drinking?

Teefren: It definitely feels like there are two camps of people. Some people will put their phone away for the night and some people will just sit there and message people or go on Facebook.

Ross: Yeah. And do you think that it changes the drinking scene?

Teefren: I think it has a bit, you get a lot more people sitting down by themselves, on their phone.

Ross: And do you ever feel like it detracts for you? Being a non-phone user does it ever detract from your night?

Teefren: It does if there are enough people doing it but normally wherever I go there's a good mix and enough people that aren't so it doesn't get to me

Teefren here draws on the social isolator discourse to construct a dichotomy of people that use their phones continually over a night and those that put them away for it. She expands on the previous study's findings by suggesting that her not using the phone might add to the experience of the event as a whole and this introduces the notion that by having enough people actively present in this fashion it is possible to support a certain amount of phone centric users at events. While there is some acknowledgement that people on their phones may be in contact with other peers, suggesting that they are "*sitting down by themselves with their phones*" minimises the presence of these potential peers and accentuates the role of the phone in this isolation. However Pier, below, drew upon a social isolator discourse to construct a friends' phone use as both slightly unacceptable behaviour and an enjoyable eccentricity of this particular person. Here what is described as antisocial phone behaviour almost adds to Pier's enjoyment of the night.

Ross: How do you think other people are using their phones while out drinking?

Pier: Pretty similar. Snapchats. Drunken Snapchats. I'm trying to think of people using it for other stuff {scrunches up face} not really. Sometimes CBear uses his phone to read books when he gets real drunk and I tell him off. Like at the party.

Ross: Really?

Pier: Yeah it'll be going off and it'll be like two in the morning and he'll just be reading a book.

Ross: That's awesome!

Pier: Yeah it's hilarious, he just sort of forgets.

Ross: He forgets there's a party going on?

Pier: Yeah {laughing} And he gets really into a book.

Ross: While he's drunk?

Pier: Yeah at 1 in the morning. He'll like start reading this book.

Ross: You know how people are like "oh alcohol it brings out your inner you"?...

Pier: Yeah probably! For drunken CBear it probably does

Ross: That's so amazing. I don't think I know very many people that get really drunk and then read a book.

Pier: Oh it's so funny. He just quietly pulls out his phone as well. So it'll be like a party {gestures encompassing circle} and then like for example maybe we'll be playing beer pong, so it's like 4 playing and 2 watching and then someone moves away from the conversation he'll just pull out his phone and read a book.

Pier describes CBear suddenly delving into a book on his phone mid-party and as well as it being something worth teasing him over, it is behaviour that is humorous too. Here the polarised nature of the behaviour (reading a book in this context leaves little room for interpretation as a social activity) and the unconventional setting for engaging in such an activity combine to add a memorable and relatively unique element to Pier's drinking with CBear. This builds upon the previous findings that touched upon constructions of non-social time wasting on phones by illustrating in more detail that certain, non-social, apps were considered particularly inappropriate.

Phones were again constructed as enablers of (and focal points for) social activity and as devices that were sometimes shared with the group as social objects. Participants such as Pier described apps such as Spotify being used at the start of nights to play personal playlists as accompaniment to drinking activities and then, as the night progressed and people drank more alcohol, the phone became a shared device that was used more as a jukebox as various people acquired it to play the specific tracks they wanted to hear. Tinder was used as a social drinking game and below Mercutio draws on a social facilitator discourse to construct her knowledge of Tinder culture and her subversion of the Tinder app as a shared social activity that she and her friends do using her phone.

Ross: And then I think that from here we've got the classic kind of Tinder and Facebook. So here, though, {motions at video} you're like sort of actually start browsing and commenting on stuff on Facebook?

Mercutio: I think that was actually just me getting tagged in memes. And then Tinder would have been, I think. Oh no, if it's chatting what was I doing, I dunno. Oh! I think we might have been playing the Tinder drinking game.

Ross: Oh yeah, so is that the photo? Like a drink if they've got their pet in the photo or...?

Mercutio: Yeah, well, it's the photo thing and then also, like you message them? And if they respond with a set of generic responses, then you drink, and there's, like, a whole set of rules. I don't know. It's so so bad you get so wasted.

Ross: I was about to say! So is it actually the case that for Tinder you tend to get quite generic kind of responses?

Mercutio: Yeah, I mean like the game that I wrote is specific to Tinder as a woman. 'Cause it's kind of like dead animals in the picture and like height in the bio and that kind of thing, you know? And how soon after a match do you get a message? And nine times out of 10, it's just like. "Hey, how's your night going?". Super drunk. Like really *really* quickly. The later the night is the quicker and more generic the responses are. So so so like the later it gets like the worse it is. It's just funny.

Ross: Right and so those conversations like in Tinder, I'm assuming it's for hookups? Does it escalate quickly?

Mercutio: Yeah, yeah, I never actually as it was kind of like oh you know "what are you doing tonight?", "How's your night going?" or something like that? And uh, probably trying to convince me to go to come to some bar, some party. Actually, I got a really cool offer! It was something like "so weird request, but can you come to a Tinder themed red card with me where you have to handcuff yourself to me until we both we each finish a bottle of wine? I will buy everything?"

Ross: So shoot me through a red card event.

Mercutio: Um, I've never actually done one, but I think it's essentially like someone in a flat, like in a flat. You all get a red card, you pull it and you pull it. You decide that day and what you're doing, and everybody has to do it like you can't. You can't get out of it, but yeah.

The data from my app frequently led to instances like this where participants were able to identify more of the specifics and context surrounding their social smartphone use while drinking. Here for example the very bespoke use of Tinder is slowly unpacked and the acceleration of drinking that comes about through integrating the phone into their drinking in this manner is illustrated in more depth. Mercutio constructs Tinder and the phone as things that can form the foundation of in-person socialisation during drinking sessions but here she also positions Tinder as an app of opportunity, where out of the blue she gets "*a really cool offer*" to handcuff herself to someone she does not know and partake in a drinking lock-in with them. While the offer could be seen to have obvious risks associated with it, Mercutio considers it a unique and intriguing opportunity that contrasts with the generic offering of the app. In addition to highlighting a use of Tinder that it was not intended for (as a drinking game) this also aligns with constructions of phones and apps like Tinder as social facilitators that allow access to, or

knowledge of, these special events that then elevate alcohol and group drinking above regular drinking sessions and can be understood as generators of you-had-to-be-there-moments.

A Discourse of Constantly Connected Drinking Cultures

For the remainder of this chapter I focus on the way in which participants drew upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to construct the phone as a device that creates a constant awareness of, and accessibility to, diverse people in their lives while they were drinking. The phone records show that participants frequently checked in with peers and communicated with people who were both present and separate from the locations where they were drinking. As can be seen in the summary of participants' phone use (see Table 2), primarily this communication made use of Snapchat and Facebook Messenger but texting and calling alongside other instances of web enabled apps such as Reddit, Tinder and Instagram also occurred. As such I have dedicated some of the space to how a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn upon in distinct ways when participants discussed communications apps before turning to how it was integrated into participants' alcohol marketing talk.

Drawing on a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*, participants constructed the phone as a nexus of both realised and potential connections, cementing it as an integral part of their drinking nights. Participants described alternating interactions with peers and ongoing group conversations that wove across multiple platforms on their phones. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* positioned participants' peers as constantly accessible and close, notwithstanding any account of physical distances between them, and at times this constant connection was described in ways that highlighted a feeling of obligation or expectation of connection that could at times construct previously enjoyed interactions as mildly onerous or cumbersome. For example AA below draws upon this discourse to describe the role his phone plays in his nights more generally:

AA: Um I think communication aspect cause you're not just drinking with the people around you, you're drinking with everyone else as well. It's also a good way for people if they're bored they can just go on their phone or if they don't want to talk to people they can just go in their own sort of personal bubble.

AA describes the primacy of those who are physically present as being somewhat lessened by the constant connection to his peers the phone provides. These connections make other peers more accessible to the point that they can be considered a part of his drinking. This constructs a broadening of his drinking circle and a constant renegotiation of who he is 'drinking with' at any moment. While there are clear overlaps with a *social facilitator* discourse as well as some benefits that draw upon a *social disrupter* discourse (such as allowing for removal from present sociality into a personal bubble), he draws upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to expand the horizons of his personal drinking experience rather than describing the role of the phone as optimising the experience by increasing the choices on offer.

It was common for participants to have friends and other contacts that were associated with specific communications apps. One participant, Teefren, relied on Facebook Messenger for the majority of her peer communication and her mother was the only person she texted because "*I don't think she knows how it {messenger} works*". While technical proficiency is obviously part of why Teefren uses texting with her mother, intimacy of relationship is present too and this regularly determined the communications platform used for other participants. Zeffron, below, describes two of his closer friends that he met up with after a party as being the only people he tended to text. So while they were also part of the wider peer group that he sent Snapchats and Facebook messages to over the night, these closer friends had another means of communication that they were more exclusively associated with. Potentially the requirement of a personal phone number for texting (rather than an accepted friend request or 'follow' on apps like Snapchat and Facebook) might explain this tendency for participants' closer relationships with text recipients.

Zeffron: Yeah pretty much, lot of Snapchatting, lot of Facebook messaging. Usually I won't be texting that much 'cause that's the two people up in {place} and usually they're around me? It's just like you know, different friends?

Ross: So they're the only people that you'd text if they're not there?

Zeffron: Yeah

For others, however, the content that was being discussed or shared meant a conversation gravitated toward a particular platform. Below AFlat discusses how various factors can converge with the context and needs of the conversation at hand, whilst at the same time describing the way in which the phone serves as a nexus of connection across his drinking nights. This conversation relates to data in the early stage of the night where he was engaged in multiple conversations with the people he was drinking with, friends that were not there, a brother that was talking about a rugby game that had just finished, and an old acquaintance who had just had profound information shared with her and was wanting to debrief with him. He also used the app 'Pokémon Go' at the start and end of his night which, alongside using location features to find and catch digital Pokémon, provides at least a veneer of interaction and connection with other people as you befriend or compete with them in-game (and the phone will often push notifications about in-game happenings as they occur).

AFlat: Yeah so with texting if I want to get hold of someone directly. Like if I'm trying to find where they are in town just like bearing in mind that they might not have their data on, so I can only really text or call?

Ross: So is it safer?

AFlat: It's just easier to get hold of people whereas Messenger talking about the rugby conversations it's just a lot easier to go back and forth through Messenger.

Ross: Oh right! So this is not texting? {points at the rugby conversation data}

AFlat: Oh that might be texting, I think yeah that might be. So it kind of is person dependant like with my brother, sometimes, depending on how the conversation is initiated sometimes he might send me something on Facebook Messenger and we'll discuss through that or he might text me and then we'll just keep on texting. There's not really a method to the madness.

Ross: {Laughs} so the sort of flow here it looked like, sort of started talking about rugby, and then opened chrome, is that to ahh check rugby?

AFlat: Yeah {nods} I'd imagine so

Ross: And so obviously Pokémon Go in the middle. And is it a quick thing for the Pokémon Go as you go through the stops?

AFlat: Yep it's literally just a swipe

Ross: Ah cool, and then Addy calls you as well?

Aflat describes a multitude of connections that he can, and regularly did, make use of across his night. These transition across various apps, the use of which Aflat suggests is determined by likelihood of mobile data being on, the relationship to the recipients (and multiple of these appear in even this brief

snapshot of his data), by the immediacy required of the communication, or just by whatever platform is used first to make the contact. The constant but changing connections that are available are emphasised by the multitude of platforms of communication engaged with over the small period of time as well as Aflat describing his pattern as having no "*method to the madness*". He constructs his communications landscape as constantly shifting and the act of traversing it as one that, at times, he has diminished control over. This makes a certain amount of sense as the constant connection of the phone allows his contacts to choose the platforms they wish to use, meaning that Aflat is likely to have installed any apps his peer group deems important. Each of these apps he has installed creates another potential facet of connection on his phone to be engaged with over a night, often one that can push notifications, alert him about an incoming call, and encourage user responses over the night as it vies for attention amongst other happenings and other apps doing the same. The varying levels of attention that come from a combination of constant connection and the differing modes of communication is something that many users constructed as needing to be balanced across their nights. And later in the conversation Aflat considers this balance and some of the potential costs of being constantly accessible to all of his phone's contacts:

Aflat: Yeah I think so. In regards to Snapchat, maybe being able to communicate with people that are maybe drinking elsewhere as well, they're still part of the fun from a distance so I think it does add something it probably also detracts because I get distracted from what is happening around me, because I'm absorbed with my phone. So perhaps you lose as much as you gain socially {laughs}.

Ross: Right.

Aflat: Sort of a dispersion. Yeah so often if I get a Snap from someone who's drinking and I'm having a boring Saturday I'll be like "oh that's fun" but it still wouldn't motivate me to drink when I'm home alone

Ross: Haha "that's fun, I could drink… alone, which would also be not fun"

Aflat: Yeah I dunno if I'll be happier or sadder.

Ross: And so they detract a little by dispersing you?

Aflat: Yeah spreads me across space and time a little bit

Aflat highlights an important tension present in a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* where the connections afforded by the phone, and in particular the social apps, can lead to too much attention being given to them. The potential of the device for more inclusive drinking events is offset by

its potential for "*absorbing*" Aflat's attention. Aflat describes a toll of this constant connectedness as one of him being spread "*across space and time a little bit*", where attending to the many social offerings is constructed as burdensome. The constant connection to other peers and their happenings is constructed as both a pleasurable, beneficial resource that can augment drinking and a potential source of 'social fatigue' and distraction. Describing the device and the connections as spreading him in this manner also helps illustrate another way in which a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was often used to subtly undermine participants' autonomy over their sociality and how smartphones and app ecosystems, through the provision of connections that need to be attended to, were constructed as active brokers of participants' sociality. Below I consider the specifics around some of the communications apps used across participants' nights.

Calling and a Discourse of Constantly Connected Drinking Cultures

The ability to call represents the most immediate, and least ignorable, connection that can be made using the phone and participants often described calling as an efficient and effective mode of communication. However, making a call was also a cause for hesitancy and even seen as unusual at times. Preference for other modes of communication is illustrated by the fact that participants did not make many calls over their nights when compared to texting and using Snapchat and Messenger. Below AA describes his typical usage, the variance in communications platform that can occur, and conveys some of the novelty that calling represents:

AA: Like beforehand it's just Snapchats, probably, but if, hypothetically, some sort of drama went down then that's probably Messenger material, or even texting even, {Raises eyebrows in faux scandal} I've had calls before as well!

AA mentions calling as a non-normative afterthought and in a way that constructs it as a little unusual through both the good natured imitation of shock but also in it being something that might actually occur if there were unusual enough circumstances. Calling here is deemed more likely if the material is something particularly dramatic (likely making immediate discussion more desirable) but even in this case, other forms of communication are given precedence as calling lies at the end of the escalating

types of exchanges AA takes part in. Even more so than texting, calls were usually made to closer contacts and this may be for similar reasons, as no participant record showed a call from anyone outside of what they described as their close friendship groups. Even when calling these closer contacts, there was often the expectation for a call to divulge immediate, relevant, information and for the conversation to be brief. For example, AA describes one of his closer friends that is more likely to call him via the phone:

AA: Some people call a lot more than others. Ummm Hemi does. Yeah especially for stuff like that he'll be like "come around mine in like 20 minutes" and I'll be like "chur" and he'll be like "chur" and that's the call done.

AA describes a call about an imminent drinking session from Hemi as common or expected and the content of the call is both incredibly succinct as well as more likely to happen when organising a place to drink. All of this makes it a call that is unlikely to inconvenience AA for long or require much concentration if he decides to accept it, but the brevity of these calls also helps depict them as slightly unusual in the wider context of communications between peers. This immediacy of information that calling offered was described as beneficial when it was able to put a night back on track or provided additional safety. Below Awi notes that immediately being able to call the police or a taxi provides some basic assurances for her drinking nights before also describing the immediate and constant ability to contact peers as allowing her night some measure of flexibility.

Awi: I can call the police if anything happens, I can call a taxi without having to worry about it too much. So I'd be pretty stressed if I was separated from my phone on a night out. And it can be anything as well. Like it's nice to change plans on the fly?

Ross: Right

Awi: Instead of having to be like "oh I really want to go and do this, but I told this person that I would be here at this time and I've got no way to tell them that I won't be"

Here Awi describes the potential to instantly call and connect to people or services as providing multiple avenues of assurance across her night. Immediate access to police and taxis provides for her physical safety, while the constant connection to peers allows for a flexibility that can mean plans that she has previously agreed to do not necessarily have to be kept and her night can unfold as she determines in

the moment. This may also represent some of the extra work young women need to do and concerns they need to negotiate as part of their participation in drinking cultures. None of my male participants described their phones in terms that emphasised the immediate personal safety aspects of the device, although they did sometimes consider the phone helpful for maintaining the broader safety of their drinking groups.

However the directness of calling could also be an issue. Calling was sometimes constructed as an obtrusive form of communicating with peers and usually this was when calling made too much use of the constant connectedness afforded by smartphones. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* has obvious overlaps with those of the social facilitator and social isolator. Highlighting a tension with *smartphones as social facilitators* this constant connection to others was described as something that could potentially detract from an evening if attending to it removed one too fully from other forms of socialising on offer. Calling on the phone is something that requires more attention than other modes of communication and so it holds the potential to remove more fully those involved from their present circumstances over the duration of the call. Additionally, a phone call is not asynchronous communication – once a user has chosen to accept the call there are demands placed upon them as they are tied to an immediate and ongoing conversation which, in addition to the greater attention requirement and temporary disabling of other communications, can bring extra social pressures such as the pressure to commit to a course of action or plan on the spot.

Participants sometimes described their calling habits in terms that still emphasised the convenience to them but also noted the expense that might occur for others. Alcohol in particular was constructed as a disruptor of the social conventions or inhibitions relating to the use of various communications apps and calling was no exception. The awareness of the immediate gratification and connection that was on offer from calling, coupled with the lowered inhibitions of inebriation, were often described as encouraging communication that might otherwise have not occurred. Zeffron described swapping from Facebook Messenger to calling someone on his night as mostly influenced by "*Aaaaalcohol. I can't be*

bothered texting, I'm just going to call them". Here he had already been drinking at one party and was wandering to a more intimate gathering of friends so the combination of closeness of the contact, the need to figure out his next plan, and alcohol initiated disinhibition seem to elevate calling as a preference. This is despite texting being the way that they had been organising and keeping in touch up until that point. Inebriation and the resulting lack of coordination may also play a role in making texting a bit more difficult to accomplish at this point, whereas calling could require less physical control to both initiate and maintain. Below Mercutio also considers how alcohol accentuates her need for things to happen straight away and that once this is the case, calling becomes increasingly desirable for both the immediacy *and* the obtrusive nature of the communication mode. Here a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* is drawn upon to highlight how constant access to her partner alongside an overuse of calling, is constructed as a potentially undesirable experience for the recipient of her calls whilst also satisfying her own needs.

Mercutio: Um, I think it's yeah, yeah, 'cause I think like I… I do it when I'm sober as well 'cause I just get like fed up and annoyed with texting because, actually Etin is just terrible at replying so she'll just kind of drop off the map? So if I get a reply from her, then I call her instantly because I'm gonna just sort this out now. When I'm drinking, like, I want things to happen *right now* ... So the immediacy of the phone call is really good. Especially if I'm worried that if I don't call her and make her, be like "no you have to come over" yeah {motions talking on the phone} "you're coming over now. OK, cool see you in 30 minutes." Or whatever, she just won't come?

Ross: And does that... does that get kind of exacerbated by alcohol? Is that a thing?

Mercutio: Definitely. Like I get so much more naggy. Nag so much.

The phone and calling here is positioned as requisite for making immediately desirable things happen and it is precisely the obtrusiveness of calling here that is both lauded (because it is less able to be ignored or 'put on seen'[13]) and a potential issue. When sober, Mercutio describes a threshold for calling that suggests there comes a point where she needs to solidify a plan and at this point, calling is deemed necessary. But the addition of alcohol is described as increasing this need for immediacy through her

[13] Refers to the practice of Facebook Messenger and other Messaging apps including visible discussion metadata such as who has seen a message and timestamps. Messages that are ignored thus result in the last update being one of "seen by X" or similar when X has seen the message and chosen not to respond to it.

more hedonistic descriptions of motives, when drinking she "*wants things to happen right now*" and so a lowering of the calling threshold is attributed to the consumption of alcohol. Throughout, Mercutio also constructs this calling and the direct connection it offers as a form of harrying or nagging. She constructs her calling jokingly as self-centred but her description also removes some of Etin's autonomy through requiring an increased amount of attention (since by calling, Etin's choice in how she allocates her time and attention becomes limited) as well as through the efficacy of calling (calling is Mercutio's mode of choice for making things happen immediately and for making sure they happen as she wants them to). Finally, the call in Mercutio's record that she is referring to happened in the middle of her night and they had already had a conversation on Messenger where Etin suggested it was unlikely she would join Mercutio. Calling in this context is a means to apply maximum leverage on a topic already discussed and resolved unsatisfactorily. Together this means the call was outside of the bounds of the majority of calls participants took in both time (the majority were at the beginning or end of a night) and content (most covered new or immediately relevant information such as updating locations or organising a venue to drink at). Like many participants Mercutio constructs the calling capability of the phone and the constant connection to peers this affords as a useful, effective, connection but one that was also, ideally, used sparingly due to the potential for disruption and obtrusive or inappropriate communication over drinking nights.

Facebook Messenger and a Discourse of Constantly Connected Drinking Cultures

While participants did use their phones to send and receive calls, most communications with drinking peers made use of social apps, particularly Facebook Messenger and Snapchat and it is these two that will be the remaining focus of unpacking the discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*. Participants drew on this discourse when describing Facebook Messenger as a platform that was helpful as a host for the logistical discussions that were necessary for organising a night and as a platform that kept them in touch with peers once drinking had begun. The discourse highlights the awareness of peer *groups* that Facebook Messenger engenders and the variety of ways that participants made use of this constant access to these groups as well the expectations accompanying it. Messages to individuals were

most often used to organise people prior to events, in a similar manner to texting and calling. However, participants also described using Messenger for more casual, affable, connection or 'checking in' with peers across their nights which differentiated this means of communication from their use of texting. These brief, fleeting, instances of connection, that were often text based but also incorporated images, served to acknowledge or reinforce relational ties in ways that did not take much time or detailed content to initiate.

Ross: Cool and then Foguy?
Pier: Yep back home there {points at data}
Ross: And Foguy is there?
Pier: Na I dunno where Foguy is. He's just doing his thing.
Ross: So he's mentioning you on Facebook
Pier: Yeah he does that a lot {laughs}, random tag.
Ross: {Laughs} tags you in random things?
Pier: Yeah it's nice; he's thinking about me.

