

**WHAT ARE THE DISCURSIVE RESOURCES SURROUNDING “BEER
GOGGLES” AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN
UNIVERSITY CONTEXT?**

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ABSTRACT

Exploring student drinking, this research provides an in-depth investigation into how “beer goggles” is constructed discursively and what implications that has within the South African university context. In doing so, research attempted to: 1) map out the discursive resources operating in the empirical research literature, public domain texts and individual talk; 2) identify the subject positions and action orientation of these constructions, and 3) to establish what gendered subjectivities are reproduced within that framework. With a qualitative and social constructionist background, this study utilised a Foucauldian discourse analytic method that included ideas from discursive research. Data collection involved five mainstream videos, three focus groups and three interviews. Along with the research literature, the videos represented the wider social constructions around “beer goggles” that are played out in the micro contexts displayed by the latter participant material. Based on their popularity on YouTube, consideration was given to videos that were the most relevant and theoretically interesting to the research project. The focus groups and interviews involved current, full time, male and female, Rhodes University students over the age of 18. Analysis revealed a common sense construction of the phenomenon that has various discursive implications. While embarrassing and sometimes out of control; “beer goggles” is constructed as a socially profitable altered state of mind that is deemed a normal and heterosexual experience in the university drinking culture. Highlighting the importance of a discursive investigation, this study provided new and alternative information that can assist further research and shed light on the debates surrounding the phenomenon. Additional research is recommended.

Acknowledgments

Winston Churchill once said ‘Writing is an adventure. To begin with it is a toy and an amusement. Then it becomes a mistress, then it becomes a master, then it becomes a tyrant. The last phrase is that just as you are about to reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and fling him to the public.’

He was correct about servitude. So I would particularly like to thank all those who put up with this research taking up so much of their time. Without the contributions from the individuals who participated in this study, this research would not have been possible. Without my supervisor Werner Bohmke’s constant support and invaluable feedback, I doubt this project would have ever been finished.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and literature review

1. 1 Introduction

It is perhaps reasonable to believe that most universities battle with containing and regulating alcohol consumption, given that the ages at which students enter such institutions is one of independence and experimentation, where students test their limits against any boundaries previously set by their parents and school systems (Young & de Klerk, 2008). Being more likely to drink excessively (Gill, 2002; Wechsler & Wuethrich, 2002), Market and Opinion Research international (MORI)/UNITE (2005) found that one third of 1007 students in the UK drink more than the recommended weekly limit (Dempster, 2011). National surveys repeated four times by Wechsler & Nelson (2008) in America demonstrated that more than forty percent of college students binge drink (five or more drinks) a night. Often stereotyped as “alcoholic layabouts” (Dempster, 2011), the drinking habits of students has been such a concern that the National Union of Students in England proposed minimum tariffs on student bars to limit consumption (Woolcock, 2009).

While the level of alcohol consumption at Rhodes is no higher than other South African Universities, it does have a reputation as a “Drinking University” for two reasons (Young & de Klerk, 2008). Firstly, because of the small and concentrated size of the University Campus that is also located near various bars, the drinking behaviour in students is extremely noticeable. Secondly the small size of the University allows students to form numerous social networks in which drinking constitute a strong bonding activity. This common perception of the university, reinforced by negative media reports (Randeree, 2009), is argued to perpetuate excessive drinking habits by portraying inaccurate views of normative consumption (Young & Mayson, 2010). International research, suggests that University drinking is often characterised by excess (Karim, Kypri & Salamoun, 2007), with Rhodes university being no exception. In a recent survey of 2049 of the universities students, almost half of the respondents reported drinking patterns in either the hazardous, harmful or alcoholic dependent categories (Young & Mayson, 2010). As a result of the above studies, it is argued that student drinking at Rhodes is a public health concern that most likely results in health, social and academic problems for those who drink and for those who reside in its immediate surroundings.

Various studies have determined that University students exhibit a higher prevalence of alcoholic disorders and harm than those who are not enrolled in such an institution (De Visser & McDonnell, 2012; Kyrpi, Cronin, & Wright, 2005; Young & de Klerk, 2012). Knowing the prevalence of HIV, crime and the fact that many students have to overcome poor academic preparation for their studies; suggests that the social, academic and health concerns attached to drinking may be worse for students in developing countries such as South Africa rather than first world countries (Young & Mayson, 2010). This information stresses the need for more detailed explanations and interventions regarding student drinking than has previously been undertaken.

This research aims to further explore student drinking by providing an in-depth investigation into how the phenomenon of “beer goggles” is constructed discursively and what various consequences these constructions may have in the South African university context. In western culture there are numerous common phrases indicating a general acceptance of this phenomenon, such as “you’re pretty when I am drunk” or “beauty is in the eye of the beer holder” (Johnco, Wheeler & Taylor, 2010; Lyvers, Cholakains, Puorro & Sundram, 2011; Pennebaker, Dyer, Caulkins, Litomtz & Ackerman, 1979). These are all colloquial and humorous methods of referring to a state of alcoholic intoxication where individuals are presumed to be more likely to make impulsive sexual advances based on inaccurate evaluations of physical attractiveness. This is because alcohol consumption is known to modify an individual’s usual perceptions of attractiveness to such a degree that potential companions appear more attractive than normal (Jones, Jones, Thomas, & Piper, 2003; Lyvers et al., 2011). Engaging with or perceiving a stimulus in this distorted manner, is argued to occur through perceptual, neurological or even sociological influences. These explanations will be covered further on in the literature review.

This supposedly popular habit of drinking can additionally be described as a gendered endeavour (Dempster, 2011). Sexual stereotypes surrounding alcohol are stated to help explain the differences in alcohol use/consumption between males and females (Holmila & Raitasalo, 2005). This is because drinking exists as a specific social practice whose precise contextual elements can be played out in a gendered ways. Of particular significance for this research is then, how talk about “beer goggles” could be associated with the production of certain forms of subjectivity, such as gendered identity, particularly heterosexual masculinity

or femininity? Literature around this topic forms an additional framework of which to discuss material that emerges from this project.

The media's depictions of alcohol ingestion is shown to reinforce the connection between alcohol and traditional masculinity, by representing women who drink as less feminine and more masculine through their adoption of masculine actions (Jackson & Tinkler, 2007; De Visser & McDonnell, 2012). Westernised contexts, for instance, advertise excessive alcohol consumption exclusively as a male dominated enterprise (e.g., Ratcliff & Burkhart, 1984). Research shows that newspapers express health related warnings to women regarding the effects of drinking on fertility and appearance (Day, Gough & McFadden, 2004), and that pregnant women's drinking is portrayed as a moral concern, whilst men and father's drinking activities are not even mentioned (Bogren, 2011). The media negatively represents women who drink as being 'sexually open' and 'violent' (Jackson & Tinkler, 2007), whilst simultaneously presenting male drinking as normal and simply part of everyday 'laddish' culture (Bogren, 2011; Dempster, 2011).

Although it reported to be in the decline, research shows that there is a gendered nature to alcohol consumption in real life (Peralta, 2007). This is because drinking practices are often directly correlated with the reproduction of potentially harmful forms of subjectivity, specifically heterosexuality and masculinity (Bogren, 2011; De Visser & McDonnell, 2011). Being well represented in the University context (Karim, Kypri & Salamoun, 2007), alcohol consumption is shown to vary across gender lines in Rhodes University (Young and de Klerk, 2010). It is reported that females consume less alcohol than males, but are more vulnerable to alcohol related harm and therefore might experience similar health concerns (Young & de Klerk, 2012). Following international trends, this confirms that gender influences alcohol consumption levels in South Africa and should be accounted for in any research involving alcohol related behaviour.

Numerous international studies on alcohol have demonstrated a surplus of discourses around alcohol consumption that serve men's power relations, involving many diverse contexts and identity constructions (Dempster, 2011; De Visser & McDonnell, 2012; Edley & Wetherell, 1997; Lyons & Willott, 2008; Peralta, 2007; Speer, 2001).

Facilitating particular gender expressions within specific contexts, alcohol may be used to circumvent stigmatization and to conform to certain gender norms (Peralta, 2007). This is because the consumption of alcohol with fellow males constitutes a powerful basis for the enactment of conventional masculine identities (Hemmingsson, Lundberg, Diderichsen & Allebeck, 1998). Literature suggests that reconstructive explanations of intoxication provide fertile ground for identity management and construction (Kraminer & Dixon, 1995). As Landrine and colleagues (1988) advocate “drunkenness may be an aspect of the concept of masculinity”.

A discursive study (Gough & Edwards, 1998) suggested that male talk around drinking behaviour facilitated a dependence on hegemonic masculinities and the subordination of the ‘other’-namely women and homosexual men. Campbell (2000) utilized notions of hegemonic masculinity and gender performativity to explore the drinking practices amongst young adults in New Zealand. Results established that male drinking practices persevere because through their displays of masculinity, prevailing understandings of masculine behaviour are reinforced and defended (Lyons & Willott, 2008). Together these studies supplement the idea that stories concerning alcohol related behaviour form important facets of identity, especially in regards to masculine gender construction.

More contemporary research follows this same line of thinking. In a university study with seventy-eight interviews, results suggested that alcohol use symbolised the personification of hegemonic masculinity. Masculinities were constructed via drinking related stories, tolerance levels and the significance of drinking too much or too little, which signified femininity, weakness, or homosexuality (Peralta, 2007). A mixed methods study (De Visser & McDonnell, 2012) examined the degree to which individuals endorse double standards regarding alcohol consumption- namely if there is less acceptance of drinking for women than men, and its implications for social practice. Despite little difference between genders in drinking levels, double standards for alcohol use existed and were shown to mediate individual behaviour. Excessive consumption and public intoxication were regarded masculine practices, with even the most egalitarian individuals portraying negative evaluations of women’s alcohol use (De Visser & McDonnell, 2012). Substantial female consumption was associated with supposed unwomanly conduct, such as promiscuity and the belief that it inhibits nurturing motherly behaviours (De Visser & McDonnell, 2012). Interviewees at Westchester University recognised the significance of drinking in

constructing masculinity as well (Dempster, 2011). Although this was paralleled with attempting to distance themselves from the extremities associated with these identities, participants still exhibited complicity with many other general facets of hegemonic masculinity (Dempster, 2011).

In light of the research concerning the implications of student drinking and the deeply entrenched socio-cultural gender-based understandings in its association with romantic encounters, one could presume that the literature regarding “beer goggles” was comprehensive and without variation (Lyvers et al., 2011). However, in review, it seems that current empirical research is, in fact, conflicted regarding the existence and nature of the phenomenon. Many articles still debate whether “beer goggles” actually exist and those that agree differ in their conclusions as to why it occurs (Jones et al., 2003; Lyvers et al., 2011). This inability to establish consistent evidence suggests that the link between alcohol consumption and increased perceptions of attraction remains to be clarified and theoretically developed.

Providing an important background for the reader, a brief description of the above stated dichotomy within the literature follows. This research is organised around deliberations on the legitimacy of the phenomenon and other possible explanations surrounding its occurrence.

1.2 Literature review

A review of the current literature reveals that several studies have indeed found positive correlations between attractiveness ratings and degrees of alcohol consumption (Aldhous, 2008; Coleman & Cater, 2005; Dry, Burns, Nettelbeck, Farquharson, & White, 2012; Halsey, Huber, Bufton, & Little, 2010; Jones et al., 2003; Lindgren, Pantalone, Lewis & George, 2009; Lyvers et al., 2011; Parker, Penton-Voak, Attwood, & Munafò, 2008; Pennebaker et al., 1979; Steele & Josephs, 1990). Noticeably, the phenomenon is argued to occur through a variety of mechanisms which shall be discussed later. A study by Pennebaker and colleagues (1979) reported a correlation between alcohol and perceived levels of attractiveness for both genders when closing time loomed for patrons in a bar. Their conclusions were presumed to have partly resulted from alcohol consumption even though no physical measure of blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was administered during the study. A

more recent quasi-experimental study explored the perceptions of attractiveness in eighty college students who had either consumed alcohol in the last three hours or were labelled sober for that particular day (Jones et al., 2003). Suggesting a possible explanation for risky sexual behaviour, the study's results indicated that in heterosexual relations, those who consumed alcohol rated facial stimuli as more attractive than those who didn't (Jones et al., 2003). Noticeably however, the results of this study are limited in that it relied upon self-reported degrees of intoxication and was not conducted in an experimental setting where controlled interventions could be given (Parker et al., 2008). Thus, regardless of its high ecological validity, elevated ratings of attraction could instead be attributed to alternative confounding variables such as voluntary alcohol consumption or the environmental priming of certain responses (Parker et al., 2008).

The most recent study by Lyvers and colleagues (2011) tested eighty intoxicated and non-intoxicated heterosexual students from both genders for a three month period in their naturalistic setting. In this survey that rated the perceptions of attraction towards the unfamiliar members of the opposite sex, each individual's BAC level was measured. Results served to confirm the "beer goggles" phenomenon as the inebriated sample group showed considerably higher attractiveness ratings than the control group (Lyvers et al., 2011). Despite improving on previous studies by measuring individual's BAC across a range of levels in their natural environment, the study is not without its limitations. The authors acknowledge possible confounding variables, such as personality factors like impulsivity or the "closing time effect" of individuals becoming more desperate as time progresses (Lyvers et al., 2011). These problems are irrelevant in this particular context however. This is because a positive correlation between alcohol and perceptions of attraction has been established. It only creates doubtful reflections on whether the relationship occurred through pharmacological actions of alcohol, psychological determinants or even a combination of the two (Lyvers et al., 2011). Nonetheless despite these problems of isolating possible causal mechanisms, previous research has highlighted the legitimacy of alcohol mediated perceptions of attraction to a significant degree. Inebriated individuals are presumed to sustain altered perceptions of attractions that make them more likely to engage in impulsive sexual advances (Aldhous, 2008). Consequently, even though the mechanisms remain unclear, it can be argued that there is a correlation between alcohol consumption and increased perceptions of sexual attractiveness in others.

Alternatively, numerous research studies have failed to establish a correlation between alcohol consumption and increased perceptions of attraction, with some studies indicating psychological explanations such as social expectancy (Friedman, McCarthy, Förster, & Denzler, 2005; Gladue & Delany, 1990; Hull & Bond, 1986; Kruse & Fromme, 2005). An early study by Gladue & Delany (1990) failed to show any positive relationship between the alcohol consumption of bar patrons and their subsequent attractiveness ratings of facial stimuli. This study is limited however as it is based upon the self-report of drunk individuals with their baseline (no alcohol) condition having an estimated above the limit BAC of 0.05% (Jones et al., 2003; Lyvers et al., 2011). In a more recent article, Kruse and Fromme (2005) provided alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages to eighty students who consumed at least five alcoholic drinks per occasion a week over the last three months, and asked them to rate photos of the opposite sex for attractiveness levels. This experiment calculated the BAC levels of each group, with the control group obtaining false feedback regarding their perceived levels of inebriation (Kruse & Fromme, 2005). Results indicated that alcohol consumption had no significant effects on individual's perceptions of attraction since the outcomes for the placebo and intervention group remained indifferent (Kruse & Fromme, 2005; Lyvers et al., 2011). This may however, be mediated by the possible confounding effects of different levels of alcohol tolerance amongst the participants, as the authors have themselves acknowledged (Kruse & Fromme, 2005).

Another explanation against the existence of "beer goggles" is that of social expectancy theory. This perspective holds that even the mere exposure to alcohol related cues can increase attractiveness ratings, especially in those who already believe in the aphrodisiac properties of alcohol (Abbey, Buck, Zawacki, & Saenz, 2003; Bègue, Bushman, Zerhouni, Subra, & Ourabah, 2013; Friedman et al., 2005; George, Stoner, Norris, Lopez, and Lehman, 2000; Goldman, 1999; Hull & Bond, 1986; Lindgren et al., 2006). This relates to the ways in which through the repetitive connection between alcohol and sexual desire, a conditioned association develops that can allow the same properties to be activated by any such alcohol related cue (Lyvers et al., 2011; Friedman et al., 2005). A pair of studies by Friedman and colleagues (2005) exposed men to subliminal priming of either alcohol-related or control words and then asked them to rate unfamiliar females on degrees of attractiveness and intelligence (Lindgren et al., 2006). Participants exposed to alcohol related cues rated potential partners as higher in attractiveness (not intelligence) in relation to those in the control condition (Friedman et al., 2005). Thus, perceptions of attraction may change for

reasons other than alcohol in bar environments (Lyvers et al., 2011). Even the unconscious expectation of prospective partners being more attractive in a certain context can influence an individual's perceptions of desirability (Lindgren et al., 2006).

Whereas conventional society has frequently advocated that alcohol is a causal factor in the "beer goggles" phenomenon, it is evident from the above that empirical research has not yet provided consistent evidence in regards to its connection with attractiveness ratings (Lyvers et al., 2011). On the one hand, literature supports the notion of the "vodka visor", because through the consumption of alcohol, individuals experience physiological changes in perception, cognition and inhibition that makes others seem more attractive than usual (Aldhous, 2008; Coleman & Cater, 2005; Dry et al., 2012; Halsey et al., 2010; Jones et al., 2003; Little, Apicella & Marlowe, 2007; Lindgren et al., 2009; Parker et al., 2008; Pennebaker et al., 1979; Steele & Josephs, 1990). However, on the other hand; numerous researchers disagree on the mechanism by either suggesting that the phenomenon doesn't occur or that factors other than alcohol can be attributed to the increases in attractiveness ratings within these contexts (Abbey et al., 2003; Bègue et al., 2013; Friedman et al., 2005; George et al., 2000; Gladue & Delany, 1990; Goldman, 1999; Hull & Bond, 1986; Kruse & Fromme, 2005; Lyvers et al., 2011; Lindgren et al., 2006). To permit further understanding, the contemporary literature supporting the existence of alcohol mediated attraction and the research suggesting alternate arguments is discussed in further depth.

1.3 Existing explanatory frameworks for the beer goggles phenomenon

1.3.1 The perceptual/attraction explanation

According to various evolutionary theories, individuals in a species discriminate between potential partners in relation to their physical appearance (Halsey et al., 2010; Thornhill & Gangestad, 1999). For instance, the degree of bilateral symmetry is known to constitute a stable indicator of an animal's phenotype qualities (Thornhill & Gangestad, 1999). Numerous researchers argue that because bilateral symmetry is a firm indicator of an individual's physical appearance, perceptions of attraction are heavily dependent upon degrees of facial asymmetry (Halsey et al., 2010; Little et al., 2007; Perrett et al., 1999). Thus degrees of facial symmetry are important factors in individual's selection of potential partners. It is argued that because alcohol alters our ability to perceptually recognise the symmetry in people's faces, it

becomes an important factor in determining the attraction rating of others (Aldhous, 2008; Halsey et al., 2010; Little et al., 2007). Numerous studies have revealed the detrimental effects of alcohol ingestion on visual perception (Andre, 1996; Watten & Lie, 1996; Wegner & Fahle, 1999). During periods of intoxication, individuals are known to suffer perceptual decreases in their oculomotor control, visual acuity and contrast sensitivity (Halsey et al., 2010; Little et al., 2007; Watten & Lie, 1996; Wegner & Fahle, 1999). These studies do not however examine the facets which may affect perceptions of attractiveness and which parts are damaged by immediate alcohol consumption (Souto, Bezerra & Halsey, 2008).

One study has established that alcohol ingestion increases perceptions of attractiveness for facial stimuli in a manner that is not-selective for opposite sex faces and persistent for up to twenty-four hours after consumption in males rating females (Parker et al., 2008). Although distinguished, these results are not without complications as the authors themselves note. Due to participants being able to identify whether their drink contained alcohol or not, one cannot ascertain whether the effects were due to pharmacological or psychological determinants. A study by Souto and colleagues (2008), found that increases in attractiveness ratings associated with alcohol consumption results from an inability to detect the bilateral symmetry that is essential in the perceptions of facial stimuli. This research however is criticised for using the contested method of geometric images and forgetting to analyse varying degrees of asymmetry by testing a combination of symmetry/asymmetry levels on perceptions of attractiveness (Halsey et al., 2010). Proceeding from the above, a recent study at Roehampton University instructed sixty-four intoxicated or sober (control) students to rate twenty photos of facial stimuli on degrees of bilateral symmetry and attractiveness (Halsey et al., 2010). In line with the “beer goggles” hypothesis, the results indicated that sober participants preferred symmetrical faces and were in fact better at detecting them than the experimental group (Halsey et al., 2010). Similar to the previous studies, personality differences were not ruled out as a confounding variable. Certain participants in each group could be more adapted to alcoholic beverages or have a more open disposition to potential mate selection (Parker et al., 2008). However, given the consistency of the above studies and the fact that none of the participants in this particular study claimed to abstain from alcohol; the results are reliable. Thus, the reduced ability of intoxicated people to detect asymmetry in faces may constitute an important mechanism underlying increased attractiveness ratings.

1.3.2 The neuropsychological explanations

1.3.2.1 The decision making capabilities explanation

As a second possible mechanism, it is suggested that alcohol inhibits our decision making capabilities so that we become less discriminatory in our choice of sexual object (Dry et al., 2012; Loeber et al., 2009; Steele & Josephs, 1990). This means that the subject does not become perceived as more desirable, but just that the observer cares less whether they are actually deemed 'attractive' or not.

The adverse effects of alcohol on various forms of cognitive functioning have been extensively documented (Coleman & Cater, 2005; Dry et al., 2012; Fillmore, 2007; Finnigan & Hammersley, 1992; Hull & Bond, 1986; Jones et al., 2003; Koelega, 1995; Loeber et al., 2009; Schweizer & Vogel-Sprott, 2008). One study at the University of Heidelberg, examined the effects of alcohol on individual's prefrontal lobes and decision making capabilities through quantitatively analysing the differences in cognitive functioning of forty-eight alcoholic individuals and thirty-six healthy participants (Loeber et al., 2009). Results uncovered evidence in favour of the cognitive abilities of the control group, as the alcoholic participants performed significantly worse in all tasks regarding prefrontal lobe functioning (Loeber et al., 2009). These results may however speak to the long term effects of alcohol rather than the short term effects, which is the more primary focus in terms of discussing "beer goggles". More contemporary research by Chattopadhyay and colleagues (2011) analysed thirty alcohol-dependent subjects with thirty healthy participants in regards to a CT scan and a mental status examination. Similar to the previous study, the alcoholic subjects were again found to suffer substantial cognitive impairments in comparison to the healthy participants. Despite possible confounding variables such as the effects of age and nutritional habits on the participant's cognitive health, this study gives precedence to the notion that alcohol decreases our cognitive capabilities.