Here Pier describes a notification from his night that has resulted from his friend tagging him in something on Facebook. This fleeting 'checking-in' connection is linked to content that is deemed "*random*" and as such not noteworthy, but the act of tagging itself is described as a pleasant reminder of the connection between the two and marks an instant in Pier's night that Foguy has momentarily been reminded of him by whatever has come across his feed. These tiny instances of quick connection were frequent throughout participants' data. While such exchanges often made use of material deemed "*random*" or immaterial, these instances highlighted the constant accessibility that participants' phones created and the ways in which peers made use of this. These instances required little time or little immediate acknowledgement from the user and yet they served to reinforce social connection between peers across drinking events. Drawing upon instances like these and other frequent communications with peers, participants constructed their phones as providing constant accessibility to wider groups of friends.

Participants drew upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to help construct their Messenger groups as places of social anchorage where constant interaction and a continual 'checking in'

with peers occurred across their drinking events, making these places where belonging and group memberships were acknowledged and affirmed. These were often semi-private spaces where close-knit relationships and the familiarity with, or constant accessibility to, members was expressed in a variety of ways – mostly light-hearted teasing and sharing of content or happenings that others might find funny or relevant. These frequent group interactions solidified in-group associations as there were elements present within many of the Messenger groups that required prior knowledge of the groups' cultural microcosm (such as the existing relationships between individuals, a prior understanding of the appropriateness of tone or phrasing in certain conversations, or even just the significance of members' nicknames). Participants discussed these group chats in ways that highlighted the continued familiarity and interaction amongst members; and these more personal areas that were not publicly observable sometimes provided small moments of tension when they became the focus of our conversations. Not having the knowledge of group history to fully understand the meanings of these elements, some of my interpretations (taking content at face value) were resisted by participants. Participants would sometimes unpack their group history as part their rationale and explanation of these elements. For example group members often had nicknames that were fluid, changing as members of the chat deemed it appropriate or humorous.

Ross: Yeah so we started around here {points at data} and of course because I get your notifications, I get your Facebook messages and with their nicknames so ahhh <nickname that implies a preference for younger partners>.

Gfisk: Oh yeah… they're all pretty appropriate {sarcasm}.

Ross: Jotun.

Gfisk: Jotun is the only one with an ordinary name {laughs}. I didn't name any of those {waves hands} it's the chat

Ross: No no honestly it's a judgement free zone. As soon as Facebook added the option to nickname anyone in the conversation.

Gfisk: Things got ridiculous. {Points at screen} the joke behind that, I'm going to go through this, he's twenty, twenty one? And he's always gone out with girls 2 or 3 years his junior. Consistently. No matter how old we've been. That's... that's the joke. So. That's bad. Prior to that he was actually <Nickname that plays on his proper name and being a father> because his name is actually <name that parallels the nickname>.

Messenger groups often reflected the in-group ties and understandings of group members. Gfisk here describes how the superficial nicknames of members in the chat are constant reminders of the shared experiences and understandings of chat members and that they are fluid elements which can be updated to reflect notable changes or just a member coming up with something they deem warrants the change in nickname. The familiarity and appropriateness of these nicknames to in-group members provides a little tension when having to explain their etymology to someone not familiar with the relationships present or how the group functions but these risqué names also illustrate the intimate understanding of members who are constantly in contact with each other and who know where their groups' personal boundaries are to be drawn. The two chats Gfisk interacted with over his night made the most use of these types of nicknames, only one or two members did not have them, but most participants and their peers had instances where nicknames in their Messenger and Snapchat groups represented some tie to an experience or memory shared with other members.

In addition to drawing on a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to illustrate their close familiarity with their peers in these structural aspects of their communications apps, participants shared material with contacts and their group chats in ways that affirmed relationships and affiliations. Participants' descriptions of their exchanges positioned themselves as being continually aware of, and interested in, their wider networks of peers while they were out drinking. For example below Aflat describes his use of Facebook and Messenger over his night:

Aflat: Facebook Messenger would be [used], again, if it was in a lull and I was looking through Facebook and found something funny, I'd send it to them via Messenger.

Here Aflat notes how his trawling of the Facebook feed during lulls switches to actively reaching out and forming an instant and momentary connection with a peer when he finds material that reminds him of them – and is funny enough to share. In this manner every contact on the phone is positioned as part of the 'here and now' and as a *potential* presence in the sociality occurring across drinking events. However, a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was also drawn on to construct peers

that were present at drinking events as simultaneously inhabiting shared digital spaces such as those that Messenger groups provided too:

Mercutio: I do any memes, like it's usually real like self-deprecating stuff because that's what everything is. But like my friends and I will literally sit in the same room drinking and talking to each other. Still, like engage in conversation. Having a good time while also scrolling through and tagging each other in all the shitty memes. It's cool, it's good. I really like the obscure ones that don't actually make sense to anybody. But everybody pretends that they understand it.

…

The accessibility to people is good. If you wanna, you wanna tell someone about something and you really need them to see this image and you really need them to do this thing. You can show them instantly, and that's really, really cool and I do that all the time.

Mercutio makes it clear that although her friends will often sit in the same room as each other tagging each other in memes, this takes place alongside having a conversation and is integrated into the overall social experience and good time. In this she is describing an amalgamation of some of the material present in study 1 where phones and app generated content are described as focal points for material that is being shared with the group. However, here the devices are also described in ways that differ from being just passed around and instead the connection between participants' phones is used to extend and augment their in-person conversations. The visuality of the action, where friends are tagged in memes to attend to, is an important consideration in these exchanges as it accommodates and augments the ongoing, parallel, face-to-face conversation rather than disrupting or supplanting it such as might occur if they were using Messenger to converse with each other via primarily text. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* helps emphasise the utility and flexibility of phones in this situation as the connections to persons present via their phones are essential to the socialisation - without a phone, and the connection that access to the group chat represents, anyone present would be missing out on viewing material that was critical to understanding the ongoing face-to-face conversation. Added to this, Mercutio's data showed multiple other conversations coming to the fore over this augmented conversation and then receding such that Mercutio's immediate drinking environment and peers formed a stable platform of sociality across the night that was then temporarily

expanded upon, to include other peers and their happenings, using apps such as Messenger and Snapchat.

As described, when considering the overlap with the discourses from study 1, a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was also drawn upon to construct phones as integral to maximising the potential for fun and pleasure during participants' drinking events. Participants' casual connections and conversations with peers via Facebook Messenger were often described as a factor that could be the start of a night increasing in intensity. Below Pier, who had originally planned for four friends to be drinking together, discusses how their drinking nights seem to rarely end up having attendance that low.

Ross: Right coolcoolcool and so how does that end up happening? 'Cause you've planned, clearly, for four?

Pier: Yeah oh well like so we like cause the way it sort of works I guess then is ummm I'll hit up one of my friends and they'll be with their friends and they'll be "yeah keen to come out!, oh can my mates come out?" and I'm like "sure!" and that just needs to happen like two or three times and your party is like quadrupled in size

Ross: {points to phone data} And then basically it's Messaging and you end up with a little conversation with Chesapeak? And presumably she's one of the ones that is thinking of coming around?

Pier: Yep

Ross: Cool and then there's some negotiation in there? {points at data where there is some back and forward of teasing and cajoling based on the two scenarios of Pier coming out to the pub versus Chesapeak coming over and drinking}

Pier: {Laughs} Classic! Everyday conversation.

Ross: Pretty much! But she's obviously at <pub name>?

Pier: Yeah she was at her house and then was going to <pub name>. Going to the pub

Ross: And she was trying to get you to go along?

Pier: Yeah well she offered, yeah, but I didn't want to {laughs} the pub costs!

Ross: So did she end up coming around?

Pier: Yep yeah, and she came around. And brought her crew.

Ross: {Laughs} She brought extras as well?

Pier: Story of my life. Yeah. Story of my life

Ross: Starting to see how it blew up a bit.

Pier: {Laughs} Like, it wasn't *biiig*. Just bigger than four people.

A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* is drawn on here with the casual, ordinary descriptors of mobile access to his friends such as "*hit up*" and "*everyday conversation*", constructing

the large pool of Messenger contacts each as a potential drinking friend for the night. As each contact also has their own connections and plans, each of the Messenger conversations he is engaged in over a night holds the potential to result in multiple people attending Pier's drinking nights or him being included in other interesting drinking events. Here his data showed Pier and his friend were constantly updating each other via their phones as part of an ongoing negotiation while they attended to their respective drinking activities. This haggling over how a meet-up should occur on the night results in the friend attending Pier's party, causing an escalation of the event size that Pier describes as common. There is a chain reaction effect that occurs due to each of Pier's contacts being a constantly connected nexus for their own peer groups as well.

A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was also drawn on when participants described some of the drawbacks that continued access to these group chats could bring. One of the members of Gfisk's group chat is someone that is included in the Messenger chat group but is not considered a part of the closer friendship group that comprises a core of peers within that chat. On the night, the group had headed into town and when the member disappeared for a moment, the group had decided to take the opportunity to head home without him. Below Gfisk describes how he negotiates this issue:

Gfisk: Oh if it is an especially big event like homegrown[14], I would want to see how many people would come definitely. Cause a big crowd is always good

Ross: Trying to get as many?

Gfisk: Yeah basically try to get as many people as I can together. But uhhm, the problem with doing that is that there are those guys like Grant. There's a few of those guys who are like ehhhh {waggles hand iffylike} they're in there but you don't really *waaant* to come? Sort of, in there by default? So I'm trying to get those friends I'm closer with inside those groups to come? Is the primary goal?

Ross: Like with managed exclusion?

Gfisk: Yeah with managed exclusion. But if you've got the ahh the basing of some of those friends you're close with then those additional hangers on, then they can come. Cause it's manageable but I don't want to be stuck solely with those guys {taps desk with finger emphatically} yeah. Personally. It's kind of stink. But yeah.

[14] Jim Beam Homegrown is a music festival that is sponsored by Jim Beam bourbon. It focuses on local music and bands from Aotearoa

Grant's membership in the chat seems to be at odds with his status within the group as it is described by Gfisk. He has access to the chat where everyone is continually bonding, sharing material and organising activities, yet he seems to be a member that is not always welcome in the space. His continued membership or access means that he cannot easily be excluded and will often be a part of any plans that this chat group makes. This creates a tension between the ideal, open, nature of how this group chat could operate and the limitations of using it when another less desirable peer has constant access to the peer group through it. To accommodate and plan around Grant's constant access to the group chat Gfisk makes sure a certain core of friends are available for plans like attending a music festival before he puts the idea to the broader group chat. Here he describes balancing the ability to get as many people to go to an event as possible with the need to make sure that at least some of the people he will enjoy going with are attending. In doing so he draws on a *constantly connected drinking cultures* discourse to construct the constant awareness of the groups' activities that phones facilitate as a potential personal risk when these group chats contain members that he is not as close friends with. In this instance the intimacy and closeknit relationships between members of the chat are described as being disrupted by an over-broadening of the chat group and this has resulted in a loss of some of the pleasurable functionality that being continually a part of it brings. Additionally this illustrates a disadvantage of the group based communication and where modes such as calling or other forms of 1-to-1 app communication begin to appeal.

Overall a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn upon to show how Messenger and in particular Messenger group chats extend and augment drinking sessions by including a broader range of drinkers than those who are just present. Additionally Messenger groups create social anchorage for the peers who are a part of them, allowing them a space for sociality regardless of physical locality and personal drinking contexts. Participants drew upon discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to highlight the familiarity and intimacy of these groups, as well as to show themselves as constantly aware of the presence of the group, the connection this represented, and the need to coordinate or stay in touch with members. This means that a discourse of *constantly connected*

drinking cultures was also drawn upon to negotiate the inclusion and exclusion of group members and their involvement in drinking activities. At times this connectedness was also described as leading to serendipitous interactions that helped intensify or escalate heavy drinking sessions.

Snapchat and a Discourse of Constantly Connected Drinking Cultures

As seen in Table 2, Snapchat was used a little less than Facebook Messenger; however, usage throughout an event was more consistent than Facebook Messenger, which was instead used more often at the beginning of participants' nights. This consistency appeared to relate to shifts in the type of content being Snapchatted at various times, as participants discussed different ways they would make use of the app while drinking. Participants drew upon a *constantly connected drinking cultures* discourse to construct Snapchat as an app that created access to their peers for purposes broadly similar to their use of Facebook Messenger, including: immediate organisational information; updates about the nights' progress and happenings; and for entertainment or content generation with physically present peers. However, it was the latter of these two categories that participants predominantly associated with their Snapchat use and this helped construct it as a more social platform:

Pier: Ahhhm I use Snapchat a lot more when I'm drinking? I don't really use Messenger when I'm drinking, I don't really need to. Usually If I'm going somewhere, especially if I'm going out of town, everyone that I would need to communicate with is there.

Ross: Right yeah

Pier: Snapchats kind of like, I dunno, it's a social thing? So it's not really a "you're on your phone instead of interacting with someone".

Pier positions Snapchatting as phone use that is not the same as other, socially disruptive, uses; it is a social activity and he describes this added social emphasis as being the reason he is more likely to make use of Snapchat than Messenger while he is drinking. By constructing Snapchat as more of a social activity, Pier positions the app as justifiable phone use that belongs alongside the face-to-face sociality of his drinking sessions. Messenger communication is disregarded once he is drinking, which aligns with his data where he used Facebook Messenger primarily to organise and chat to friends in the build-up to his night. Snapchat is the way he stays connected to his friends and acknowledges those connections

while he is actually drinking, and this means that the constant connectedness to his friends spans multiple app platforms each with different social functions. Similarly, while participants described some of their Messenger interactions with individuals and group chats as fun, participants did not construct Facebook Messenger itself as a platform that was enjoyable. The platform of Snapchat on the other hand, was described as a fun and whimsical app:

Ross: Snapchat because it's the most common? Or is it quick? easy?

AA: Um probably just because it's quick and fun. It's generally all this whimsical stuff. Like I don't really take any serious Snaps, if such a thing exists {laughs}

In addition, alongside the decreased concerns about self-representation outlined in study 1, the inconvenience of trying to detail any sort of organisational minutiae using the ephemeral platform of Snapchat added to the ludic perceptions of Snapchat. Instead, Snapchat was described as being used for frequent, fleeting, visual communication in a manner that maintains the culture of the platform as a whole. Like material in study 1, this immediacy and the modes of communications on offer from Snapchat were valued parts of evenings:

Zeffron: Snapchat makes it really easy to get a good idea of what is actually going on.

Ross: Right so is that the addition of the image?

Zeffron: Yeah cause you know those parties that you get invited to and only a couple of people show up?

Ross: Yeah

Zeffron: Snapchat is kinda nice, cause … you know {spreads hands out}

Ross: {laughs} you don't accidentally get lured to a two person party

Zeffron: Yeah not like {motions texting} "heaps of people have showed up" and it's like {looks around pointedly side-eying}

Ross: "where are all these people you mentioned*?*" Right, so less awkward parties?

Zeffron: Yeah. Exactly "*prove* it".

The immediacy of connection that Snapchat allows, coupled with the ability to include more aspects of the surrounds and context, allow for a better understanding of what exactly Zeffron is being invited to and help him avoid social situations he would rather not be in. By conveying immediate visual aspects of their nights Zeffron's contacts can "*prove*" things are how they have said they are and Zeffron can invest his drinking time well. Snapchat's visual primacy provides rich, immediate, communicative detail that

makes it more difficult for peers to lie or exaggerate and that allow myriad details of the context to be conveyed.

In addition to the appeal of more detailed and immediately relevant communication for planning and organising participants' drinking, the ability to portray immediate drinking context, peers, or notable happenings via Snapchat were described as exciting and valued uses of the app during participants' drinking. As has previously been described participants constructed a lot of this type of use as engaging in a culture of frequent, quick, whimsical, connection with peers; however, Snapchat work was also occasionally constructed as more heavily, or obviously, about doing identity work. When this was the case, it shifted Snapchatting away from being about a fleeting acknowledgement of relational ties across drinking events and toward a functionality that aligns better with social networking apps such as Facebook and Instagram.

Ross: So the big broad question out of this bit is how do you think phones are being used while people are out drinking?

Gfisk: As a liaison tool, sorting out where people are, what they're doing, what they're going to do next. That's all it is for

Ross: So things like Snapchat, is that liaising?

Gfisk: If you're communicating with someone then it is liaising but generally to your Story I dunno, I'd say that fills the narcissistic void, I dunno, that Instagram, I feel, fills?

Ross: Is that the image thing again?

Gfisk: Yeah I dunno I don't need… I could do a whole thesis on Instagram but ahh yeah I think that is such a weird website. You take photos, write a short caption, and then just try to make your life look fantastic.

Ross: Yeah so the question about that is the difference between that and Snapchat? Cause it seems like maybe Snapchat is different?

Gfisk: Yeah it is very similar. Oh well yeah… maybe. Um.

Ross: Well… because you use Snapchat for one?

Gfisk: Pretty much. I guess it is sort of temporary and you heavily document one thing, you document an event on Snapchat story, whereas on Instagram you document your life. Umm I think it is two very different things to brag about. Cause it is bragging I feel. Advertising.

Ross: "this is what I did"?

Gfisk: Yeah! It's self-advertisement. That's exactly what it is. *I* think anyway. And I enjoy, I get personal satisfaction out of making it look … nuts

Ross: {Laughs} it would be a little weird if you enjoyed making it look really dull and boring

Gfisk: {Laughs} “oh this is shit”, "send", {motions half-hearted phone use}. Yeah. Coz the idea is that you capture the lurid moment. Even if you can… the way you capture it, or something you say on it, jazzes it up a bit, like, it’s still this one moment in time that is going to disappear in 24 hours. That, yeah, it’s just that single stupid moment. That’s what it is all about. Whereas, yeah, Instagram is creating a much more permanent image of your whole life, yeah.

Most participants described some of their Snapchat use while drinking as more focussed on representing their night than specifically creating dialogue with peers. Gfisk unpacks this further by noting that while Snapchat *can* be just about “*liaising*”, he considers use of the Snapstory[15] feature can sometimes edge closer to a narcissism he associates with Instagram. However, it is constructed as less narcissistic than Instagram through emphasis on the ephemeral nature of Snapstory and the subject being represented. By not creating a lasting representation that is linked to his identity and by being more focussed on representing the event or relationships rather than himself, Gfisk positions his Snapstory content as more of a fleeting “*brag*” about his night than one that will be permanently attached to his identity. Gfisk’s Snapstorying also draws upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* as he describes his documenting of the night. The banality of his gesture that accompanies “*send*” illustrates the pervasive nature of this connectedness, whilst being constantly connected facilitates the ability to “*capture the lurid moment*” as well as the immediate sharing of it.

The descriptions of continued additions to his Snapstory also draws upon this discourse as these are an ongoing process of connecting and communicating with his peers over the night. The content of this material is positioned as another point of difference to Instagram use as the focus is external and upon telling a story of an event for this wider network of peers, rather than him documenting his life for them. Finally the emphasis on capturing and portraying the “*lurid*” or “*stupid*” moments provides contrast to common perceptions of Instagram as a platform full of sculpted, perfect, pictures. Yet Gfisk’s pleasure in “*jazzing*” these lurid moments up as part of his “*self-advertisement*” of the drinking night is one that is still very aware of what this audience of peers will admire. He positions his role of providing

[15] Snapstory is a Snapchat feature that allows users to add Snaps they have taken to their Snapstory feed, these collections remain visible for 24 hours before the app deletes them automatically.

these touch-ups or additions to the Snapped material as one of an auteur that is aware of their audience and is going to provide them with entertainment that is shaped by his vision. AA also describes some of the nuance around the use of Snapchat to update peers while drinking rather than start conversations with them:

Ross: Cool ah so is there any difference between how you use your phone drinking and how you use your phone when you're not drinking? Any difference between them?

AA: Um generally I'm drinking like social, I won't check {the phone} much unless there's a lull in conversation oh or I Snapchat something interesting. I probably use Snapchat a bit more {when drinking}, don't tend to use it very often and that's just like talking to people. So I'll use it I dunno when I'm wearing something cool {does a pose with hands} or when something funny happens or when I'm drinking a nice Guinness.

One of the ways AA uses Snapchat is to display something interesting that is a part of his night to his friends and he provides an explanation for why he Snapchats more while drinking; this is in part due to the ability to do more identity work, because there are more "*interesting*" moments, and more opportunities to represent his varied associations with his drinking culture. When he isn't drinking, he suggests he only uses the app for "talking to people" whereas while he is drinking he describes the app as being useful for making a wider range of connections to peers, connections that differ from regular non-drinking conversations. Once again, the social associations that are ascribed to Snapchat help temper constructions of its use as unsociable and even highlight the acceptability of interrupting other forms of socialising to generate content on the platform. Snapchat here is described as being used for updating peers when he has done something novel like dressing up, capturing a funny moment, or letting contacts know when he is drinking one of his favourite beers. In this way his drinking sessions are constructed as occasions where content that is worth Snapchatting, and so connecting to others over, is likely to be generated and a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* is drawn upon to construct this frequent connection and affirmation of relational ties as something that is desirable but also likely enjoyable for others to experience. Below Pier expands on the complementary nature of drinking and Snapchatting:

Ross: Yeah sweet and then actually you start Snapchatting and video player {points at data}

Pier: {Laughs}

Ross: you just start apparently going wild on the Snapchat.

Pier: Is that quite near the end of the night?

Ross: Yeah.

Pier: {Laughs} Naaaah I don't know whaaaaat that is {exaggerated open eyes and still laughing}. Obviously I was having a fun time and just wanted to share with the world!

Here, whilst considering his app data, Pier contrasts previous discussion where he had downplayed the association between alcohol and his Snapchat usage. Pier professes some faux-embarrassment about his increased usage of the app and describes reaching the pinnacle of his drinking night as being something that he "*just wanted to share with the world*". He clearly constructs this form of Snapchatting as a broadcasting of what he is up to and what is going on around him rather than an attempt to enter into dialogue with those that will receive the Snaps and the expectation is that this connection to those peers will allow them to share in his drinking fun. Moving away from the more selective use of Snapchat where having something to share is required, Pier's data and his descriptions of it suggest that just connecting with peers becomes the thing that is enjoyed when he is disinhibited by alcohol. This constant connection to peers and the idea of updating networks continually while inebriated was sometimes reflected on as a potentially risky phenomenon yet none of the participants ever constructed this risk as something too detrimental or serious:

Ross: So when you said that you're not really drinking with just the people that are there, you're drinking with a wider kind of a group. Is that adding something?

AA: Well it can do, like for example if you do something really stupid like say "oh I'm going to skull this bottle out of a gumboot" or whatever, it means a lot of people are going to see that. Because that's the stuff that people are going to Snapchat. But before it was a bit of banter "old mad AA did this in the weekend" now instead it's like "everyone has seen it now, he's now a social pariah" {laughing}

Ross: Or hero?