Contemporary literature includes various explanations for why intoxication is revealed to impede our cognitive functioning. These include alcohol's effect on the prefrontal cortex, its neurophysiological determinants and the theory of alcohol myopia.

According to numerous articles, the prefrontal cortex that is most heavily damaged by alcohol consumption is specialised to mediate several different facets of the decision making process (Lee, Rushworth, Walton, Watanabe & Sakagami, 2007; Dry et al., 2012). The prefrontal cortex area umpires our decisions in social environments; where the orbitofrontal cortex and the anterior cingulate update our senses and actions, whilst the primate frontal cortex maintains the representations vital to controlling such actions (Lee et al., 2007). This refers to how the ingestion of alcohol inhibits an individual's ability to make normal cost and benefit considerations of their situation, in which they carefully scrutinise each available option with its virtues and vices therein (Lee et al., 2007). With this in mind, the influence of alcohol on the brain's prefrontal cortex can be directly linked with the poor decision making capabilities that individuals state they experience in qualitative studies around alcohol ingestion (Stuart, 2013). Combined with the possibility of memory loss, intoxicated individuals are likely to make poor decisions that coincide with their perceived embarrassment regarding their actions (Stuart, 2013).

Being most apparent in moderate doses (Olive & Griffin, 2008), alcohol is otherwise argued to influence our decision making capabilities through its pharmacological effect on sexual desire that decreases our ability to discern who we would normally find attractive or not (Lyvers et al., 2011). It stimulates a release from the mesolimbic dopamine reward system in the brain that is believed to have the same effect on sexual attraction as pro-dopaminergic drugs (Rosen & Ashton, 1993) and/or our own natural sex hormones (Putnam, Du, Sato & Hull, 2001). This dopaminergic characteristic of alcohol consumption provides some evidence that aligns with the common Shakespearean belief that whilst alcohol increases our sexual desires it also diminishes our levels of performance (Lyvers et al., 2011). This is because intoxication is argued to temporarily alter the libido in such a way that an individual's usual cognitive functioning is seen to become nonexistent.

In line with the above, the theory of alcohol myopia states that intoxication can also diminish our cognitive abilities by allowing highly salient cues like arousal to become processed over and above any less salient cues like the possible consequences of our behaviour (Jones et al., 2003; Steele & Josephs, 1990). It is argued that alcohol creates a 'myopic' effect on the brain that weakens an individual's capacity to pay attention to the details of any given situation. Forming overly simplistic deductions from rather complex matters, it allows individuals to make uncharacteristic decisions that forgo the usual processes of deliberation that are typical

of a sober and more rational mindset (Steele & Josephs, 1990). This cognitive effect of alcohol attempts to provide some explanation for the roller-coaster ride of sometimes contradictory and immediate impulses that are often said to be experienced by those who have been intoxicated.

1.3.2.2 The inhibitory explanation

Thirdly alcohol is argued to cause disinhibition, or a release of natural impulses, by eliminating learned inhibitions and consequently encouraging individuals to engage in behaviours that would otherwise be avoided (Critchlow 1986; Grant & MacDonald, 2005). Literature supporting this effect includes various research articles (Coleman & Cater, 2005; de Almeida et al., 2001; Evenden & Ryan, 1999; Grant & Macdonald, 2005; Lindgren et al., 2009; Stuart, 2013; Vander Ven & Beck, 2009; Varlinskaya, Spear & Spear, 2001), along with the two explanatory theories of alcohol myopia (Steele & Josephs 1990) and anxiolysis-disinhibition (Sayette, 1993).

Conventional lore argues that the consumption of alcohol frequently makes people more aggressive, socially assertive, gamble more and so on, than if they were sober (Steele & Josephs 1990). The idea that alcohol may cause this effect is a reliable fact given the enormity and breadth of research around the relationship between alcohol and behaviour. Quantitative animal research states that alcohol often leads to disinhibited behaviour, such as aggression (de Almeida et al., 2001), impulsivity (Evenden & Ryan, 1999) and playfulness (Varlinskaya, Spear & Spear, 2001). The literature conducted with humans has also been guided to a large extent by disinhibition theory (Grant & Macdonald, 2005). Numerous qualitative studies have revealed that alcohol is often viewed as a social lubricant that alleviates social anxieties and increases the likelihood of risky, uncharacteristic behaviour (Coleman and Cater, 2005; Lindgren et al., 2009; Stuart 2013, Vander Ven and Beck, 2009).

The first means in which alcohol may impact an individual's inhibitions is through anxiolysis. Sayette (1993) argues that alcohol functions to reduce one's experience of anxiety when presented with anxiety stimulating cues. This model proposes that alcohol impedes the appraisal of stressful information by pharmacologically restraining the stressors activation of associated concepts formerly established in long-term memory (Sayette, 1993, Davis, 1999). This means that an intoxicated person in an anxiety-provoking position will have a dampened

experience of anxiety in comparison to sober individuals, because the stressor will not be interpreted as stressful (Davis, 1999; Ito, Miler & Pollock, 1996). In terms of inhibition, this would propose that individuals who are intoxicated may actually perceive and attend to all cues in a given environment, but not communicate some of them as having any potential risk (Davis, 1999). Due to this misinterpretation of the consequences of certain actions, intoxicated persons are less likely to be inhibited in their conduct, thus increasing the possibility of the excessive or extreme behaviour recognized in current research.

Given the expectation for alcohol increasing our disinhibition, it is surprising that there is substantial unexplained variability that characterises this relationship in humans. Recent research demonstrates that alcohol does not always lead to disinhibition, but can either inhibit or disinhibit behaviour depending on environmental cues (Grant & Macdonald, 2005; Olmstead, Hellemans & Paine, 2006). This discrepancy is argued to be also explained through the aforementioned alcohol myopia theory (Steele & Josephs 1990). It is argued that when the salient cues in an environment elicit certain behaviours and the peripheral ones inhibit it, the myopic effect of alcohol on narrowing attention and thought releases said behaviour. This means that alcohol consumption only produces disinhibition when the cues that signal immediate rewards (e.g., impulsive sexual gratification) are more significant than the cues that would otherwise inhibit behaviour (MacDonald et al., 1990; MacDonald, Zanna & Fong, 1996; MacDonald, Fong, Zanna & Martineau, 2000; MacDonald, MacDonald, Zanna & Fong, 2000). The environmental determinants play key roles in determining conduct. This may explain how alcohol occasionally makes social actions more extreme turning, for example, the socially cautious person into the friendly backslapper, or the well informed and behaved individual into the sexual risk taker (Olmstead, Hellemans & Paine, 2006; Steele & Josephs 1990).

1.3.3 The social expectancy explanation

The aforementioned research explanations presume that the consumption of alcohol induces certain behavioural consequences because of its pharmacological impact on perception, cognition and inhibition. However, numerous forms of contemporary research have explored a different hypothesis. Such research holds that the variety of expectations often associated with alcohol consumption in society such as its mental and behavioural effect, can influence our alcohol related behaviour regardless of consumption levels (Bègue, et al., 2013; Friedman

et al., 2005; Hull & Bond, 1986; Lindgren et al., 2006; Lyvers et al., 2011). This social expectancy theory argues that the constant sociological connection between alcohol and sexual desire creates a conditioned association in the mind between the two that can be triggered by any alcohol related cue (Lyvers et al., 2011; Friedman et al., 2005). The socio-cultural environment that surrounds the consumption of alcohol preserves the alternative mechanism of expectations and provides a convenient excuse for individuals to engage in its related behaviours (Lyvers et al., 2011). In a culture that highlights the prevalence of “beer goggles”, the perceived effects have become so entrenched in our minds that numerous studies show that the mere unconscious expectations of the experience to have a considerable effect (Bègue et al., 2013; Friedman et al., 2005; Hull & Bond, 1986; Lindgren et al., 2006; Lyvers et al., 2011). In more general terms, some research holds that the expectations associated with alcohol can lead to the same effects as alcohol itself, regardless of whether the individual actually consumed any alcohol in reality

Hull and Bond (1986) conducted a meta-analysis of all the research concerning the effects of social expectancy on individual behaviour. Using a balanced placebo design, results suggested that the various expectations associated with alcohol consumption had significant positive effects on increasing arousal levels and socially divergent behaviour. Current research further highlights the magnitude of this supposed conditioned association in our minds by indicating that alcohol related cues may have the same effects as alcohol ingestion when a person is unconscious (Friedman et al., 2005; Goldman, 1999). The most recent evidence of this is demonstrated in two experimental studies conducted by Friedman and colleagues (2005) consisting of eighty-two and seventy-eight undergraduate males. Within both experiments, the participants were primed with alcohol-related or control words before rating the attractiveness and intelligence of a series of photographs depicting female facial stimuli (Friedman et al., 2005). Results indicated that the mere exposure to alcohol related cues increased attractiveness ratings, with the condition being more substantial in those that were only sub-optimally primed (Friedman et al., 2005; Lyvers et al., 2011). Although alcohol has various pharmacological mechanisms towards inducing sexual interest, it can also create an atmosphere of social anticipations that facilitate and explain some of its associated behaviours.

The explanation that the phenomenon is a socially mediated construction speaks to the culturally located meanings and practices (transmitted via social representations and

discourses like “beer goggles”) associated with alcohol. The constant connection between alcohol and its previously mentioned effects creates a conditioned association that can be triggered by any such related cue (Lyvers et al., 2011; Friedman et al., 2005). This view would see the previously discussed bodies of research as part of that process. The discourses make truth claims based on evidence that construct the idea of “beer goggles”, alcohol and our subsequent human experiences in particular ways. As a result the research question becomes clear: namely how is the phenomenon of “beer goggles” constructed discursively and what are the consequences of the various language resources that are used within that framework of understanding?

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have considered the specifics of this particular research question and reviewed all the available literature regarding the topic at hand. Contextualising the phenomenon, an initial description of “beer goggles” and its relationship with university culture was given. Modern literature is shown to include numerous deliberations on the legitimacy of the phenomenon and the various possible explanations for its existence. This inconsistency within current research demonstrates a need for further explanation and theoretical improvement. Consequently literature supporting the existence of alcohol mediated attraction and research suggesting alternative explanations have been sketched out. Outlining the ‘performative’ nature of gender in relation to alcohol provided an additional avenue for which this research project can examine the “beer goggles” phenomenon.

In the next chapter, I discuss the theoretical orientations that structure this particular research project. In connection to Foucauldian discourse analysis, the historical development and the significance of social constructionism will be outlined. Social constructionist theory and its relation to the study of alcohol related behaviour and gender form this study’s theoretical lens. Following this, the discursive implications of the different ways in which the above literature constructs the phenomenon will be discussed. This means that explanations will be provided for how each of the above ideas encourages individuals to comprehend the phenomenon in particular ways and how that may have certain discursive implications for social action.

Chapter 2: Theoretical literature review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the literature relevant to the subject of “beer goggles” and how it is constructed in society and modern academic research. This chapter provides an outline of the theoretical paradigms, research methods and theory used in this particular research. A qualitative paradigm was used in this study and a Foucauldian discourse analysis was the preferred research method. Significant information is given regarding the link between the idea of “beer goggles” and a social constructionist understanding of social phenomena. Along with highlighting how “beer goggles” can be understood as a social construction, an in-depth exploration of the various elements within said construction will be provided.

2.2 History and development of Social constructionism

Since ontological and epistemological assumptions are an important aspect of knowledge generation, it seems prudent to first provide a brief outline of the development of the social constructionist theoretical paradigm in order to solidify the reader’s understanding. Being multidisciplinary in nature, social constructionism draws its influences from a number of social sciences such as philosophy, sociology, psychology and linguistics (Burr, 2003; Parker & Spears, 1996). Rooted in philosophical developments from almost three hundred years ago, the theories of social constructionism are said to have emerged from the works of various American and British scholars over the past four decades (Elder-Vass, 2012). Noting that this is a possible social construction itself, I shall describe the history and key influences of the social constructionist movement below.

Social theory in the late twentieth century was influenced by the challenges raised through the arrival of postmodernism (Elder-Vass, 2012). Embodying the Kantian search for truth that emerged during the enlightenment era, postmodernism signifies a questioning and rejection of any of the fundamental assumptions in modern life (Burr, 2003; Gergen, 1985). In the search for the structures to life, theories by sociologists such as Karl Marx and psychologists such as Freud and Piaget all promoted a grand narrative for explaining social phenomena (Burr, 2003). These theories are known as “*structuralist*” because they propose that all social phenomena have a deeper reality of underlying structures that explain their existence (Palmer, 1997). With the introduction of Nietzsche’s nihilistic view that rejects the possibility

of a grand narrative, arose the development of post-structuralism, or as it is often referred to, postmodernism (Palmer, 1997). Postmodernism rejects the idea that there can be an overarching understanding of social phenomena and that the social world is a result of hidden structures that explain our functioning (Burr, 2003). Rather than understanding social phenomena from one overall viewpoint, postmodernism stresses the co-existence of multiple versions of reality that can explain social phenomena. In alignment, this research does not view and attempt to explain “beer goggles” as originating from a single mechanism. It is seen as emanating from a variety of explanations that each warrant their own situational understanding and examination.

With the early twentieth century interest in understanding how socio-cultural forces construct knowledge, arose many sociological influences towards the social constructionist ethos (Burr, 2003). The most notable contribution by Berger and Luckmann (1966) comprises of an anti-essentialist argument to social life that states we create and maintain the existence of social phenomena through our social interactions with one another. This theory was developed through the sub-disciplines of symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology (Burr, 2003). The former theorises that we construct our identities through social interaction and the latter attempted to understand the process by which individuals construct and make sense of the world they create (Burr, 2003). Through the process of externalisation, objectification and internalisation, Berger and Luckmann (1966) identified a circular relationship between the individual and society. Within this dialectic relationship, individuals have agency in constructing their world, but at the same time are limited by the social institutions and frameworks of meaning that inhabit that world (Burr, 2003). In other words, humans continually create the social world they live in, which then in turn becomes a reality to which they must respond. With constructionism’s roots in the hermeneutic tradition, social phenomena are viewed as a creation of human thought that is not grounded in an external reality (Lock & Strong, 2010). Together with postmodernist theories that suggest multiple explanations of reality; a social phenomenon thus becomes viewed as a form of social construction. Rather than knowledge constituting an underlining structure to be discovered, it is viewed as a consequence of many social processes that blend together to form its identity (Burr, 2003). This means that through socialisation humans actively construct and give meaning to our external reality. As a consequence, examinations of social phenomena, should take into account the role of language in constructing the very nature of what things are.

The early 1960s and 1970s were characterised by various arguments for the construction of a new paradigm that would retreat from the cognitivist and structuralist beliefs around psychological research and focus more on the subject as a human being (Parker, 2005). As social psychology was originally used during the Second World War for propaganda and manipulation (Parker, 2005), psychologists in the 1970's become increasingly anxious that the discipline unfairly promoted the values of certain dominant groups (Parker 2005). Often referred to as the 'crisis' within psychology, the voice of the individual was disregarded in favour of the decontextualized experimental mode of research that came with the dominance of positivism (Burr, 2003). Together with previously stated work of Berger and Luckmann (1966), various pieces of scholarly work within social psychology such as Gergen's (1973) '*Social psychology as history*' and Harré & Secord's (1972) '*The explanation of social behaviour*' directly opposed this. Employing postmodernist influences, they proposed that the methods of psychological enquiry be revised to examine the building blocks of our social lives because all knowledge is socio-historically specific (Burr, 2003). These reactions against the crisis within psychology occurred at the same time as many influential debates in post-structuralist philosophy and history during the 1970's (Parker 2005). Literary and philosophical influences such as the work of Foucault and Derrida further discussed the importance of understanding social phenomena as socio-historical concepts in which language forms is fundamental in constructing (Burr, 2003).

2.3 Departures from traditional scientific psychology

Social constructionism has a multidisciplinary background that draws its inspirations from a number of sources. With a framework in postmodernist theory, its emergence not only has origins in earlier sociological and philosophical writings, but also in the new theories that advanced from concerned scholars during the above crisis within social psychology (Parker, 2005). The development of social constructionism can be seen as a departure from the underlying assumptions and positivist research methods inherent in traditional scientific psychology (Lock & Strong, 2010; Parker, 2002). For a better contextual understanding of its development, the essential facets from which social constructionism deviates from traditional psychology will be briefly outlined.

2.3.1 Anti-essentialism

As previously mentioned, one of the defining features of social constructionism is that it opposes the essentialism of traditional positivist psychology (Lock & Strong, 2010). Since all

social phenomena are viewed as a creation of different socio-historical influences, it is argued that there is no pre-given or discoverable nature ‘inside’ of these phenomena or the actors involved in them that provides an inherent template for their character (Burr, 2003; Lock & Strong, 2010). Traditional psychological theories such as trait theory and psychoanalysis ground themselves in the argument that humans have some pre-existing content and structure inborn within their personality. Social constructionists directly oppose this pre-given view of things or people, whether their ‘essence’ is said to have arrived through biological or environmental influences. This is because essentialism traps individuals inside fixed/stable identities that are limiting and unchangeable (Burr, 2003). Unlike traditional scientific psychology, in a social constructionist view, individual social actors became seen as blank entities whose identities fluctuated with the prevailing interactional relationship between reality and socio-cultural influence.

2.3.2 Anti-cognitivism

Social constructionism critiques traditional psychology’s preoccupation with cognition and its use as an all-purpose explanatory theory that places cognitive process at the heart of shaping our perceptions and action (Potter & Wetherell, 1997). According to Willig (2008b), this critique is founded upon certain misguided assumptions that are made in the connection between language and representation. These shall be shown below.

Firstly cognitive theorists believe that language is a true representation of our inner mental states. Constructionists disagree with this view of language. They posit that in order to make sense of talk, we need to take into account the social context from which they speak. This is because all language has a specific function that involves differing forms of stake for each particular environment (Willig, 2008b). The attitudes and beliefs expressed in language then are not true representations of a person’s thought as the purpose of talk is not consistent across social contexts.

Secondly, cognitivism believes that our thoughts are based on perceptual representations of the world that can be objectively captured if we eliminate the possibility of all biases. Social constructionists argue that the world can only be understood in a multitude of ways where no such absolute representation is possible. This is because it is through the application of language that the meaning of phenomena is continually created and negotiated in society (Willig, 2008b).

Thirdly cognitive researchers assume that even though individuals may attribute different attitudes and causes to a social object or event, the ‘subject’ itself is not contestable. Constructionists believe otherwise. They argue, once again, that there can be no absolute definitions of a ‘subject’ because all social objects are constructed through language (Willig, 2008b). This means that any attributions made about a phenomenon are not separate from its underlying nature, but rather representative of the ways in which our talk helps to construct that particular nature.

Lastly constructionists disagree with the assumption that what people say is dependent upon stable cognitive structures that represent an individual’s everyday course of events, beliefs, attitudes, experiences and so on (Willig, 2008b). Due to the performative nature of discourse, people’s accounts of social objects and events are argued to instead be reliant on, and change, according to, their particular discursive context (Willig, 2008b). This means that it is not about what structures people choose to represent with their language, but rather about what they are attempting to do with their words within that particular space that matters. As the meanings behind talk can change with its operation, what we say cannot be representative of any stable mental system. Our talk and what our words mean fluctuate depending on the context within which it is used.

Providing an alternative conception of language, the above arguments propose that a phenomenon does not simply represent a mental process. It is rather a form of discursive action that may have certain ‘*performative*’ implications that must be taken into account when conducting any research project (Willig, 2008b).

2.3.3 Relativism/Critical realism

Social constructionism rejects the traditional scientific psychological assumption that knowledge is a direct reflection of reality. Through historical and socio-cultural influences, it is argued that we construct our own multiple versions of what reality is (Burr, 2003; Hacking, 2000; Lock & Strong, 2010; Parker, 2005). If ‘*discourses form the objects from which they speak*’ (Foucault, 1972), it stands that knowledge is not mirrored by reality, but rather in the different versions of meaning that hold precedence at that particular time. The realist ethos of traditional psychology is critiqued for representing an incomplete view of the world that overlooks many different versions of reality and their relevant vested interests (Hacking, 2000). The relativist argument that there is no objective truth because all viewpoints must be

judged in relation to their particular socio-cultural context represents a radical departure from the traditional scientific mode of inquiry within psychology (Lock & Strong, 2010).

A potential critique of the postmodernist and poststructuralist principles inherent in social constructionist theory is that they are often charged with following relativism. This is an important problem for social constructionism in that it does highlight the validity given to all versions of phenomenon/experience (Burr, 2003). This means that with social constructionism, nothing can be condemned because everything must be judged in relation to its particular context. As a result, attempting to argue that forms of phenomena such as “beer goggles” have either positive or negative attributes towards society would seem problematic.

Social Constructionist theorists have typically responded to this relativist charge in three distinct ways.

Firstly, individuals are urged to examine the consequences of particular versions of phenomena for the kind of relationships and practices that they may reproduce (Burr, 2003). In doing so, this would allow us to compare the consequences between other ways of being and then postulate its influence/value in society. It is true that such an argument would need to be grounded in a particular set of values (such as ‘good’, or ‘value’ or ‘equality’ or ‘liberties’), which are themselves social constructs produced in a certain set of social and historical circumstances. Nevertheless, the important argument is that these values provide a position from which to speak (Burr, 2003). The key is not to pretend that knowledge generation is objective/value-free and apolitical, but to acknowledge the position from which one speaks and to make one’s argument in a manner that is consistent with that position as far as possible (Burr, 2003). Following this line of thought, it may be untrue that there is no position from which can critique a version of events.

A second rebuttal against this argument revolves around social constructionism’s notion of ideologies, which will be covered in more depth later regarding knowledge and power. Social constructionism is not defending any type of behaviour, but rather just arguing that everything is socially constructed and therefore mediated by the prevailing influences of that particular society/historical period (Burr, 2003; Lock & Strong, 2010). Through common usage and via the power relations that are tied up with different forms of knowledge, things achieve and perpetuate their own dominance in society (Parker, 2014). They preserve and extend functions of ideology over others, which could be seen as oppressive or liberating

because it limits/develops individual agency in terms of the subject positions that become available.

Thirdly those who disagree with the assumptions of the relativist position often refer to themselves as critical realists. Illustrating this theory, Edley (2001) makes a useful distinction between the different ways that social constructionism is used: ontological and epistemic. Ontology refers to the study of being and existence in the world, whilst epistemology relates to the nature of that knowledge and how we came to share these understandings (Burr, 2003). The epistemic sense of social constructionism revolves around the notion that through the use of language we construct particular versions of what we think the world is like that becomes our reality (Parker, 2002). But when social constructionists who follow this thinking state that ‘there is nothing outside the text’ they are not, says Edley (2001), making an ontological argument regarding the nature and existence of the world beyond language. It does not mean that reality doesn’t exist, but that through the use of language and social interaction, it does so as a socially constructed reality (Edley, 2001).

2.3.4 Micro/Macro social constructionism

The reduction in explanation of phenomena has long been a source of contention for critical approaches within psychological research (Billig, 1976). There exist at present, two broad, major forms of social constructionist theory and research that differ in this discussion—namely micro and macro social constructionism (Parker, 2002). Whilst both theoretical approaches diverge from traditional psychologies focus on the individual abstracted from external influence, there are differences in terms of the scope and importance they place on the social world.

Used by those who refer to themselves as discursive psychologists, the first theory emphasises the role of micro structures of language use in everyday interaction (Parker, 2002). This relativist stance does not deny that there is an external reality, but questions our ability to directly observe it without using discourse and thus engaging in social construction (Burr, 2003). Micro forms of research, such as conversation analysis and ethnomethodology have been used to explain, for example, how a deviant career is constructed for others via the redescription and removing of what is made to seem abnormal behaviour (Parker, 2002; Smith, 1978).

Shifting towards a higher level of social and cultural analysis, critical psychologists realised the need to examine the wider particular socio-economic structures, classes and various systems of oppression that occur through language (Parker, 2002). Micro-constructionism ignores these factors because it views individuals as having free agency of the construction of their forms of talk and of their interpretations of it (Parker, 2002). This is where the second macro form of social constructionism comes into focus. This view holds that there is an underlying structural reality to the world (such as power relations, ideologies and institutions) which structures our understanding within that world (Burr, 2003). Influenced by the work of Foucault (1972), this forms the backbone to this study's deconstructionist Foucauldian approach to research.

2.3.5 Knowledge as a socio-historical construct

Following the modernist metanarrative, traditional positivist psychology viewed knowledge as a timeless truth that represents the underlying or pre-given structures inherent in any social phenomena (Hepburn, 2003). In association with the earlier mentioned '*crisis*' within psychology, traditional positivist psychology is argued to dominate research in which western views of the world are favoured in comparison to other less known socio-cultural views of the world. With its postmodernist ethos, social constructionism argues that social psychology cannot discover universal truths to social life because all forms of knowledge are historically and culturally specific (Burr, 2003; Lock & Strong, 2010). In other words, the study of social phenomena cannot be abstracted from the time and culture bound discourses that mediate how they are constructed in society. This is what Hacking refers to when phenomena are socially constructed in their own individual matrices (2000). What a phenomenon means for some people is not necessarily true for others. In social constructionism there are no absolute descriptions of social life, but rather representations of the socio-historical discourses that surround it. This method of examination is especially important in a country such as South Africa, whose rich historical and cultural diversity necessitates research that accounts for multiple levels of socio-contextual influence.

2.3.6 Language as a performative pre-condition for thought

Emerging from a dissatisfaction with traditional positivist psychology, social constructionism argues that language is a necessary condition for thought that guides social action. Concepts of thought are acquired by individuals through the use of their individual language and reproduced everyday by those who share similar socio-cultural and historical locations (Burr,

2003). This means that we are not born with pre-existing categories for thought as our way of thinking and their subsequent frameworks of meaning are mediated by our use of language. Theories and knowledge are not simple expressions of the things which they purport to be about, but rather a construction of the social and linguistic preconditions that preceded it (Hibberd, 2005). For example, when stating that you prefer the forms of punishment that are more moral, it is the pre-existing concept of morality that informs the foundation for that experience (Hibberd, 2005). Giving social interactions precedence in creating knowledge means that language necessarily follows in creating our experience. Language becomes directly involved in social action because our different ways of talk maintain certain patterns of thought and exclude others (Parker, 2002). For example, when we talk about “beer goggles” as a primarily perceptual endeavour certain consequences and restrictions or narrowing of thought/action will follow. Viewing language as ‘performative’ transgresses the traditional positivist psychological view of it being a passive vehicle for our thoughts (Parker, 2002).

2.3.7 An emphasis on interactional processes and social practice

Whilst traditional scientific psychology attempts to find explanations for social phenomena inside the individual, social constructionism emphasizes the social practices that people engage in and the relative interactions therein (Burr, 2003). The meanings (identities) that are attached to phenomena are not inevitable, but rather unfixed manifestations of its surrounding socio-cultural factors (Hibberd, 2005). Social constructionism opposes the essentialist view that theories and knowledge exist in a vacuum of inherent structural characteristics by suggesting that the very nature of knowledge is instead constructed by our social interaction with each other (Hacking, 2000). The focus of psychological inquiry shifts from underlying / internal structures to an emphasis on the interactional processes that construct knowledge. Knowledge is not some structure that a person has or doesn’t have, but rather a fluctuating entity that people construct together in its surrounding socio-historical matrix (Burr, 2003). Through interaction, social groups can replace old forms of knowledge, ideologies and practices with new ones (Hibberd, 2005). Unlike traditional scientific psychology, the study of the sociological processes that construct knowledge through language becomes essential towards understanding “beer goggles”. This is because the ideas around social phenomena and the practices or identities that follow them, are flexible constructs dictated by prevailing winds.

As a consequence of the above departures from traditional psychology, social constructionism has become a common theoretical framework in contemporary society, with many debates around culture, race, gender and science being mediated by its emergence (Parker, 2014). It not only forms a major radical alternative to traditional psychology, but also operates as a springboard for many feminist critiques and post-colonial theories (Parker & Spears, 1996). Alongside an extensive list of readings about socially constructed topics, Hacking (2000) argues that even the individual qualifies as part of that category with a quote from a Roman catholic – ‘I am myself, of course a social construct; each of us is’. According to Hacking (2000), social constructionism allows individuals to not feel guilty in going against the predominant views of society, as it highlights the fluctuating societal dynamic of ideas. For example, woman who adopted early 20th century patriarchal social beliefs can learn to challenge the principal ideas and not be condemned by their female biology or human nature (Hacking, 2000). Unlike traditional scientific psychology, social constructionism demonstrates that institutional and societal practices are not fixed notions that can be justified through a single universal explanation (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 1973). Any social construct is rather a complex amalgamation of the prevailing socio-cultural and historical identities that is reproduced and maintained through language and social practice (Burr, 2003; Hibberd, 2005). Resulting from this alternative ontology, the introduction of social constructionism has spawned a number of approaches to studying phenomena. It can be seen as a theoretical orientation that forms the backbone for numerous radical and critical approaches to psychology, such as discursive psychology, post-structuralism and critical psychology (Burr, 2003).

2.4 Central tenets of Social constructionism

What animates this story of social constructionism is a very different view of being human than the one associated with traditional psychology. Knowledge is viewed a socially constructed entity and as such the focus of inquiry shifts towards our social interactions and the implications that they have on meanings and identities of the phenomena of study (Parker, 2014). It is important, at this stage, to map out a number of key concepts in social constructionists theory that will later be used in this research and elaborate on the possible implications they hold understanding social phenomena. These key concepts include: the role of language, language and social practice, and knowledge, power and subjectivity

2.4.1 The role of language

The traditional view of the connection between language and reality views the one as a means of expressing the other. When talking about “beer goggles”, or some other experience, the phenomenon being described is presumed to predate and exist independently of the language that is used for its description. Traditional psychology views language as a ‘*bag of labels*’ (Burr, 2003) used to provide expressions for phenomena that already exist in and of themselves. Language is taken to be a simple way of representing the external world that has no basis in its construction.

Social constructionism believes that reality is a socially mediated construct and at the heart of that creative process is language (Burr, 2003). It is claimed that “as soon as we begin talking about the world, we begin to represent it and construct particular accounts of what the world is like” (Edwards, Ashmore & Potter, 1995, p. 27). Following postmodernism and anti-essentialism, reality is not viewed as having some underlying structure to be discovered, but rather as a consequence of many forms of discourses that blend together to form identity and meaning. The social interactions between people in everyday life are where any shared versions of reality are constructed (Burr, 2003). As a result, the centre of inquiry moves from a focus on the individual to include all kinds of social interaction where the study of discourse is of great importance. Discourses refer to any set of linguistic meanings in forms that can be given an interpretive gloss (Macleod, 2002). Although the emphasis is on language, it is appropriate to view discourse as constituting any symbolic forms of representation such as images stories or even metaphors (Burr, 2003). This leads to what Parker (1990) highlights as the post-structuralist proverb which states that “there is nothing that exists outside of the text” (Derrida, 1976). As previously mentioned this does not lead to gross linguistic realism that outright denies the existence of reality, because when something becomes interpreted as a text, it does not lose its object status (Macleod, 2002; Parker, 1990). Phenomena are viewed as existing both inside and outside of texts (Parker, 1990).

Claiming that multiple versions of reality are available through our social interaction means that the identity of any one thing entails a variety of different discourses, each with a different way of representing the world (Burr, 2003). Talking about the material world then, is not to describe the world accurately, but rather to participate in an external textual genre that eventually becomes internal representations of what we call reality (Gergen, 2001; Hibberd, 2005). Reality does not determine the form of our utterances and their meanings, but rather

we employ language together to determine what that world is like for us (Hibberd, 2005). Knowledge is therefore mediated by our talk. Societies and cultures as interactional mediums sustain forms of knowledge by constantly sharing and re-creating different understandings of the world. Discourse is located within a '*system of dispersion*' (Foucault, 1972). It is in this system that some ways of talking about reality become more dominant than others (Parker, 2005), which will be discussed in a later section on knowledge and power. In general, the meaning or identity of phenomena is never fixed, but rather in a constant state of change in relation to the socio-cultural and historically dependent '*talk*' that surrounds it.

The possibility of multiple constructions of reality through discourse is essential to the social constructionist ethos (Parker, 2005). Our experiences of the social world are undistinguishable and without explanation if it were not for language bestowing meaning and structure upon it (Burr, 2003). As a result of this view, social constructionism has formed the theoretical background for psychological inquiries into the role that language plays in constructing how we experience the world. Discourse analysis is concerned with the ways people collectively construct versions of reality with certain practical implications, and how these versions of the world are established as real and independent from social influence (Hibberd, 2005). Where language was seen as a resource for discovering what individuals think, discourse psychology views language as a topic that *constructs* the world that we see now (Edley, 2001).

2.4.2 Language and social practice

Deconstructionists and discursive researchers both share the idea the language is constructive rather than representative of the world and, in different ways, argue that how we describe ourselves, others and certain situations has implications for action, either as individuals or as a society (Burr, 2003).

Discursive psychology embodies the principles of speech act theory and ethnomethodology (Parker, 2002). The former theory views language as a '*performative*' social practice that is not significant because of what it describes, but rather due to the specific function it achieves (Austin, 1962; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The latter theory determines the functions that discourse has within society and the effects of the versions of reality that emerge as a consequence (Harré, 1983). Moving away from traditional psychology, these theories give rise to different research questions than before. It leads psychology to ask what are the specific functions of the discourse, what purposes is the speaker trying to achieve, what stake do they have in the process, and what linguistic moves are they employing to do this (Burr,

2003). Language is now seen as a ‘tool kit’ that constructs accounts of reality for a specific purpose that psychological research must take into account (Potter & Wetherell, 1995).

While discursive psychology has placed the most emphasis on the action orientation of language, this does not mean that deconstructionists have always viewed language as divorced from social action (Burr, 2003). As previously mentioned, social constructionism argues that the various constructions of the world that language makes possible for individuals to take up generate different forms of social practice. This conclusion, according to Burr (2003), is compatible with both types of discourse psychology. Deconstructionism views language as a structure of signs and symbols whose socio-cultural sphere of influence has widespread repercussions for social action (Parker, 2014). This means that discourses can be seen as validating certain macro-level institutional practices (e.g. universities, social traditions, and health centres) whilst attacking or marginalising others (Macleod, 2002). When used by those taking a discursive stance or micro social constructionism, discourse has a meaning that doesn’t go beyond the immediate context in which the language is used (Burr, 2003). Emphasis is placed on the situated nature of language in which its ability to make certain practices applicable is channelled through our everyday interactions with each other. For example, framing “beer goggles” as a “*learning process*” (Stuart, 2013, p.33) could have certain interpersonal functions, such as the justification of behaviour, blaming others, and maintaining particular identities within the interaction (Burr, 2003). It becomes a seen as a positive endeavour that is an essential facet of individual growth. The deconstructionist stance used in this research would otherwise emphasize how this construction may support particular institutional practices, such a culture of alcohol consumption, university drinking clubs, and certain forms of social initiation.

While discursive psychology underlines the autonomy of the speaker to utilize language as a cultural resource to his/her own ends, deconstructionism emphasizes the forms of language that direct not only what we think and say, but also what can be said and done (Willig, 2008b). Influenced by the work of Michel Foucault (1972), discourse in this research, is not just about language, but the regimes of social practice too-that is the ways in which talk is bound up in regulating, organising and administering social life (Willig, 2008b).

2.4.3 Knowledge, power and subjectivity

If discourse produces our knowledge of the world, and if these collective understandings mediate our social practices, then there is a clear connection between what is perceived as

knowledge and power (Burr, 2003). For Foucault, any prevailing sense of knowledge in a culture or time period is ultimately bound up with a struggle for power (Parker, 2002). Knowledge is viewed as one of the many possible versions of reality; one that has established the '*stamp of truth*' over other competing discourses and now advocates certain social practices/ways of acting over alternative modes of living (Biggs & Powell, 2001). According to Young (1987) discourse entails a dualistic character of simultaneously constructing and restricting what can be known, said or experienced at any given socio-historical period. Discourse transmits and produces these notions of power, whilst also always holding the ability to undermine and expose it, rendering it weak and more susceptible to contestation (Macleod, 2002). The notions of what are permissible for individuals to do and how they treat each other depends on the prevailing common sense view. This is because any version of reality that is substantiated through common discourse advocates certain social practices, vindicates particular actions and marginalises any deviations from that construction (Burr, 2003). Viewing discourse in this way, allows for flexibility in the creation of knowledge because a tension will always exist between the constructive and restrictive aspects of discourse and any alternative constructions that oppose them (Macleod, 2002). To understand the unstable nature of knowledge and power, Foucault (1991) recommends that individuals must become aware of how they view themselves, through a process termed 'the archaeology of knowledge' (Burr, 2003).

Discourse analysts differ in regards to the significance placed on the meaning construction features of discourse against its effects in practice (Macleod, 2002). In her conceptualisation of discourse as a specific system of meanings, Holloway (1989), for instance, attempts to recognize the circumstances that generate accounts and how meaning is produced from them. While the deconstructive Foucauldian approach used in this research also examines the meanings attached to discourses and the conditions that render them achievable, the emphasis is on the social and knowledge/power effects of discourse (Macleod, 2002). Talk is seen to construct objects and contain subjects, as well as formulating what is perceived as common knowledge and truth (Parker, 1990). This means that a discourse can place individuals in positions that may have various consequences for their subjectivity and experience by constraining their freedom to act and behave in particular ways (Hacking, 2000). In other words, discourses limit an individual's sense of agency within their surrounding context. For example, within a biomedical discourse, those who are doctors occupy the position of 'expert', which locates them as the authoritative caregivers in relation to the other 'passive

patients' (Biggs & Powell, 2001). Deconstructive discourse analysis involves identifying discourse as an 'event', re-establishing meaning as presence, and deconstructing any predominant taken-for granted ideas of a subject (Macleod, 2002).

2.5 A brief discursive analysis of the research literature

Deviating from traditional psychology, the above central tenants provide a theoretical lens through which this research can approach examining the topic of "beer goggles". Ontologically speaking, this research then views "beer goggles" as being socially constructed through forms of language that have particular repercussions for social practice and the identities that people form in relation to said construction. With this understanding, clear patterns of construction emerge within the pre-existing academic and research literature. Each explanation constructs the phenomenon of study in particular kinds of ways with specific forms of consequences. Attempting to fully comprehend the discursive nature of the idea "beer goggles", this research must first analyse the perceptual, neuropsychological, and social expectancy explanations that have already been outlined in the literature review.

2.5.1 The perceptual explanation

Framing "beer goggles" in this particular light has certain implications for the construction of the phenomenon's identity within society. Not only is physical attractiveness depicted as the principal factor in interpersonal relationships, but it is also constructed as the constant and inevitable variable of change amongst intoxicated individuals (Little et al., 2007; Halsey et al., 2010). Popular literature advocating that the perceptual effects of alcohol cause "beer goggles" consequently limits/moulds the idea of the phenomenon itself and the way in which people interact with it.

The aesthetic value of a prospective partner is so pronounced in this group of research that attraction becomes viewed as a primarily perceptual enterprise devoid of any emotional connections beyond that which is superficial. It only forms a short term connection that is immediately withdrawn once the influence of alcohol has disappeared. Depicted as a shallow and lustful enterprise, relationships are viewed as a chemical process in which we as human beings play a small role. Our rational deliberations, social influences and any individual preferences are consequently left behind. As such, individuals become comparable to beasts, in that our sexual relations follow the most basic animal desires and nothing more. Over-emphasizing physical qualities in attraction takes away what it means to be human.

With this in mind, phenotype qualities become illuminated as the chief signifiers of the possibility of relationships over and above other considerations. Possible contributing factors such as personality, similar interests and/or belief systems thus fall by the wayside in association with appearance. In a similar nature, culturally located notions of physical attractiveness may become ignored in the face of supposedly Eurocentric assumptions around beauty (De Visser & McDonnell, 2012; Lyons & Willott, 2008; Peralta, 2007). This is because the current discourse on “beer goggles” emphasizes altered perceptions of ‘*bodily*’ attractiveness, with potential partners appearing thinner and in better physical shape after the consumption of alcohol (Aldhous, 2008). This is not only illustrated in the social stigma attached to drunken sexual relations with ‘unattractive’ partners in one phenomenological study (Stuart, 2013), but also in the widespread connection with alcohol and slender/healthy individuals in popular western advertisements and movies (Morrin, 2009; Walker, 1992). The emphasis on Eurocentric notions of attractiveness disregards any other perception of beauty, such as how some African, Fijian and even Asian cultures favour ‘*voluptuous*’ partners or place less importance on bodily features in determining beauty (Bordo, 2003).

Sexually orientated drinking games have a further significance within this relationship of attraction. In alcohol related forms of entertainments such as ‘hunt the grunt’ (Skarupke, 2010), participants enter into a competition in which the individual that sexually engages with the ugliest partner wins a predetermined reward. These communal activities are socially located within environments that consume alcohol and valorise physical attributes in determining sexual attraction. Transmitting certain beliefs around standards of beauty, these games are incredibly sexist male dominated activity. Presupposing their own attractiveness, women become reduced to objects whose significance in sexual relationships is directly proportional to their physical attractiveness. The argument that relations with socially unattractive women require compensation from others both reinforces the primacy of physical attractiveness and implies which types of women are then better positioned within that construction than others. This direction of value is partly based on and consequently highlights an already pre-existing assumption that alcohol effects our inhibitions. It implies that individuals need to disregard what is normal and acceptable behaviour to associate with women who are otherwise deemed unattractive from a physical and assumingly western standard of beauty.

This specific explanation is popular within contemporary literature (Aldhous, 2008; Jones et al., 2003; Lyvers et al., 2011) and appears attractive as a simple and pervasive theory for

alcohol related behaviour. As such, individuals could be more drawn to the perceptual route in rationalizing their actions than others. Offering understanding, this explanation is beholden to the idea that individuals are unaware of their perceptual misconceptions at the time of intoxication. This means that the prospect of any cognitive defects in consideration of their perceptual impairments or even the consequences of their actions are not accommodated for in this line of research.

Individuals could attempt to alleviate their impaired visual capabilities by interacting in well-lit environments, squinting their eyes or asking others for conformation on their perceived attractiveness ratings. Supporters of this theory could even try move away from the supposed focus on physical appearance and emphasize other aspects of interpersonal attraction. In this way the perceptual discourse could contribute to an increased focus on additional interpersonal factors that it overlooks such as personality, similar interests and beliefs. Reactions could then increase awareness for other types of research that take into account different mechanisms like the social expectancy or neurobiological theories. It could however, just lead to an exclusive focus on perceptually based interventions that compensate for any supposed visual strain and an over-emphasis on the importance of aesthetic dynamics over other possible influences.

2.5.2 The neuropsychological explanations

Contemporary neuropsychological research argues that alcohol consumption can both hinder our decision making capabilities and disinhibit our inebriated behaviour. This means that not only do intoxicated individuals become less discriminatory in their choice of sexual object (Loeber et al., 2009; Lyvers et al., 2011; Schweizer & Vogel-Sprott, 2008), but that they engage in actions that they would otherwise normally avoid (Coleman & Cater, 2005; Sayette, 1993; Steele & Josephs 1990; Vander Ven & Beck, 2009). These two neuropsychological theories have various implications for the construction of the phenomenon itself and for those involved in its experience.

Intoxicated individuals are converted into passive beings. They become viewed as slaves to their biology and the impact that alcohol has on their biological functioning and most basic sexual impulses. Viewing alcohol in this way, removes individual agency and the choice for how people behave when they are drunk. This is because giving primacy to alcohol's supposed neuropsychological effects on the brain takes away feelings of responsibility. This

literature may then excuse and justify any potentially problematic behaviour that could be associated with the phenomenon.

In a similar manner to the previous explanation, other modes of thought become ignored by the propensity for research to advocate itself as the focal component of the phenomenon at study. “Beer goggles” ceases to be about attractiveness ratings or any other considerations, but rather about alcohol’s neuropsychological effect on our cognitions and level of inhibition. This is because presenting one particular explanation for “beer goggles” makes an implicit argument for which particular theory should hold more favour.

Creating a general awareness of alcohol’s neuropsychological effects may otherwise force individuals to develop a proactive mentality that is more cautious regarding their inebriated conduct. Those experiencing the phenomenon could become reliant on external sources of intelligence to avoid the possibility of irrational or irregular behaviour. Promoting a careful attitude towards drinking, this explanation may then also curb the arrival of any problematic behaviour that the intoxicated are deemed irresponsible for producing in the first place.

2.5.3 The social expectancy explanation

Viewing the notion of “beer goggles” as a form of social construction has certain implications for its identity within society and the individuals held within that understanding. In this idea, the phenomenon and its supposed effects are not static entities, but rather culturally and historically located constructions that fluctuate in relation to the prevailing viewpoints.