AA: Or hero I guess

Ross: Snapchat fame?

AA: Fame and infamy. Two sides of the same coin.

AA describes Snapchat in ways that build upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* discourse. Snapchat is a constant presence and possibility while he is drinking and there is an

established culture of Snapping anything interesting that happens which continually reinforces the access others have to his activities while he is drinking. Snapchat therefore represents a connection to AA through which other peers might receive information about him, regardless of whether he would like them to. It is a connection to him that is directed and controlled by others, thus he has little control over it. This constant connectedness afforded by Snapchat means that his novel and notable drinking occurrences are now expected to be immediately viewed and judged by more than just those present physically. Laughingly, he describes the qualitative change between being told a story of what happened in the weekend and now everyone actually *seeing it* through shared footage on Snapchat. This visual accuracy and in-the-moment perspective holds the potential to shift the occurrence from one that is a source of "*banter*" about a person to one that makes a "*social pariah*" of them. However, these happenings also represent the way this constant connection can be used to make in-the-moment assessment of the fun and possible activities on offer by any that receive this material.

Snapchatting this material is a fun and enjoyable activity in its own right but the 'proof' that this type of sharing provides, serves event attendees well by showing that heavy or exciting drinking is occurring, and anyone that Snapchats this material is going to be associated with that as well. But AA notes that "*really stupid*" things being valued as highly shareable material on Snapchat creates a risk. Inebriated, Snapchat wielding, peers whose judgment about the suitability of content may be impaired, create an environment where material that is exchanged could potentially be damaging to any persons that are involved. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* is drawn upon here to show that anything that happens while drinking can reasonably be expected to be shared nearly instantaneously and amongst a large number of AA's peers. The constant connection means that happenings that could be shared *are* shared; there is no window of opportunity within which AA might remove footage from devices or discuss the appropriateness of material to be shared. This sharing has the veneer of ephemerality that Snapchat encourages but between screenshotting peers' Snaps, which participants did and were often happy to show me, and the large number of peers that could possibly observe content despite its limited viewing timeframe, material can also be considered permanent or at least

irreversibly distributed. The norms that users have developed around Snapchat, such as the sharing of instantaneous, unfiltered, moments and the technological structures of the app itself (such as setting timers that determine how long a Snap can be viewed by anyone that receives it) likely contribute to the juxtaposition of the culture of Snapchat with the properties of content that is shared upon it.

One novel way that participants drew upon the discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* arises around this form of Snapchatting a status update while drinking. Participants sometimes described these instances of Snapchat use in a way that constructed them as fatiguing, banal or weighted down with a sense of obligation. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn on here to construct peers as not only constantly accessible but as people who were sometimes *too* present and that *needed* to be constantly acknowledged via the platform.

Ross: So what's coming in and then out of the phone from other people?

Pier: Normally a couple of messages asking what's going on, because we normally have stuff going on. So people will hit me up. And then Snapchats. I'll just do return Snapchats though.

Ross: Alright so with Snapchat you say that 90% of it goes to your husband are there other people that you'd occasionally Snapchat?

Awi: Ahhh yip, just random people, I Snapchat my sister. If somebody sends me something, I'll probably reply {shrugs}

Pier and Awi describe some of their use of Snapchat as purely reactionary which demarcates it from a construction of enjoyable updating of peers and displaying of drinking activities and instead constructs this exchange more as one of automation and decorum – those that have sent Snapchats should receive Snapchats. Despite the relative ease and quickness of Snapchatting Awi and Pier describe sometimes limiting themselves to only responding to peers' Snaps. Other participants also noted the banality of material that could form the basis of these exchanges and these reflections were not solely limited to the Snapchats they received. As we explored his data record Gfisk contemplated his discomfort over the material that forms the foundation of connection. Here the need to respond to peers and to have *something* that he felt was worth Snapchatting in response sometimes proved a difficult issue to navigate.

Ross: So then Snapchatting around 10:05 and that's actually you sending Snapchats out instead of just receiving?

Gfisk: Yeah that would have been replying to all my Snapchats. I hate replying to Snapchat. So I do it all in one big go. {Laughs} Get! {shoos the air} get it out of the way {motions frantic phone use}

Ross: That seems more onerous than some people find Snapchat?

Gfisk: Yeah ohhh {puts head in hand}

Ross: Don't enjoy it?

Gfisk: Nahhh. Oh I like it, and I hate it. I dunno um and that's sober or on the town, it's the same. It's just an annoying app

Ross: So what is it that…?

Gfisk: Um I don't know. It's the act of taking a selfie or putting in a picture and then adding a caption and that all takes more time than sending a caption to someone. I dunno, it's more personal? And like you can um I usually end up taking the piss actually cause it's easier than taking one where you don't look wrecked or don't look stupid?

Ross: So purposefully tank a photo or something?

Gfisk: Yeah or just even hold your hand over the camera so it's black?

Ross: Oh yeah yeah

Gfisk: Yeah I don't know I just find it an annoying app to use

Ross: So it's the photograph part {that is an issue}?

Gfisk: Yeah it definitely is actually taking a photo of yourself or something.

Gfisk describes how he allocated time in his night to 'batch Snapchat' his replies to everyone and this is described as getting it "*out of the way*" in one lot. The obligation of these connections sitting on his phone and waiting for a response creates a task that he needs to set aside time out of his other drinking activities to attend to, and the need to have to take a photo instead of respond with purely text is described as a requirement that just serves to make the task more tedious. Snapchat as an image-based communication works best when there is something to photograph. Gfisk notes that having to think about the image that is going to be sent becomes a burden because it is a more personal form of communication, he is representing himself on the platform and this is cause for care and concern when sending material; for example, if a selfie is an undesirable representation to put out into the space of the nightly Snapchats. Sending photos that are obviously "*taking the piss*", and do not convey a sense of trying too hard, reduces the likelihood of peers interpreting this representation as too meaningful. Gfisk describes photos where he purposefully looks "*wrecked*" or "*stupid*" (which are likely to be deemed funny and also avoid interpretation as vain representations of the self) as quicker and safer to source

and send than material that could be read as him having put some thought into it. Covering the camera is also a way of resisting the key feature of the app – it's visual representation – while still staying connected to his friends upon it. Gfisk's tension seems to have come about because he constructs the identity work that is a part of sending material over the platform as prominent and something others pay heed to which, while likely the case, does run counter to the appearance of ephemerality and the encouragement of fleeting or mundane connections that are emphasised by the culture and architecture of the Snapchat app.

Finally, Snapchat was described as something participants, and those they were drinking with, could do when together and as something that served the peers who participants were drinking with in addition to those they were apart from. Snapchat was used to generate content for those present to view and to be entertained by. In these instances, a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn upon to highlight the pleasure of being able to instantly access and replay small moments or interactions from other peers' perspectives thus facilitating continued enjoyment of the happenings. Structurally, Snapchat is suited to this instant replay function and, arguably, it even encourages it as the activity usually included some editing and alteration of the picture within the app (e.g. cutting all but one person from the scene or zooming on faces for effect) before it was then sent for the amusement of others. This interpretation of a moment-just-shared was usually one of humour and this material was also described as migrating outside of participants drinking context and into their groups' broader history and day to day communications.

Here Pier describes the speeches he is known to do while their group is drinking and playing beer pong. These are often captured on Snapchat and then shared with those present:

Ross: And then it's Snapchat, from Shax?
Pier: Yep, she's with us in the room. I'm probably Snapchatting and she's Snapchatting me.
Ross: So this is just across the room Snapchatting?
Pier: Yeah
Ross: That's surprisingly common
Pier: Yeah well it's mainly just zoomed in pictures of my face while I'm doing speeches for beer pong.

Ross: Right. As you were doing what sorry?

Pier: Speeches in beer pong, to motivate my partners. {Laughing}

Ross: Is this grandstanding for the beerpong?

Pier: Yeah. It's common

Ross: Upping the scene?

Pier: Just making sure we win!

Shax was Snapchatting Pier's Snapchatting of himself delivering these speeches to his beer pong comrades. Beer pong, as has been described in study 1, is a signifier of heavier drinking and adding to the 'Snappability' of this moment Pier is making speeches to rally his team at the beer pong table. The beer pong table itself is potentially Snappable content because it was one he described previously as a bespoke, handcrafted, gift to his girlfriend and so is both a meaningful object with narrative history to the group, as well as a signifier of their alignment with a certain aspect of their drinking culture (competitive heavy drinking). Broadcasting this material to his peers is something that falls into the social updating usage previously described but in addition to this, Shax has sent him her version of it. This then allows Pier to relive his efforts from her perspective once he is finished. Her perspective makes sure that it is just his face that is shared with the group, likely as the surrounding context is not necessary to include, they all know how their drinking is going, and because most of the entertainment will be derived from the enthusiasm with which the speech is given and any accompanying facial expressions. Sharing these snippets of entertaining moments via their phones highlights how Snapchat, similar to Facebook Messenger, also made use of participants' continual connection to present peers via their phones. AA below describes the act of creating Snapchat stickers as further entwining his drinking and social communication with present peers:

Ross: And then home! {The animated video stops} Sweet. So for the most part it seemed like Snapchat for the catching up with people back in {town} and letting them know how the night is going as well as checking in on how their nights going is that right?

AA: Yeah as well as banter for our group chat for the flat that was out.

Ross: So do you get stickers of you?

AA: Yeah generally just us four so that's one I took of Hummy looking quite wasted {shows saved Snap}.

Ross: {Leans in to see. Laughs} Wait, so is that copied?

AA: Yeah so you can cut around her and then I can send a Snapchat to her now with a picture of her face like that. So even like earlier today for Deben I would like cut out a face of a meme and put them in? So stuff like that. I should have some more here like for example {shows another image on phone of friend staring intensely right into the camera}

Ross: So sorry, just for the cameras, what was the text for that one? It was like "*what did you say to me you little cunt?*"

AA: Yes that's exactly it. And for example these are the things you can do with stickers. {Shows phone with a friend's face pasted onto each of the bodies present in a photo} So those are sort of the pictures.

Ross: So those are just all the people you're out with? And then that's on the fly right?

AA: Yeah.

Ross: So you take a photo edit it and then be like "I'm going to chop this up and edit out his face"?

AA: Yeah exactly, it's like a super budget photoshop

AA describes the enjoyment he gets from engaging in "*banter*" with his group while they are drinking together and utilising the space that Snapchat affords them. In this instance the banter comes from being able to create Snapstickers[16] from his friends that relate to their drinking excursions. These moments that have just passed can be instantly relived and then reused from then onward whenever the image is deemed relevant again. Drawing on a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* AA shows how any little moment can and will be captured and this is reinforced by the fact that these stickers are created continually across the night. By then sharing them back to the group with accompanying text, these moments become a form of in-group meme allowing the group to derive further enjoyment from the moment they just made. This also provides group members the opportunity to re-edit it if they can think of another way to humorously repurpose the content some other time. In this manner Snapchat solidifies these drinking related occurrences into the groups' wider, everyday communications and meaning making and it acts as a repository for content about drinking and peers that might want to be kept and remembered more permanently.

Participants described enjoying this ability to re-live their drinking events after the fact and derived personal pleasure from re-watching material they had previously captured. The repository of Snapchat,

[16] A collection of customisable digital images that are saved in Snapchat and that can be pasted into any Snapchats that are created.

via either the 24 hour availability of its Snapstory feature or participants' saved Snaps from events, was valued for the enjoyment, status, and conversation that resulted from sharing drinking material with peers:

Gfisk: Yes I do Snapchat. I didn't use Snapchat that much that night but some nights I microblog the whole evening just cause it is so funny.

Ross: Nice

Gfisk: Just the right type of night. And if I mentally commit to it at the start of the night "right I'm going to Snapchat everything tonight" cause when I do, I dunno, I get it just right, it looks quite funny? I play it back to myself the next morning and I'm hungover I'm like "that's hilarious" just watching it

Ross: So is that like a {Snap}Story or?

Gfisk: Yeah definitely a Story yeah. Just showing it to everyone you know? And people like come and talk to you and they're like "man the parties you go to are so wild" and I'm like "actually not really, it's just down to how you capture them?" But it's a good story, it's a good conversation starter.

Ross: That seems like it is often the case. That it is the conversations after the parties as well?

Gfisk: Yeah absolutely yeah. The sort of folklore I guess, a bit messed up.

Gfisk describes the enjoyment that can be experienced after his drinking when he has set about properly capturing the night on Snapstory, an enjoyment that contrasts his previous descriptions of when he has to use the app to respond to peers that have Snapchatted him. Drawing upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* he describes using Snapstory to continuously "*microblog*" his night; adding each relevant happening as a Snap to the dynamic, coherent, narrative that he builds over his drinking event. As he does previously, he constructs the tool-like nature of Snapchat and its ability to direct, frame, or reshape aspects of the night as integral to this enjoyment - with this assistance he can get it "*just right*". Snapchat is a flexible platform and it is one that brings together content and peer connections. This allows Gfisk to re-watch the material himself, as well as receive the admiration of his peers for it as they continually check in on his story or watch it in its entirety when it is finished. He also touches upon the idea that if it is good enough content then people will talk about it, it will be a conversational starter post event and that this elevated material may even become a permanent part of the "*folklore"* amongst his peers. These descriptions of the seemingly ephemeral platform of Snapchat being used to generate digital material that then becomes permanent were common amongst other

participants and illustrate how this group-centric drinking material seeps out of drinking contexts and into the everyday communication amongst peers.

Overall a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn upon to show the accessibility of every moment that held social potential across participants' drinking events. This accessibility was enabled by the two apps Snapchat and Messenger that participants used to capture and immortalise prime drinking moments and the people present within them. This material was then used as in-group memes or memories that were often taken up into the wider communication practices of the group to be sent over and over, continually reinforcing the connections between members and the associations present in this material.

Resisting Constantly Connected Drinking Cultures: Dropping the Connection

A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* constructs the phone as an integral connection to other peers across drinking events and in keeping with this, some participants resisted these constructions by actively, physically, disconnecting to show this constant connection as undesirable. This tension was echoed by other participants either through their contrasting descriptions of app and communications use (loving it, loathing it) or by similar direct consideration. For example Mercutio outlines some of the oppositional positions that could be taken around phone use as well as the cost of actually enacting these alternatives below:

Ross: Cool, is there anything you don't like about it, like your phone?

Mercutio: Um? I don't think so, actually I used to have the real wanky kind of like "oh I'm a slave to technology" thing, but I think that's, that's okay. Like, I like being able to be in constant contact with people and I like that I can talk to my friends who live like around the globe and have a reply in an instant. And I like that my friends can recommend me songs and I don't have to wait till I go home to listen to it right? I don't have to hunt out a CD. I like that I can remember a song that I liked when I was like 14 and I can just go back to it and I like that I can take a photo of my friends whenever I want. I love I love that kind of thing.

Ross: And everything happens through one thing? Like your phone?

Mercutio: Yeah, exactly exactly and I get frustrated 'cause I don't like... I like being able to contact people at any moment and I really like that I can have people contact me at any moment, but I also hate it because I just get so sick of people talking 'cause people all talking, like it always happens at once? Like I'll get a million messages like before {points, referencing her data we have covered}, they just all come at once. And I just I

> hate it. And I do, I go through phases of kind of like wanting to be off the grid for a while and just wanting people to, just if they want to talk to me and want to contact me just come over. But I think I would hate that more {laughs}. So everything is a double edged sword basically.

Acknowledging that the potential exists to view phones as overly involved in peoples' lives, Mercutio then positions herself against this interpretation of their ubiquity in peoples' social lives by showing that she has considered it but also made peace with this entwining. Describing it as "*wanky*" and making use of the hyperbolic term "*slave*" adds to the impression that distancing oneself from smartphones is not actually desirable and may even be a self-indulgent, naively elitist, position to take. However, drawing upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* she outlines how it can all become a bit much as there is little stopping each of her *potential* connections from actually instigating contact at the same time. Her data showed conversations on her phone between her friends that were drinking, her girlfriend, her theatre friends, and another two groups of friends and they were tangled together, chronologically, as asynchronous conversations that she would have had to have caught up with by reading back over message histories before she could engage with. She describes the "double edged sword" of enjoyable constant connectedness and the accompanying requisite of constant attention.

Above Mercutio outlines an abstracted version of the issues related to constant availability and connection, noting that sometimes she considers going off the grid and forcing people that want to talk to her to come and do so physically. In doing so she touches upon the communication thresholds present whereby digital access is easy thus it is used often and for mundane, sometimes distracting contact. Contrasting this, physical access is more effortful thus if she were able to limit her conversations to this mode, it would likely result in fewer communications and lessen the potential for being overwhelmed. For Mercutio this alternative is rejected as being worse, perhaps in part due to the extra onus of maintenance and immediate interaction that comes with synchronous, in-person, conversation. However other participants did take steps to disconnect from the constant connectedness their devices offered.

Ross: Cool so the pause in use here {motions at animated video}. Is that just because you're at a party?

Teefren: Yeah, actually there.

Ross: And you?

Teefren: Prefer to talk to people

Teefren had used her device to organise and talk to friends before her party but once there, she stopped using it completely and only resumed once she was organising to move on from the venue. When asked, she mentioned she left it in her bag the entire time she was at the party. Above she describes a stark dichotomy between the conversations she had on her phone and talking to people at the party she attended, one in which the former are positioned as inferior in some manner. This coupled with the complete lack of device use emphasises her prioritisation of face-to-face sociality over that which the phone offers. In this instance the constant connectedness offered by her device was useful up to a point, it got her to the event and helped organise the logistics of her evening, but after this it is then constructed as irrelevant or even undesirable. There is a physical displacement of the device that disrupts its ability to call attention to the communication and connection it offers. This distance is used by Teefren to disconnect from her peers in order to properly prioritise other forms of sociality on offer. This was likewise the case for Pier who draws upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* as part of his rationale for disconnecting when he chooses to stay home over a drinking night:

Pier: So if I was like sober driver I'd probably use the phone in the same way assuming that the party is at my house cause I'd still have music and all that {waves at data}, probably still send Snapchats of other people doing drunken shenanigans but yeah probably be pretty much the same. But if I was staying at home not going out, I probably wouldn't use it at all. Or if I was staying with {girlfriend}, I might use Google some.

Ross: Nice

Pier: Otherwise I just get bothered by lots of people like "come out", they do what I was doing to Rif.

Ross: They start wheedling you?

Pier: Yeah so the quickest way to stop that is just to not answer

Ross: Ah that's cool, so often like kind of blank times on your phone?

Pier: If it's been like a couple of weekends when I've been going out, then yeah I'll try and have a weekend off.

Ross: Right and then the easiest way to disconnect from that is just to turn the phone off? Or onto silent?

Pier: Yeah so put it on silent. Oh I won't even turn it onto silent but I'll turn off my ummm Wi-Fi because then the people that are just on Messenger can't message me. Cause I use Messenger for everything.

In Pier's phone data he had been repeatedly trying to convince a few of his friends (including Rif above) that were choosing not to attend his drinking event to change their mind and join him instead. This had been an enjoyable activity that drew on a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to illustrate that continued connection as being valuable and providing him the means to wear down resistance to his attempts (Rif eventually gave up studying and joined the evening). Above, however, Pier again acknowledges the constant connectedness the device creates with his peers and the influence this can have over his evening. Because Messenger is such a large part of his drinking nights, his disconnecting from internet access also disconnects him from his peers and his drinking culture for a time. Similar to Mercutio, he once again constructs this change as a form of gatekeeping – for Pier the constant insistence to "*come out*" from loose acquaintances that "*are only on Messenger*" is avoided but those peers that are able to call him, and whose need eclipses having to engage in this less desirable communication mode, can still do so.

One final disengagement from the constant connectedness of the phone resulted from the primacy of activities at participants' physical locations creating a peak enjoyment or engagement that naturally led to little use of participants' phones. Below Gfisk positions Snapchat as a secondary drinking activity, despite having previously outlined the pleasure that he got when he documents a drinking session of him and his friends and makes it look "*nuts*" (GFisk). Snapchat use is both constructed as a signifier of a slow night as well as the remedy to this issue, whereas disconnection from the phone is depicted as a naturally occurring phenomenon and a metric of a successful night where everyone is "*tearing things apart*".

Ross: Right, it used to be that there was always that person that was always taking photos of the night but I think that it

Gfisk: Sort of the advent of Snapchat that's partly fallen

Ross: Yeah I think that's the thing I was curious about. You'd say that's everyone now? Basically microblogging the night?

Gfisk: {Laughs}, yeah {nods} yeah especially if the nights a bit slower then everyone jumps on Snapchat and starts to document everything. But if things are absolutely hectic and, you know, tearing things apart really

quickly, then nobody has time? Nobody thinks to jump on Snapchat. Umm but there's definitely more avid Snapchatters than us.

Ross: So when you say that the night is ebbing and everyone jumps on Snapchat, is that sort of figuring out what other people are up to?

Gfisk: Yeah basically. I don't think it is trying to escape, but it is trying to get more people there or it is trying to move everybody there {motions picking up a group of people and moving them} to sort of psych it back up again. Nothing really dies, it is just quieter. Like if you're having a conversation with someone or within the group and you've actually got space to jump on the phone whilst a few others converse, it's like "oh yeah cool". {points at data on screen} That would have been when I was checking my messages, when things were quieter, especially during the game when everybody is just {puts up both hands like horse-blinkers and motions forward} at the screen.

A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* is drawn on to show how myriad contacts that are immediately accessible via apps such as Snapchat take a drinking event that has slowed and "*psych it back up again*". Gfisk describes this usage as being not about "*escape*" or abandonment of the sociality on hand but as complementary to it or as occurring in the spaces between it. However the constant connectedness the device offers, and in particular the attention to those connections present upon it, meet their match when the night reaches its zenith. The converged sociality and social spaces of device and face-to-face conversation are described as more distinct from each other. The face-to-face sociality and "in the moment" physical, bonding, activities of the peers gathered together take precedence and keeps their attention in such a way that Snapchatting and documenting the night becomes a secondary, often forgotten, activity.

Chapter 9: Alcohol marketing and constantly connected young adults

Similar to participants in study 1, app study participants described alcohol as having associations with particular peers and life events. By being a continual and familiar part of participants' drinking cultures these commercial brands had meanings, memories, and status organically attached to them as they were present and used by young adults as a part of their sociality and drinking. While many alcohol brands were discussed amongst participants, two were particularly prominent across multiple participants in this study: Speights – a common 'student' beer brand – and Jägermeister a sweet spiced liquor that is often mixed with a Red Bull energy drink to create a 'Jägerbomb' in clubs. For example, Gfisk discusses the wide range of associations that his friends have attached to Jägermeister below:

Ross: Jägermeister is revered?