Unlike the previous research explanations, drunken individuals are not depicted as outright advocates for certain beliefs over others. They are rather, the active contributors and victims of the multitude of views that society proposes at the time. While acknowledging that the previously mentioned pharmacological effects of alcohol hold some truth, individual actions whilst intoxicated will be viewed as socially mediated to some degree. The person who is familiar with “beer goggles” behaviour or having that experience is a lot more active by engaging with their social cultural value systems and choosing to adopt or conform to those standards. As a result, individuals are seen to possess some agency and responsibility in their actions. While individuals still possess some freedom in choosing a specific idea around alcohol, that action helps construct the pool from which they make that selection in the first place.

Research on how the social expectations attributed to alcohol construct the idea of “beer goggles” opens up opportunities for action. The previously mentioned mechanisms arguing for the existence of the phenomenon all excuse/include certain modes of thought by proposing each of their individual theories over others. Furthermore they do not allow the investigation of what people do with the various ways in which “beer goggles” is constructed. Social expectancy research however can be used to include all versions of thought and determine how each one of them contributes to individual understandings of the phenomenon. This particular theory will also help broaden the scale of interventions that can be used to combat the effects of “beer goggles”. In addition to identifying the plausibility of any of the solutions for the other proposed mechanisms, one can also acknowledge that they are socially constructed. Research can examine how different belief systems mediate the supposed effects of the phenomenon. It could lead to the reinterpretation of societal views. Through a discourse analysis of the various ways in which the idea of “beer goggles” is constructed, one can reveal the building blocks of individual understanding and their implications for any behaviour exhibited therein.

2.6 Beer goggles and its subjectivities (one of which is gender)

The significance of language to social relations and power makes it essential to examine the creation and renegotiation of certain subjectivities or ways of experiencing yourself in relation to “beer goggles” (Edley, 2001; Kraminer & Dixon, 1995; Speer, 2001). Together with the research connecting it to alcohol, an analysis of the above theoretical explanations reveals gender as a distinct aspect of the phenomenon. While the literature involves different theoretical understandings and their discursive implications, a third point of focus then emerges to be discussed in analysing all material in this project. That is examining how the social practices around alcohol that lead individuals to employ the idea of “beer goggles” as justifications for their actions may be played out in specific gendered ways. This means investigating what kind of gendered relationships between people do the constructions of the phenomenon imply and what gendered subjectivities are involved within that framework.

2.6.1 Rationale for gender as a subcategory

As previously mentioned, there has been a growing concern regarding the drinking habits of university students, marking it as a site for the construction of various forms of identity and other sociological issues (De Visser & McDonnell, 2011). Research provides little detail of what might influence student drinking and whether particular assumptions and norms might

impact on their behaviour (De Visser & Smith, 2007; Dempster, 2011). Despite the substantial variances in drinking habits between genders been shown, research has not adequately interpreted the nuanced impact of gender on the epidemiological circulation of drinking (Peralta, 2007). With only a few South African exceptions (e.g. Kraminer & Dixon, 1995), this dearth of investigation is also particularly apparent in gender's lack of connection with constructionist theory (Peralta, 2007) and the topic of "beer goggles" itself.

2.6.2 Theoretical orientation

Rather than observing gender in terms of static roles and character traits, a more fruitful approach stems from social constructionist theory (Lyons & Willott, 2008; Peralta, 2007). Both genders think and act in certain ways because of the prevailing concepts that they adopt from their environment regarding femininity and masculinity (Courtenay, 2000). Gender is not imposed upon men and women. Similar to jelly that never sets; it is rather something that they achieve themselves on an ongoing basis, constructed by the surrounding socio-cultural and historical influences (Edley, 2001; Measham, 2002; Potter & Wetherell, 1994). Gender does not reside in the person, but is accomplished through and in the continual interaction with others (Speer, 2001). Drawing on the concept of binary oppositions (Jay, 1981), scholars even propose a dichotomous nature of genders in which they are always constructed in relation to one another (Lyons & Willott, 2008). Being contextually malleable, there are therefore no universal forms of gender, but rather multiple variations across contexts (Peralta, 2007; Kraminer & Dixon, 1995). Transcending essentialism, by thinking of gender as being continually negotiated through repeated (and shared) social practices, could further our knowledge in relation to this study (Lyons & Willott, 2008).

Such an account could prove useful in analysing how "beer goggles" is constructed in a particularly gendered way through the specific kinds of talk and practices associated with it. Given the marked differences in alcohol consumption in the literature between genders (Dempster, 2011; De Visser & McDonnell, 2012), it seems reasonable to examine whether these same differences exist in relation to the phenomenon itself. Future analysis may involve establishing how "beer goggles" is as an already gendered concept, especially in terms of how talk is constructed, how the experience itself is conceived as part of the dating/sexual experience, and/or how it is linked to other gendered practices. While gender may influence drinking, alcohol practices like "beer goggles" may also be viewed as a way of *doing*

gender' (West & Zimmerman, 1987) and thus achieving particular sexual identities within society (Lyons & Willott, 2008; Measham, 2002).

2.7 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have reviewed the available literature relevant to the theoretical orientations involved in this research. In relation to Foucauldian discourse analysis, I considered writings that pertain to the development and significance of social constructionism, and its intricate details in relation to psychological studies. This process included (1) the history of social constructionism and its departure from traditional psychology; (2) the post-structuralist role of language; and (3) its practical implications of mediating our knowledge, power and subjectivity. After applying this theoretical lens to the existing explanations for the phenomenon, consideration were given to the relevance of the subjectivities that may arise from its construction- namely that of gender and its relation to alcohol. By exploring the discursive constructions that surround "beer goggles" talk, research will be able to determine the social implications of these versions and how they serve to negotiate forms of knowledge, meaning and identity.

In contemporary literature, there is a lack of qualitative research that investigates the socially mediated nature of the phenomenon. Research in this area predominantly examines the existence and sophisticated casual mechanisms underlying "beer goggles". However there is still much that is unknown regarding the sociological meanings behind the phenomenon- as a social construction 'out there'/for others. This research aims to fill that gap, especially from within the South African context. A discursive examination of "beer goggles" talk in this way will provide new and alternative evidence that can shed light on current debates and further supplement any health related programmes around student alcohol consumption.

Locating the theoretical orientations underpinning in this study, follows a discussion of the '*mechanics of research*', such as research design, recruitment, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations. Now that the theoretical backgrounds have been established, the previous chapters can then be turned into the '*methodological directives*' needed to obtain the material for subsequent analysis.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The former chapter reviewed the theoretical groundings towards an analysis of how the phenomenon of “beer goggles” is discursively constructed and what the consequences of this construction may be in the South African context. This chapter presents an outline of the paradigm and research methods used in this particular study. A qualitative Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) was selected as the chosen research design. Details regarding the methods of recruitment, data collection and data analysis are presented. Significant factors were intended to ensure the application of stringent ethical standards and research design quality are considered. This laid the groundwork for the discussion of the analysis in the ensuing chapters.

3.2 Research design

Research design, as similar to architectural plans, refers to the organisation of conditions and data to complete a precise purpose in the most relevant and appropriately resourceful fashion (Durrheim, 2006). This study utilized a qualitative Foucauldian discourse analytic, as depicted in the question of: how the phenomenon of “beer goggles” is constructed discursively and what various consequences these constructions may have in the South African University context? The question involves exploring the various linguistic resources that surround the phenomenon and their subsequent implications for social practice and subjectivity, paying particular attention to the construction of gendered identities. This is why a discourse analytic method was chosen.

Qualitative research has an extensive and well documented history within the field of psychology. The importance of qualitative research in researching human behaviour was first acknowledged in the 1920s (Moodley, 2009). According to Bryman (2012), qualitative research encompasses descriptions and interpretations of meanings attached to the text, whilst quantitative research focuses on numbers and the measurement of objective facts. The qualitative paradigm allowed the research to be subjective and involved, whilst the latter paradigms statistical analysis of phenomena meant that the researcher could remain disconnected and outside of the research process (Bryman, 2012; Kvale, 1996). Numerous studies have quantitatively investigated the causes and existence of “beer goggles” (Lyvers et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2003), but a qualitative approach seemed more applicable when

exploring the discursive constructions surrounding the phenomenon and their subsequent implications for social practice. A qualitative research paradigm was selected for several reasons. According to Willig (2008b) qualitative research entails a holistic, natural and inductive methodology that aims to discover and interpret our experience of phenomena. To explore the linguistic constructions that permeate the idea of what “beer goggles” is and how individuals behave in relation; the aim of the study is to examine the discursive nature of the phenomenon, without any objective manipulation of the circumstances to which it resides (Durrheim, 2006). The use of ‘*variables*’ would impose the researcher’s own meanings on the data and thus prohibit the documentation of the respondents own ways of making sense of the objects under examination. Qualitative research moves away from the artificial laboratory setting and into a more natural environment where the discursive frameworks underpinning such an experience could be studied (Willig, 2008b). Research becomes observant and sensitive towards the exact context in which the phenomenon occurs, instead of simply attempting to identify a cause and effect relationships. A qualitative paradigm allows research to take an open-ended inductive approach to understanding a small sample, instead of formulating deductive hypothesis on a larger sample group (Bryman, 2012). For the purposes of this research, a combination of public domain texts, interviews and focus groups were used to identify the nature of the discursive construction surrounding the phenomenon.

Burr (2003) and Bryman (2012) both describe numerous different research designs that can be employed in the field of qualitative research. These designs include narrative psychology, interpretive phenomenology, discourse analysis, grounded theory, ethnography and even conversation analysis under the umbrella term of qualitative psychology. The theoretical framework that the researcher uses to approach the text is informed by its epistemological position (Bryman, 2012). Following postmodernist ideals, the underlying assumption of this study was that reality is not a pre-given structural entity to be discovered, but rather a socially constructed representation of multiple versions of reality that each contains different socio-cultural and historical determinants (Lock & Strong, 2010). Knowledge is viewed as a social construction and thus the focus of inquiry emphasizes our social interactions and the implications that they have on the knowledge, meanings and identity of phenomena (Burr, 2003). Social constructionism holds that reality is a socially generated construct and at the core of that production process is language (Parker, 2002). As a consequence, this research follows a discourse analytic position that investigates the implications of the various discursive resources that individuals use to construct their notions of “beer goggles”.

Discourse analysis was selected to counter the individualising and quantitative trends of traditional psychology dominant in the literature (Morrison, 2006). Shifting from traditional psychology's focus on researchers as being expert measurers of individuals and their actions; discourse analysis attends to the range of interpretations that we can access and the various implications that they have (Macleod, 2002; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). It permits a view of descriptions of individual experiences of "beer goggles" as social constructions, mediated by socio-cultural shared systems of meaning and regulation (Morrison, 2006; Parker, 1994). Highlighting the constructive function of language shifted the focus from the individual towards the productive ability of discourse to systematically formulate objects, identities and experiences in socio-historically dependent manners (Willig, 2008a). In line with this, certain '*versions of reality*' and '*regimes of truth*' are viewed as being constructed in particular environments. Using a Foucauldian position that places emphases on discursive construction allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the present knowledge surrounding "beer goggles", in which the current body of data is seen as having certain implications for social practice (Morrison, 2006). This approach paid attention to the relationship between language and its effects on knowledge, power and subjectivity (Burr, 2003). Whilst discourse is seen as being constitutive of a certain version of reality, it also serves to sustain and reproduce the existing state of affairs (Parker, 2002; Willig, 2008a).

Consistent with these discursive theoretical foundations, the analysis of this study was mediated by certain assumptions. Being representative of the world, discourses do not simply mirror reality, but reflexively construct both objects and subjects (Burr, 2003; Hibberd, 2005; Morrison, 2006). As a result, any conceptualisation of "beer goggles" and the depiction of those who experience it are socio-culturally and historically dependent forms of knowledge. This leads to the core assumption that "beer goggles" is constructed through language and that in dealing with the subsequent social practices, individuals use pre-existing socio-cultural narratives to formulate and structure their particular '*versions of reality*' (Burr, 2003; Lock & Strong, 2010). The emphasis is on the '*regimes of practice*' (Foucault, 1972) that language facilitates through the use of its various linguistic tools and their discursive effects (Burr, 2003). In other words, it is the action-orientations of language that become the centre of study within this research.

Due to the various linguistic resources being the focus of inquiry, the purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which students construct the idea of "beer goggles" and thereby

inspect the subsequent effects of these discourses on social practices and subjectivity. For example, this research is not analysing the causes of the phenomenon, or attempting to determine a solution for it because this implies that it is a problem. In line with social constructionism, discursive research must transcend the common sense view of phenomena constituting a fixed and universally valid category (Macleod, 2002). The aim of this particular study is to investigate the range of discursive moves emerging in the South African University context and their implications surrounding the idea of “beer goggles”. In investigating the construction of “beer goggles”, the aim was to determine what discursive moves are used, what functions these linguistic resources serve, and what the implications of these constructions in society are. In Foucauldian terms, I analysed the discursive and social practices surrounding the idea of the phenomenon and their subsequent consequences for individual’s actions in relations to those discursive prescriptions.

While the focus is predominantly based around a Foucauldian framework of analysis, research will also draw on discursive ideas around the action orientation of talk. Differing from a conversation analysis (Wooffitt, 2005), this means that research will, to some extent; investigate how participants manage their stake in interaction (Potter, 2003). It is important to examine how individuals may position themselves in regards to the various subjectivities or ideas that are constructed around the phenomenon. This is because the roles that participants adopt in relation to said construction may have certain discursively interesting implications for those involved.

3.3 Paradigm/ theoretical orientation

Taking into account the previous chapter’s in-depth exploration into social constructionism, it seems necessary to examine its relation and applicability to this particular research study. How this particular study diverges from traditional psychological approaches and contributes to the current understanding of “beer goggles” will be outlined below.

The common sense view is that there is not a dialectic relationship between language and reality, but rather that one is a way of representing the other (Burr, 2003). Following modernist and structuralist ideals, experience is presumed to exist independently from the words that are used to describe it. It is argued that there is a pre-given nature to all phenomena that provides an inherent and unchanging template for their characteristics (Lock & Strong, 2010). This realist ontology advocating the positivist belief that we can only know

what we can immediately apprehend or perceive to exist, forms the dominant underlying assumption toward scientific modes of research (Potter & Wetherell, 1997). Scientific, quantitative methods of inquiry that examine measurable and universally fixed data in experimental and survey designs dominate the literature around the topic of “beer goggles”. The current literature primarily follows this traditional approach, with the perceptual, cognitive and neuropsychological explanations being largely ruled by quantitative methodology (Lyvers et al., 2011).

Although qualitative research designs that provide information about the ‘*human*’ side of the phenomenon are present, they are underrepresented and scarce within current literature. Whilst a few studies have examined the qualitative nature of “beer goggles”, they have been primarily concerned with its connection with ‘*risky sexual behaviour*’, rather than the overall effects of the phenomenon itself (Coleman & Cater, 2005; Lindgren et al., 2009; Vander Ven & Becks, 2009). There is only one study that examined how individuals directly experience “beer goggles” in South Africa; with its interpretive phenomenological analysis of the various meanings that students attach to the phenomenon (Stuart, 2013). Overall, there is a lack of data that focuses on the effects of “beer goggles” itself and a scarcity of diverse theoretical orientations being used for its analysis. Having either an interpretive phenomenological or thematic lens, there is a need for more concentrated and varied forms of research.

Moving away from the positivist stronghold, this research adopts a qualitative methodology that seeks to explore phenomena and describe their relationships, instead of simply attempting to confirm certain hypotheses about them. There is a departure from a highly structured and stable form of research towards a more flexible opened-ended methodology that can capture the ‘*human*’ side to experiencing “beer goggles”. Having its roots in social constructionism, a Foucauldian discourse analysis focuses the linguistic devices that surround the phenomenon and their relative implications through the interpersonal interactions in society. This is different from the previous phenomenological emphasis on the meanings attached to individual experience or an investigation into the relative themes attached to “beer goggles” (Stuart, 2013). This research not only explores the collective discursive constructions that develop around the topic, but determines how those versions of events negotiate our knowledge, meanings and identities that surround it.

Due to the dearth of qualitative research in contemporary literature and current debates surrounding the aetiology of the phenomenon, an examination of the meanings and identities

that emerge through discursive practices surrounding “beer goggles” is crucial. The existing literature contributes towards the objective, scientific and dispassionate conditioned association between alcohol and individual behaviour (Lyvers et al., 2011; Friedman et al., 2005). This is because it discusses the existence and intricate biological causal mechanisms underlying “beer goggles”, but reveals little concerning their socially mediated nature. Any of the existing qualitative data is not only rare and lacking in focus, but does not account for social constructionism, especially in a South African context.

Given our knowledge of the previous literature, the ontological view of the world as being socially constructed by various discourses and their subsequent implications for social practice, represents a new and alternative way of studying the phenomenon. Supplementing further research, it seems pivotal to examine how the language surrounding “beer goggles” may construct the phenomenon itself or vice versa, with particular reference to the social expectations uncovered therein.

3.4 Research question

This project aims to investigate the discursive resources surrounding “beer goggles” and the implications that these constructions may have for social practice, identity and subject positioning within the South African university context. With the significance of language towards social relations and power, it is important to reveal the how the discursive dynamics of the phenomenon are formed and what may arise from these constructions. Within this line of thinking, several research questions develop: a) what are the broad discourses that are drawn upon in the discursive construction of beer goggles in empirical research literature, public domain texts and individual talk?; b) what subject positions are available in the discourse concerning “beer goggles”; and c) what gendered ideologies are reproduced in the discursive construction of “beer goggles”?

3.5 Recruitment

It is stated by Bryman (2012), that researchers employ specific methods to generate sample groups that are in accordance with their particular study’s requirements. In the two sampling methods available; probability sampling involves random sampling, whilst non-probability sampling includes non-random sampling (Bryman, 2012). In discourse analytic research, the purpose of sampling is to obtain ideographic material that speaks the different ways of understanding the phenomena. As a result of exploring the discursive constructions

surrounding “beer goggles” and their relative effects, it seemed most appropriate to use non-probability sampling.

Non-probability, purposeful sampling for the focus groups was crucial to this research, because it ensured that those who are sampled are applicable to the particular question of study (Bryman, 2012). It is more appropriate than other sampling methods, as sampling conditions were established prior to research and not contingent upon criteria that evolved as it progresses (Bryman, 2012). The sampling frame consisted of approximately eighteen to twenty four current, full-time, male and female, Rhodes University students over the age of 18. Research shows that alcohol related behaviour is well represented in universities (Karim, Kypri & Salamoun, 2007), especially from within the Rhodes University context (Young & de Klerk, 2012; Young and Mayson, 2010). Although the degree of alcohol consumption varies across cultural and gender lines (Young and de Klerk, 2008; Young and Mayson, 2010), for the purpose of purely representing the phenomenon discursively, any such student sufficed. Otherwise, individuals who did not meet the above stipulated criteria were omitted to ensure that the most relevant material was obtained. The sample size involved three focus groups of 6-8 participants each. This was not only suitable for master’s projects, but essential in that each group was neither too big nor small to hinder group interaction (Bryman, 2012; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015). Thus, given the particularities of this project and the limited nature of the previous research, it seemed necessary that this particular sample group were chosen.

Participants were obtained through the method of snowball sampling, in which initial subjects assisted the researcher to recruit further participants by suggesting possible members from their own acquaintances. This method was not only time and cost effective, but also more likely to obtain participants whom other participants assume had rich experiences regarding “beer goggles” (Bryman, 2012; Willig, 2008b). Those who were chosen from the above selection process were then issued with the appropriate participation, confidentiality and agreement forms (see appendices 7.1 to 7.3). Permission was obtained from Rhodes University Psychology Department’s ethics committee, the Dean of Students and the registrar in order to conduct the research.

The three interview participants were gathered from an earlier phenomenological study (Stuart, 2013) in a similar manner and in the same environment (transcripts in appendices

7.7). Recruited through snowball sampling, the sampling frame consisted of three male, full-time, Rhodes University students over the age of 18, who had previously experienced the phenomenon at some point. All relevant confidentiality forms and permissions to use the data in this research were obtained from the previous research.

In terms of selecting the text (Parker, 2005), the videos that were transcribed were chosen on the basis on two considerations. Firstly, in order to pick the most widely influential material, they were selected in terms of how quickly they appeared within the search category of “beer goggles” and the amount of views they exhibited on YouTube. Secondly, consideration was given to videos who repeated patterns previously identified in the literature and presented with forms of discourse that were both theoretically complex and interesting to the research at hand. With these parameters in mind, each video was selected within the first six pages of searching for the phenomenon, with two public domain texts representing major network television shows such as ‘The Doctors’ and ‘National Geographic’.

3.6 Methods of Data collection

The chosen data collection technique involved three interviews, three focus groups and five mainstream videos. The analytic lens posed towards this material was to establish how “beer goggles” was discursively constructed. To determine how the phenomenon was publically connected to particular kinds of behaviours, forms of subjectivity and/or certain forms of gendered identity.

The first source of data that was collected for the research project was the video material (transcripts and full links are included in appendices 7.5). The discourse used in these videos were circulated in much broader context via mass media communications and therefore more likely to be reflective of the wider social attitudes and beliefs around the topic of “beer goggles”. As these attitudes were widely circulated, participant responses in the subsequent interviews and focus groups were seen as specific, localised version of them, likely to have been shaped by the broader ideas/discourses around the phenomenon.

For this present study, the previously collected phenomenological interview data of approximately 45-60 minutes (Stuart, 2013) that were transcribed were subjected to a fresh discursive analysis. This acted as pilot informing the questions posed in the focus groups and formed a substantial part of the analysis material in this project. Obtaining information in this way increased the validity and complexity of the material used in analysis. This is because it

provided a more in-depth and concentrated examination into the discursive construction of “beer goggles”.

Each focus group was approximately 60- 90 minutes and was to be followed by a subsequent follow up discussion to ensure the material was representative of their discursive constructions. The principles of Foucauldian discourse analysis targeted the ‘regimes of practice’ (the discursive and social practices) surrounding the phenomenon and their respective effectiveness on social action (Burr, 2003; Potter & Wetherell, 1995). Semi-structured focus groups not only facilitated group interaction, but created an open-ended dialogue where questions could be moulded in response to particular answers and probed into the most relevant areas of conversation (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015). The schedule was developed on the basis of: a) a review of the relevant literature, b) interview data from the previous phenomenological study, c) a discursive re-reading of that interview data, and d) an analysis of the video material on the phenomenon. With this schedule and the selection of relevant questions, the focus groups comprised a quick and applicable method of gathering discursive data around the joint construction of meaning and languages used in discussing the phenomenon of “beer goggles” (Bryman, 2012; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015).