Gfisk: Yeah! um it's I dunno it's like if someone's got a bottle of Jäger. Like if someone's got a bottle of vodka it's like "oh yeah spirits" but if someone's got a bottle of Jäger, it's the shape, it's the colour, it's the smell, it's the taste. And it's all that stuff you know "woooah". And it's German. It's got that real German name and it's what it does to you. And it's the fact that it is part of the Jägerbomb which is kind of {stops}

Ross: Yeah it's clubbish?

Gfisk: Yeah it's got that sort of association but by itself it's like "woah! Jägermeister". If someone's handing shots of that out you're like {gleefully rubs hands together} "yes please!"

Ross: {Laughs} "And I will queue for it"

Gfisk: Yeah and people will only give it out to people that they really like? So it's sort of like a status thing if someone gives you a shot of Jägermeister it's like "oh where'd you get that?" "oh {puts on snooty face and voice} Renee gave it to me". You know like?

Ross: "We're friends"

Gfisk: We're friends yeah exactly and everyone is like "ooooo" {raises eyes} sort of thing? It's got that vibe[17] about it. You know?

Ross: Yeah I kinda get it. It's interesting trying to figure out how it got there?

Gfisk: Yeah ummm god I can't tell you why that is. Like I think it hits you as soon as you go to your first couple of parties and people talk about it "oh he's got Jäger" it's somehow snuck in

Jägermeister is constructed as holding a special status amongst Gfisk's drinking peers. It is a signifier of a special night and just having it at a party is described as elevating a person's status alongside the added

[17] Feeling or association

meaning of sharing it with other partygoers. While he cannot articulate how Jägermeister managed to gain this status amongst his peers Gfisk still holds and reproduces his group's fascination with this product – a product that has the novelty of a foreign language label, a distinctive bottle, a unique taste, and that has ingrained itself into the clubbing scene. This status meant that it was integrated into the production of their drinking cultures on apps such as Snapchat:

Ross: What about like on your phone, similar to people have shit around the flat of Tui and whatnot, does anyone include their drink in their Snapchat?

Gfisk: Absolutely, in Snapstories, like Jägermeister is the classic one. If somebody's got a bottle of Jägermeister, again, it's that status symbol coming through and that's an experience in itself Jägermeister.

Ross: So that'd go on a {Snap}Story?

Gfisk: Yes definitely or individual Snaps to people like "come here, we have Jäger"

Ross: It's a lure?

Gfisk: Yeah!

Jägermeister is used as a product to be Snapped to others when they want to show their event is going to be one that aligns with the particular "*experience*" and "*status*" he and his peers have built up around the brand. This presentation of brands as Snapworthy by themselves was relatively rare and in this instance appears to be derived from the unique pedestal the peer group has placed Jägermeister upon, a reverence that also helps eschew any questions of maturity that might be directed at putting the product so front and center into communications. However, these associations between brand and the meanings or understandings that underpinned peer group relationships were present amongst other participants to varying degrees as well. For example, while Mercutio described a wariness of marketing and branding in general she also derived pleasure from certain brand associations that had been cultivated over time with her peers:

Ross: Yeah So what about like, um, so like perhaps a slightly more genuine kind of form of advertising is, is that advertising by association. So instead of it coming from a company, like from a friend or something? so I don't know… if someone sends you a photo or uploads photos on Facebook where they're sort of getting drunk or just chilling with like a brand or a particular bottle of something. What about that?

Mercutio: It still annoys me if, yeah, I don't know why that annoys me, but it does. Like I think I will drink things that my friends are drinking. But also it's always based on recommendation. On some sort of, like, a sentimental thing. So last year I made friends with this person who umm… We had this like him and his flat

mate had this tradition where they would go to New World and there was this like massive like 2 litre bottle of wine. Like just weird Italian wine. That usually cost like $20 but sometimes on special for 17.99. So every time it was on special…

Ross: {Laughs} Phwoooar!

Mercutio: I know! So every time it was on special they had to go and buy it and we would like 'cause we all had this agreement, well not agreement, but kind of like thing where we would nev..., we refused to spend more than $10 on wine. Umm Yeah that yeah the $10 rule and so that was like splashing out and that was like the big exciting thing. But of course you couldn't buy it when it was $20.00. So you have to go for $17.99 and so now whenever I see it on special I buy it out of out of kind of like "oh this person moved away and I miss them."

Ross: Yeah, that sort of nostalgia buy.

Mercutio describes learning and aligning with a friend's brand associations, specifically a bottle of "*weird"* Italian wine. In doing so their purchasing norms are incorporated as a form of bonding and ritual that was done together. She and her companions bond over the purchasing of a specific brand of alcohol with relatively arbitrary rules of when it is to be purchased and when it is to be left on the shelf, to the extent that, after the person this purchasing was associated with has left, Mercutio continues to buy it as a form of remembrance of those moments shared. The brand has made itself available to this kind of meaning making by way of being cheap and occasionally on special for cheaper but the specific context of Mercutio's friends and their conversations and behaviour around the brand are what have cemented its place as a relational tool between them. Other participants and their peers also included alcohol brands directly as a part of their social identities:

Pier: Nah but talking about advertising like that, some mates that drink the same thing every week, so we always talk about that.

Ross: Oh yep, that becomes a topic of discussion?

Pier: Well Crej always drinks DBs and Crej is working. {DB or Double Brown Ale is a low cost beer}

Ross: Doublè Baronè! {a common, sarcastic, dressing up of the cheap beer brand name}

Pier: Yeah he drinks that

Ross: Does he fancy it up?

Pier: He loves it! He thinks it's really good. I might have to tell him about that.

Ross: That's excellent!

Pier: It's disgusting

Ross: So that becomes the topic of conversation?

Pier: Yeah. It's always about us drinking Double Brown though, not anyone else drinking stuff. I mean some of my friends when we were at school you know like a couple of nights gather together, a couple of my Gizzy mates always drank Cody's[18] from the age of 14 to when they were like 18 or19. So there will be sometimes when we go back and be like hey let's all get a box of Cody's cause remember when we used to {muffled}. A nostalgic thing.

Ross: Nostalgic brand kind of a thing?

Pier: Yeah so sometimes that happens. Sometimes you've gotta do what you gotta do. Cody's is disgusting but sometimes you've gotta do it.

Pier describes his friend as a one brand man and in this instance there is a certain amount of incredulity about the chosen brand as it is a particularly cheap brand of beer and his friend is working (so should be able to afford to buy much better beer). This association allows for routine conversation and group discussion and appears to even shape the group toward drinking the same beer on occasion despite the distaste for it. Pier likens this friends' strong branded association to other unpleasant drinking that is done because it needs to be done in order to reaffirm previous ties and revisit formative drinking moments. Cody's is described as an identity marker for his other group of friends and the cheaper brand is associated with the younger, underage, drinking that they engaged in. This makes it a part of their first alcohol experiences and nicely situates drinking it as an act of remembrance and reengaging with the folklore of their past. In addition to describing their relationships to brands, participants also constructed themselves as aware of the shift to online alcohol marketing and of the differences this entailed for how brands presented themselves to participants:

AA: Online is a bit more in your face about it? Then they'll also come across like "oh we're a friendly organisation?" Sort of thing. Which is every sort of brand.

Ross: Your brand as your mate kind of thing?

AA: Which is like "you don't care about it", we're just numbers.

Here AA suggests that online, brands can be both more obtrusive as well as more sociable because they actively project themselves into AA's social spaces using friendly corporate personas. He picks this apart a little suggesting that this type of engagement is one that feels staged and makes the ulterior motives,

[18] Bourbon and cola RTD

such as the data that engagement creates, clear. Below Teefren expands on the apparent persistence of mobile and online marketing of alcohol.

Ross: So what do you think in terms of the trend of alcohol marketing moving from offline billboards to online social media and then even more directly to your phone through apps and encouraging people to share marketing material?

Teefren: I think it will continue because it's working

Ross: Do you think it's working?

Teefren: Yeah I think so. Cause I don't see that much of it… but what I do see is more than I see for anything else. So I don't see anywhere near that level of advertising for clothing, or food or even fast food advertising.

Ross: Right cool so you think alcohol it is very clearly front and centre for marketing presence?

Teefren: Yeah I think so

Ross: And do you think that it's the digital presence that is pushing that?

Teefren: Yeah I think so

Teefren, who noted throughout her interview that she saw very little marketing, notes that she still somehow manages to see more alcohol marketing than any other form and that this suggests online marketing and mobile marketing has been a successful pursuit for alcohol marketers. Alcohol marketing, in particular online alcohol marketing, is a notable presence compared to other forms and it is here that a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* starts becoming a useful lens through which to view alcohol marketing in young adult lives. The constant connectedness of Teefren to peers and marketers creates these points of reference where she can see that despite marketing not being overly visible to her, alcohol marketing is primarily what is being shown to her and so alcohol marketing represents some of the more commercial connections that are less overtly visible yet still constantly connected to her via her phone.

Similar to study 1, participants also tended to construct themselves as unmoved or oblivious to any marketing and advertising they did happen to see. However, sometimes they drew on a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* to show how their imperviousness to marketing attempts and material could be hampered by their connections to other peers who were less vigilant and engaged with material in ways that brought it to the attention of participants:

Awi: No I have never seen alcohol marketed on my smartphone or if I have seen it I haven't registered it?

Ross: Yeah so most of the advertising is all kind of other physical stuff? And TV?

Awi: No I've never paid attention to ads. I'm kind of at that age that I had a phone of some description, even if it wasn't a smartphone, that I could occupy myself with during the ads?

Ross: Yeah I suppose that's the way that things are going.

Awi: Unless they were funny, I suppose the only way that alcohol marketing media would get in front of me was if it was funny. And it got linked to me or it made a compilation of top 20 funniest ads that went viral

Here Awi suggests she rarely sees alcohol advertising of any form and notes that her phone is actually a form of protection from having to suffer through traditional types of advertisements as would be seen on TV. But she does also note that any material she does happen to see is likely going to be sourced from peers linking funny, relatable, content to her or material that has achieved some meta recognition of worth or unusualness such as anything that has proven popular enough to achieve virality where its spread will be peer-led. The presence of ads and marketing in participants' lives was generally described as undesirable, particularly when talking about attempts that were obvious pieces of marketing. Zeffron extended this notion of his peers as weak points in his efforts to avoid engaging with and seeing, alcohol marketing materials:

Ross: Oh so as foot traffic you probably see a little bit more {marketing}?

Zeffron: Yeah a little bit? To be honest I have an adblocker.

Ross: Is it Adblocker Plus?

Zeffron: Yep. It's like "no I don't like ads".

Ross: Yeah so my question now is what about in your Facebook feed? Cause adblocker; not so good at that.

Zeffron: Oh yeah that's right! Cause it's like "oh hey! look at this page that people liked" and it is like, yes! That is where I see it. Because it is like, "your friends like Smirnoff" or something, so here's an advertisement for Smirnoff. It's like "thaaank you friends" {sarcasm}

Ross: {Laughs} "You've exposed me to more. Cool". That's fair, blaming your friends for alcohol advertising is fair

Zeffron: What are friends for?

Zeffron uses specific software to block advertisements on his phone but he constructs his friends' less diligent engagements with brands upon the social platforms he is also present on as bypassing this preventative measure. These exchanges use the mechanics of the platform that are reserved for illustrating the social activity that peers have engaged in, here liking or following an alcohol branded

page on the platform, rather than those that are more obviously reserved for advertising. Elements of a *constantly connected drinking cultures* discourse are drawn on to construct the risks inherent to being constantly connected with peers that participants themselves have little to no control over and whose activities on the social platforms they share can change participants own experiences of them. The presence of ads in Zeffron's life is attributed to the acts of others and there are elements of affront that accompany his descriptions of this activity that draw upon his lack of agency in these instances of exposure. AA describes how this can escalate further once there is immediacy added to these notifications of peers' activities:

Ross: So what about over the night would you get anything coming in? So like if you've liked a bar on Facebook or something like that they might send you notifications for events that they have might come up?

AA: Oh like sometimes other people going to events near me at bars and stuff, but that would probably be the extent of it and I don't really care, "why is this notification?"{swipes imaginary notification away}, like I'm not going to go to your stupid event.

Ross: So that one is just telling you about friends?

AA: Yeah generally

Ross: And it's for events that are near you?

AA: Mhmm

Ross: Like so if you're in {town} you wouldn't get that for your friends in another town

AA: Yeah it's location based

Ross: Oh cool fascinating. And that's for like pubs would be like an event? at a pub?

AA: Yeah I'm thinking like something in that alleyway {points to it on his animated video}, or like {pub name} doing some dress up party or something.

Again the immediacy of peers' connections to AA and the ability of their unrelated (and sometimes undesirable activities) to interfere with his night by creating notifications on his phone is constructed as spamming him with material he considers irrelevant and annoying. A role of the smartphone as a mobile marketing device is outlined whereby the phone makes use of location-based services to track the events AA's friends attend in real time and then notifies AA about these activities. This is presumably based upon the assumption that, as contacts of his, the activities are likely to be relevant to his interests and he may also wish to attend. The platform of Facebook, and its underlying algorithms, has not recognised that these connections are not ones he wishes to prioritise at the time. But it is an obvious

area of growth for marketing on the platform and this notification process represents a series of decisions based on estimations that are only likely to improve in their accuracy, particularly as he provides valuable feedback by swiping them away. Even in the above instance it is possible that under different conditions (e.g. altered mood, greater level of intoxication) this notification would have been acted upon instead. This would represent the process working as intended despite it being deemed irritating this time. Indeed, it is also the case that these connections and this sharing of alcohol related activities was sometimes appreciated. For example Gfisk describes how his friends often share this material with him and how, when it involves an event to attend, it can be integrated into their nightly plans:

Ross: What about like drinking events? So umm

Gfisk: Definitely yep that's through your phone. Concerts

Ross: Yeah homegrown and stuff like that?

Gfisk: Yeah homegrown is a classic or certain clubs that have something on in town "oh we should all go to this" or "have a party first and then all go to that"

Ross: Oh ok so how do people find out about that?

Gfisk: That's advertised via social media. Facebook primarily

Ross: And so is that the kind of stuff that you wouldn't see but your friends would pass through?

Gfisk: Yeah definitely. I tend not to see that stuff, I don't know why.

Ross: Is that, do you friend any bars on Facebook?

Gfisk: I follow all of them! But that stuff just doesn't appear on my newsfeed. For whatever reason my Facebook algorithm isn't aware that I drink. {Laughs}

Gfisk constructs himself as missing out on relevant marketing material here rather than avoiding it and despite the impenetrability of Facebook's supposedly malfunctioning algorithm and his online connections with most of the relevant local bars, his friends are needed before he can actually access the material he would like to. Gfisk, contrasting Zeffron above, constructs himself as pursuing this form of alcohol marketing. However, one notable difference between Gfisk here and AA above is that in the end Gfisk's friends are actively sending him the relevant material when compared to the Facebook led notifications of AA's peer activities. In both cases the unreliable nature of Facebook's infrastructure is bemoaned for its inability to properly gauge the needs of AA and Gfisk; but they describe potential

means for this to improve e.g. by swiping away notifications or by attending to specific drinking material that is sent by friends, both acts that help train what should be considered relevant.

As discussed in *Snapchat and a discourse of constantly connected drinking cultures*, sometimes negotiations were required when deciding what should be Snapchatted to peers and this created a tension between caution relating to personal representation on the platform and the appeal of Snapchatting and acknowledging connections to peers. For most participants brand and alcohol marketing was constructed as being safe in the right circumstances – it could be used as the foundation or precursor to connection without encouraging interpretations of the material that might appear too personal or invested. As in study 1, the idea of engaging with overt marketing was usually met with disinterest, derision or wariness. For the most part a desire to do so was limited to opportunities too good to pass up such as incredible specials on relevant brands: "*if it is like an objectively good special from normal advertising then I'm going to go for it. I mean Guinness for $5 at a bar? I'm there yesterday!*" (AA). But marketing and brands that were not too obtrusive were sometimes constructed as providing opportunities to connect with others and this led to alcohol brands being integrated into the solidifying and celebration of individual or group relationships that took place on platforms such as Snapchat. This could take the simple form of a quick notification of a deal spotted being sent to the relevant person as below:

AA: Yeah if it was something that I knew they really liked. Like for Jebra, if I'm at the store and there's lots of Speights on sale {motions messaging on the phone} "oh long night, are we getting up in this deal?"

This fleeting connection builds upon the shared knowledge of Jebra as a 'Speights man' and uses this part of his alcohol identity as the foundation for both sharing the relevant deal but also the invitation for a "long night" of drinking. Aflat below gives some consideration of what this looks like from the other end as he was another known Speights drinker, with it potentially more solidified as a part of his identity, leading to well-established group routines around the brand:

Aflat: Yeah it's kind of a running joke that all I drink is Speights, so whenever we're drinking Speights, there is generally a Snapchat of Speights. Like either the ones that I'm drinking or the ones that I've finished or….

Ross: So is that you sending them out or people sending them to you? Does anyone just send you a bunch of Speights photos?

Aflat: Sometimes! {Laughing}. They're like "you'd love it here" it's a Speights {motions taking a photo of some Speights that the friends have sighted while out and about}

Ross: Just a wall of Speights?

Aflat: Yeah and I've also got a Speights branded darts board, so it'll just be a photo of a Speights bottle next to the Speights darts board. Which we also painted the stand for blue, Speights blue.

Ross: Oh yeah okay so that's the kind of thing! So sort of covers the next one do friends or other contacts send you alcohol information through the phone?

Aflat: Yeah mostly light-hearted, never like marketing or like "there's a deal"

Ross: {commanding voice} "you should buy Speights"

Aflat: Yeah {laughs}

Ross: Ahhh so that kind of difference there, obviously you're not sending that there as a "you should drink Speights" or even if you are it's again very light-hearted? So Speights and Tui are doing light-hearted advertising but is there still quite a difference between that and what you're doing?

Aflat: Yeah probably. It's just the case that I have my brand sort of a thing? Like it's more perhaps at first it would have been advertising but upon trying other beverages, such as Tui, I went back to my standard.

Similar to Pier's friend that enjoys Double Brown beer, Aflat's affiliation with Speights is something his friends are aware of and likely anyone within his personal environs would be too as he had various Speights paraphernalia about his house. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* encourages constructions of these types of exchange across Snapchat again as fleeting moments of connection and affirmation of relational ties. Brands are interwoven seamlessly into this connectedness as the meanings and associations that have been built around them align with the relationships, preferences and identities of young adults. Snapping Aflat images of Speights or receiving the same from him is desirable because it is constructed (and can be read) primarily as a nod to some shared knowledge between the Snapchatters - an acknowledgement that Speights has been found somewhere and that they both know *someone* who likes Speights. The constructions of Snapchat as a social, "light-hearted", communications platform likely also encourage similar interpretations of this material being conveyed through it and deemphasise the commercial connections of the material being sent. This may also be seen to play a part in AA's description of how he incorporated a beer brand and promotion into a Snapchat update below:

Ross: Sweet so what about drinking events, local specials, alcohol related events, like Wellington sevens?

AA: Oh yeah!

Ross: Would you ever get anything from your friends about those sorts of things? Jim Beam homegrown, homegrown, rhythm and vines it can be branded or wellington sevens isn't alcohol branded but is considered …

AA: It has an alcohol culture

Ross: Do you get any of that from friends and fam?

AA: Not particularly, although I like that you said fam {points fingers like guns at me}. But like for example maybe not through social media but for the lions tour the {English pub} did like a buy London prides {English beer} for a cheaper price as well as go into a draw for that? So we'd just go there and be like London pride, then we'd just Snapchat our mates "oh London pride, classic" {laughs}

Ross: {Laughs} Trolling? So in… that one is kind of like the pub doing it because they're an English pub right? And doing an English special for a special event

AA: And we'd be just going along as well because we're ruffians {Laughs}

AA describes the novelty of an English experience, where specials on alcohol align with contemporary cultural events. Here the England rugby team was visiting to play in Aotearoa. Aotearoa has lasting historical ties to England (including many English expatriates that set up or frequent pubs such as the one in question), a team that the All Blacks[19] have a long, close, and competitive history with, and an English branded dark beer on special which provides a good stand-in for, or reference to, the visiting nation. Taking part in this experience, particularly to engage in a bit of mockery and potential turf crossing, creates a moment worth Snapchatting. There is a requisite fun, impishness, or whimsy present here that makes engagement with an alcohol promotion not only appealing but a context where AA is likely to create and share alcohol branded content and information about the promotion organically - this material will be embedded and shared as part of his sociality across Snapchat in ways that are completely determined and directed by him. Again the brand and promotion provides a foundation for connection and by including elements that show that they may not really belong in this context, AA and his friends can build upon this foundation to create a Snapchat connection with peers that constructs their activities as shenanigans being undertaken and avoids constructions that draw close affiliations

[19] The name for the men's national rugby team

with the act of marketing. Below AA compares this light, branded, material alongside other Snapchat material he receives over a night:

Ross: So thinking about what comes into the phone while you're drinking. What's the composition of that material? Is it just like them in the photo? Or is it funny shit that they've got going on? Or is it particularly if they're out drinking would they include what they're drinking?

AA: All of them, just depends on the person and situation. Like Jane Snapchatted some sick Beercon stuff and like shots, and like Joseph in town {Motions dancing} and lasers and everything, and Gareth Snapchatted "on an ice cold Speights" or something.

Ross: So if you get something like "nice cold Speights" usually is that going to be them telling you what they're drinking and where?

AA: Yeah "oh yeah hard days work" or something not super personal

Ross: Just kind of a catch up?

AA: Yeah and then you respond "oh yeeah nah mate, sounds choice" or something

AA includes an update of drinking a Speights alongside what would often be considered more exciting drinking related activities and he expands on this material to construct it as a fairly routine and shallow connection that holds little personal value. In doing so he describes what may be an asset of the material, as the distancing from more "*super personal*" material constructs this as a casual form of connection instead and this better aligns with the culture of Snapchat and allows for more opportunities to send Snapchats.

The integration of marketing material and brands into these casual, frequent, connections bridges previous material where participants constructed their constant connectedness to peers as sometimes pleasurable, and onerous or open to misinterpretation at others. Marketing provides relatable content that can be used or referenced in these connections with peers. This is coupled with the work that most alcohol marketing campaigns do in building alcohol related tropes that are recognisable contexts or situations that drinkers might find themselves in. For example below a fairly cheap brand of beer (Export) had engaged in a bit of brand 'banter' with a slightly more expensive brand (Corona). The cheap brand's marketing campaign mocked the perceived aloofness of the other's attempts. This is fairly standard social marketing where two brands engage in the kind of exchanges that are prized in these online spaces. However, Pier describes how this is the kind of marketing that is also enmeshed with an

end of workday "generic" Snapchat and how, when combined, these factors create material that is easily shared via Snapchat and that is received as a pleasant 'checking-in' from a peer. By recreating the recognisable beer ad slogan and context Pier's peer is creating a knowable reference for Pier and the content is suitably mundane so that there is little chance that any undesirable interpretations or affiliations can be attached to its sending.