The focus group schedule (shown in appendix 7.4) contained both pictorial and audio-visual stimulus material. This served to facilitate discussion and orientate the participants talk towards particular discursive topics.

After the selection process, the focus groups were conducted and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher (see appendix 7.6), ensuring that all identifiers were omitted (Willig, 2008b). Ensuring all significant information was captured and accounted for; each focus group was video recorded to keep track of any verbal or non-verbal cues that may be useful in analysis (Willig, 2008a).

3.7 Analysis of the research material

Transcriptions of the interviews, focus groups and videos were examined through the method of Foucauldian discourse analysis as described by numerous authors (Parker, 2002; Potter & Wetherell, 1995; Willig, 2008a). Providing a wider common sense construction of the phenomenon, an investigation of the videos preceded the analysis of the material not speaking to its macro-social context. Whilst the interviews, along with the other prior sources

of data, informed the focus group material, both sets of data were analysed together due to their similarity of micro-social context and for uniformity in the discussion process.

Due to the ideographic and reflexive nature of discourse analysis, the linguistic constructions and their subsequent effects in each of the data collection methods were explored in a constant back and forth manner. Whilst examining the congruence between the discourses that are used/produced, these findings were then interrogatively related to the back to the surrounding literature (Willig, 2008a).

While following the six analytic stages proposed by Willig (2008a) below, each section of analysis was aligned with the specific research questions to ensure uniformity with the studies overall aims. This allowed the researcher to: 1) map out the discursive resources operating in the text around “beer goggles” in all three sets of textual material, 2) identify the subject positions and action orientation of these discourses, and 3) establish the gendered subjectivities that may be implied within that framework.

Stage 1: Identifying discursive constructions

This initial stage placed emphasis on all the different ways in which the discursive object is constructed within the text (Willig, 2008a). The linguistic objects of study are dependent on the topic of the research topic at hand. As this particular research was investigating how individuals ‘*talk*’ about “beer goggles” and with what implications, the discursive object could be “beer goggles”. As the process of finding discursive constructions was guided by shared meaning, both explicit and implicit references towards an object were included (Willig, 2008a). This is because the text contained hidden or implied references to objects that provided rich information regarding its construction.

Stage 2: Discourses

After the initial identification of the discursive constructions inherent within the texts, research then shifted its focus onto the differences between the discourses within their wider systems of meaning (Willig, 2008a). What seemed to be included in the construction of one discursive object could in fact be a reflection of many different versions of shared meanings. For illustration, in the wider context of a focus group about the experiences of “beer goggles”, an individual could draw on various discourses that may be echoed in

contemporary literature. These could have been a perceptual discourse when they talk about their loss of vision or an inhibitions discourse referring to individuals talking about feeling less self-conscious when intoxicated (Lyvers et al., 2011).

Stage 3: Action orientation

This step involved an in-depth examination of the discursive contexts within which each object was deployed and their relative functions within that environment (Willig, 2008a). Research examined the purpose that each discursive construction serves and how it related to any other constructions that were established in the surrounding text. Emphasis is thus placed on the action orientation of language. The aim was to establish what purpose each discursive construction achieved within the wider context of the text as a whole.

Stage 4: Positions

Once the various discursive constructions have been situated within their wider frameworks of meaning, research must then examine numerous subject positions which they offer. Within their wider network, discourses make available specific positions for individuals to place themselves or others within (Willig, 2008a). The focus was not only on how discourse constructs objects in reality, but also in its creation of subject positions as well. Linguistic constructions create particular discursive locations that dictate individual behaviour and have implications for their subjectivity (Willig, 2008a). This is why Parker (2002) suggested that discourse psychologists should always not only ask what role they are having to adopt when reading the text, but what was its function and how does it position them in relation to itself. In other words, researchers must attempt to understand the ways in which the text addresses its audience and exactly how it made individuals listen. It is about who is allowed to speak within texts and what are people permitted to say or do from those positions.

Stage 5: Social practice

This stage placed emphasis on examining the connection between discourse and social practice. It involved an investigation of how the discursive constructions and their subsequent subject positions opened up or closed down particular opportunities for action (Willig, 2008a). In constructing particular '*versions of reality*' and positioning subjects in certain ways, discourses regulated what constituted acceptable behaviour. Taking into account non-verbal performances, certain social practices could become legitimate and acceptable within

certain discursive contexts (Willig, 2008a). As a consequence, the research investigated and was aware of the two way reciprocal connection between discourse and social practice. This enabled research to identify the possibilities for action that were underpinning the various discursive constructions found in the text.

Stage 6: Subjectivity

The last stage was concerned with exploring the connection between discourse and subjectivity. As discourses constructed particular versions of reality and ways of being in the world, they made available certain positions that governed a person's subjective experiences (Willig, 2008a). Taking up a discursive position meant that the individual would experience the world through that particular linguistic lens. The individual's world became immersed within any of the theories or concepts that are established as central towards the discursive practice that he/she is positioned in (Willig, 2008a). Rather than their subsequent opportunities for action, this phase highlighted the emotional connections of what could be felt, thought and experienced from the people who hold such subject positions (Willig, 2008a).

3. 8 Validation

Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006) recommend four possible ways to strengthen the trustworthiness of any research process. Trustworthiness is made up of four different criteria, each of which will be explained below.

3.8.1 Credibility and Transferability

Credibility refers to the degree of perceivable authenticity in the research findings, whilst transferability relates to the extent that they can be reapplied to alternative contexts with similar participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006) argue that credibility is accomplished through multiple methods, such as peer evaluation and follow up discussions. Authenticating the research material, this study then included numerous follow up email discussions with participants and regular evaluative meetings with the research supervisor. This allowed participants to not only comment on how their ideas were reflected in the analysis, but to appreciate that their information was received with dignity and authenticated through a process of peer validation. Increasing the study's trustworthiness, this also provided a more in-depth understanding of

the research material which further confirmed any conclusions arrived at later on in the project.

Otherwise the fact that the research involved textual material from multiple sources of data also increased the integrity of the study's findings. Developing the focus group schedule out of a discursive examination of the remaining research material has similar effect. This is because it ensures that the questions asked of the social world were the most credible towards the overall research objective.

The study was made transferable to other contexts by including a comprehensive description of the research context and any assumptions that were deemed central to its progression (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The research environment and individual participants are discussed at great lengths within this chapter's earlier recruitment section. This provided others with a database for making judgements about the possible transferability of findings to other similar environments.

3.8.2 Dependability and Confirmability

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), dependability accounts for the research materials congruency with the research findings. The studies confirmability however, refers to the extent at which the researcher has not allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations to influence the conduct of research and the conclusions derived from it.

To establish the idea of dependability, this study adopted an 'auditing' approach to research. This meant that comprehensive records were kept of all the stages in the research process- problem formulation, selection of participants, transcriptions, data analysis, and so on- in an accessible way. During the course of the research, my supervisor and I regularly audited the entire research process, checking the degree to which each phase of progression could be justified. For example, in order to become as close to the data as possible, the transcripts were revisited numerous times and repeatedly cross checked with the original material to ensure validation.

In terms of increasing the project's confirmability, I participated in numerous meetings with my project supervisor to eradicate bias and continually strived to reflect on my own contributions to the research process itself.

3.9 Ethical considerations

According to Wassenaar (2006), every research project should adhere to three ethical principles. These include autonomy, nonmaleficence and beneficence. Respondent autonomy was guaranteed by obtaining informed consent and allowing the participants to withdraw at any time. To ensure nonmaleficence, the participant's names were not only cloaked in pseudonyms, but they were also made aware of the possibility of sensitive information being discussed throughout the project. The research was beneficial in not only revealing the range of discursive events and their various implications that surround the "beer goggles" phenomenon, but also in creating a qualitative discourse-orientated foothold in the current empirically and quantitatively controlled literature. Ensuring linguistic equivalence was fundamental in a multicultural environment such as South Africa. Participants clearly understood the dialogue that emerged out of the focus group discussions in order for any meaningful material to be collected (Wassenaar, 2006). Since obtaining a translator would add additional complications in a research project of this kind, non-English speaking respondents were omitted from the sample. Otherwise, to reduce the possible effects of researcher bias, a reflexive attitude that considers any external influences on the project was conducted throughout the research process and independently evaluated by the projects supervisor.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter outlines the methodological framework that underpins the structure of this particular project. Presenting the 'mechanics of research', a qualitative Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) was selected as the appropriate research design. Details regarding the theoretical orientations, methods of recruitment, data collection and data analysis were presented. A combination of interviews, public texts and focus group material, will allow the research to map the discursive constructions that surround the phenomenon and determine their implications for subjectivity and social practice. Significant factors were outlined to certify the application of stringent ethical standards and research design quality through this process. It is these methodological considerations that lay the groundwork for the entire research project and the subsequent discussion/analysis sections that follow.

Chapter 4: A discourse analysis of five mainstream videos

4.1 Introduction

As a precursor to other forms of data collection, this section involves an analysis of the widely circulating ideas that exist around the topic of study. Distributed through public mass media, these videos represent the most broadly influential material regarding how “beer goggles” is constructed in the public sphere. While based on their popularity on YouTube, consideration was also given to the videos whose content was the most relevant and theoretically interesting to the research project at hand. As such, its examination is representative of the broader social attitudes and beliefs around the phenomenon that are then played out in the micro context displayed in the subsequent interview and focus group material.

This chapter’s analytic process is not searching for themes relating to individual experience. Rather it is looking for the ways in which particular kinds of ideas are drawn upon to formulate certain social understandings of the “beer goggles” phenomenon. While following the analytic stages proposed by Willig (2008a) in the previous chapter, the analysis will also be aligned with the specific research questions to ensure uniformity with the study’s overall objectives. This will allow this research to examine the various discursive organising principles that surround the idea of “beer goggles” in the public sphere. Informing the focus of the remaining two forms of data collection to some extent, this analysis then provides detailed and complementary information towards the overall research project itself.

4.2 Scientific paradigm

A clear way of talking about the phenomenon in visual media is through a scientific mode of explanation. This becomes evident in their repeated connections with the professional realm and the abundant use of technical terminology, such as “*survey*” (Video 3 line 10) and “*test*” (Video 4 line 3).

The scripts centre their dialogue within a context of academic understanding through situating scientific knowledge as the foundations for their discussions. Two of the videos contain academically well-informed participants, with ‘National Geographic -- Sex: How It Works’ (Video 5) involving a PhD educated interviewee and ‘Are "Beer Goggles" Real? -- The Doctors show (Video 1) including medically trained panellists. Further advancing their image of expertise, the majority of texts utilise a variety of academic resources in any of their

discussions. This common tactic of framing discussion within a scientific paradigm is best illustrated in the opening sentences of the video entitled ‘Are beer goggles real?’

Extract 1

“Researchers at the univeristy of Durham say that in their newest round of research,beer goggles is totally a myth. We have a quote from them where they say there is no imagined physical transformation, just more desire. Alcohol switches off the rational and decision making areas of the brain, whilst leaving the areas to do with sexual desire relatively intact. Umm, I think that here we have a lot of respect for the scientific method,but they are just wrong” (Video 2 line 1).

Situating talk in this way makes certain epistemological assumptions regarding the value of knowledge. The scientific discipline is presented as a credible and reliable source of information that warrants a certain degree of respect in conversation. While the assumed rigorous nature of science is argued to increase the value of information, it is not however, presented as definitive in knowledge creation. This is because diverging from traditional positivist psychology; the above extract shows that subjective understandings of the individual can represent possible counterarguments. That being said, the video titled ‘Proof that beer goggles exists’ highlights how the scientific paradigm functions as a tool that supposedly strengthens and supports the legitimacy of any of the arguments that are made.

Extract 2

“I am not surprised by this study, but it is interesting to have some science behind to back up that notion” (Video 4 line 8).

This association with scientific research then sets up a binary between the kinds of positions that are made available to people in the text. It locates the speakers in the videos as the knowledgeable scientists who are aware of all the mechanics of the phenomenon. The audience on the other hand, is portrayed as the ignorant layperson that is assumed to lack any understanding of how “beer goggles functions other than their own experience. The video ‘Beer goggles works both ways’ shows how any technical or intellectual knowledge is then portrayed as new and consequently informative material to the public.

Extract 3

“I mean a lot of us have experience of the fact that we are at a bar and there is a guy there and you know I barely even notice him, but after a few martinis, he starts looking a little bit like Brad Pitt’s cousin. So we are all familiar with this effect. What we are not as familiar with and what we don’t really know is how alcohol affects our own perceptions our own attractiveness and that is what researchers at Ohio state university set out to do. They won a prize for their work that suggests that we think we are hotter ourselves when we are a little tipsy” (Video 3 line 4).

Addressing the audience in this way functions to promote any arguments made in the texts. It establishes a degree of credibility and authority on behalf of those who are talking by connecting the speaker’s viewpoints with what is constructed as an estimable source of information. This is especially true, when extracts, such as the above, emphasize how the public’s perceived ignorance of the topic can be addressed through its supposedly educational material.

On a deeper level, this talk also establishes authority for a certain way of understanding the phenomenon. This is because it reproduces a particular kind of knowledge bias that was previously identified in the literature. It gives primacy to the quantitative and scientific forms of information over and above any experiential modes of understanding. In doing so, this discourse further strengthens that gap in the literature that this qualitative study aims to fill.

By inflating the perceived value of the texts in this way, the likelihood that the public will engage in behaviours associated with “beer goggles” may increase. This is due to the idea that the social expectations connected with consumption can influence behaviour regardless of levels of intoxication (Bègue et al., 2013). As such, the use of numerous scientific articles regarding alcohol’s mental and behavioural effects may have consequences above the influence of alcohol itself.

4.3 An altered consciousness

In discussing the experience of the phenomenon, an idea of a changed state of mind operates throughout the texts. Resonating with the literature (Jones et al., 2003; Lyvers et al., 2011), intoxication is linked to an altered consciousness that supposedly occurs through a variety of causal mechanisms. With varying levels of significance, the biological explanations for alcohol’s effect on the brain are given precedence over and above any other considerations.

This is because in comparison to the substance's effects on perception and neuropsychological consequences, the idea of its social determinants receives little or no publicity at all.

Channelling ideas in the literature (Halsey et al., 2010; Thornhill & Gangestad, 1999), the standard and conventional definition of the phenomenon is that it's primarily perceptual in nature. Talk regularly bestows visual elements towards explaining the phenomenon. The video entitled 'Are "Beer Goggles" Real? -- The Doctors' includes a beginning statement that provides the perfect example.

Extract 4

"A lot of us have been there where after a few drinks maybe your vision gets a little blurry and some might say you even put on those beer goggles" (Video 1 line 1).

Echoing findings in other parts of the literature (Coleman & Cater, 2005; Dry et al., 2012; Steele & Josephs 1990), the consumption of alcohol is further constructed as altering the public's state of mind through two neuropsychological avenues.

Firstly by lowering our inhibitions, intoxication is shown to encourage individuals to engage in behaviours that they would otherwise avoid. The video entitled 'National Geographic -- Sex: How It Works' explicitly constructs this effect of "beer goggles" to the public:

Extract 5

"Once you consume alcohol, it has a global effect across the brain so it results in lowering your inhibitions. You're more likely to engage in certain behaviours that you wouldn't normally engage in" (Video 5 line 2).

Secondly alcohol is shown to affect our cognitive faculties through impairing our capability to make sound judgments in decisions. This effect of intoxication established in research is most apparent in the video 'Are beer goggles real?'

Extract 6

"Alcohol switches off the rational and decision making areas of the brain whilst leaving the areas to do with sexual desire relatively intact" (Video 2 line 3).

The effect of alcohol on our consciousness is depicted as common knowledge for those who understand why there are certain rules and regulations imposed on drinking in society. Whilst its value shifts depending on its application, ‘Proof that beer goggles exists’, explains how alcohols effect on our mind should be obvious to a public that supposedly already knows the legalities of drinking behaviour.

Extract 7

“I agree with you, I don’t think that we need a scientific study to determine the alcohol might impair your judgement. We know that you don’t drive drunk, you’re not supposed to come to work drunk, you’re not supposed to get drunk in front of your boss. This is why we would suggest either that you shouldn’t doink drunk. Or maybe you should because maybe it’s good that you sort of open yourself up. Maybe lowering your standards in regards to sex isn’t the worst thing in the world” (Video 4 line 10).

Talking about the phenomenon through this idea of an altered consciousness creates two opposing positions around responsibility.

On the one hand, the above seventh extract disagrees with the ideas around responsibility that are shared in the embarrassment discourse later on. Arguing that the public should already understand the potential consequences of intoxication, the actions of those who experience the phenomenon become seen as deliberate and unmistakable forms of behaviour. This means that individuals are accountable for their actions because they should have already known the possible consequences that their drinking could lead to beforehand.

On the other hand, however, this talk around an altered consciousness also locates those who experience “beer goggles” as occurring through an external sense of agency. Serving a similar function as the biological explanations for the phenomenon (Halsey et al., 2010; Coleman & Cater, 2005); alcohol itself is constructed as changing the person’s behaviour over and above individual autonomy. This separation positions people as having less agency and responsibility for their intoxicated actions, and consequently as having fewer reasons to feel embarrassed about these actions. This is because the phenomenon is represented as a biochemical reaction affecting the brain, which is beyond peoples control and far removed from their usual self.

Reinforcing the expectation that “beer goggles” occurs through a particular state of mind, the above talk reveals conflicting ideas around whether it is possible to separate the person

experiencing the phenomenon from their behaviour. Any attempt to reconcile this conflict only becomes apparent in the individual talk discussed in the next chapter.

Otherwise, while absolving the public from their sense of guilt, the emerging idea that ‘beer goggles’ constitutes a normal experience in everyday life can help reproduce potentially problematic behaviours associated with drinking. This is due to these actions becoming rationalised and excused as not only part of alcohol’s effect on our minds, but as part of what is normal to experience. The extract below from the video ‘Beer goggles works both ways’ reveals how problematic gender relations such as sexual aggression can be explained away as part of what is constructed as the usual effect of alcohol on our consciousness.

Extract 8

“If you combine this research that says we think we are hotter ourselves when drunk and the one saying we think other people are hotter, it kind of explains why it is that otherwise perfect people become really aggressive at bars in terms of hitting on you. Especially when you look at other types of research that argues that people tend to be more aggressive when drinking alcohol. So I feel like all those aggressive sexual advances could be slightly explained by this research” (Video 3 line 33).

4.5 Normality

Whereas the aforementioned literature review places emphasis on student drinking (Karim, Kypri and Salamoun, 2007; Young & de Klerk, 2012), these video texts construct the general public as being familiar with alcohol consumption and the “beer goggles” experience. Speaking on behalf of the general public, the video ‘Beer goggles works both ways’ introduces the phenomenon as a construct we are all familiar with.

Extract 9

“I mean a lot of us have experience of the fact that we are at a bar and there is a guy there and you know I barely even notice him, but after a few martinis, he starts looking a little bit like Brad Pitt’s cousin. So we are all familiar with this effect” (Video 3 line 5).

Assuming that the public is familiar with the effects of alcohol, the audience in each text is often encouraged to share their views and experiences of the topic. In the extract below, the video ‘Proof that beer goggles exists’ makes this apparent in its attempt to request personalised anecdotal evidence from each of its viewers.

Extract 10

“Yes, 100% I have been surprised. So yea alright tell us what you guys think? Answer the question because we want to know if you have had similar experiences and if you have had the luck of another person drinking to the point where they have had sex with you and you thought that maybe you didn’t deserve it” (Video 4 line 50).

The idea of the phenomenon being normal for everyone in society is constructed as an undeniable fact. This is because even the slightest indication of unfamiliarity with the topic is presented as having comedic value. In the video ‘Are beer goggles real?’ such an assumption becomes evident in talk that frames an individual’s ignorance in sarcastic terms and as deserving an incredulous interpersonal reaction.

Extract 11

“I3: Well as a totally sober virgin I can’t really comment on this sort of stuff (laughs).

I2: Not buying it” (Video 2 line 19).

The idea that “beer goggles” is a normal life experience reinforces a particular notion of what to expect when consuming alcohol. Linking with the literature around social expectancy theory (Lyvers et al., 2011), this discourse then constructs and maintains the belief that everyone should be familiar with the phenomenon.

Through this talk of normalisation, those who experience “beer goggles” become separated from what can be considered deviant and irresponsible behaviour. This is because their actions now constitute an ordinary event that everyone should already be accustomed to occurring in regular life. Its incidence is normalised and thus situated as such within the public mind-set. This means that the possibility of disapproval is minimised due to the promotion of the phenomenon’s standing as not anti-social. Criticising those who engage in such practices will then encounter adversity, since they are forced to contest what has become represented as usual and accepted behaviour.

Due to this connection with the ordinary, a new meaning of any social practices associated with “beer goggles” emerges. Instead of being characterised as abnormal, they become viewed as secondary effects of an already accepted feature of society. Responsibility for their occurrence is then diminished. This is because the act of normalising the phenomenon implies that any practices associated with the experience are seen as common and

unavoidable too. This may then help reproduce certain problematic gendered ideologies associated with the phenomenon, such as the social conventions around attractiveness and heterosexual interaction in the aforementioned tenth extract. The last two lines imply that alcohol consumption disrupts a normal and widely accepted rule that sexual relations should only occur between people of equal levels of attractiveness. It states that the feelings of embarrassment that it connects to “beer goggles” result from a violation of these rules of dating. It implies that those who drunkenly interact with less attractive people should feel embarrassed about their actions; whilst those who take advantage of intoxicated better looking people are also supposed to feel guilty because they didn’t ‘deserve’ what happened to them.

4.5 Embarrassment

Literature suggests that alcohol consumption is connected to the development of various social and health problems for students at university (Young & De Klerk, 2008). Despite a sense of normality, these video texts publicize “beer goggles” as having consequences that are deemed socially embarrassing for those involved.

While signifying some responsibility in the behaviour; the fact that the video ‘Beer goggles works both ways’ characterises individuals as being ‘guilty’ of their experiences attaches a certain degree of shameful emotions towards defining the phenomenon.

Extract 12

“So mark I am a very guilty of wearing beer goggles from time to time. Have you tried them on recently?” (Video 3 line 1)

The notion that “beer goggles” can lead to potentially humiliating consequences is constructed as finding origin in the two sources.

The first idea is that the altered state of mind associated with inebriation precipitates the development of risky sexual behaviours that increase the spread of embarrassing sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. An extract from the video ‘Are "Beer Goggles" Real? -- The Doctors’ highlights this idea by connecting high levels of intoxication to the emergence of these perceivably unfavourable physical conditions.