Pier: I was thinking of the Speights ones, the finishing school down south. Or the export gold when Corona did their umm "from where you'd rather be" and Export gold did their "from where you actually are?" I enjoyed that.

Ross: That is kind of meta isn't it?

Pier: Yeah, I thought that was cool.

Ross: Um soo the rest of it focuses on sort of not quite so blatant marketing? Sort of Snapchats and people sending a bottle of what they're drinking for the night or whatever. Ah so do you get any of that sort of alcohol material through the smartphone?

Pier: Yeah if it's like that then lots of my friends Snapchat when they're out drinking. So yeah.

Ross: Right and will they include what they're drinking?

Pier: Ah so it sort of depends, so lots of my mates, when I think about it, I'll get heaps on Fridays. Cause lots of my mates are tradies?[20] so tradies up in Gizzy with the beautiful weather. So I'll get a lot of pictures of beer and Woodstocks.

Ross: Right so box and the sun?

Pier: Normally just the bottle, one bottle and finishing workday something like "good work on the site" or "from where you'd rather work" or something generic-ish like that

Ross: Yep just kind of like basically the alcohol ad?

Pier: Yeah yeah pretty much

Ross: And do you enjoy getting that?

Pier: Yeah I do actually, at least someone's got nice weather. And I like it; lots of my mates work hard so they definitely deserve it.

Ross: Summer sun and beer is nothing to be ashamed of

Pier: Noo

Ross: So what is that? Through Snapchat? Facebook?

Pier: Yeah pretty much always through Snapchat. Occasionally I might see something like, I might see something on Facebook. Maybe like once or twice, or on Instagram. But it's like very rare.

[20] Tradesperson e.g. plumber, builder, electrician

In creating marketing that is easily referenced, humorous and aligned with the culture of an 'end of working week reward', Export beer has seeded an opportunity for content creation that only needs to be recognised and then taken up in a suitable context. This is illustrated by Pier's reflection that he gets a lot of Friday check-ins from friends. This opportunity relies on Snapchat being a platform of social connection but also on the need of participants and their peers for material that is constructed as interesting enough to take a picture of and light-hearted enough to be sharing as a casual Snapchat to peers. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* helps construct low maintenance, easily recognisable, content as desirable material for making numerous, safe, connections to peers. Here Pier's friend combines a picture of an end of working week beer with a repurposed beer brand slogan which itself is derived from a marketing campaign that mocked the out of touch and idyllic messages of another brand and in doing so he creates a safe, not too personal check-in with Pier that is enjoyed.

A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was a part of the resources participants used to describe the presence of alcohol marketing within the apps on their phones as well as their understandings of how they incorporated marketing materials into their sociality, particularly their app-based sociality. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* emphasises the constant presence of 'others' via the connections available on participants' phones. While participants sometimes described an awareness of constant marketer presence through secondary associations of algorithms and structural notifications, primarily a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was used to construct peers as constant presences via participants' devices and as desirable to acknowledge or connect with frequently. Thus, the discourse highlights how the constant presence of alcohol marketing becomes a useful tool for its mundane relevance to other young adult drinkers and the broadly accepted instances of fleeting sociality, less burdened by notions of self-representation, that sending alcohol branded material offers. As well as accommodating for the contexts drinking participants might find themselves in and the opportunities participants' needs represent, these branded materials cleverly matched the established cultures of the social apps they were propagated amongst (e.g. the spontaneous, whimsical, culture of Snapchat). This was done in ways that make them easily

identifiable/usable resources for young adults seeking to maintain and acknowledge relationships across these platforms and further embeds brands into the spaces where young adult drinking cultures are being developed and practiced.

Summary

By placing participants' phones at the centre of this study (the devices being the only way I 'observed' how phones were used as part of participants' nights) this app study covered similar material and activity to my observational study but did so from a different perspective. This is a perspective formed from an approach to collecting and analysing participants' phone data that almost mimics the algorithmic approaches engaged in by alcohol marketers – albeit a far less powerful or all-encompassing approach than those activities. Regardless, I enjoyed trying to piece together the 'puzzle' of each participant's night and, more broadly, some things about them from their phone data before we met for interviews. Many times, before meeting participants, I was able to infer much about the existing relationships with contacts present in the data as well as little personal details, hobbies, or preferences of the owner – small insights that often proved useful for aiding or guiding interviews. This foreknowledge and profiling of people-yet-unmet from phone data extended to information about the many contacts that participants interacted with across their devices too. Taken as a whole, this data gave me a restricted look at a mere sliver of the predictive data trove that is being continually compiled and made use of by alcohol marketers – an insight that was as fascinating as it is worrying when the implications of what becomes possible for marketers with that level of access are considered.

A key thing that comes across in my app data is the accessibility that is afforded by the smartphone, and the extent to which this entwines various unrelated threads of participants' lives with their drinking. Discussions with participants brought some of the ramifications of this constant accessibility and connection more fully into the foreground than it had been in my observational study and this was key in shaping my analysis for the app study around a detailed consideration of how participants drew upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* when describing the distinct apps and communication mediums used across drinking events. Overall, coupling this methodology with

participant interviews encouraged discussion relating to a lot more of the micro detail of participants' phone interactions as well as some of the more mundane ways they used their devices while drinking.

Drawing upon a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* participants constructed peers as being a constant presence via their smartphone connections. This is a connection that was not always active, instead it was a potential that could be realised at any time by using their phones to connect to peers. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn on to show the positives of this connection such as the immediacy of information, feelings of adaptability and safety, or group coherence. However, it was also used to construct this continued presence as detrimental at times; for example, when deluges of constant communication became overwhelming or when the more subtle pressure to acknowledge and maintain relationships with constantly connected peers across a drinking event built up and required attention – this was a pressure that appeared similar in nature to that which can accompany sitting with a peer in a silence that begins to extend. Here the finite capacity of participants' attention was central to the issue and a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* also was used to position the phone as requiring constant attention. This was exacerbated, in part, by the way that smartphones allowed mundane, everyday, aspects of participants' lives access into their drinking occasions. Messages and Snapchats from family or peers that were not drinking added to those being sent by peers that were, and thus to the content that required attention and response via the device.

Participants described the various functions of the apps on their phones in ways that showed each as playing a specific part in keeping them constantly connected to peers and other contacts. Each differed in terms of the immediacy the app required, the intimacy of relationship with peers involved, and the norms of the content and media that comprised conversations. Calling was used by participants infrequently; yet its immediacy, coupled with the heightened need to be attended, was leveraged in specific contexts to deal with time sensitive issues. Participants used Facebook Messenger and Snapchat the most for their social communication with peers. While both were used throughout, Snapchat was

more prominent while drinking took place and Messenger played a slightly larger role in pre-event logistics. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn upon to show these apps as binding drinking friends together, regardless of locality, and as providing constant spaces in which groups could maintain relational ties across their drinking events. This constant connection and desire to acknowledge relational ties led to alcohol content once again forming the foundation for sociality. The pressure to connect that is a part of a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*, alongside a wariness of the identity work that many of these apps are used for, appears to create a niche for marketing content to be used as a relaxed, 'safe', and entertaining way of engaging in sociality with peers, as well as for bonding.

Chapter: 10 Discussion, implications, future directions and conclusions

In this final chapter I begin by using my research questions to focus and place my research findings within the relevant existing literature. Following this, I consider some of the limitations of the research. In the remainder of the chapter, I broaden my focus to consider the implications of my findings for smartphone-enabled young adult drinking cultures and alcohol marketing. I then identify ways in which future research might build upon these findings before providing some final conclusions based on this research.

The Role of Phones in Young Adult Drinking Cultures

My first research question was "how are smartphones integrated into young adult drinking practices and any related identity-work?". The findings from both studies show that smartphones were a constant presence in young adult drinking experiences, both those I attended in person and those for which I recorded participants' phone use data. These data suggested phones tended to be integrated seamlessly, but not uncritically, into young adult drinking experiences. This observation aligned well with participants' descriptions of them in follow-up interviews.

A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn upon to construct smartphones as affording participants constant access to their social lives but also to emphasise the continued access to the device owner that allowed peers to connect and communicate with them at any time. In particular findings from my app study emphasised how attending drinking events does not disconnect young adults from other facets of their lives. The findings also emphasised the extent to which mundane life filters into young adult drinking contexts when peers or other contacts choose to make use of their phone enabled connections to young adult drinkers. Ito and Okabe (2005) use the term "ambient virtual co-presence" (p.13) to describe how young adults use their phones to carry their friendship groups around with them at all times. This intensifies access to their intimate circles of peers and creates an awareness of them as possible contacts, or connections, at all times. The continual presence of peers 'in potentia' is an integral aspect of a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*. In addition to

material from other drinking peers, participants received messages and Snapchats relating to the in-the-moment happenings of other family and friends (e.g. watching sports, talking to shared acquaintances, studying and assignment related questions), as well as being tagged on Facebook in a variety of memes or posts. This illustrates some of the overlap between the two studies as the potential to connect via the device serves as a foundational requirement for both the social facilitation afforded by smartphone devices as well as the social disruption their use can create.

In my observational study participants drew upon a discourse of *smartphones as social disrupters* to describe how the devices were sometimes overused and could interfere with the social experiences such as conversations, dancing or drinking games, that were expected parts of participants' drinking events. When this was the case, participants often made use of what I have labelled the *selfie loving youth* interpretive repertoire to describe those peers who overused apps such as Snapchat or Instagram during nights out drinking with their peers. However, the vanity laden, individuated, judgements that accompanied this repertoire were sometimes replaced by addictive or medicalised constructions as alternative rationales for device overuse and reliance. These dependant or addictive descriptions of undesirable usage resonate with descriptions of limbic capitalism (e.g. Courtwright, 2005) and in particular the intensification of this idea that is encompassed by the notion of limbic platform capitalism (Lyons et al., 2022) where algorithmic driven social media are finely tuned to target and capture the attention of users – providing pleasurable experiences, training addictive patterns of use, and creating dependency on the experiences being provided. Participants sometimes used these dependant constructions when they described their own practices to distance their usage from undesirable interpretations of vanity.

Describing personal use in these addictive terms also provided a rationale for any potential disruption of sociality that might result from participants' overuse of their devices. This is a rationale that is less open to interpretations of personal choice, or responsibility, when it comes to the behaviour because blame is more focussed upon the device instead. However Parent and Shapka (2020) note that there may be

other conceptualisations of young adults' relationships with their phones that are worth considering since, for example, an attachment theory lens offers a slightly different perspective to understandings that lean on addictive explanations for device dependency. By emphasising the various roles that the devices play and their status in young adults' lives (e.g. comfort, safety, proximity and providing secure foundations for exploration) they suggest it is unsurprising that sometimes there is the development of ties to the devices that can create feelings akin to separation anxiety when access is removed. Lastly, interaction between a discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* and *smartphones as social facilitators* provides other explanations for device centric worry when access to smartphones is removed, whether this is voluntarily removal or otherwise. For example replacing the "ambient virtual co-presence" (Ito & Okabe, 2005, p. 13) created by access to smartphones with a reduction in flexibility, or feelings of being uninformed, when the devices are removed suggests that social ostracization from digitally present peers may be a contributing factor to device centric worry upon their removal. These differing explanations carry different implications for the efficacy of interventions when usage becomes problematic. For example, interventions might target substitutive peer-related behaviour (e.g. improving the appeal of, or ability to engage in, in-person conversation) rather than more behavioural methods (e.g. desensitisation to an inaccessible device). At the very least, a multi-faceted understanding of problematic usage benefits any interventions developed.

Drawing on the *selfie loving youth* repertoire was most common when describing women in participants' peer and friendship circles. There are parallels here to Lazard and Capdevila's (2021) work, where they suggest that when it comes to associations between selfies and self-interest, young women "are the most vilified for these practices" (p. 1643). Overall these findings are also consistent with studies such as Faimau (2020) who notes that the selfie is still often cast as a problematic symbol of vanity despite the nuanced motivations and understandings surrounding them and their communicative properties (Senft, 2015). For participants in my study, the selfie and the perceived conceits associated with it were signifiers of a peer who used their phone too often or one who was prone to

disengagement from the sociality on offer at drinking events, and these associations remained gendered as they were far more commonly directed at, or used as part of descriptions of, women.

Participants also described themselves as mature and capable of self-control in their use of devices, a contradiction to the constructions of addiction above and an alternative which illustrates the tension between wanting to demonstrate understanding of the nuances surrounding acceptable device use and acknowledging that descriptions of their own personal behaviour did not always align with these proposed ideals. This is consistent with the ways in which young adults describe their use of social media for displaying alcohol related content (Hebden et al., 2015) and their engagement with alcohol marketing (A. M. Atkinson et al., 2017) where young adults' technological proficiency and knowledge, as well as their understanding of the social norms and rules around risky activity, is described as providing immunity to the risks and compensates for engagement in the activity. Additionally, when enacted, self-discipline around their own device use sometimes came at a cost – such as regret for not capturing key drinking moments that could later be used as keepsakes, for identity work, or as the basis of further sociality via the apps they used. Such remorse was tied to the loss of their personal perspective in the content that was generated across events. This adds to our understandings of the function that smartphone cameras play in drinking cultures, while aligning more broadly with research that suggest young adults' adults value specificity and personalised material when capturing, sharing, and selecting what to keep on their camera-enabled phones (Y. Chen et al., 2017; Peters & Allan, 2018; Soares & Storm, 2022; Zürn et al., 2018).

Smartphones, and particularly the onboard camera-enabled communication apps, were lauded and enjoyable parts of participants' drinking experiences. Indeed, the primary means by which participants navigated, and resisted, constructions of socially disruptive phone use was drawing upon a discourse of *smartphones as social facilitators*. Truong (2018) describes how young adults use their phones to participate in physically distant peer activities, as well as to include those peers in their own. My findings support this idea while extending it to show this inclusion and participation via the device also applied to

peers who were physically present, where app material either augmented or was a completely necessary part of engaging in the face-to-face conversations taking place during drinking. As such, participants constructed the phones they used throughout their drinking events as integral to, as well as interwoven with, the sociality that occurred. Physically and spatially, phones were integrated into participants' immediate face-to-face interactions as both a catalyst and a value-added supplement to conversations at events. This is a finding that balances both some of the disruptive constructions of phones in my own findings as well as those in previous research that suggest the presence of phones undermines face-to-face sociality (Dwyer et al., 2018).

At drinking events participants also frequently extended their own personal, device-centric, activities to peers who were physically nearby. Changing the function of the device from a private tool to a public display in this manner meant that fleeting glimpses of the connections and content on participants' devices were offered to attendees which created social opportunities in a way that builds upon the social affordances Pink et al. (2016) associate with smartphones. Specifically, participants' personal, digital interactions were opened to nearby peers to both connect and entertain. My findings show this device screen-sharing included, rather than excluded, peers who were present at drinking events and was key to illustrating social, device-centric, activity. Importantly, this form of sharing bypasses the need for peers to be part of more intimate app-based friendship chat groups so material could be shared socially with less intimate, but physically present, peers. Participants shared content that they knew everyone would want to see, and this content was usually curated with the wider face-to-face gathering in mind. Quintero et al. (2019) show that the new communications afforded by the smartphone allow the sharing of drinking practices to be a social act that resists constructions of risk. The current findings support this notion and add some detail to our understandings of how and why young adults do this. App interactions were often chosen to be displayed to those in attendance and aspects of participants' drinking cultures were frequently referenced as part of these displays. Material shared with participants that showed or signified heavy drinking was seen as entertaining (e.g. depictions of florid drunkenness or atypical behaviour inspired by consumption), and participants were keen to share and/or compare

this content with others in attendance. This illustrates how smartphones open up more ways for drinking to be performative and competitive and is a finding that, when considered alongside de Visser and Smith's (2007) work that links the aspects of masculine identities with heavier drinking practices, suggests that men could be at particular risk of escalating both the sharing of drinking related content and their alcohol consumption as drinking events progress.

Additionally, devices were used to communicate, update, organise and even persuade peers who were not present to join in, or at least understand that the event was valued, exciting and fun. Each of these functions was described as a valuable social aspect of participants' drinking events but participants connected with peers who were not present as a social activity in its own right as well, and in a way that was deeply dependent on the devices and the apps they carried. Truong (2018) describes the tension young adults feel between wanting to engage in pleasurable phone use and the potential risk of losing track of immediate happenings, a tension that participants in the current research also often navigated. A discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures* was drawn on to signal the continued presence of distant peers and thus the continued tension that acknowledging (or not acknowledging) those contacts could create for participants. Thulin (2018) illustrates the paradoxical need to attend to the asynchronous messaging groups and conversation that results from these constantly connected spaces being the sites where group bonding and sociality occurs, as well as where any disengagement is noticeable to the group. This results in a similar tension between device use and engagement in immediate proceedings. While participants certainly described navigating these tensions frequently, to varying success, their descriptions also depict a collapsing of these boundaries at times. This occurred when they blended digital and real spaces in a way that merged the background of digital, phone-based, sociality and relational maintenance with the foreground of in-person sociality that remained a prized part of their drinking occasions. These findings suggest that it is possible for young adults to seamlessly integrate phone-based sociality into the face-to-face sociality available at drinking events. However, for those times when phone use was more overt or obtrusive, participants balanced their frequent attention to devices by drawing upon a *smartphones as social facilitators* discourse to position

themselves as rational in their phone and social app use, and to set themselves apart from the absorbed, addictive, associations that constant device use whilst drinking risked.

Phones were used as a form of digital 'word of mouth' which made sure everyone who should be aware of a drinking event was informed of it and everyone who had chosen to not attend was aware of what they were missing out on. Truong (2018) also suggests that the immediacy of apps that enable multimedia communications allows for direct comparisons to be made between different groups of drinking peers and their events in real time and thus for logistical decisions as well as drinking behaviour to likewise adapt in real time. In effect, participants described using their phones, the capabilities of which they valued highly, to escalate drinking sessions as they were happening, both growing them in size and intensifying the drinking that occurred. Once again material that signified the heavy drinking and sociality that was occurring was considered desirable to share as part of this escalation. These findings illustrate how smartphones can exacerbate the overestimation of peer drinking behaviours that occur via social media, extending research that both notes this effect and suggests that it is likely responsible for heavier drinking in young adults (Bain et al., 2022; Kypri & Langley, 2003; Moreno et al., 2013; Sargent et al., 2020).

The instantaneous depictions of other peers' drinking, used by participants as competitive material, creates an environment similar to a positive feedback loop where participants can keep adjusting their own drinking to parallel or 'best' material that is received, thereby generating material which is itself responded to by other drinking peers. This feedback loop coupled with the culture of normal, ephemeral, communication that Snapchat has developed, may account for previous findings that, of the main social media, only Snapchat seems to be related to increases in the amount college students drink (O'Shields & Baldwin-White, 2023). Although they do not appear to account for the distinction between Facebook's social media site (which is present in their study) and the app-based Facebook Messenger (seemingly absent or conflated with the parent site), they do illustrate how the visual primacy of Snapchat's communication could explain the relationship. Additionally, my findings suggest that while

Facebook Messenger is less prominent than Snapchat during drinking events, it was still used. Facebook Messenger was similarly used to send risqué material to peers and its role for young adult drinkers (a hybridisation of traditional texting and visual communication) was closer to Snapchat than it was to the profile and feed-based structure of its parent site. Given this, it is possible that Facebook Messenger contributes similarly to the relationship between drinking and social media use.

As is evident in the above, the camera was primary to constructions of the phone as a social facilitator. This is unsurprising given that young adults, employing apps such as Snapchat, have shifted to a primarily visual form of communication (Thulin, 2018) where sending images *is* communicating with peers and the speed and richness of such material can add a desirable efficiency to communication. Participants regularly depicted themselves as engaged in sociality and showing suitably inebriated others around them as likewise engaged. This allowed them to draw upon 'soft', desirable, alcohol associations for identity work as a part of these communications and emphasises the continued relevance of research that shows posting alcohol centric material is often desirable (e.g. Hendriks et al., 2018). Doing so in this subtle manner resisted constructions of immaturity that more overt alcohol posts risked and avoided interpretations of socially disruptive device use by ensuring these communications were brief, inclusive, social exchanges that were based upon content that was not focussed solely on themselves.

Participants denigrated the updating and sharing of happenings via the phone even when they enjoyed capturing material via their devices. By including photos of friends and other attendees rather than themselves, participants constructed their communications as centralising the drinking context rather than the individual. This is a finding that builds upon the appeal or reward of posting alcohol content that emphasises social community to sites such as Facebook (Erevik et al., 2017) and shows some of the potential motivations for this phenomena as it emerges in app based communication. Photos of intoxicated peers provided material that was humorous enough to start a conversation but it was also material that illustrated the type of drinking and sociality that was occurring. Likewise, Snapchat, which

focusses on ephemeral representations of the here and now, allows photographs and the capturing of moments to be constructed as socialisation 'in action'. In this way photos are once again reoriented as a means for communication rather than just representation (Goodwin & Lyons, 2019) and upon Snapchat they are often seen as ephemeral conversations rather than lingering artefacts that could risk associations of doing more permanent online identity work.

However participants also countered these understandings of Snapchat as an ephemeral platform with descriptions of creating permanent material from media that was sent and received on it. Snapchats were regularly screenshotted to be saved and used at a future date or used as part of Snapstories that were continuously available for 24 hours. Material that depicted friends in humorous, inebriated, circumstances was once again described as desirable for these purposes and these saved Snaps were then also repurposed to be used as part of daily sociality. Research suggests that young adults deal with the ephemerality and resulting loss of content that Snapchat use entails by screenshotting worthwhile material, an act that can result in awkwardness or a desire to ask permission afterward from peers that have had their content saved in this manner (Cavalcanti et al., 2017). My findings suggest that saving Snapchats from a drinking context was expected and engendered little awkwardness. It is possible that Snapchats taken while drinking both mitigate potential awkwardness of screenshotting and negotiate the sometimes problematic loss of content that was appreciated on the platform. Additionally my findings show that this is done in a way that also normalises and entrenches material from young adult drinking cultures into their everyday sociality and bonding. Content was used as memes and bespoke, substitute, emoticons for in-group chats. It was even reposted to more permanent social media on special occasions, such as posting saved Snapchats to a friend's Facebook profile on their birthday. Thus the ephemeral expectations of Snapchat content were completely subverted at times, a finding that builds upon the erosion of Snapchat's ephemeral functionality that arguably began with the introduction of more permanent content features such as Snapstories (McRoberts et al., 2017).