Extract 13

“Obviously the other thing we do need to mention is that when you do drink alcohol your inhibitions are dropped and that’s when a lot of dangerous things can happen. Just remember you have to be safe because there are sexually transmitted and unwanted pregnancies they often do occur after having too much alcohol so cheers. One more sip and then we are putting it away” (Video 1 line 36).

The second idea is that alcohol consumption is linked with certain embarrassing types of social interaction. This is because the ensuing altered state of mind is argued to occasionally generate socially inappropriate behaviours, such as aggression, arrogance, and incoherent forms of communication. In the video ‘Proof that beer goggles exists’, the prospect of attaining these supposedly unfavourable characteristics is constructed as originating from what is implied as alcohol overconsumption.

Extract 14

“That is where the liquid courage is great, but it isn’t great when you get the super confidence that you think you are the smartest person in the room” (Video 4 line 31).

The association between alcohol and embarrassing behaviours functions as a method of educating the public on the dangers of drinking too much. Echoing research that attempts to help challenge excessive alcohol consumption (Karim, Kypri & Salamoun, 2007; Young & Mayson, 2012), this talk promotes a more conscious and restrained attitude towards alcohol related practices. This is why the video ‘Are "Beer Goggles" Real? -- The Doctors’ attaches a type of golden mean to consumption, where moderation is presented as the decisive goal:

Extract 15

“It is why people make a lot of bad decisions under the influence and why we always say moderate alcohol use that’s not prolific intake”(Video 1 line 21).

Demonstrating the potential for alcohol related activities to become humiliating, serves to position those experiencing “beer goggles’ as having two distinct identities. With excessive alcohol consumption being constructed as the root cause of embarrassment, those who drink in moderation can now be seen as the responsible and knowledgeable patrons at the bar. This is because, while taking advantage of alcohol’s social lubrication qualities, they are seen to understand the dangers of drinking too much. Those who experience the embarrassing

consequences of alcohol are represented as the opposite. This is due to their overindulgence in the substance being framed as originating from a disregard or ignorance of its mind altering effects.

4. 6 A profitable life experience

The various mechanisms through which “beer goggles” is supposed to alter the consciousness are also constructed as being profitable in interpersonal life. Echoing the literature’s idea of alcohol being a social lubricant (Coleman and Cater, 2005; Lindgren et al., 2009; Stuart 2013; Vander Ven & Beck, 2009), the phenomenon is publicized as being advantageous towards socialisation, especially sexual interaction. In the video ‘Are "Beer Goggles" Real? -- The Doctors’, this potential benefit of intoxication is deemed so great that it is even depicted as a force that can be compared to magical self-enhancing substances made known in famous cartoons.

Extract 16

“It’s kind of like spinach to Popeye” (Video 1 line 31).

Provided that overconsumption and its aforementioned embarrassing consequences are avoided, alcohol is framed as an elixir that helps individuals negotiate the dating world. Acting as a social lubricant; intoxication is argued to produce a state of being whose broadened desires and new levels of confidence generate a wider pool of possible sexual partners. This idea is shown below in extracts from multiple videos.

Extract 17

“Yea I think that that is a big part of it. I think sometimes you are at a place where you are little bit shy and little bit reserved. So your inhibitions can go down with alcohol. The other part of it is that now you have this confidence to think that you look good, to think you are smoother than you are so you go up to people that maybe you otherwise wouldn’t”(Video 1 line 26).

And

Extract 18

“I should get on tinder with a few drinks and start rating people. And saying yes or no to people. And in that way we increase our pool. We say yes to guys we may not have otherwise

because we don't find them as attractive as without a few drinks. And we might also say yes to people that are out of our league because we are thinking we are hotter ourselves" (Video 3 line 48).

Encouraging the public to reconsider what is constructed as the usual negative definition of the phenomenon; the majority of texts emphasise the social utility of "beer goggles" in relation to its harmful effects. This is evident in how the video 'Proof that beer goggles exists', attempts to transform the idea of alcohol's disinhibitory effects as being an experience that is facilitative towards interaction instead of always being considered detrimental.

Extract 19

"we would suggest either that you shouldn't doink drunk. Maybe you should because maybe it's good that you sort of open yourself up. Maybe lowering your standards in regards to sex isn't always the worst thing in the world" (Video 4 line 12).

Interestingly, this idea of lowering your standards in sexual interaction directly opposes earlier notions around standards of attractiveness. Arguing that intoxication has relational benefits by increasing one's dating opportunities; contradicts the idea that alcohol causes embarrassment by disrupting a pre-existing set of social rules around sexual interaction. While the previous talk of normality prohibits relations between people of unequal levels of attractiveness, this discourse encourages the use of alcohol for that specific purpose. This highlights a stark contrast between discourses around principles of attractiveness and how "beer goggles" should function within that idea.

Nonetheless, the action orientation of just this particular discourse is to construct moderate alcohol consumption as profitable towards what is perceived as socially desirable forms of interaction. Drawing on the idea that alcohol is required to effectively counter an otherwise threatening social life, this talk produces a category of people that are presumed to be worthy of attention in the social arena.

Altering the public view of how "beer goggles" functions, serves to position those who experience the phenomenon in a different light. Constructing drinking as having positive applications in interaction counters a supposedly predominant view that alcohols effect on our consciousness must necessarily lead to unhelpful repercussions. This is because in encouraging its popularity amongst the general public, the audience is given various

justifiable and seemingly benign reasons to seek out intoxication. Ignoring people who abstain from alcohol, those who drink in moderation can now be located as individuals whose alcohol-improved social skills make them more desirable in interaction. In the video 'Proof that beer goggles exists', this is due to the supposed mind altering effects of intoxication been constructed as fundamental towards achieving effective socialisation.

Extract 20

"It loosens somebody's inhibitions. It also apparently raises somebody's self-esteem, so there is an incentive for somebody to need to pound a couple before they hit the club" (Video 3 line 39).

Supporting ideas around embarrassment, those who drink excessively are constructed as irresponsible and socially oblivious to what is considered appropriate forms of communication. Establishing an idea for what is normal and abnormal in interaction, the video 'Proof that beer goggles exists' shows how the behaviours associated with overconsumption are framed as socially problematic experiences.

Extract 21

"Ok, You are really sweet, but really right how do we reap some of these benefits that give us a boost, get us less inhibited, but don't necessarily end us up like super drunk, slobbering all over ourselves and slurring our speech" (Video 3 line 44).

The idea of employing alcohol as a social lubricant reproduces certain gendered ideologies through perpetuating a cultural status quo regarding drinking behaviour and heterosexual relations. Consuming alcohol becomes a social activity whereby one's intelligence and reserve is discarded for enhanced confidence, desire and possibly sexual promiscuity. This means that any heterosexual and misogynistic behaviour associated with "beer goggles" becomes seen as being justified. This is because they are now transformed into auxiliary by-products of a mind-set constructed as necessary for reproduction. The video 'Are beer goggles real' shows how superficial and heteronormative sexual interaction becomes normalised and accepted through the idea that alcohols effects on our perceptions can aid individuals in selecting a sexual partner.

Extract 22

“If you walk through a crowd, you don’t really get the full like sixty frames per-second. It is sort of like a slide show. When you look at a girl who might not be perfect. You know at sixty frames per second you cant really see the detail. You know what her face generally looks like, but you cant really lock down what it is. That can tip the scales” (Video 2 line 19)

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter involved an analysis of five public domain texts that speak to the widely circulating ideas regarding “beer goggles” in society. Utilizing a discourse analytic lens, this involved examining the ways that talk fashions public understanding and constructs experience in relation to the phenomenon itself. Such a process revealed several interwoven discourses including: (1) a scientific paradigm; (2) an altered consciousness; (3); normality (4) embarrassment, and (5), a profitable life experience. In connection with the relevant literature, this knowledge will guide and supplement an analysis of the research material in the next chapter.

Establishing the discursive effects of mass media follows an examination into the individual micro contextual talk regarding “beer goggles”. With a funnelling lens of focus, this research can then determine how public constructions of the phenomenon may influence individual talk and vice versa.

Chapter 5: A discourse analysis of three interviews and three focus groups

5.1 The Introduction

The previous chapter involved a discourse analysis of five public domain texts; exploring how their talk shapes public understanding and impacts experience in relation to the phenomenon of “beer goggles”. Following from that, this section involves an analysis of the individual talk surrounding “beer goggles”. This talk is representative of localised attitudes and beliefs around the phenomenon that may have been influenced by the wider macro-context displayed in the earlier public domain texts and formal research literature.

It must be noted that the participants in individual talk display an automatic understanding of “beer goggles” without there being a formal consensus regarding the existence and nature of the phenomenon in the research literature or public domain texts. This suggests that “beer goggles” is a socially constructed entity; since it is due to its socially constructed nature and the ways that it is put together, that the participants and public domain texts are even able to understand the topic in the first place. Departing from a traditional literature review, this chapter is then significant in allowing the research to tap into the socially circulating ideas that constitute “beer goggles” as phenomenon that is already understood and used in certain ways.

The scientific discourse identified in the previous research literature and public domain text reproduces a form of knowledge bias that ignores any experiential ways of understanding. The aim of this chapter is to encourage contemporary research to place more emphasis on the constructive nature of people’s experiences instead of just focusing on formal quantitative research material. Although the participants may draw on various ‘scientific’ ideas when describing discourses like altered consciousness, it is not done so in the same explicit or monopolising manner. Attempting to create a shift in understanding, this analysis then functions to reduce the lack of qualitative and experiential information in modern research around the “beer goggles” phenomenon.

Following the study’s objectives and analytic steps by Willig (2008a); the interview and focus group material is analysed in a similar format to the preceding chapter. This permitted the researcher to draw out the discursive constructions used in the text and their ensuing subject positions, whilst further exploring their implications for social practice and gender. In doing so, this chapter reveals several interwoven discourses including: 1) an altered

consciousness; 2) a lack of control; 3) normality; 4) heterosexuality; 5) embarrassment, and 6) a profitable life experience. Demonstrating how these ideas echo those found in the literature and video scripts; this process aims to demonstrate how all three sets of material are woven together to create a common picture of the “beer goggles” phenomenon.

5.2 Altered consciousness - “*a fucked up version of yourself*” (Focus group 2 line 184)

Talk concerning the experience of the phenomenon reveals a similar discourse of altered consciousness to the one established in public mass media. The only difference is that instead of placing importance on one particular type of explanation, individual talk emphasizes both biological and sociological theories for its existence.

Supporting ideas around degrees of consciousness in the previous chapter, the majority of participants reiterate the notion that alcohol consumption produces the altered state of mind thought necessary for “beer goggles” behaviour.

Extract 1

“Things that you would look at and usually not do you don’t have the ability to not do anymore because you are so drunk” (Focus group 2 line 37).

And

Extract 2

“I don’t know whether this is still beer goggles” because like you are still pissed, but like you can’t think clearly, but you can sort of see the fact that you are actually not keen on them. So kind of like, being drunk made me very stupid in my decisions of which girls I was talking to” (Interview 2 line 147).

While still drawing on alcohol’s supposed perceptual and neuropsychological effects, the participants do however; construct the idea of an altered consciousness as having a further, more environmental influence. Echoing the literature on social expectancy theory (Bègue et al., 2013), this means that the environment is presented as playing a significant role in altering the intoxicated mind. This is because the expectations placed on behaviour by the social context are constructed as producing the kind of effects associated with “beer goggles” regardless of alcohol consumption. Linking to the discourse of normalisation (to be discussed

later), participants consistently locate their state of mind as being influenced by the perceived normality of “beer goggles” in the university drinking context.

Extract 3

“You kind of become more desperate and horny because you are in a club context where you think that kind of stuff always happens” (Interview 2 line 228).

Performing the same function as descriptions of “beer goggles” in public mass media, this discourse further locates the idea of the behaviours leading to an altered consciousness as stemming from a particular social context. While separating the person who experiences the phenomenon from their intoxicated behaviour, the participant’s actions are also normalised as something that is expected to occur in their particular social setting.

Once again, those experiencing “beer goggles” are positioned as beholden to an external locus of control. The pharmacological effects of intoxication and the expectations placed on people by their environment are fashioned as directing behaviour over and above individual autonomy. This detachment of the sober self from intoxicated actions removes the participant’s sense of agency and responsibility for behaviour. It allows the participants to feel less embarrassed about their experiences because not only are these behaviours framed as uncontrollable, but they are also constructed as what is normal in the university context.

While serving to disconnect participants from their actions, the idea that the mind altering effects of alcohol are expected in their specific location can reproduce potentially problematic behaviours linked with drinking. The assumption that alcohol’s effects on the mind resonates with other participants in the student environment serves to rationalise and excuse actions as being part of the usual university experience. One participant explains how accountability for problematic gender positions in sexist ‘games’, such as “*hunt the grunt*” (Skarupke, 2010), become reduced through what is constructed as normal behaviour when intoxicated.

Extract 4

“There is like that whole game with like hunt the grunt and stuff where it’s like a fun drunk thing to go for like the worst looking person in the club. (Laughs). And that is acceptable when you are drunk and everyone has a good laugh about it and everything the next day. But if you play hunt the grunt sober, people will be, like, you have got problems” (Focus group 1 line 116).

Although this discourse may perpetuate these kinds of problematic behaviours by itself, it is important to acknowledge the potential confounding influence of the perspectives from which the participants may have arrived from in the first place. This is because failing to obtain a heterogeneous sample group in the research process may also explain the gendered nature of the above talk. As such, “beer goggles” may not actually be gendered in and of itself, but just that it adopts a gendered flavour when interviewing a group of predominantly male participants who are all from the same university location.

5.3 A lack of control- “*There is an element, but not that much*” (Focus group 2 line 170).

In order to make sense of this idea of an altered consciousness from an experiential perspective, the effects of intoxication on the mind are constructed as a significant force in directing the participant’s behaviour. Differing from the rest of the research material, those who experience “beer goggles” are positioned as beholden to an external locus of control in which their sense of agency and responsibility is said to become limited in certain degrees.

When referring to prior “beer goggles” experiences, participants consistently attribute their actions to a perceived lack of control which they frame themselves as unaccountable for producing.

Extract 5

“I would see her out on the beach and I would just be filled with regret every single time. But I had the feeling, every time we hooked up. It wasn’t that I was powerless, but I was just so drunk that I didn’t care and it was just something to do. So my inhibitions were just gone. My standards were gone and this chick just took advantage of that” (Interview 1 line 44).

Otherwise, in hypothetical endeavours that may be considered immoral, alcohol’s mind altering effects are paradoxically framed as having little power over self-governance. The extract below reveals how the same participant as the above quote, later frames his “beer goggles” experiences as including some control that prevents him from committing what is constructed as harmful behaviours.

Extract 6

“I don’t think I ever restrained myself. But not like in the creepy rape sense where (Pause). If I thought someone was hot then I would try like you know? But if I ever got some modicum of

interest. Like if I could tell there was an opening for me, I would go for it and I would just let go" (Interview 1 line 133).

Echoing the 'scientific' literatures reduction of agency in intoxicated conduct, the above talk allows the participants to manage their self-image as someone who is always rational and in control to some degree. As outlined below, this not only justifies and excuses some intoxicated actions in a way that suits individual interests, but it also serves to position the participants as acting from a moral and therefore more acceptable character.

The previous two extracts reveal an interesting difference between which states of being opportunistic is deemed tolerable in the "beer goggles" experience. Framed as the agent of his own behaviour in extract six, the participant's own intoxicated sexual advances on others are constructed as acceptable forms of socialisation. Otherwise, being constructed as the victim of other people's opportunism in extract five; the sexual advances of others on his own intoxicated self are deemed unacceptable. The reason why only the former scenario is constructed as acceptable is because of the participants assumption that there is a 'modicum of interest' displayed by the target of his drunken affection. The idea of having some control is used to allow the participants to make the presumption that their behaviours are always being reciprocal in nature. In other words, it justifies their actions as emanating from a state of mind that can still identify with morality and prevent any of intoxicated actions from verging into what is constructed as the 'creepy rape sense'. While the idea of having some control is used to justify the participant's own sexual advances as existing within a set of ethical grounds; the idea of having no control is also used to excuse any of their unwanted "beer goggles" experiences as situations in which they were taken 'advantage' of and therefore not responsible for producing.

Otherwise, utilizing the idea of control in this way serves to allocate a sense of moral authority in talk that allows the participants to position themselves in a more favourable light. It situates some of their intoxicated actions as being out of their control, whilst locating their potential to produce more serious behaviour (e.g. sexual assault) as not falling under the same notion. This means that although the idea of control is used to absolve the participants of the responsibility for some of their behaviours, it still allows them to frame themselves as the moral guardians against what is constructed as wrong behaviour.

Extract 7

“Ya, like I don’t think if I got as drunk as I would ever get, I would never be like violent towards a woman or anything” (Focus group 3 line 197).

This kind of talk scaffolds the idea of “beer goggles” being a normal experience for the participants. This is because in constructing the practice as understandable due to intoxications effects on our agency, the phenomenon is similarly depicted as ethically acceptable in certain ways.

Naturally the participants do not desire to be judged negatively by others in regards to their drunken conduct. As a result, one could infer that talking about the phenomenon in this way may simply be a reaction against the social expectations of how individuals should behave. For that reason it may have more connections with social expectancy theories, than the ‘scientific’ literature involving alcohol’s pharmacological effects on our ability to control our behaviours.

Nonetheless, this particular way of talking about control in the “beer goggles” experience may help reproduce certain potentially problematic behaviours. As shown in the previous extracts, it allows the participants to assume that their own intoxicated actions can exist within a set of ethical boundaries. The problem is that this belief is based upon nothing but the participants own assumptions about how their intoxicated behaviours are received by others. Ignoring the fact that this beliefs may have arisen from an intoxicated and therefore unsound mind-set; no consideration is given to how the subjects of their drunken sexual advances might actually feel. Provided that the behaviour is not embarrassing for the participants themselves or physically harmful in any way, the emotional repercussions for others go unnoticed. It is simply just presumed that the participant’s actions are morally righteous without any real evidence and therein lays the danger. While the previous discourse functions to absolve the participants of all responsibility, this talk allows individuals to overlook the fact that their actions might actually be problematic for those on the receiving end of their behaviours. Actions that may in fact verge into the what is constructed as morally abhorrent ‘creepy rape sense’ for others are not taken into account and therefore completely disregarded as a subject that needs to may need to be changed.

5.4 Normality - ‘*here at Rhodes its fine*’ (Interview 3 line 247)

Talk regarding the environmental particularities of “beer goggles” reveals a similar normalising discourse to the one established in the previous chapter. The only difference between the two sets of text is the size of the context that the phenomenon is related to.

While media texts emphasize everyone in society experiencing the phenomenon, the participants talk highlights its situational locatedness. Supporting the idea that binge alcohol use is most prominent in academic institutions (Karim, Kypri & Salamoun, 2007), “beer goggles” is constructed as primarily exclusive to drinking environments that are similar to the university setting.

Extract 8

“I think a place like Rhodes allows things to happen that wouldn’t necessarily happen as frequently in a normal situation. So it’s uncommon in most other places, but common in sort of like drinking places like Rhodes” (Interview 2 line 307).

College is framed as entailing the perfect amalgamation of situational influences deemed crucial for the prevalence of “beer goggles” to emerge. Once again depicted as an age of experimentation and independent thought (Young & de Klerk, 2008), the usual stage at which individuals enter university life is deemed as essential towards the phenomenon being experienced as normal.

Extract 9

“I think it doesn’t occur with people over the age of like thirty. Because once you reach that age you are kind of like into your career and kind of like your experimental student like twenty something stage is over” (Focus group 2 line 673).

In explaining this idea of “beer goggles”, the majority of participants attribute its frequency in university to the existence of certain shared social dynamics. As alluded to in the previous extract, the youthful nature of the typical student is connected to particular social factors that precipitate its emergence. This is because the experimental and open-minded nature of the average university scholar is provided as the main rationale behind the phenomenon being constructed as an ordinary experience.

Extract 10

“It is much more of a liberal community, student community and experimental than anywhere else” (Focus group 3 line 558).

The existence of this university way of life is deemed fundamental enough that its absence is argued to explain the why others are supposedly less familiar with the topic at hand. Referring to how his older relatives would react, the participant below shows how being removed from the college social setting lacks the liberal and adolescent mind-set thought necessary for the phenomenon to be considered appropriate.

Extract 11

“At Rhodes I am free of that family kind of judgment like come on now you are doing bad son that is a naughty thing (laugh). Here I am away from that. But if there is a person around related to home, it does affect my behaviour. I know that I need to stop at this limit and that I must be very well mannered and you know a courteous guy. And not just go, you know? I can’t just hook up and follow my every desire” (Interview 3 line 287).

Similar to the previous chapter, the function of this discourse is to reinforce a particular idea of what to expect when consuming alcohol. However the key divergence in individual talk is that this expectation is now described as restricted to the particular social and developmental location of the student lifestyle. One participant argues that the strength of the association between university and alcohol related behaviour can actually maintain the existence of “beer goggles” over and above the influence of alcohol itself.

Extract 12

“Rhodes people they come here and they know the vibe is to get drunk and hook up so they even do that when they are not really shit faced. I have seen that a million times” (Focus group 2 line 730).

Although the public domain text normalises “beer goggles” for society in general, this talk merely serves to separate the intoxicated conduct of university students from what can be considered deviant and unacceptable behaviour. While it once again vindicates any actions associated with the phenomenon as being part of ordinary life; it further serves to minimise social disapproval by adding a conditional element to the experience. This is because in constructing their behaviours as limited to a particular situation, they are also framing it as

temporary circumstance of being a student. This means that “beer goggles” not only becomes positioned as normal behaviour, but as something that is unrepresentative of the participant’s character outside of college lifestyle. As previously highlighted in extract six, it is not who they are when they leave university to establish a career.

As a result, individual talk then constructs particular gendered ways of being as normal and abstracted from the participant’s true nature. Any potentially problematic actions committed by intoxicated students become justified as part of what is fashioned as the usual behaviour at that stage in their lives. The extract below shows how the attribution of responsibility and/or criticism for their actions become nullified by what the participants have constructed as part of their normal lifestyle situation.

Extract 13

“So people they joke about my behaviour and I have to check my behaviour. But at the same time I know they are joking and I don’t have to take their jests too seriously. So if I hook up with a grunter this weekend it won’t really affect me that bad. I know it’s normal here and that the jests are a bit of fun” (Interview 3 line 277).