Spatially, participants also appeared to negotiate the disruptive potential of devices and the potential they held for augmenting sociality at events. At times this was achieved in a manner that also encouraged the generation of content via participants Smartphone cameras and Snapchat in particular. Informal device-friendly 'timeout' spaces that were removed from face-to-face sociality were complemented by areas of device use that emerged closest to the heaviest, social, drinking that was occurring at events. These emergent social spaces for phone use create an interesting parallel of Carah's (2017) observations around alcohol marketers and their crafting of novel opportunities that encourage users to create and share content on social media. Participants' drinking events regularly had novel spaces and activities (e.g. makeshift grandstands, beer pong competitions, enthusiastic [minor] destruction of property) or technological devices (e.g. selfie sticks, drones) that encouraged phone use to capture and send drinking material to peers. In this manner the desirability of acknowledging connected peers and these 'content traps' encouraged participants to make use of their phones. There are also parallels here to the notion of intoxigenic environments (McCreanor et al., 2008) where the norms and meanings around alcohol are established as inherently interesting. This appeared to manifest as physical photogenic environments where the positive associations and meanings surrounding alcohol, coupled with environmental cues, made capturing material in particular spaces more worthwhile.

Participants' negotiations of what was and was not appropriate device use also highlighted the fluid nature of such judgements across the duration of events. Very public acts of device use, or novel opportunities to use them, often encouraged temporary upsurges in use. Examples such as selfie sticks and Snapchatting of property damage or competitive drinking became obvious instances of phone use that others would mimic using their own phones. The notion of 'contagious Snapchatting' is a finding that expands upon Maglieri et al.'s (2021) findings of contagious phone checking and other behaviours. Snapchat in particular is a perfect fit for this type of usage as the ephemeral appearance of shared content fits well with the sometimes risqué nature of this content. Building on Boyles' (2017) descriptions of Snapchat's culture being one of capturing and sharing moments unfiltered, and as casual communication amongst friends, these activities are ones that signal the kinds of drinking occurring.

This communication provides pertinent information as well as entertainment that does identity work in a casual, parallel, and nuanced manner when compared to platforms such as Instagram. Despite this, my findings also included instances of wariness relating to people who continually Snapchatted themselves and their drinking context. This aligns with research that suggests the way images are used on the platform can sometimes undermine the culture of authentic "in-the-moment" capture it has developed (Barker, 2020) as well as findings that suggest young adults may still use Snapchat for self-enhancement and to satisfy the demands of vanity (C. T. Barry et al., 2020). For many participants, Snapchat was not exempt from constructions of vanity or inappropriate usage. Some participants actively resisted the visual communication requirements of the app, and thus any vanity-laden associations, by sending messages that used decontextualised photos (e.g. closeup of a foot) or blank images (formed by placing a hand over the camera) as the foundations for their conversations.

Achieving a state of intoxication allowed participants to engage in enjoyable norm-breaking behaviours surrounding their device use unfettered by the risky, undesirable, interpretations that would otherwise accompany it. This can be conceptualised as another aspect of the carnivalesque that Haydock (2015) suggests accompanies drinking cultures, where accepted practices are suspended or even inverted for a time. As well as device use in general, this disinhibition was also applied to the norms surrounding particular apps. For example participants regularly expressed enjoyment at the memory of their Snapchats 'blowing out' once they were at a certain stage of inebriation and participants' phone data regularly showed flurries of Snapchat use as drinking continued. This is an increase in use that, in these circumstances, also compensates for the potential lapses in memory that research has shown accompanies such states (Griffin et al., 2009). Here physical memory is supplemented by its digital counterpart and valued content that might later be used to illustrate the good times experienced is more likely to be captured. This finding blends the contemporary trend of everyday camera use complementing biological memory (Soares & Storm, 2022) with the desirability of capturing novel, positive moments, that can be shared at a later time (Peters & Allan, 2018) and it further ingrains the

importance of the device in these circumstances while fortifying constructions of it as an extension of the individual (C. S. Park & Kaye, 2019).

My findings illustrate that smartphones were used prolifically as a part of participants' identity work. Discourses of *participatory marketing* and *smartphones as social facilitators* were drawn on to portray participants as social drinkers to peers across a range of social apps, illustrating that the devices offer new ways to make use of the positive identity associations that accompany alcohol and consumption (Hendriks et al., 2018). The devices also helped construct smartphones owners as 'good' friends; for example, the obligation to continually attend to distant friends as well as to make sure they know of social drinking opportunities highlights some of the ways that friendship is produced, maintained, and represented using the device. Similarly, participants constructed themselves as socially adept and in-the-know through their use of smartphones. The various connections present were used to illustrate participants as hubs of micro-social importance and as being continuously, actively, engaged with peers in ways that were both beneficial and pleasurable for all involved. These findings build upon those that suggest smartphones are important social tools for identity work (Harkin & Kuss, 2021; C. S. Park & Kaye, 2019) by detailing some of the specific ways the devices facilitate this work within young adult drinking cultures. Finally, there are also issues to consider here for young adults that do not have access to smartphones (Calderón Gómez, 2019; Martin & Ito, 2015) as my findings suggest that the increasing importance of the devices for identity work and relational maintenance means that young adults without the devices may be deprived of opportunities to portray relevant facets of themselves to peers as well as struggle to participate in certain positive aspects of their drinking cultures.

My findings reinforce that heavy drinking-related content still plays a key role in many young adults' sociality and while this material is likely less prominent or desirable on more publicly visible sites such as Facebook or Instagram (upon which more refined and curated alcohol related posts may still be acceptable), for participants it remained in circulation amongst their peer groups via more selective, in-group only apps such as Snapchat or Facebook Messenger groups. Goodwin and Lyons (2019) describe a

complex social media ecology where each platform and app is associated with specific content, peer groups, or social functions and my findings show that the more personal and private communications apps are a potential home for depictions of heavier drinking material amongst peers.

Related to the constantly changing ecology of app based communication Thulin (2018) suggests SMS and traditional mobile media has been 'unyouthed' and that they are now used for communication within close relationships where serious ties are present or in niche cases. My findings support these ideas and others that show young adults tend to be wary of calling in particular (Blair et al., 2015; Vermeulen et al., 2018). Calling was mostly used between close friends and partners and for situations that either required immediate response, required short and to the point conversations, or those where there was a desire to not be "left on seen"[21] and a response could be forced. The latter point expands upon the functions of calling as a still important part of young adult drinking cultures because at times participants leveraged the availability of peers via their phones as well as the obtrusiveness of calling to exert pressure on recipients to respond, attend a drinking event, or change their minds about previous decisions.

Snapchat and Facebook Messenger were used more prolifically than calling but still appeared to have some specialised purposes for participants. Facebook messenger was described as a mundane platform that served as social anchorage for friendship groups (regardless of individual locality) across a night – a shared space that flexibly adapted from being one of coordinating the night's events to being one for: checking in on peers; multimedia enabled (but text-friendly) friendship maintenance and conversation; and bonding over alcohol related content. Snapchat on the other hand was primarily described as a fun platform and descriptions often related to the entertainment gained from using it. This meant it was heavily used to send drinking related content to peers as instantaneous, fleeting, conversational exchanges of images. Broadly my findings align with researchers such as Boyle et al. (2017) that describe Snapchat a place for displaying risqué drinking practices to peers. Snapchat appeared to be the most

[21] A reminder that this term references the metadata of contemporary app based conversations (see previous footnote 12)

relevant app for participants when they were attending their drinking occasions. However, the surprising popularity of Facebook Messenger, even after the organisational part of nights, suggests that while Facebook may have been 'dethroned' (Boyle et al., 2017) it has also emphasised another facet of its offering to maintain a modicum of relevance to young adult drinkers and their communication needs.

Smartphones have added an immediacy to the propagation and engagement with alcohol centric content and in doing so they have merged sociality around this content that occurs in digital spaces with that on offer, face-to-face, at young adult drinking events. Constantly available app based platforms now serve as "telecocoons" (Habuchi, 2005, p. 167) or intimate spaces where group identities and drinking cultures are performed or engaged with. Participants had continual access to a network of peers, drinking, and social opportunities through the app-based drinking culture hubs present on their phones. Shifting the maintenance of these telecocoons to apps such as Snapchat and Facebook Messenger seems to move shared heavy drinking material more fully into the immediate social processes of young adult drinkers *as they are drinking*. This is a change that also aligns with the notion that the nature and purpose of these portable spheres of intimacy are in a dynamic relationship with the repertoires built up around the social apps that maintain them (Habuchi, 2021) – influencing and being influenced by them. Additionally it highlights Carah and Brodmerkel's (2021) point that increasingly, young adult drinking cultures are being submerged into more private, invite-only, app environments, becoming less publicly visible and accessible as a result – particularly relevant for any researchers seeking to add to understandings relating to this increasingly invisible content.

Crucially the inconsistencies and the discursive negotiations that participants undertook around device use as being socially facilitative or socially disruptive, ultimately points to important but submerged power relations. Participants are managing friendship, sociality, and identity in an online environment actively designed in particular ways and it is the structures that host young adults' interactions that seemed to always be missing from their descriptions. The onus of understanding appropriate usage, to avoid "living the night through Snapchat", or to balance the capturing of moments with the partaking in

them all fell on individual users. Participants' justifications of their own usage (such as when the phone was constructed as an addictive device) were described more as exceptions to the rule. Smartphones were integral parts of participants' drinking events but even when participants used addictive or medicalised terms to illustrate their relationships to the devices, the devices themselves and the environments created upon them were not described in ways that acknowledged that they might be actively contributing to this behaviour. This may be because the flexibility of smartphone devices allows them to accommodate the changing needs of individual owners and to adapt to changing notions of acceptable use over a drinking event, leading to their continual presence in users' lives. It is possible that this 'blank slate utility' is a part of what makes it hard for participants to frame them as actively contributing to problematic usage. Almost every aspect of the device is customisable and this may bring with it a chameleon-like camouflage. If a user does not want Snapchat to notify them every time a message is received, they can make that change, there are content and usage management apps, healthy screen time management apps, the devices can be silent, set to vibrate, or to be loud. All of these are choices the individual user *could* make to limit the attention or addictive properties of the apps and device. Despite the fact that this would drastically change the sociality on offer and exclude them from key interactions amongst their peers, users can then be seen as carrying the burden of not having made these choices. Relevant here are ideas relating to the 'attention economy' of social media where user attention is now viewed as the commodity that is sold upon many of these platforms (Goodwin et al., 2016; Pedersen et al., 2021). Each of these features and actions that were constructed, at one point or another, as problematic for participants result from the purposeful design of both smartphone and social media technologies. As Bhargava and Velasquez (2021) note, it appears these features are all too often implemented in ways that draw upon the basic psychological principles related to addictive gambling – to much the same effect. In effect, some of participants' dilemmas that related to negotiating use and understanding of their devices appears to arise from their attempts to account for and resist the all too easy, honed, and manufactured appeals for attention that the devices (and the apps upon them) are built to emit.

Mobile Marketing and Brands in Young Adult Drinking Cultures

I had three interconnected questions that related to alcohol marketing and brand presence in young adult drinking cultures as well as young adults' understandings of brands, marketing and mobility. They were: "How do young adults understand alcohol marketer's use of mobile technologies?"; "How do young adults engage with alcohol marketing and brands as a part of their smartphone enabled drinking cultures?"; and finally, "What forms of alcohol marketing and engagement are present in young adult drinking cultures and how do these make use of smartphone-enabled young adult drinkers?".

Physical branded materials were often held in high esteem by participants due to being signifiers of users' drinking cultures and because they were often physical representations, or artefacts, of specific past drinking excursions. The history of the acquisition of these items became entwined with the shared group experiences and culture and in the retelling of such events, those bonds and the past enjoyment of drinking sessions were reinforced. Participants and their peers imbued these materials with personal meaning and history and in doing so illustrated the ways in which marketing was made to work for them and how a *participatory marketing discourse* allowed them to undertake the role of cultural bricoleur, repackaging marketing materials in a way that served them and their peers (Deuze, 2006) while reducing in prominence the commercial origins of this material. In this manner alcohol marketing materials were described in ways that perfectly align with Darmody and Zwick's (2020) descriptions of a hyper-involved marketing presence. Through constant surveillance, an expert understanding of the consumer, and the precise provision of circumstance and material, Darmody and Zwick suggest marketers are relieved of the task of actually practising marketing as the invisibility they achieve through a tightly manipulated, and thus paradoxical, empowerment of the consumer results in the uptake and integration of marketing materials into consumers' daily lives.

Participants made use of branded signs, branded competitive drinking vessels, and other branded drinking accessories to draw upon broad, alcohol related, social associations, as well as brand specific linkages. This showed how the careful, purposeful, marketing of these branded materials - materials

that are designed to explicitly reference young adult drinking cultures and to be made use of within them (A. M. Atkinson et al., 2017) - made them readily available for appropriation by participants. Seeding branded materials throughout events meant that brands were passively piggybacked into young adults' sociality, but also often purposefully placed in areas where people gathered and took photos because of the desirable meanings they conveyed about the owners of the branded objects. Such branded mise-en-scène creates background associations in shared digital, visual, content that, even when not intentionally included, reinforces the associations that research shows exists between alcohol brands and user perceptions of 'sharable' content (Vanherle et al., 2022) as well as between alcohol brands and young adult sociality (Lobstein et al., 2017).

Previously, the reinforcement of associations between brand and culturally relevant meanings was work undertaken by marketers (Saffer, 2002) and while they still do to some extent, it has increasingly been work that is offloaded to consumers, such as young adults, to do as they are more effective at doing it and usually do not require payment. As Carah (2017) describes it, alcohol brand work involves creating agreeable and targeted cultural associations or content which then creates open-ended invitations or opportunities for young adult drinkers to engage with and share via their phones. Participants described multiple occasions where they, or their friends, had organised authentic, brand centric, events that used these brands as exemplars of the novel, exciting and Snapchat-able drinking they were engaged in. Marketing such as this provides a framework as well as the more subtle restraints of a branded paradigm for users to interact within, rather than specific instructions for dissemination of branded content. By creating opportunities for users to build their own partnerships with the brand in these spaces, brands reaped authenticity – participants themselves did the work of integrating branded material into their social practices and meaning making which led to it being done in ways that were tailored to participants' specific cultural microcosms and that normalised this material in more facets of young adults' wider drinking cultures. The autonomy described by participants drawing upon a *participatory marketing* discourse helped occlude commercial aspects of material as participants focussed instead upon the ways in which they made use of marketing content, the resulting sociality and

interaction with peers, and how they were in control of the integration and reorientation of this content.

My findings illustrate how marketing that was better aligned with the culture of the social platforms young adults use, and the ways they make use of them, was engaged with in a manner that de-emphasises the commercial nature in favour of accentuating other, more desirable, associations that developed from engagement. This illustrates how the differing social app ecologies (Goodwin & Lyons, 2019) were also understood and harnessed by alcohol marketers to create further synergy between their marketing content and the young adult cultures making use of it. Additionally when this went awry and that awareness or understanding of appropriate platform culture was not present, participants described content as undesirable, restrictive, and less socially useful. This also appeared to make content more readily identifiable as marketing. However rejection of the commercial origins of material was clearest when it came to branded content on Snapchat where these materials were almost always perceived as completely user-driven, and user-generated, communications or interactions. For example participants described quirky, visual marketing materials (e.g. branded novelty hats) in ways that emphasised the relevance of these marketing materials to the types of drinking they were engaging and deemphasised their commercial nature. These materials formed the basis of nights that were interesting enough to require Snapchatting and participants described them as novel enough to raise the threshold of acceptable phone usage, allowing more Snapchatting to occur at these brand saturated events. This suggests that these branded materials were readily integrated into young adult drinking cultures in a manner that made them prominent, as they were key to illustrating the novelty of such drinking as well as likely to spread across platforms such as Snapchat. However it also illustrates that these branded materials influence the practices of these cultures in ways that are beneficial to both cultural participants and the spread of brands present amongst them.

As was the case with descriptions of socially disruptive device use, the boundary that demarcated sufficiently participatory marketing was fluid for participants and this meant that individuals could

misjudge worthwhile content. Most of the marketing that participants saw or interacted with on social media platforms provided at least some means for participatory engagement. Yet marketing content that was deemed either too crude in its approach or too prescriptive in how participants were able to use it was often positioned as an undesirable interaction and derided in a manner that suggested any peers who shared or interacted with it had erred. Thus the ability to judge what was appropriate to be shared often involved drawing upon notions of personal proficiency, maturity and even intellect - a finding that adds support to the idea that young adults make use of perceived maturity to deter such engagement (A. M. Atkinson et al., 2017).

Marketers and branded content were described in terms that positioned their attempts to elicit engagement as devious but also as a routine and expected occurrence on social media platforms. This 'brands will be brands' talk shifts responsibility for the marketing content that is propagated and seeded on these platforms, once again, onto the young adults who use them for social purposes. However constructing it as a personal responsibility and the issue as one of making sure that individuals are not selling their voices on these platforms, or at least not selling them too cheaply, does not take into account the influence of the wider technological structures playing host to this sociality. This parallels the way in which participants constructed their phone engagement and their choices of what sociality to prioritise as being a matter of personal choice (and thus personal failing when a poor choice was made) and it speaks to some of the same underlying issues. These digital spaces are fine-tuned, through granular data collection and algorithmic analysis, to elicit interaction and engagement with content (Schivinski, 2021). Using these media inevitably aids in their refinement and thus in their ability to understand what is required, as well as when it is required, to get users engaging with marketing content. These background functions of the social platforms were largely absent from young adults' talk when they discussed their engagement with alcohol marketing and smartphone use and yet their drinking cultures made a lot of use of these platforms. Micro interactions upon social platforms are forgettable content for people yet they are a staple machine training source for the algorithms that organise social platforms (Carah & Angus, 2018). Here a discourse of *constantly connected drinking*

cultures is also relevant, as the constant desire to connect and acknowledge relationships manifests as a desire to create data – meaning user purpose aligns with, or is even fostered by, the needs of the machine. Additionally, these structures represent a manifestation of commercial attempts to generate, access, and store users' data. Their design appears to elicit engagement and interaction, despite participants' accounts of their reservation and wariness, suggesting this is a purposeful feature rather than a coincidental one. In the same way that being disassociated from alcohol marketing material appears to benefit branded material and helps it assimilate into young adult drinking cultures, the invisibility of the structural processes that shape and manipulate interactions upon social media helps them avoid critique or attributions of agency when users fail to live up to peers' ideals or notions of posting decorum.

My *participatory marketing* discourse overlaps with the discourses of *constantly connected drinking cultures* and *smartphones as social facilitators* discourse. The most common forms of marketing that participants described as desirably participatory were those that allowed the materials to be reshaped into social interactions with peers or those that were enough to facilitate these social interactions on their own. It was this potential for social connection or sometimes the beneficence of informing peers via interactions on their phones that was routinely part of prized participatory marketing constructions. This is a finding that illustrates the importance of ideas like 'hyper-relevance' in Darmody and Zwick's (2020) portrayals of contemporary marketing. Marketing content that aligned with the in-the-moment needs of participants, here for example the need to connect and communicate with peers, was engaged with primarily as a tool that facilitated those needs rather than as marketing content. Related to this there were also overlaps with my *smartphones as social disrupters* discourse. Those peers who shared material deemed too obviously commercial, or overly prescriptive in terms of how they could be engaged with, were described as disrupting the social environment present upon users' phones. That these exchanges occur via smartphones augments and assists marketing by allowing it the chance to make use of user location, profile, and immediate contextual data then combining these with a library of material that is customised for use in particular moments and to achieve specific purposes in order to

maximise the chance of eliciting engagement. This raises a concern that as user behaviour and various facets of the context surrounding it are increasingly quantified and experimented with (Carah & Angus, 2018), these commercial social platforms represent spaces where marketing interests can use that data for increasingly active sculpting of young adult cultures and sociality.

The implications of the ways in which marketing increasingly encroaches on every aspect of young adult lives (Bhargava & Velasquez, 2021; Srnicek, 2016) become even more concerning when we consider them alongside the discourse of *constantly connected drinking cultures*. By becoming part of the 'everyday' of young adult lives, through sponsorship of events and sport teams, branded household items, paid placement of social media posts, peer generated content and influencer placement, brands are not only increasing their familiarity for the individual but they are increasing the likelihood that *they* are the resource that is present whenever young adults connect with each other. Alongside their repeated success at associating their brands, and more generally alcohol, with sociality (A. M. Atkinson et al., 2017; Lobstein et al., 2017), marketers ensure that they will be used as a part of these exchanges. Generously this might be theorised as a form of symbiotic relationship but given the harm that alcohol can and does cause (Kypri et al., 2009), other, more parasitic parallels emerge. The hyperbole of this comparison is dampened when we consider those participants who took steps to protect from or silence marketing voices on their devices only to find their peers, unblocked, now served as deliverers of marketing content. Similar to the Grecian Trojan horse or the "zombie ant fungus" Ophiocordyceps unilateralis that encourages infected ants to climb above their own colonies in order to rain fungal spores upon them (and thus increase the tally of infected), marketers can make use of seemingly innocuous, compliant, peers to penetrate friendship circles, bypassing many preventative measures to gain access to group members that would otherwise remain disengaged. In this manner marketers' post exposure marketing goals that focus on factors such as peer engagement rather than initial content views (Carah & Meurk, 2017) provide ways of accessing an increasingly reticent demographic.

My findings reinforce that alcohol marketers have continued to integrate the meanings and understandings that young adult drinking cultures produce and that their marketing is embedded within. In addition to this, marketers have continued to adapt to the platforms that play host to these cultures. Earlier forms of marketing have been replaced with strategies that knowingly reference the demographics they are being specifically tailored to (e.g. A. E. Barry et al., 2016; Klostermann et al., 2018). They now make use of algorithmic training as well as user data sets that include relational data, metadata and engagement data (Carah & Brodmerkel, 2021; Martín-Quevedo et al., 2019) so these data sets continue to grow becoming more refined, accurate, behavioural predictors of the users that contribute to them. This makes marketing approaches more subtle and appear as open-ended invitations to users of social platforms. Marketing material now *alludes* to the potential rewards engagement could result in or *suggests* ways that it might be taken and repurposed to users' own designs, never stating outright how it is to be made use of. In doing so it ostensibly allows users to engage with it on their own terms, making it more desirable but also creating the situation where brands are used more authentically than they could ever be if marketers were to decree how engagement should occur. Alcohol marketing provides the raw materials for sociality and interaction with peers on these platforms (A. M. Atkinson et al., 2017) and in the case of my participants this role of provider was often an appreciated one. Overall, there was an alignment between marketing materials and the participatory culture of engagement with contemporary social media, that at times made it hard for participants to define what was or was not marketing material. Perhaps more importantly, when marketing was well crafted it seemed difficult for participants to care about this distinction – a statement that shows that while much has changed, some of the traditional ideals and aspirations of brand-based marketing remain. Or rather, as Holt (2002) notes, there comes a point where marketing materials are not considered an incursion but rather an authentic part of young adult drinking cultures in their own right.