5.5 Heterosexuality- *“the name beer goggle is associated with men”* (Focus group 3 line 452).

While it may once again be due to the predominantly male sample group of this research project, the above ideas of normality discursively map onto heteronormative forms of interaction. This is because talk is infused with a heterosexual discourse that normalises certain gendered ways of being and takes itself for granted as the standard effect that alcohol has on interpersonal relations. Echoing the literature (Bogren, 2011; Dempster, 2011), there is an evident “laddish” set of values that is depicted as ordinary and as existing within the typical university drinking culture that is identified above.

Talk regarding alcohol’s influence in negotiating the dating world, reinforces inequitable patterns of gender relations that are heteronormative in nature. This is because women are constructed as the passive recipients of an aggressively pursuing male desire. They are positioned as the submissive objects in reaction to a supposedly active masculine sexuality.

Extract 14

“Ya, it is a social thing, you know. Guys are meant to court and chase. Chicks are meant to be earned in a way” (Focus group 2 line 459).

Recognising the un-egalitarian nature of their proposal, male participants make use of a socio-cultural discourse around sexual interaction. Viewed as an intimidating “*attack on your masculinity*” (Focus group 2 line 494), proactive female sexuality is constructed as an unnatural enterprise that destabilizes what is constructed as normal behaviour for a man or a woman.

Extract 15

“that is what you are supposed to be doing as a man. And if she is doing it to you, it is kind of like taking away your ability.” (Focus group 2 line 497).

While reinforcing patriarchal gender norms, this talk reframes the male participant as the brave upholders of a supposedly natural social order between genders. Promoting masculine forms sexuality as normal to experience absolves the male participants of their responsibility for their “beer goggles” related behaviour. This is because anything other than a heterosexual type sexual interaction is constructed as disregarding what it means to be part of the male gender itself.

On the other hand, female talk frames the dynamics of sexual interaction in a way that switches the positioning between genders. Granting that the supposed differences in roles between genders exist in courting, it is women that are given the position of power in determining the tolerability of male behaviour. Linking back to ideas around opportunism in the talk around control, heterosexuality is constructed as only deserving acceptance when a female’s consciousness has been undermined/affected by intoxication.

Extract 16

“Well, like a guy might see a girl and see that she is totally out of his league. But then the girl might start losing her inhibition and the guy will think lets go for it” (Focus group 3 line 460).

Due to the relaxation of the gatekeeper of sex role that women are assumed to take on in heteronormative relations, the female experience of “beer goggles” is constructed as vulnerable to male desire. While shifting the blame across genders, this view then has potentially problematic implications for encouraging sexually coercive or entitled behaviours. This is because it implies that once a woman is experiencing the phenomenon it is licence for men to take advantage of their diminished self-control and capacity to give consent. It

promotes the idea that men are entitled to attractive women if they just wait for their intoxicated mind to become incapable of denying any sexual propositions. Employing the idea that there are a set of social standards in the dating world (discussed later), one extract shows how heteronormative and problematic behaviours become viewed as acceptable under what is considered the usual ways to sexually interact in drinking environments.

Extract 17

Nikki: *“women who have beer goggles will accept those men if they think that they are below their standards and that they wouldn’t do things ordinarily. Because they have beer goggles on”*

Jackie: *“yes, like you wouldn’t mind being treated in a different way. You would find it kind of funny. That is beer goggles”* (Focus group 3 line 465).

5.6 Embarrassment- *“It was like the raunchiest night of my entire life”* (Interview 1 line 194)

Similar to public mass media, the most persistent idea operating throughout the text is the association between “beer goggles” and the emergence of potentially embarrassing consequences. In general, the majority of participants identify some of their intoxicated behaviour with such emotional discomfort that social isolation is deemed the only remedy.

Extract 18

“You have woken up from a hangover and you know you have done something dumb. And you just get that shame blanket that sort of wakes you up and it’s sort of like “hey bro, guess what...you fucked up last night. And you don’t want to get out of bed because you are so embarrassed” (Interview 1 line 149).

And

Extract 19

“I don’t think that I would tell people. I am generally too embarrassed to tell anyone at least until much later” (Focus group 3 line 658).

Whilst extract eighteen’s evocative language can simply serve to reveal his emotions, it could also be linked with the embodied state of a hangover. Individuals feel physically sick after the consumption of alcohol and thus could feel psychologically fragile too. As the mind and body

are interconnected (Pally, 1998), their emotions could represent the impact of alcohol consumption and not just any long term feelings towards their behaviour.

That being said, “beer goggles” is constructed as a potentially embarrassing experience in individual talk for two reasons.

Echoing the literature (Vander Ven & Beck, 2009; Young & Mayson, 2010) and public mass media; alcohol is firstly connected to making poor decisions and engaging in risky irresponsible behaviours that could result in sexually transmitted diseases and even unwanted pregnancies. There is an obvious state of social apprehension between participants regarding the probability of these issues arising through their drinking habits. This is illustrated in one individual’s post-mortem examination into the supposedly ominous consequences attached to his preceding night spent drinking:

Extract 20

“But afterwards you sort of think, god what the shit did I do that for? Did I use a condom that time? That was fucking stupid” (Interview 2 line 73).

Contrasted with the existence of a jovial attitude towards drinking, there is an underlying sense of severity and understanding attached to the idea that “beer goggles” can have serious repercussions. This is because despite being portrayed as having some comedic value, participants acknowledge that these kinds of consequences can happen to anyone, including themselves.

Extract 21

“I felt shamed. If it was an innocent like beer goggles thing, like oh I hooked up with a fat chick then you can all laugh. But like can you imagine if I had actually got her pregnant dude and then I like had a kid with her? I have been tricked into thinking I got a chick pregnant twice now. Like, everyone has that worry and can imagine themselves in that situation” (Interview 1 line 328).

Secondly, although public domain texts and individual talk both attribute embarrassing interpersonal events to alcohol consumption, the interview and focus group material proposes a different avenue of concern. Sexual relations with unattractive people are constructed as an additional source of embarrassment that is built upon ideas of a heterosexuality, attractiveness and body regulation. The fact that this talk is absent from public domain texts

raises the question of why it is limited to this material in particular. Once again, the lack of a heterogeneous sample group in individual talk may explain its gendered flavour. However, it could just be that the public nature of mass media prohibits the emergence of any underlying biases that otherwise become apparent in normal conversation and/or the participant's university context. As such, it is only within this chapter that the idea of embarrassment in relation to "beer goggles" reveals a gendered and biased nature in favour of masculine patriarchal social norms.

Supplementing the previous discourse, this discourse replicates a kind of heterosexual masculinity which is misogynistic in its orientation. This is because, with the attractiveness of each male participant never being questioned; it is women who are always constructed as violating the code of dating. They become objectified as mainly physical beings, whose characters only significance is to supposedly mislead men into embarrassing sexual interactions. This is illustrated in the previous twenty first extract, in which a contrast is made between the 'innocence' of male "beer goggled" behaviour and the idea that they might fall victim to the manipulation of women who attempt to take advantage of their intoxication.

When talking about embarrassment in relation to partner choice, the majority of the participants' expressions of regret originate from a dissatisfaction with their companion's physical attributes. This is because of a socially circulating idea around beauty and attractiveness that argues that it's only acceptable to be attracted to stereotypically beautiful people. Similar to the perceptual explanations for "beer goggles", this idea of where desires should be focused also sets a standard for the ideal body type. In defining the phenomenon, the extract below shows how sexual relations with unattractive people are constructed as an abnormal and objectionable endeavour that is only explainable through alcohol's supposed effect on our state of mind.

Extract 22

"Beer goggles is when they become so inebriated or drunk that they start losing their inhibitions and they think they are surrounded by pretty girls. They hook up with a girl that they think was really pretty. Think that they have done well. Then the next they wake up hung-over and realise that the person they had hooked up with was not as pretty as they had thought. Ugly as shit" (Interview 3 line 9).

In deliberating the consequences of the above ideas around attraction, the majority of participants reveal a conscious aversion to the way that their embarrassment constructs sexual interaction.

Extract 23

“This might seem like a slight exaggeration. But it’s almost men’s attempt to dehumanise women and that they are not really people anymore. That they are just sex on legs” (Focus group 3 line 480).

And

Extract 24

“It also constructs men as these okes who are super shallow and just care about pretty stuff” (Focus group 3 line 488)

While recognising their intoxicated actions are problematic on some level, the male participants engage a range of discursive moves to position their intoxicated sexual desire in a more favourable light. Separating themselves from all responsibility, the superficial and ‘dehumanising’ sexual lens attached to masculinity is attributed to three supposedly mitigating factors illustrated below.

Firstly, sexual interaction is framed as being governed by an unconscious evolutionary urge to procreate with individuals physically capable enough to produce healthy offspring. Via this biological thinking, one participant justifies the objectification of women in “beer goggles” behaviour as occurring through an overriding and natural construct in human nature.

Extract 25

“What it comes down to I think is sexual reproduction. Because generally I think that it is wired in our brains that if someone’s attractive they have better genes to carry on the healthiest offspring and stuff like that” (Focus group 2 line 520).

Due to the purportedly unconscious level of this behaviour, the fixation on physical beauty is constructed as something the male participants are not responsible for reproducing. It is a result of the way in which they were made and therefore not representative of the way they choose to be.

Secondly, attraction is described as a socio-cultural construct in which the assumptions around beauty are argued to be dependent on prevailing cultural norms that exist outside of individual influence. Discussing the ways in which the stimulus material in the focus groups depicts male sexual desire, one participant attributes the focus on physicality to a pre-existing cultural standard that supposedly dictates what normal behaviour is.

Extract 26

“There were a lot of assumptions stating what our assumptions of beauty are as that just portrays it as visual beauty. It like takes the average of what everyone ugly person is. It like says oh this chick is too fat. Like obviously you are not going to get a guy because you are a fatty, meanwhile maybe there is like a guy that will like her for who she is. But now our like cultural assumption portrayed in these images dictate that she is supposedly ugly when this is not necessarily the case in every way” (Focus group 1 line 223).

Thirdly, the environment is also constructed as a potential intervening feature in sexual desire. The supposedly loud and impersonal characteristics of the club situation are stated to hinder the possibility of emotional connections with others. This, once again serves to excuse any problematic sexual evaluations made by men; positioning their behaviours as guided by the situation and not from their own sexual nature.

Extract 28

“I think when you are sober the process is a lot slower so you actually get to know the person and stuff. Umm whereas if you get drunk in a nightclub it’s like bang in a couple of hours. You meet someone for a short time and it’s loud. So naturally you’re e focused on their looks as that is first impressions” (Focus group 1 line 232).

5.7 A profitable life experience- “I am almost pro beer goggles” (Interview 3 line 231)

Similar to the previous chapter, the “beer goggles” phenomenon is framed as offering profitable forms of life experience. The only difference is that in individual talk, any of the embarrassing behaviours associated with the phenomenon is reconstructed as being beneficial in nature. While “beer goggles” is still presented as allowing individuals to socially interact with their environment in more profitable ways, it is also argued that excessive levels of intoxication can be useful in teaching valuable life lessons that aid in interpersonal growth.

Normalised in the university context, these two ideas around alcohol consumption are outlined below.

Firstly, in union with public domain texts, the “beer goggles” phenomenon is framed as helping individuals negotiate their way through the dating world. In ‘levelling the playing field’, a moderate level of alcohol consumption is supposed to help sexual interaction to occur between individuals within different degrees of attractiveness. Constructed as a social lubricant; alcohol is once again positioned as being vital towards developing what is deemed as socially desirable forms of interaction. Drawing on the notion that alcohol is essential to combat an otherwise threatening social life, it perpetuates an idea of how students are expected to interact. The extracts below show how alcohol’s effect on the mind is argued to help individuals develop certain characteristics that are constructed as essential in sexual interaction.

Extract 29

“I think we kind of find it awkward to date and alcohol just helps out with making that initial move” (Focus group 1 line 52).

And

Extract 30

“I don’t know, but being drunk is often like the most relaxed fun version of yourself. So like if you can see that in a person often a relationship might spark off. If you are off with a chick whilst you are drunk or whatever. Maybe not completely fuck faced. But drunk enough to be confident and relaxed is often when the chick might take an interest in you when she might not have done when she was sober” (Focus group 2 line 277).

On face value, this seems to follow the public domain texts in opposing previously established ideas around standards of attractiveness. This is because stating that alcohol has relational benefits appears to contradict the earlier notion that it causes embarrassment by disrupting a social rule that forbids sexual relations between unequally desirable partners. Despite this, however, it is evident that the majority of the participants actually still support the idea of a social code existing around standards of attractiveness in sexual interaction. This is due to the belief that extending one’s sexual opportunities to unattractive people is an embarrassing kind of philanthropic endeavour. Instead of saying that they lost control and

now regret their behaviour, the participants cast their “beer goggled” experiences as performing a favour that is constructed as profitable for others to receive.

Extract 31

“Fat girls need love too” (Focus group 2 line 234)

And

Extract 32

“You know? Everybody does their bit for charity” (Interview 3 line 225).

Justifying any potentially problematic behaviour associated with the phenomenon; this presupposes the participant’s own levels of desirability once again. It also reinforces the idea that there is a standard of beauty in interaction and that relationships should only occur between people in the same degrees of attraction. It allows the participants to increase their sexual opportunities and justify any of the actions that they deem unfavourable under the pretext of its supposed performance as a social benefit.

Secondly, in individual talk, the phenomenon of “beer goggles” is framed as an essential educational tool that guides and regulates behaviour. It is constructed as a necessary stage of development that permits individuals to learn from past actions and possibly avoid the consequences of feeling embarrassed by that experience again.

Extract 33

“I have learnt from my experiences and from mocking my friends. I have learnt that don’t get as drunk and don’t always get as raunchy. Later in my Rhodes career, I have had all these experiences and whatever and now I know my limits, I know how to tell the difference whatever. It is all about experiences. As I said I am almost pro beer goggles because it teaches you life lessons that you need to develop in the future” (Interview 3 line 230).

Serving a function in the profitable life experience narrative, the participant’s embarrassment regarding their behaviours further solidifies the idea of this kind of developmental process. Attempting to repair their relationship with society, the expression of remorse previously identified in individual talk is an indirect apology that serves as a bulwark against additional persecution and intolerance. It functions as an implied recognition that each participant has learnt from their embarrassing experience and now understands why their behaviours should

never be repeated. While the admission of guilt acknowledges some degree of control and responsibility for the participant's behaviours, it creates an implicit barrier between their past and present self. This is because in addressing their sense of agency, it also allows the participants to separate their past intoxicated behaviours from what is now constructed as their new and more developed identity.

Undeniably, the act of classifying "beer goggles" as a learning curve implies that the participants recognise their behaviours are wrong and unusual to repeat in the university context. The question that remains is why the participants construct their actions as something to be embarrassed about and consequently to move away from? Is their regret seated in some form of trepidation about the morality of their behaviour, or is it because they have slipped into a potentially problematic cultural standard about beauty? The previous discourse of embarrassment and the earlier ideas around "beer goggles" philanthropic properties would suggest the latter.

Otherwise talking about "beer goggles" through this discourse serves to position those who experience the phenomenon in a slightly different light than the previous chapter. While still constructed as having seemingly justifiable reasons to seek out intoxication, the associations made with each level of drinking changes. Once again disregarding those who abstain from alcohol, those who consume the substance in moderation are located as possessing superior interactive abilities. Those who drink excessively however, are not just constructed as producing irresponsible and socially problematic conduct. This is because normalised in the university setting, the overconsumption of alcohol is now framed as essential ways in which individuals can develop an idea of what is socially acceptable behaviour. This means that despite the possibility of embarrassment, both moderate and excessive levels drinking are deemed beneficial forms of life experience.

Along with public domain texts, this discourse reproduces particular gendered ideologies by creating an idea of what constitutes normal drinking behaviour and sexual interaction. It produces an atmosphere that is tolerant of misogyny and minimizes responsibility for the reproduction of problematic attitudes and practices. This is because in constructing an idea of the dating world, an altered consciousness and all its associated behaviours are again pictured as essential towards effective forms of socialisation. Any conduct accompanying the "beer goggles" experience is then not the participant's responsibility, but rather a result of alcohol's effects on the mind and what is perceived as the universities normal 'laddish' drinking culture

(Speer, 2001). Talking about this particular discourse, the two extracts below draw on certain metaphors and forms of language that are interesting in terms of what they reveal about how the participants construct their own role in their behaviour and how they view the dating world.

Extract 34

“It is part of life lessons or whatever that kind of stuff. So I am almost pro hooking up with grunTERS through beer goggles. You know? Everybody does their bit for charity (laugh). Umm, if both people know, you know? It is a drunken event and it gives you that experience” (Interview 3 line 227).

And

Extract 35

“I remember guys were saying look it is tough, but you have to slay a few dragons to get to the princess” (Focus group 3 line 639).

In general these extracts demonstrate how certain standards of sexuality are normalised and accepted by the participant’s trend of attributing the cause for their behaviour to their social environment rather than their own individual agency. Along with the use of misogynistic terminology for women such as ‘grunTERS’, the “beer goggles” experience is characterised as a kind of ‘charitable’ enterprise on behalf of the male participants. This reiterates the previously mentioned superficial and heterosexual lens attached to attractiveness in individual talk. It strengthens the idea that women are supposed to play a certain role in sexual interaction-namely the passive objects of the male desire. Otherwise the metaphor in extract thirty-five promotes a kind of chivalric attitude to the dating ritual which is further heteronormative in its orientation. It conjures up images of men in shining armour whose duty in sexual interaction is to combat a few ‘dragons’ (e.g. unattractive women) to rescue the supposedly helpless and inactive ‘princess’ (e.g. attractive women). This excuses the maltreatment and objectification of some women as necessary towards finding what is constructed as the ideal partner. It also justifies an aggressive and active male sexuality in “beer goggles” as part of the way that the dating world is supposed to work. In doing all this, the above two extracts highlight the kind of gendered mind-set the participants already have and are utilizing within alcohol mediated interaction.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This research aimed to further explore student drinking by providing an in-depth investigation into how “beer goggles” is constructed discursively and what implications that had within the South African university context. In doing so, this study attempted to: 1) map out the discursive resources operating in the empirical research literature, public domain texts and individual talk; 2) identify the subject positions and action orientation of these constructions, and 3) to establish what gendered subjectivities are reproduced within that framework.

After summarising the results of the analysis, this chapter will include a review of any practical and methodological considerations that have emerged throughout the research project. While this involves discussing possible avenues for future research, it also entails a reflection of the strengths of the research project and its trustworthiness as an investigative process.

6.2 Summary of research findings

Meeting the objectives of the study, this section outlines how the discourses from all three sets of research material end up talking to each other to produce an idea of the ‘kind of person’ that experiences “beer goggles”. Often cast in ‘scientific’ terms, the phenomenon is constructed as producing an altered state of consciousness in which individuals experience a diminished sense of control. It is also framed as a relatively normal occurrence that is heterosexual in terms of the ways in which alcohol is argued to mediate sexual interaction. While the effects of intoxication on the mind are regularly connected to embarrassment, any emotional discomfort is reconstructed into a form of profitable life experience in that it enables individuals to learn from their behaviour and to prosper in their given social environment.

Within the above narrative, some conflicting ideas around the phenomenon became evident throughout the previous chapters. In general, one contradiction was particularly apparent in the research material. This is the idea that whilst “beer goggles” constitutes an altered state of mind that is normal and socially profitable, it is also an embarrassing experience that is sometimes out of control in regards to drinking and sexual interaction. Along with outlining

the overall picture of “beer goggles”; the way in which these kinds of contradictions are resolved and used for specific purposes in interaction is shown below.

On the outset, it is evident that there is a strong scientific discourse in the research literature and public domain texts that attempts to understand “beer goggles” in terms of its underlying causal mechanisms. Creating a common sense understanding of the phenomenon, this kind of talk normalises the idea that alcohol has certain effects on our state of mind that absolve people of the responsibility for their actions.

The fact that this discourse is missing from individual talk suggests that there is a disjuncture between the ways in which the “beer goggles” phenomenon is understood. There is a scientific discourse that places importance on quantitative methods of explanation, but not experience. Then there are the experiential accounts of “beer goggles” which pay little attention to scientific theory, but place more emphasis on the phenomenon’s social consequences in its lived context. This particular study is important as it highlights this division in understanding and adds a further qualitative voice to what seems a predominantly empirical field of research.

All three sets of research material construct “beer goggles” as producing an altered state of consciousness. Through scientific modes of explanation, the literature and public domain texts establish that there are a variety of causal mechanisms affecting the intoxicated brain that are responsible for producing what is constructed as uncharacteristic forms of behaviour. In order to make sense of these ideas from an experiential perspective; this study reveals how individual talk adopts a discourse of control. Attempting to justify and rationalise actions associated the phenomenon; participants frame the supposed mind altering effects of alcohol as normal and as having a degree of influence over individual autonomy. Reducing the perceived severity of “beer goggles”, positioning the intoxicated person within an external locus of control is used in ways that serve individual interests and overlook the desires of others in interaction.

Reinforcing certain social expectations around its prevalence, “beer goggles” is framed as normal to experience, particularly from within the university drinking context. It is in this specific cultural setting that the phenomenon is infused with a heterosexual lens that normalises problematic gendered ways of being and takes itself for granted as the standard way in which sexual interaction should function. Attached to the student environment, the social disapproval of any alcohol related behaviours is minimised through their connection

with the supposedly unrepresentative and temporary nature of what is constructed as normal university life.

Built upon ideas of heterosexuality, attractiveness and body regulation; the effects of alcohol on the mind are connected to the emergence of certain embarrassing behaviours. No matter how distressing, these behaviours are however, always reconstructed as being beneficial in their nature. Solidifying its normality in the university drinking context, “beer goggles” is framed as providing students with the opportunity to learn from their experiences and to interact within a particular idea of the social world in more profitable ways. Employing this idea of “beer goggles” serves to manage individual stake in interaction. While functioning as recognition for their sense of embarrassment, this kind of talk allows individuals to separate themselves from their behaviours by positioning their identity as a flexible construct that changes and develops away from their past intoxicated experiences. Creating a cultural status quo regarding drinking behaviour and sexual interaction, the phenomenon is rather contrastingly framed as an emotionally uncomfortable, yet profitable form of interpersonal growth. Despite the sense of regret, the “beer goggles” phenomenon is constructed as a beneficial experience that teaches individuals how to consume alcohol and how to better understand the social environment within which it is involved.

6.3 Suggestion for further research

This study highlighted the importance of investigating the discursive construction of “beer goggles”. The current body of research is dominated by quantitative studies that contribute to the objective, scientific and dispassionate association between alcohol and behaviour. This is because with experimental designs assessing the intricate causes and actuality of “beer goggles”, there is little information concerning its socially mediated nature. Any of the existing qualitative material is not only rare and lacking in focus, but does not account for the social construction of the phenomenon, especially from a South African perspective.