Smartphones were important in participants' drinking cultures but they are at least as important to the marketers targeting these cultures, because the social apps and native sensors of the device expose

young drinkers to alcohol marketers in a way that they have never been before. As more of the technology in young adults lives is connected and controlled through smartphones the amount of data sources available will only increase (M. Taylor et al., 2020) meaning that marketing exposure on social platforms can become more targeted and effective. Again this opens young adult drinking cultures up to marketers making them more accessible and terms like 'earned advertising' (J. Y. Park et al., 2016) are useful to consider as they make clear where marketers now put their efforts. It is about harnessing participatory labour for brands and there is an emphasis on the work and effort marketers invest that suggests a successful piece of alcohol marketing takes care of itself once it is available and ready to be taken up by young adults. Accordingly, a broader look at my findings seems to suggest young adults may underestimate how much value their engagement with contemporary marketing content creates. These benefits are certainly larger in scope than participants' descriptions (which often omitted factors such as the authentic embedding of brands into their culture, the increased surveillance that engagement promotes, or how scaling engagement to a population level makes even the smallest interaction valuable) and are purposefully obscured by the architecture of both the social communication apps being used and the phones upon which these engagements now occur.

Strengths and Limitations

A strength of both of my studies is that each draws upon data that was created from young adult drinking events as they occurred. In the observational study I attended in person and here this may also be a limitation as I was certainly an outsider, easily the oldest attendee at the informal events I attended and at least 10 years older than any of the participants. However each event I attended had some heavy drinking participants, usually extending to the majority of participants, and coupling this with the social nature of the drinking I observed meant that I was a warmly welcomed and accepted part of attendees' nights. The only disappointment participants voiced was that I was never "off the clock" to join them drinking.

However it is worth noting that, prior to my attending, the burden of inviting me (a complete stranger to the majority of drinking attendees) to young adult drinking events almost certainly shaped the types of events, or drinking I was able to access. My presence was most noticeably an overt part of the evening at the smaller event where flatmates were celebrating the end of the week and while this particular group was enthusiastic to have me around their drinking, it made for a night I felt was more of an intense social occasion and where I needed to be more actively involved and engaged with a single group's sociality for the entire evening. In contrast, the other events either had a range of ages and relations attending (i.e. the two formal affairs) or were sufficiently large that no one could be expected to know everyone that attended and thus I was less likely to be a burden on the sociality occurring (my presence humorously mirroring the ways in which participants described excessive phone use becoming less of an issue at larger parties). At these other events I could wander between groups, take a break to form detailed notes or just have a moment for quiet thought and reflection on the proceedings. It seems likely that for some more intimate drinking sessions between close groups of friends, I may not have been a desirable or welcome presence and they would not invite me to attend such events. Given that phone usage was described as less monitored amongst the attendees of such sessions, it seems very plausible that other notable differences in the way phones are integrated into these types of drinking contexts might emerge.

For my app study the data were generated from phones that were being used as part of young adult drinking cultures. My app was collecting this in the background without the need for prompting or maintenance, thus it was a relatively passive form of data collection as interaction with the app usually occurred the day before, and the day after, data was generated. Truong (2019) reflects upon the obtrusive nature of many smartphone collection methods that ask participants to disrupt their regular behaviours to engage in data generation (e.g. taking photos of drinks or 10 second video clips of the environment at specific times) and how this can cause discomfort as well as remove participants from the moment. My app was designed to alleviate these types of issues from participants as an attempt to employ a near unobservable observer. This unobtrusive data collection strategy worked very well,

although one participant mentioned to his friends that his phone was collecting data and they proceeded to send him lascivious messages hoping this would result in awkward conversation between us later.

While the passive nature of data collection for my app was designed to address my specific thesis topic, this too was not without some drawbacks. One of the clear limitations was the data generated by the devices provides a decontextualised view of participants' device usage. Compared with my observational study and the relationships between spaces, peer proximity, and device use that underpinned some of my findings there, my app study only had the happenings on the phone to rely upon when thinking about relevant material that could be brought into participant interviews. In these interview settings I then had to rely on participants' memory of the surrounding context and while this was surprisingly successful on account of the efficacy of phone recordings as primer material, there were still occasions where phone interactions were not remembered by participants. This obviously shaped the analysis and there were likely instances where pairing this data with observations of the context it occurred in also could have provided further insight or paths of enquiry for a follow up interview.

Another limitation of my app is that I needed to use the Android operating system due to the more open programming environment, the financial restrictions of my project, and the expertise of the coder employed to build the app. One concern here is that researchers such as Shaw et al. (2016) suggest that demographic and personality differences between Android and iOS users exist; but of particular concern is that they also suggest the meanings and understandings associated with devices differ (e.g. Apple phones may be more likely to be used as status symbols than Android based devices) and this may change how they are used in young adult drinking cultures. This reliance upon Android also brings a potential limitation in the form of some small technical proficiency being required to side-load my research app, although this is an unlikely issue as no participant withdrew upon finding out the requirements for installing the app.

Prior to conducting this research I expected that one strength would be my ability to compare and contrast my outsider perspective of young adult drinking events with the perspective of my young adult participants and this was the case. The design of both my studies allowed me to talk about those expected, mundane, parts of drinking contexts that participants often would not have considered relevant or would have completely different interpretations of. In my observational study, two examples of this were the ways in which alcohol marketing and branding were integrated into drinking contexts and some of the nuances relating to personal space, behaviour, and phone use. Likewise for my app study, recorded phone data allowed me to include a lot of the mundane interactions occurring on phones and it allowed me to see who it was being interacted with, illustrating just how much phones were being used to interact with people that were already present and drinking with participants.

As well as providing considerable overlap my two studies complement each other. The design of my observational study led me to be heavily reliant on users' descriptions of the content they received and sent via their smartphones across a night. My interviews included sessions of "show and tell" where material generated on the nights I attended was sometimes presented, yet the ephemeral nature of apps such as Snapchat and the unreliable memory that results from late nights and heavy drinking meant that this content often only included material that participants had deemed novel enough to screenshot (particularly in the case of Snapchat) or that crossed a certain threshold of interest for them to remember and thus remember to show me. This is a shortfall that my app design clearly compensates for whilst simultaneously failing to fully account for the wider context this data was generated within as I have mentioned above. In doing so my app study allowed me to bring my own perspective into an interview setting to more fully unpack and explore the finer details relating to material sent and received via participants' devices in a manner similar to the way in which wider contextual elements of young adult drinking cultures were brought into the observational interviews.

Finally, data collection took place before the ongoing coronavirus pandemic that began in 2019. Social constructionist epistemologies recognise the temporal, social, and political nature of language and

meaning. The global pandemic is an event that has had far reaching implications and lasting effects and young adult drinking cultures were undoubtedly one of myriad that were affected. For example, with many governments implementing complete lockdowns, young adult drinkers were deprived the opportunities to conduct the face-to-face sociality that remains a primary part of their drinking cultures. They were thus heavily reliant on app-based communication to remain in touch and to drink together. Anecdotally many of the heavier drinking young adults I share Messenger and Snapchat groups with, increased the prominence of alcohol on display when posting material to these spaces and posts of empty alcohol vessels became a stand-in for keeping in touch. Additionally "drinking together" sessions were organised were group members logged in and drank simultaneously in cyberspace building on the webcam drinking Moewaka Barnes et al (2016) outline and aligning with contemporary research that suggests drinking online was used as a replacement for other forms of sociality when COVID restrictions made them unavailable (Caluzzi et al., 2022). Competitive or novel drinking sessions with housemates or family during isolation were facilitated using phones to record them and then share highlights to other groups, often resulting in escalation, as I have outlined as part of my research, between groups. The function of these apps and devices once again seemed to evolve to fit the needs of the young adults using them and it is plausible that some of the changes resulting from the coronavirus pandemic remain relevant despite the attempts to return to a previous normal in many countries.

Implications

Broadly my research highlights how the space and time of drinking as a leisure practice for young adults is fundamentally altered by the presence of smartphones. This holds implications for the night-time economy as well as for urban mobility during nights out. While I have primarily focussed upon the meanings surrounding sociality and the ways in which alcohol marketing makes use of the devices, I also regularly touch upon the coordination of movements and space that these devices are a part of. For example there is an inherent safety to being in constant contact with a device that can record video footage or take photographs, a fact that is well-known to many protestors and persons of police interest worldwide – the presence of a camera that is livestreaming can serve as a reminder for proper conduct.

One implication of the continued integration of devices and constant connectedness they create might extend to women's engagement in their drinking cultures. Smartphones may help women feel safer moving through drinking environments (e.g. navigating between bars and clubs) a safety that might foster feelings of greater engagement, inclusion, and participation with their drinking cultures. There are also implications for researchers wanting to extend our knowledge in this field because the alterations accompanying these changes are essential to understand if the commercial dimensions of this are to be understood. Inevitably marketers and commercial entities will shift to accommodate these changes in young adult drinking cultures, seeking to become a part of them, influence them, and to profit from them where they can.

Similarly my thesis presents some tensions between constructions of smartphones as they relate to young adult sociality, but more broadly there is a tension present throughout between autonomy and control. The device represents the means for young adult autonomy to be realised across their drinking events, through the precision and immediacy of information and interaction, through its function as a 'territory machine' that brings with it private and intimate space regardless of the public locales it is used within (Varnelis & Friedberg, 2008), through the customisation in functionality to the user's need that the various app stores allow, or even through the ability to capture and present more facets of identity to peers. Young adult drinking cultures and happenings can be more known and available through the devices and this allows more opportunities to participate at times when it is desirable to do so. Yet for all this, participants described instances where the devices facilitated a sense of diminished control, where the demands on attention were became unwanted and inescapable, or where social expectations meant that the treasured connectedness and immediacy that smartphones facilitated became burdensome. This tension seems to represent much of what surrounds writings on Web 2.0 and the promises of liberty that inevitably fall short because they remain reliant on the commercial infrastructure and ownership behind the technologies (Fuchs, 2011). Young adult drinking cultures make use of these commercially owned platforms and devices to a greater extent than ever before. They are integral to sociality, relational maintenance and the expression of their cultures yet young adults have

little control over how these platforms are designed and implemented or what they prioritise. While the broad goal of increasing usage of social platforms may align users' desires (e.g. access to as many relevant users as is possible, establishment of culture or desirable public content) with those of commercial entities (e.g. more data, from more people, to monetise in various forms), the differing desires result in smaller decisions being made that often put the two groups at odds (e.g. the integration of marketing content into the social feeds and reels of apps such as Facebook, TikTok and Instagram) and in these instances users have little say in matters.

Further implications of platform ownership and the commercialisation of young adult sociality may be considered by looking at the contemporary example of Twitter and its eventual sale to Elon Musk. Twitter is a platform many use and have been reliant on for not only social interaction but instigating social change as well as finding space for solidarity or community. Examples of this include the 'Arab Spring' demonstrations (Khondker, 2011) and 'Black Twitter' (Brock, 2012). Unilateral control of what is an important social tool was sold to a single person who then made many changes to the platform's culture as well as the background technological architecture it ran upon. The rules and meanings on the platform (e.g. what symbols like a blue tick mean, what types of speech are allowable) were disestablished in a very short amount of time (Kolodny, 2022). The users who built the value of this platform through their interaction and sociality, through the data they have created on the site, had little say about higher decisions relating to the platform and who actually controls their data. In these circumstances user choice often comes down to either putting up with changes they may not agree with, or moving to new platforms (e.g. Mastodon, Diaspora) that bring new rules, the need to learn new technologies, and have different cultures established because they originally appealed to a different demographic. Furthermore, the social implications of this become more dire when we consider that the large amounts of user data are a part of this sale to an individual – the, admittedly unlikely, sale of Twitter to any of the wealthy individuals connected to governments in, for example, Tunisia or Egypt during Arab Spring could have had deleterious effects on individual protestors at the time. While Twitter is the most contemporary example to hand and one that has been particularly tumultuous, Instagram

being sold to Meta, who then 'Facebookified' the platform in 2012 is an example that remains relevant to young adult drinkers (Ghaffary, 2022).

Much of prior research and, indeed my own, talks about contemporary communications technology being 'always on' and 'constantly accessible' but my research also highlights that largely the technology that enables this communication that is central to these exchanges and experiences also has a tendency to vanish. The constant and assumed presence of the devices seems to encourage them to be forgotten when it comes time to critique their design or the impact they, as manufactured commercial technologies, might have on society and culture. This is similar to the way in which Billig (2017) argues the banal symbols of nationalism become invisible through their ordinariness and presence in the everyday lives of citizens. Smartphones are 'visible' in certain circumstances or descriptions but not others, yet they remain functioning and in effect across much of young adult sociality even in those times when they are not visible. This is obviously a beneficial trait for marketing and data collection purposes but as communication technologies to pair people and phones are preparing to be embedded within the brain via implanted mediating chips seeking to translate neural activities (Capoot, 2022), it seems important to fully attend to the critique and issues that accompany these commercially designed communications technologies and the ramifications of the access they allow. What new forms of data might a technology such as Neuralink (Neuralink, 2022) allow marketers access to? Additionally, one of the ways in which my participants resisted the attention seeking nature of the devices, to allow themselves the prioritisation of other forms of sociality, was to physically part ways with the devices for a time – an option that becomes less viable for a commercial chip placed within the skull.

One of the issues that my findings highlight is the social norms around capturing and sharing alcohol content currently favour the spread of alcohol marketing and positive, consumption-based, content. The norms surrounding alcohol are a well-established factor in consumption practices (e.g. Perkins, 2002) and social media sharing practices (Litt & Stock, 2011). Often it is the misjudgement of peer consumption, created by an alcohol bias in posted material, that is proposed as a mechanism for the

positive correlation between social media use and alcohol consumption (Boyle et al., 2018). This suggests that attempting to shift norms to address the issue of marketing influence in young adult drinking cultures may is a plausible mechanism for positive change, an idea that recent research has shown may hold potential (Hembroff et al., 2021). Hembroff et al. (2021) implemented a re-norming strategy to counter the misperceived norms relating to peer alcohol consumption that had developed as a result of a variety of factors, one of which was the bias toward posting alcohol content to Facebook. While this may not be directly relevant for attempts to re-norm cultures in more intimate social app settings (e.g. Snapchat), Hembroff et al. also suggest that the various strategies they employed helped foster a more general critical awareness when encountering alcohol related material on social platforms. This awareness is credited with some of the decreased posting of content and it is here that my findings suggest is worth consideration. Participants often did not identify the commercial nature of content they shared and yet when they did identify material as commercial, they described it as less desirable to share with peers. Programs that seek to raise the awareness of shared content that functions as alcohol marketing, whilst also seeking to change the social norms and meanings surrounding alcohol may help raise the amount of social app content that is identified as marketing – hopefully lowering the amount this content is shared while also disentangling alcohol marketing and young adult sociality.

The degree to which alcohol marketing is used, enjoyed and a part of young adult drinking cultures points to the need for systemic solutions, as opposed to individually targeted ones where alcohol marketing is deemed problematic. Digital marketing has been notoriously difficult to legislate but there have been shifts in this area with countries such as Lithuania banning alcohol advertising online and Finland targeting the promotion of alcohol upon social media specifically (Scobie et al., 2022). Yet the nebulous nature of what content qualifies as alcohol promotion, and that participants in this study constantly negotiated, remains an issue for legislators and enforcement as well. In the case of Finland the ban encompasses sharing any form of alcohol content but in practice this has been hard to enforce or even monitor due to factors such as the individualistic feed of most social media (Katainen et al.,

2020). Arguably by targeting the most obvious examples, legislative approaches may even be encouraging marketers to pursue more insidious methods for co-opting and embedding alcohol material within young adult sociality as they seek to evade surveillance and punishment of their activities in these contexts. It seems that one of the few practical ways in which social media marketing could be addressed directly would be to harness technologies such as the blossoming AI image processing capabilities to actively monitor and flag content to users. Even then, this is a process that would inevitably require the cooperation of transnational corporations such as Meta or Google to allow regulatory boards unfettered, non-curated, access to user posted material – an outcome that would likely curb marketing revenue as well as have widespread privacy implications. There are many other issues with enlisting AI and algorithmic approaches to regulation but perhaps prime amongst them is that they skip a conversation about the role of AI in society, and in particular commerce, that needs to be had. This is an important conversation given the increasing scope of daily influence these technologies are acquiring and how little consideration is sometimes given them by public health professionals seeking to address their harm (Goodwin, 2022). Additionally, these types of propositions are ones that businesses are unlikely to be receptive to and they are only likely to work if a critical threshold of governments worldwide were prepared to legislate in a similar manner because companies such as Meta have been happy to leverage their social position and threaten to pull their services rather than comply when faced with legislation they do not like (Davies, 2022).

It is the complex relationship with users and consumers that often presents as a political problem for legislators where public sentiment toward products such as alcohol is often favourable and this is a protective factor that brands actively foster. For example a recent bill to remove alcohol from sport sponsorship and to give local government bodies more ability to restrict sales and placement of alcohol retail outlets was put into its first reading in Aotearoa (Sale and Supply of Alcohol (Harm Minimisation) Amendment Bill, 2022). Public response has been mixed but there has been a continued thread of opposition premised on the fact that many local sport bodies are heavily reliant on alcohol sponsorship to be financially viable, and so removing alcohol from this relationship would be defunding these

treasured sporting bodies. This illustrates how disentangling alcohol marketing from its ventures and providing for those ventures after alcohol sponsorship is removed is a complex task of both legislating effectively but also negotiating the opinions and needs of invested communities.

One final implication of my research is that young adults are at the fore of the digital alcohol marketing front and their understandings are crucial to include in legislation. As above, young adults are relatively disempowered when considering autonomy and the platforms their sociality occurs upon and this is unlikely to change for the most popular, commercial, platforms at least. However, where we might instead empower them is in the legislative domain, a suggestion proposed by The World Health Organisation recently (World Health Organisation, 2022). My research shows that there is dissonance, nuance, and complexity in the ways young adults interact with their devices and incorporate alcohol marketing into their sociality. One of the easiest, and likely most effective, ways of making sure this depth and proficiency of understanding is included as a part of legislative attempts to address alcohol marketing in young adult cultures is to actually include young adults in the creation of alcohol legislation.

Future Research

While it was impractical with the time and resource restrictions of my project, one simple improvement to my study would be to run both observational and app-based data collection methods simultaneously with more participants. The complementary nature of these two methods as they appear in my current study is valuable but they would provide even better insight and foundations for discussion of understandings or meaning were they to be run alongside each other. Observing wider event-related contexts and being able to pair this with specific, detailed, phone generated data would likely give better guidance for any inquiries with young adult drinkers.

Truong (2018), when considering how young adults use WhatsApp, noted the importance of orientation and of acknowledging what is left behind or untended under certain orientations. It is clear there are important perspectives that remain missing from research concerning young adults and their

relationships with alcohol marketing and social technologies. Research that includes the voices of marketers or those who implement, design and maintain the digital social platforms they make use of is rare, so much so that Hastings (2009) remains one of the few sources of relatively unfettered access to qualitative marketer data and it is merely a glimpse behind the curtain. The issue here is one of accessibility; originally I aspired to include interviews with alcohol marketers from various backgrounds as a part of this research project. After flat rejection, the slow stagnation of stalled or elongated communications, or outright hostile responses when my academic background was discovered, it became clear this was not going to be a possibility in the time frame I had. It seems telling that the access afforded Hastings was possible only due to it being a legal requirement. However it is detrimental that we are often forced to read or infer from the outputs of marketers rather than make inquiries of them directly. While it is hard to imagine how this is to be addressed, it seems one area that is worth continually keeping in mind for future research while it continues to be missing.

Methodologically my study also suggests that large scale data collection methods need not be disregarded for small scale qualitative studies. One of the most surprising aspects of my app study was the level of enthusiasm and entertainment most participants got from engaging in conversation around an animated version of their night. This was beneficial for many of the reasons described in my strengths and limitations but it also proved useful as an educational tool because, despite my outlining of the app features, many participants were regularly surprised about how much surveillance of their phone use had occurred. The boundary between user-generated content and alcohol marketing is being continually and intentionally eroded by marketers and the developments in technology they advance. Future research might consider the possibilities for device-based data collection methods as a means for providing reflective, insight driven, interventional methods. For example, this might allow a comparison between in-the-moment phone exchanges and participants' evaluation of these in a more directed setting, essentially hoping to foster some form of protective effect around users posting content that does a certain level of branded work.

Similarly future research might build further upon my findings by increasing their scope and collecting more of the actual content that is shared in visual apps such as Snapchat. Particularly of interest here would be the idea of using methods such as multimodal analysis on the conversational exchanges of images across a night. As many novel data came from little mundane exchanges that were captured by my app-based study, it seems likely there would be value in looking at the meanings and understandings present in these frequent, image-based, exchanges across drinking nights. Being able to consider them alongside the happenings of a night and the peer content that initiated these exchanges would likely provide a good foundation for investigation, although there would be ethical issues around material such as recording the photographic material sent by peers of participants to consider.

In their 10 year review of social media use and alcohol consumption Alhabash et al. (2022) recommend, in addition to a continued call for longitudinal research in the area, that future research could attempt to balance the overwhelming majority of quantitative approaches used to explore the relationships between social media and alcohol use. They suggest that the in-depth explorations of qualitative, anthropological and sociological approaches remain underrepresented and thus valuable additions to our understandings, and that the same is true for research investigating newer social platforms such as TikTok and Snapchat. While my own research adds some small weight to both of these balances, it did not intentionally set out to investigate any specific social platforms. Future research could therefore narrow the focus further and attempt in-depth, qualitative, analyses of specific platforms such as Snapchat, hopefully benefiting from a more directed approach by then being able to employ methods specifically tailored to working with those platforms in question.

Conclusions

This project extends research that shows alcohol marketing has long been entwined with young adult drinking cultures. It considers the integral role smartphones play in these cultures and some of the ways this further entwines young adult drinking cultures and alcohol marketing. Participants in this study used their phones before, during and after their drinking to organise, share, and debrief their drinking events. The variety and flexibility of the camera-enabled social communication apps available to them was an

important part of this appeal as this allowed the differing aims and needs of young adult drinkers, that evolved as drinking continued, to be met.

Participants constructed phone use while drinking as both risky or concerning as well as beneficial and enjoyable for their sociality. Sharing alcohol-centric marketing content via apps such as Snapchat, Facebook messenger, and Facebook was constructed in a similar fashion. Marketing material that was perceived as too commercial in nature, that was restrictive in how it could be used in social contexts, or that belied a certain immaturity when peers engaged with it tended to create undesirable associations. Whereas alcohol marketing material that allowed young adults a sense of autonomy and that skilfully paralleled their drinking cultures was taken up and assimilated into the sociality that forms the backbone of those cultures. Despite the wariness surrounding alcohol-related marketing material, it was often still shared to peers and enjoyed in a variety of ways by participants.

One of the reasons this may be the case is that the constant connection to peers that participants often valued, and that smartphones enabled, occasionally brought a tension to acknowledge connections and relationships via the device – a task that could become burdensome, overwhelming, or distracting and one that participants put strategies in place to mitigate. However this tension creates a niche for alcohol marketing, already rampant across most social communications platforms, to become further embedded within young adult sociality. Sharing alcohol-centric content via the devices provided an easy, fleeting, low maintenance foundation for connecting and maintaining relationships while drinking. As a result of the entwining of sociality, alcohol and marketing, participants' phones were used to capture and share large amounts of alcohol-branded material. This further normalises drinking and brands in digital content, strengthens associations between alcohol products and young adult sociality, highlights to peers the rewards of sharing such content and often appeared to result in escalation of drinking during events.

My thesis adds to our understanding of the role that smartphones and marketing play in young adult drinking cultures and potential solutions for the issues raised would appear to require systemic level

cooperation and implementation of legislation (World Health Organisation, 2022). However, other ameliorative solutions such as seeking ways to re-norm young adult drinking practices and phone use practices, as well as continuing to include their voices in areas such as legislation and consultation so as to improve the effectiveness of these, are also worthy of consideration.

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Appendix A –Observational Study Recruitment Flyer

Can you and your phone take me drinking?

Want to help with research that is investigating mobile technologies and drinking cultures?

Are you 18-28 years old?
Do you own and use a smartphone?
Do you drink alcohol with friends?
Are you fluent in spoken English?

What it is all about:

My name is Ross Hebden and I'm a PhD student at Massey University. I'm looking at alcohol marketing and how smartphones are used as a part of drinking activities. I want to tag along with you and your friends and see what goes on while you drink together. I'll be taking notes and photos of events. You get to review photos and decide whether it's okay for me to have them. To say thanks for having me along I'll bring pizzas or a similar preference and non-alcoholic beverages. Each participant will also receive $30 worth of grocery, phone, movie, or petrol vouchers.

When and Where:

You choose! I just want to tag along. We organise a day or night that you will be drinking, and that suits you, then I'll show up when and where you tell me.

If you and your friends are interested or want more information please contact:
Ross Hebden
027 3085163 (Txt is fine)
R.T.Hebden@massey.ac.nz
Or you can find me on Facebook @ www.facebook.com/DevouringRossus

Appendix B – Observational Study Participant Information Sheet

Alcohol consumption, mobile technologies and marketing.

INFORMATION SHEET: Contact person

Researcher Introduction
Hi, my name is Ross Hebden and I'm a PhD student in Psychology at Massey University. As part of this I'm conducting a research project investigating mobile communications, drinking cultures and alcohol marketing. This project explores how people use smartphones and mobile devices as part of their drinking activities, culture, and socialization. It also explores digital advertising or marketing, and how people engage with and use this material.

Project Description and Invitation
The uptake of smartphones and other mobile technologies has been rapid, particularly amongst youth and young adults. This project aims to investigate what influence or change might result from the integration of these devices into youth and young adult drinking practices and cultures, as well as what changes occur in the alcohol advertising or marketing that this group experiences. This stage of the research requires observation (by Ross) of a group of friends' drinking activities over one night, to provide first-hand insight into young adult drinking cultures and their use of mobile technologies. This observation will involve spending the night with the group, taking photos and notes on what is happening, and subsequently conduct follow-up interviews with a subset of participants.

Identifying and recruiting participants: Who can take part?
Thanks for responding to our research recruitment information. You can take part in this study if you fit the following criteria:

- You are aged between 18 and 28
- You own and use a smartphone
- You drink alcohol socially with friends.
- You are fluent in spoken English.
- You can organise a group of friends who would be willing to have a researcher (Ross) accompany them on a night out socialising

Exclusion criteria: What can stop us from accepting an invitation from you and your friends?
In some circumstances it may be either infeasible or inadvisable for me to follow along with a group. In these instances I'll have to decline your invitation. In these situations the research team may decide, for example, that the timing may not be suitable for the project, my personal safety may be at risk, or the night out involves drinking that occurs in areas too remote or isolated for the study.

Study Procedure: What will happen?
You will need to contact your friends and ask them if they would be willing to be involved in this research. You'll need to provide your friends with an information sheet. Once they have agreed, you will liaise with Ross about a date and time for the observation of the night out.

On the night, and prior to going out, Ross will meet with your group of friends and ask everyone to sign a consent form. To say thanks for having Ross along he'll bring pizza and non-alcoholic beverages (or something similar on request).
Ross will follow along with the groups' drinking activities taking field notes and photos of relevant material. An invitation to attend follow up interviews will be delivered to some individuals after these field notes are reviewed and points for discussion are identified.

To say thanks for your time in this part of the study each participant will receive a $30 CD, grocery, book, or phone voucher.

What happens to the data?
The field notes will be typed into a word document and, along with the digital photos taken, will be stored on the password protected computers and Massey shared drives of Ross Hebden and his supervisors. Members of the group hosting Ross will be given the opportunity to review photos taken (via either dropbox or another organised, private, correspondence). Photos will be anonymised before being reproduced for any purpose.

All field notes will be anonymised with names, places, and any identifying features removed or replaced. Data will be stored for at least 10 years and destroyed by Dr. Antonia Lyons (supervisor).

At the completion of this research you will be sent a summary of the project findings if you wish. You may contact Ross at any time to request a summary.

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 the researcher asks;*
- *withdraw from the study provided you notify the researcher within 1 week of the observation night. Any contributions you've made or data that refers to you will be removed from the study;*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- *provide information on the understanding that your name and image will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;*
- *be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded. You may choose whether to receive these via email or postal mail, the researcher will supply a sheet for you to register your interest and supply either type of address, this will occur at the same time as you are given a consent form to sign;*
- *ask for the researcher to leave your social gathering for any reason;*

Project Contacts

Ross Hebden (Researcher)
School of Psychology (Palmerston North)
Phone or Txt: 0273085163
Email: R.T.Hebden@massey.ac.nz

Dr Antonia Lyons (Main research supervisor)
School of psychology (Wellington)
Email: A.Lyons@massey.ac.nz

Dr Ian Goodwin
School of English and Media studies (Wellington)
Email: I.Goodwin@massey.ac.nz

Dr Tim McCreanor
SHORE/Whāriki (Auckland)
Email: t.n.mccreanor@massey.ac.nz

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about the project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 14/29. If you have any concerns about the conduct of the research, please contact Prof John O'Neill, Acting Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 350 5799 x 81090, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix C – Observational Study Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form – Observational Study

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to allowing the researcher observe my socialising and drinking activities.

I wish/do not wish to have a copy of the photos taken returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet and I understand that the researcher will be taking field notes and photos during the evening.

Signature: ..... **Date:** .....

Full Name - printed .....

Appendix D – Observational Study Interview Guide

Interviewer notes:

Give reminders about confidentiality, and that participant can ask for either video or audio recorder to be switched off at any time. Also remind about using pseudonyms, ask participant to choose a pseudonym they would like for the transcripts. "Please remember not to say anything you do not want reported in the study, and that you can ask for the video or audio recorder to be switched off at any time."

Introduce the interview: "It's about your views, your experiences and opinions surrounding drinking alcohol, mobile technologies and alcohol marketing".

Participant introduces themselves, chosen pseudonym, what they do, age, ethnicity they identify with, and where they are from (current abode).

Questions

General Drinking and Smartphone Questions

How often would you drink? How much? And does it change?
Who do you drink with? Does it vary? Why?
Where do you drink? Does it move over a night? How so?
Is there any sort of standard, expected or normal drinking session?
What do you enjoy about drinking? Anything you don't?

What kind of phone do you have?
What do you use it for? Do you consider yourself knowledgeable in its use?
What bits are always on or connected? (WIFI, GPS, Mobile Internet)
Do you use many apps? If so what ones?
Do like owning a smartphone? Why/Why not?

Drinking and smartphone use

Do you use your smartphone much while drinking?
Keep in touch with friends that aren't there on it? How?
Do you use any apps while drinking? Facebook, snapchat, drinking game apps, other?
Do you use your phone for photos while drinking?
What other kind of material or information might you often get, or convey, via your phone while drinking?
Do you use the phone for any drinking related stuff before or after drinking? Organising? Discussing things that were done? Where and how does this happen?
How do you think smartphones are being used while people are drinking?
Do you think they add something to the experience of drinking? Examples? Do they detract in any way? Examples?
Anything else you want to mention regarding smartphones and drinking?
If you want to can you show me some examples of interactions that have occurred via your phone while drinking?

General alcohol marketing

What sort of alcohol do you drink? Brands? What determines these choices?

What do you like about the alcohol you drink?
Do you see much alcohol advertising? Where? Any particularly memorable ones? Hit me with a few?
What kind of marketing offline have you seen? Online? Any notable differences between the two?
What do you think of how marketing for alcohol is done in New Zealand?

Marketing and smartphones

Do you get any alcohol marketing through your smartphone? What kinds?
Do friends or other contacts send you information about alcohol through your phone? Drinking events? Local specials? Alcohol related events (e.g. Wellington sevens, Jim Beam Homegrown, Rhythm and vines)?
Do you pass on the above material or information to your other contacts via your phone? Examples and why? Anything that'd make it more likely that you'd do so?
What are the differences between sponsored material being passed as advertising to you and
Do you have any apps that are branded with an alcohol brand? What ones? Do you want to show me them?
Have you seen any "in app" advertising for alcohol (e.g. google banner ads for free apps on android platform)? Ever clicked on it?
Have you noticed any alcohol marketing or promotions that rely on you owning a smartphone or encourages their use? Can you describe examples?
What do you think of the idea of alcohol marketing via smartphone? Do you think there are any benefits to you with it? Anything you don't like about it?
Anything else interesting regarding marketing via smartphones? Have you had any interesting or memorable experiences with it that we haven't covered?

Appendix E - Interview notation guide

Participant pseudonyms and my own name are bolded to denote who is talking and I have used a simple notation style where additional, relevant details such as body language affect or relevant contextual material are presented within braces e.g.

Participant: what do you know that I don't? {laughs loudly}

Muffled or unclear words where I have provided a best guess are presented within brackets or are noted as incoherent within the same e.g.

Participant: there are [two] types of people.

Words that have been particularly emphasised are italicised e.g.

Participant: We'd never go *there*

Where part of a conversation has been omitted for the sake of brevity and relevance I have used an ellipsis e.g.

Participant: we met up later on and hung out for a bit

…

Participant: I was drinking vodka cruisers for the first part of the night and then settled in on beers

Anonymised data has occasionally been described rather than replaced when it adds clarity and this is done so using triangular brackets <> e.g.

Participant: we tend to hang out at <bar name with old English connotations>

Appendix F – Themes, Subthemes, and Topic clusters for observational study

Drinking

- Problems
    - Harm
    - Cost
    - Lack of memory
    - Personality mood shifts
- How we drink
    - Predrinking necessitates mobility
    - Aiming to end up in town/ at the event/ just wanting to be somewhere that is not home
    - Expectations of town (it sucks/it's great/it's the default)
    - Drinking as a performance (or just as worthy of note?)
    - Tipping points
    - Alternative drinking with the occasional "binge"
    - Controlled intoxication
- Context and drinking
    - Incorporating technology whilst drinking
    - Space, aesthetics and conflicts
    - Norms of drinking and socialisation (and resisting them)
    - Who you are with is how you will drink
    - Varying amounts are normal to varying contexts
- Why drink?
    - For an occasion
    - To get wasted
    - About getting drunk
    - Problem solving/relief
    - You're here to drink with us, loosen up (social drinking)
    - Loosening up and getting a social buzz on

Smartphones

- Culture and contexts
    - Constructions of and against "vain youth"
    - Appropriate usage of the device. The rules of "being there"
    - Risk/Reward of creating content
    - Making content to drive views
    - Representing the event
    - Creating histories
    - Sharing a screen as part of socialisation
    - Phone impact (by design or accidental) "technological determinism"
    - Different apps, different ages, different content
- Technological literacy
    - Technical nous
    - Rules of the apps
    - Ubiquity of technology
    - Acceptability of the digital social
    - Opting out and resistance

    - Surveillance
    - Determinism and sculpting behaviour
    - Unknowable tech and machinations
- App use
    - Ephemeral app use
    - Addiction/distraction
    - Bringing it together on the phone (it only works on the phone)
    - Immediacy of communication
    - Snapchat
    - Camera
    - Online/offline merging
    - Phone as a social medium, changing social norms
    - Daily app usage
    - How apps are used
    - Phone as a primary access point
- Why smartphones?
    - Flexibility
    - Always on hand
    - Convenience
    - Killing time
    - Constantly connected. Device as easy communication, social enabler stuff (stuff around constant availability
    - Better comms
- Smartphones and drinking
    - Encouraging drinking
    - Exacerbating issues of drinking
    - Displaying drinking
    - As part of the getting drunk process
    - Organising drinking

Marketing

- Regulation
- Purchasing Nous
    - Getting drunk for as cheap as possible
    - Drinking classy brands for cheap
    - Purchasing strategies
- Branded images
    - Branded events
    - “It’s not actually about the marketing it’s about the cool content or loot”
    - Buying into image conveyed
    - Different brands for different occasions
    - Regional differences
    - Brand and marketing distancing
    - Allegiance
    - Engaging with brands and marketing requires payoff
- Marketing exposure
    - Problematic marketing
    - Memorable marketing

    - Marketing alcohol by adjacency and proximity (loot and events)
    - Clever/Sneaky marketing, it's a game of cat and mouse, love/hate relationship
    - Marketing as a required pain
    - Phone as an opportunity provider
    - It's not really marketing
- Online/offline
    - Online advertising is spam, offline advertising is a poster
    - Online has access to more data
    - Online marketing flow
    - Online offers a bit more sketchiness
    - Actual advertising has to be to the point, marketing can be just fun/useful/"shareable" if it is on platforms
    - Online for image, offline for loot
- Peer influence/marketing
    - Going viral
    - Resistance
    - Peers as content experts for friends
    - Phone for conversations about alcohol
    - Marketing and identity is risky
    - Alcohol advertising is for big drinkers
    - Casual branded Snapchat, vs contructed branded IG/Fbook
    - Marketing provides positive alcohol identities
    - The phone for the marketing hookup
    - Encouraging social app use

Appendix G – Participant Alcohol Information Sheet

Thank you for taking part in this project, your time, effort and input are really appreciated. On completion of the study and analysis of the data you will have the opportunity to view a summary of the findings.

If, for any reason, you would like some general information about alcohol, or would like to know more about services that can help with alcohol related issues, the following has been provided for your assistance:

INFORMATION

Health Promotion Agency (HPA)
Level 4, ASB House
101 The Terrace
PO Box 2142
Wellington 6140
Phone: (04) 917 0060
Fax: (04) 473 0890
Email: enquiries@hpa.org.nz
Website http://www.alcohol.org.nz/

SERVICES

Alcohol Drug Helpline:
Phone 0800 787 797

Youthline:
National Helpline: 0800 37 66 33
Free TXT 234
Email: talk@youthline.co.nz
Palmerston North information: (06) 357 3067
Wellington information: (04) 801 6924
Auckland information: (09) 376 6645

Al-Anon
Email: nz-al-anon-gso@xtra.co.nz
Freephone: 0508 425266.

Samaritans
Phone: 0800 726 666
http://www.samaritans.org.nz/

Lifeline
Phone: 0800 543 354
http://www.lifeline.org.nz/

Appendix H – App Study Recruitment Flyer

Use your phone while drinking?

Want to help with research that is investigating mobile technologies and drinking cultures?

Are you 18-28 years old?
Do you own and use an android smartphone?
Do you drink alcohol with friends?
Are you fluent in spoken English?

What it is all about:

Hi! My name is Ross Hebden and I'm a PhD student at Massey University. I'm looking at how young adults are using their smartphones as part of their drinking activities. I want to install an app on your phone that will monitor its usage over a drinking occasion of your choice. You will get a list of what is going to be recorded (some examples include GPS and what apps are used) and you get to review the data afterward to decide whether you are happy for it to be used. To thank you for your time you will receive a $50 supermarket or petrol voucher.

When and Where:

You choose! The app can be set to record whenever you would like. Choose a day or night that you will be drinking set the app up to record it and it will do the rest. We will also do a follow-up interview which can take place at a time and location that suits best.

If you and your friends are interested or want more information please contact:
Ross Hebden
027 3085163 (Txt is fine)
R.T.Hebden@massey.ac.nz
Or you can find me on Facebook @ www.facebook.com/DevouringRossus

Appendix I – App study Participant Information Sheet

Smartphone data collection study

INFORMATION SHEET

Researcher Introduction

Hi, my name is Ross Hebden and I'm a PhD student in Psychology at Massey University. As part of this I'm conducting a research project investigating mobile communications, drinking cultures and alcohol marketing. As such I'm interested in:

- The language and understandings surrounding the role of smartphones and other mobile internet devices in users' drinking activities, culture, and socialisation.
- The different types of advertising, marketing and product awareness that are experienced as a result of smartphone ownership or use and how users view this material.

Dr Antonia Lyons, Dr Ian Goodwin, and Dr Tim McCreanor are supervising this research project.

Project Description and Invitation

The uptake of smartphones and other mobile technologies has been rapid, particularly amongst youth and young adults. This project aims to investigate what influence or change might result from the integration of these devices into youth and young adult drinking practices and cultures, as well as what changes occur in the alcohol advertising or marketing that this group experiences.

In order to investigate how smartphone devices are used as part of drinking cultures and marketing we would like to record usage of your device over a night of your drinking activities. This requires the installation of an application that will record your phone usage over the night. This data will be used to inform a follow up interview and it will be analysed for relevant patterns or trends relating to the study's aims. An example of this analysis might be a focus on increases in alcohol marketing received via the device as a participant got closer to alcohol retailers. We have provided a list of all the app functions and it includes some examples of the types of material recorded. The app will not record any account passwords or credit/banking information. The data recorded will be completely confidential and anonymised. As a participant, you will have the ability to remove material from the study before it is analysed.

After this stage a follow up interview will be organised that may include some of this recorded material as part of the discussion.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

You have been selected from your response to our flyers, internet recruitment, or word of mouth and because you also fit the following criteria:

- You are aged between 18 and 28
- You own and use an Android smartphone
- You drink alcohol socially with friends.
- You are fluent in spoken English.

We are looking to gather data from up to 20 participants.

Project Procedures

Instructions are provided for installing the application on your phone and the researcher can provide assistance or clarification if required. After installation you can open the app to specify a time period that you want it to record your usage. If it is the first time it has run it will ask for your consent to engage in the research and it will ask some basic demographic questions. You can then set the day and time period that you will be drinking and that you want the app to record. Finally, you can open the settings of the app and there you can review and modify the material you are happy to share with the study. The app will then record phone use over the period you have nominated. The following day the data will be uploaded to a secure server. You can then decide whether you are happy with the data you have provided, if not you may have it removed from the study at which point it will be deleted. If you are happy with the data that has been collected, the data will be reviewed and material identified for use in a follow up interview. The researcher will then organise a follow up interview for a time that suits you.

Data Management

Smartphone data will be analysed to determine the ways in which the phone is used over a drinking night and to consider the types of communication that are passed to and from the device. Data will be reviewed to figure out if there is any relevant material that would be good to talk about in an interview. Some data may also be analysed for patterns or trends in app and phone usage that relate to the aims and research questions of the research, this will be coded and stored appropriately. All data will be anonymised. Digital data will be stored on the password protected computer of the researcher. Data will be stored for at least 5 years and destroyed by Ross Hebden (researcher).

Due to the potentially personal nature of the data stored it will be anonymised before being stored. Smartphone data will be tagged with an identifying number that we may use to pair this data to the interview stage. A form containing this pairing data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in Ross Hebden's (researcher) office during the study and then archived in a locked filing cabinet in Antonia Lyons' (supervisor) office, to be kept for at least 5 years and then destroyed by Antonia Lyons.

At the completion of this research you will have the chance to access a summary of the project findings if desired. The researcher will provide a sheet for you to register your interest in receiving this summary of findings.

Participant's Rights

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

- *withdraw your data from the study provided you notify the researcher within 2 weeks of the data being shared with the project. This will remove your smartphone usage data entirely from the study;*

- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- *provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;*
- *be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded. You may choose whether to receive these via email or postal mail, the researcher will supply a sheet for you to register your interest and to supply either type of address. This will occur at the same time as you are provided with participant consent forms for this stage of the study;*
- *modify the settings of the app after installing it. For example you may change the drinking occasion that you are contributing to the study;*
- *remove the app entirely from your phone;*

Project Contacts

Ross Hebden (Researcher)

Phone or Txt: 0273085163

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Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about the project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 15/59. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Rochelle Stewart-Withers, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83657, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix J – App Study App Feature List

Research app feature list.

The research app you have installed is capable of logging any combination of:

- The time
- Your GPS location
- Any apps being launched or used
- When your screen is turned on/off
- Notifications (app name, and message that appears in the notifications bar)

The following example provides an idea of the type of material we will gather from your phone. It assumes you have allowed access to all of the app features in the settings of the app:

If you started drinking at a friend's house and used apps such as Facebook or Snapchat, the research app will record where you are every 15 minutes and when you were accessing those apps (but not the content you receive or send) it will also record any notifications (alerts up at the top of your screen) resulting from that use.

If you then received a text and moved location as a result of this message, the app would have recorded that you received a message, the time it was received, where it was received, and it would be recording your GPS so the researchers would be able to see if you chose to move to a new location.

Appendix K – Themes and Topics for App Study

Apps phone use

- Organisation and getting the night going
    - Phones for getting the right people there and can get an event humming
    - Different apps for different types of organising
- Drinking phone use
    - Being drunk changes the norms for use of communications apps
    - Memories
    - Phone as a focal point
    - No device use while “doing stuff”
    - Unacceptable use
    - Safety of up to dateness
    - Safety net, always a constant presence to save from the lowest times being had. Reactionary device use.
    - Finger on the pulse
    - Constant pressure of connection
    - Promoting your buzz
- Snaps as ephemeral memory
- Snaps as connection (emph Fun. Whimsy) Snaps as socialising in itself (something you do when together too, rather than just to keep in touch). Snapchat as a more intimate socialisation? Snapchat got range!
- Apps for the gaps… in socialising or just for transition
- Device as chaotic opportunity (expands constant connection to some degree?)
- Phone as personal customisable “reality” or connection

Marketing

- Phone tech
- Drinking events
- Peer stuff
- Indifference/uninfluenced
- Visibility
- Brand talk
    - Brand associations
- Going where the deals are, divided loyalty

The device

- The need to charge

Context and drinking behaviour

- Gender
- Drinking behaviour changes in context
- Drinking shenanigans and making the bad stuff good
- Drinking socials
- Deprecating humour
- Town (sucks)
- How we drink
- Wifi and connection as deciding factors for comms

Method stuff