Although this research offers new qualitative material regarding the discursive construction of “beer goggles”, it is only exploratory in nature. As such, further research is needed to not only examine the ways that the phenomenon is taken up in talk, but to investigate what purposes it serves and how that reproduces certain types of social interaction. Due to this study discovering a discourse of normality in the student context, research exploring the nature of the university drinking culture could provide an alternative avenue for further

research. Conducted in a similar setting, this could help examine the transferability of the study's findings to similar educational environments.

Considering the nature and cost of their implementation, the material used in this study was limited in terms of homogeneity and sample size. Future research in this area could then be directed at acquiring additional participants and audio-visual information. Obtaining sample groups that were more varied along gender and cultural lines could also provide additional routes for further exploration.

6.4 Strengths and limitations of the research

The aim of this study was to investigate the discursive resources surrounding “beer goggles” and the implications that these constructions may have for social practice, identity and subject positioning within the South African university context. Due to the dearth of qualitative literature around the phenomenon, the findings of this study are explorative and potentially groundbreaking in nature.

Moving away from positivist psychology, the theoretical orientation of this project allowed the researcher to draw out the participants experiences in their own words. This is because instead of artificially imposing pre-determined categories onto social phenomena, this research captures how “beer goggles” is constructed in its natural context and how that shapes individual experience in certain ways. Giving credence to social expectancy theory, the focus on the language that is used in talk highlights the ways in which the phenomenon's lived cultural context may support particular kinds of behaviours in social interaction.

A potential limitation is that the researchers own beliefs around the phenomenon could influence the interpretation of the research material. This means that the findings of the study may be coloured by the lens through which I construct the idea of “beer goggles” itself. As such, any conclusions cannot be regarded as absolute truths, but rather as just one of the many possible readings of the discursive text. However, the fact that additional research may yield different results does not invalidate the results of the study. It simply suggests that in order to produce a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon, this research needs to be supplemented and corroborated with, further investigation.

Another possible limitation is that the descriptive nature of FDA research does not offer proof for any of the discursive features under discussion. Hence it can be condemned from a quantitative standpoint as it's impossible to know the study's findings can be generalized to

other settings. While acknowledging that qualitative research is not actually meant to be representative of an entire population group, this studies generalizability could be assured through the quality of its theoretical inferences and its transferability to comparable student environments (Bryman, 2012). The statistical criteria of a quantitative methodology may further expand the scope of the research findings, but it will not be able to examine the rich and descriptive material that is lacking in the aforementioned psychological literature. As, such the qualitative nature of this research can be viewed as an inherent strength rather than a limitation.

6.5 Validation

Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006), recommend four possible ways to strengthen the trustworthiness of any research process. While more broadly discussed in the methodological chapter, these included reflections on the studies credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

The credibility of the study's findings was ensured through regular supervisory meetings; follow up discussions with participants, as well as the use of multiple forms of textual material. While the legitimacy of the interview material rests on the previous study from which they were obtained, the authenticity of the focus groups were safeguarded through electronic respondent validation. Otherwise the previous chapters included a comprehensive description of the studies main theoretical assumptions and environmental determinants. While increasing the studies transparency, this allowed the research findings to be reapplied to alternative contexts with similar participant dynamics.

Regular meetings with the research supervisor made sure that the proper procedures had been adhered to throughout the research process. Continually auditing all the different emerging phases of the study in these meetings helped guarantee research dependability. In terms of increasing the studies confirmability, I engaged in numerous reflexive discussions with my project supervisor and continually attempted to consider my own influence on the research development itself.

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Appendix 7.1: Permission letter

14th June 2014

Michael Jason Stuart

Rhodes University

Dear Prof Vivian De Klerk

Thank you for speaking with me about my research thesis for my Masters by thesis degree in Psychology. I am seeking your permission to conduct a Foucauldian discourse analysis into how the phenomenon of “beer goggles” is constructed discursively and its implications within the South African context. The attached research proposal provides more details.

The purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth exploration into how the phenomenon of “beer goggles” is constructed discursively and what various consequences these constructions may have in the South African context. Present-day literature is dominated by research discussing the existence and intricate causal mechanisms underlying “beer goggles”, but reveals little concerning the socially mediated nature of these encounters. The existent research contributes towards the objective, scientific and dispassionate conditioned association between alcohol and individual behaviour. The aim of this study is not only to understand how individual’s experiences of alcohol are discursively constructed, but also to provide new and alternative data that can supplement further research and provide detailed multidimensional analyses of the current debates regarding the nature of the “beer goggles” phenomenon.

The study has been approved by the psychology department’s ethics committee and is being supervised by psychology lecturer Mr Werner Bohmke. If you decide that students may participate in the study, I will need a letter a letter of your permission.

Sincerely

Michael Jason Stuart

g10s2004@campus.ru.ac.za

Appendix 7.2: Participant consent form

RHODES UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
AGREEMENT BETWEEN STUDENT RESEARCHER AND
RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Updated 26 January 2011

I (participant's name) _____ agree to participate in the research project of Michael Stuart on an in-depth exploration into how the phenomenon of "beer goggles" is constructed discursively and what various consequences these constructions may have in the South African context.

I understand that:

1. The researcher is a student conducting the research as part of the requirements for a/an **Master's** degree at Rhodes University. The researcher may be contacted on g10s2004@campus.ru.ac.za or 0723421124. The research project has been approved by the relevant ethics committee(s), and is under the supervision of Mr Werner Bohmke in the Psychology Department at Rhodes University, who may be contacted on 0465038508 (office) or W.R.Bohmke@ru.ac.za (email).

2. The researcher is interested in **how the phenomenon of "beer goggles" is constructed discursively and its implications within the South African context.**

3. My participation will involve **one 60-90 minute focus group or a 45-60 minute interview about discourses surrounding "beer goggles", with the possibility of short follow up discussion thereafter.**

4. I may be asked to answer questions of a personal nature, but I can choose not to answer any questions about aspects of my life which I am not willing to disclose.

5. I am invited to voice to the researcher any concerns I have about my participation in the study, or consequences I may experience as a result of my participation, and to have these addressed to my satisfaction. **I also give permission for the data in this study to be made available for other forms of research.** A counselling centre may be contacted for further support on 0466037070

6. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time – however I commit myself to full participation unless some unusual circumstances occur, or I have concerns about my participation which I did not originally anticipate.

7. The report on the project may contain information about my personal experiences, attitudes and behaviours, but that the report will be designed in such a way that it will not be possible to be identified by the general reader.

Signed on (Date):

Participant: _____ Researcher: _____

Appendix 7.3: Video recording consent form

**USE OF TAPE RECORDINGS FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES- PERMISSION
AND RELEASE FORM**

Rhodes University — Department of Psychology

<u>Participant name & contacts (address, phone etc)</u>	
<u>Name of researcher & level of research</u>	Michael Stuart (Masters by Thesis in psychology)
<u>Brief title of project</u>	A Foucauldian discourse analysis into how discourse constructs the meanings and identities around “beer goggles” in South Africa?
<u>Supervisor</u>	Werner Bohmke

Declaration

(Please initial/tick blocks next to the relevant statements)

<u>1. The nature of the research and the nature of my participation have been explained to me</u>	<u>verbally</u>	
	<u>in writing</u>	
<u>2. I agree to be interviewed and to allow tape-recordings to be made of the interviews</u>	<u>audiotape</u>	<u>*</u>
	<u>videotape</u>	<u>*</u>
<u>3. I agree to take part in and to allow tape-recordings to be made.</u>	<u>audiotape</u>	
	<u>videotape</u>	<u>*</u>

<u>4. The tape recordings may be transcribed</u>	<u>without conditions</u>	
	<u>only by the researcher</u>	<u>*</u>
	<u>by one or more nominated third parties:</u>	

5.1 I have been informed by the researcher that the tape recordings will be erased once the study is complete and the report has been written.

5.2 OR I give permission for the tape recordings to be retained after the study and for them to be utilised for the following purposes and under the following conditions:

Signatures

Signature of participant

Date

Witnessed by researcher

Appendix 7.4: Focus group schedule

Part 1: Video entitled '*Funniest beer fest scene*' from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOs2RLC5qKE>

1. What do you think of the video?
2. Is this the typical picture of what happens when people are under the influence of beer goggles?
 - *Does everyone agree?*
3. Can you give some examples of "beer goggles" either from your own experience or someone else?
 - *Has anyone had a different experience?*
 - Research also states that people tend to lose their inhibitions and engage in behaviour they would otherwise avoid- less reserved, impulsive etc.
 - Do you ever find that you get liquid courage and impulsive?
 - Research also states there is a decrease in decision making skills-can't make a cost/benefit analysis. Do you guys agree?
4. Is there ever an element of control when drinking and when does it occur?
 - When are you most controlled whilst under the influence?
5. What are the possible negative consequences of experiencing beer goggles?
6. Are there ever any positive implications?
 - Do you agree that alcohol helps you go for people that are out of your league?
 - Do you think relationships ever start with alcohol?
 - Have you ever had the luck of another person drinking to the point where they have had sex with you and you think they normally wouldn't have?

Part 2: Video entitled '*Beer goggles (commercial)*' from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ji-q63MYghU>



Source links:

- 1) <http://www.gizmodo.com/5616197/the-secret-of-beer-goggles-discovered>
- 2) <http://www.therooster.com/blog/why-people-look-more-attractive-when-you're-drunk>
- 3) <https://encrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQECCqZfp9yHLEH-9tmP9x5eStbC6hLzY9gE4s3x4Ni5rIPaWzHSQ>

7. What do you guys think of these kinds of pictures?
 - Do they portray some element of truth? What might that be?
8. What are the usual rules for selecting a partner in sexual interaction?
9. How might the consumption of alcohol disrupt or violate these rules?
10. I was trying to get some pictures to illustrate the idea of “beer goggles”, but most of them were about women and very degrading. It also seems to portray the idea that only guys are supposed to be the active pursers in sexual interactions and not women. Women are constructed as just objects of male gaze.
 - What do you think? Is beer goggles primarily a masculine thing?
 - What do you think of the way it constructs gender?
 - Are males always the active pursers in sexual interaction?
 - What do you think of the negative depictions of women?

Part 3: Video: ‘Most intense short film ever- The mistake’ from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFETpS6l3-o>

11. What do you think the general opinion is regarding these kinds of behaviours?
12. Are there places where beer goggles frowned upon?
13. When do you guys think “beer goggles” is a normal experience?
 - Are there ever any times when “beer goggles” behaviour is abnormal?
14. Do you think the expectations of alcohol related behaviour in certain situations affect you regardless of whether you have had any alcohol?
15. An illustrative story will be provided to stimulate discussion.
 - Do you think public reactions to beer goggles behaviour are too harsh or appropriate?
16. What do your friends think about your drunken behaviours?
 - Does anyone try keeping their beer goggles behaviour a secret?
17. Is mocking people’s behaviours just a masculine form of behaviour?
 - Is it also featured in woman’s talk around their experiences?
18. Does the public opinion ever alter a person’s beer goggles behaviour?

Appendix 7.5: Video transcripts

7.5.1 Video 1: Are "Beer Goggles" Real? -- The Doctors. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lGNikFgDaBc>

I1: A lot of us have been there where after a few drinks maybe your vision gets a little blurry and some might say you even put on those beer goggles. But are beer goggles a myth? We went to the street to hear what you think

P1: My take on beer goggles is that I don't think it necessarily makes individuals more attractive, but I would say it lowers standards. There have been some woman that I have hooked up with that I wish I hadn't.

P2: I think it is real it's too real

P3: Everyone looks more attractive to me, they all look sexy.

P4: I totally believe in "beer goggles". I think past a certain point everything goes as people do see differently when they have been drinking some.

P5: I think they are a real thing, especially for people of my age at 21 should be very aware of.

P6: I don't think beer goggles are a real thing. I think it's just something that people say as an excuse for their behaviour.

I1: So this is interesting and there is a medical reason that we are going to talk about it. But at Durham University in the UK it questions whether or not alcohol actually makes you drop your standards. They looked at this study and they found that it didn't make people see others as more attractive, but that it just caused them to lower their inhibitions. So if you look at your brain what happens when you drink alcohol is that your frontal lobe is not working quite as well. Your frontal lobe is what determines or rationalises behaviour. I think this is a good idea or a bad idea. It is why people make a lot of bad decisions under the influence and why we always say moderate alcohol use that's not prolific intake. But what is really interesting and I don't know whether you guys know this, but another study suggests that drinking alcohol doesn't make other people more attractive, but that when you look in the mirror you think that you are better looking.

I2: Yea I think that that is a big part of it. I think sometimes you are at a place where you are little bit shy and little bit reserved. So your inhibitions can go down with alcohol. The other part of it is that now you have this confidence to think that you look good, to think you are smoother than you are so you go up to people that maybe you otherwise wouldn't. So yea it's a dishibition, but also this sort of inflation of the ego.

I3: It's kind of like spinach to Popeye.

I4: You start walking around and you think that you have swag and you know you just don't.

I1: Why do I just envision when I think back to all the movies that we have seen that it is usually the guys who think that they have that confidence or swag and you just don't.

35 I3: But if she has had a beer or two as well then she might think in his favour too.

36 I1: Obviously the other thing we do need to mention is that when you do drink alcohol your
37 inhibitions are dropped and that's when a lot of dangerous things can happen. Just remember
38 you have to be safe because there are sexually transmitted and unwanted pregnancies they
39 often do occur after having too much alcohol so cheers. One more sip and then we are putting
40 it away.

7.5.2 Video 2: Are beer goggles real? Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUkhLBtYaqQ)

[?v=nUkhLBtYaqQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUkhLBtYaqQ)

I1: Researchers at the univeristy of Durham say that in their newest round of research,beer goggles is totally a myth. We have a quote from them where they say there is no imagined physical transformation, just more desire. Alcohol switches off the rational and decision making areas of the brain, whilst leaving the areas to do with sexual desire relatively intact. Umm, I think that here we have a lot of respect for the scientific method,but they are just wrong.

I2:Actually at first when I read the headlines to this I was like ahh they are definitely wrong, because people who get drunk are obviously more likely to have sex with whomever it is that they are with. I mean if they are single, but you know what I realsied!

I3: Married? (laughs) they don't have to be single. That was very moral of you.

I2: Married people don't have sex do they? When I think of beer goggles, I always think of someone that you are not with. Someone that you have met for the first time and who isnt very attractive, but then as you drink and the night progresses they all of sudden become a maybe. But that doesn't really happen?

I3:Like if you need beer goggles to sleep with your wife then you have bigger problems(laughs).

I2:So yea that is what I meant and also usually when you get drunk and you sleep with somebody for the first time its because you kind of considered sleeping with them in the first place.

I1: Or considering sleeping with somebody I would say. Like I don't think that it is a huge change, but you know how you get when you are drunk. If you walk through a crowd, you don't really get the full like sixty frames per-second. It is sort of like a slide show. When you look at a girl who might not be perfect. You know at sixty frames per second you cant really see the detail. You know what her face generally looks like, but you cant really lock down what it is. That can tip the scales.

I3: Well as a totally sober virgin I cant really comment on this sort of stuff(laughs).

I2:Not buying it.

I3: I wanted to see how long that would last. Yea I mean you get drunk and yea I don't know that it actually changes the physical of the person, so I kind of do buy this research. I think you get drunk and the night goes on. You know you are out for a reason.

I2:Yea like self-consciously you wanted to have sex and you drink which makes you more aware of the fact that you want to have sex.

I3:That is a good question as I think there is a certain culture around certain drinks. So wine you may drink and then you start feeling good. Each different alchol has a different effect on people.

36 I2:Yea definitely and I also want to see the science behind like why someone people are
37 angry drunks and some people are happy drunks. Like I am a happy drunk, I get really
38 excited and I want to dance.

39 I1: It lowers your inhibitions. Now for your maybe your inhibited from being out there and
40 happy and all these things. Some people thankfully are being inhibited from being assholes
41 and telling people what they really think about them. So when you strip that away that is what
42 it is. I think that is what is going on.

43 I2:I don't know. That is still really interesting because I am happy in my real life too. Like I
44 don't feel like I need that I am inhibited in any way shape or form.

45 I1:Remember it depends on how you test for these things. It is a methodology. There are
46 interesting things that play tricks with the brain. I have heard that when I guy is exposed to a
47 girl and asked to rate how attractive she is. He is better able to do it when she is not
48 ovulating. When she is ovulating he cant really pin down why he finds her to be more
49 attractive even though he doesn't know why.

50 I3:Even if that is true, like what application does it have. Go out more when you are
51 ovulating? I guess for the women that is on the hunt that has some use, but...

52 I1:I think what it really breaks down to when you are working on these papers all day long.
53 Eventually you just want to work on something sexual and these papers are ijust an excuse
54 to do that?

7.5.3 Video 3: Beer goggles works both ways. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b59qR510zWI>

1 I1: So mark I am a very guilty of wearing beer goggles from time to time. Have you tried
2 them on recently?

3 I2: Actually no, not recently, I haven't.

4 I1: I mean a lot of us have experience of the fact that we are at a bar and there is a guy there
5 and you know I barely even notice him, but after a few martinis, he starts looking a little bit
6 like Brad Pitt's cousin. So we are all familiar with this effect. What we are not as familiar
7 with and what we don't really know is how alcohol effects our own perceptions our own
8 attractiveness and that is what researchers at Ohio state university set out to do. They won a
9 prize for their work that suggests that we think we are hotter ourselves when we are a little
10 tipsy. They surveyed people at bars and found that the higher their blood alcohol level, the
11 hotter they thought they were. So it looks like beer goggles works both ways.

12 I2: So yea you're at a party and you know there is a very attractive women. She is above your
13 station, but you are a little bit tipsy, so you think hey man, I got it going on and I'm going to
14 go approach this girl. Sometimes it works.

15 I1: Sometimes you may approach women that are slightly out of your league. But the
16 researcher says that it is just an illusion in their minds, although people may think they
17 become more attractive when they become intoxicated, other sober people don't think that.
18 So that is the point right here, if that lady that is out of your league, isn't drinking she might
19 not think you are in her league, but if she has had a few drinks she might think you are. That
20 is a question we need to ask ourselves. So another thing professor bushman says of this
21 studies implications is if you become drunk and think that you are really attractive, it might
22 influence your thoughts and behaviours towards others. It illustrates that in human memory,
23 the link between alcohol and attractiveness is pretty strong. This link is so strong that when
24 they used a placebo with participants that had no alcohol. So these people thought they were
25 drinking alcohol but they actually weren't. They saw the same effect. They still thought they
26 were hotter. So it seems like there is a really strong connection psychologically between
27 alcohol and how we perceive ourselves as well as others.

28 I2: I know that when I am not drunk and somebody else is drunk they definitely become less
29 attractive to me. When they are getting all sloppy on me. Wha wha wha wha, then I am just
30 like get out of here.

31 I1: Yea it is weird being at a bar and not drinking because everybody else's behaviour is
32 being effected and you are not necessarily in that same pool. But I think it is really
33 fascinating to think about the implications here. So if you combine this research that says we
34 think we are hotter ourselves when drunk and the one saying we think other people are hotter,
35 it kind of explains why it is that otherwise perfect people become really aggressive at bars in
36 terms of hitting on you. Especially when you look at other types of research that argues that

37 people tend to be more aggressive when drinking alcohol. So I feel like all those aggressive
38 sexual advances could be slightly explained by this research.

39 I2: It loosens somebody's inhibitions. It also apparently raises somebody's self-esteem, so
40 there is an incentive for somebody to need to pound a couple before they hit the club.

41 I1: Yea exactly and umm. You know? I was thinking about how can I reap the benefits of
42 being able to hit on guys that are slightly out of my league?

43 I2: Nobodies out of your league.

44 I1: Ok, You are really sweet, but really right how do we reap some of these benefits that give
45 us a boost, get us less inhibited, but don't necessarily end us up like super drunk, slobbering
46 all over ourselves and slurring our speech. I was thinking we could get a friend to trick us and
47 maybe offer us placebo shots. But of course that is slightly impossible to do that. Another
48 idea I thought of is that maybe I should get on tinder with a few drinks and start rating
49 people. And saying yes or no to people and in that way we increase our pool. We say yes to
50 guys we may not have otherwise because we don't find them as attractive as without a few
51 drinks. And we might also say yes to people that are out of our league because we are
52 thinking we are hotter ourselves

7.5.4 Video 4: Proof that beer goggles exists -retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gmZG4w5T3WE>

1 I1: Researchers have found that “beer goggles” actually do exist. Now these are researchers
2 at the University of Bristol and they did a test where they had one group drink alcohol and
3 another group drink a non-alcoholic placebo. Then they showed the individuals different
4 images including men, women and also landscapes. What they found was that people who
5 were drinking were more likely to find the man attractive, or the women, or the landscape
6 more beautiful. So they are saying you know what the alcohol has a direct correlation to
7 whether or not you find certain things attractive. Which of course I think is common sense
8 and I am not surprised by this study, but it is interesting to have some science behind to back
9 up that notion. Now ben make your point

10 I2: I agree with you, I don’t think that we need a scientific study to determine the alcohol
11 might impair your judgement. We know that you don’t drive drunk, you’re not supposed to
12 come to work drunk, you’re not supposed to get drunk in front of your boss. This is why we
13 would suggest either that you shouldn’t doink drunk. Or maybe you should because maybe
14 it’s good that you sort of open yourself up. Maybe lowering your standards in regards to sex
15 isn’t always the worst thing in the world.

16 I1: Oh that is interesting, Jeremy what do you think?

17 I3: You know, I did my own research (laughs) for several years on this subject. I just didn’t
18 publish my findings and I wish I had got ahead of the curveball on this because there was one
19 time that I discovered. This is a new phenomenon which I wish that they would do research
20 on because I noticed this myself that there is self-beer goggles. You know you pre-drink
21 sometimes and I am at home. This is years ago that I did it. I was drinking and I was like
22 about to go out when I looked in the mirror and was like shit I look good. And then I was like
23 oh fuck this is like self-beer goggles because I properly don’t look very good right now.
24 Something is wrong and I am missing it because you know I am drunk already. So that study,
25 I want that study next.

26 I1: I think I agree with ben that lowering your standards is not necessarily always a terrible
27 thing, but what I love is the liquid courage that comes along with drinking. So you think you
28 are the best dancer at the club. You think you look the best. You have like the confidence to
29 go up to the hottest guy in some cases, when you otherwise wouldn’t have the courage to do
30 that. So yea I think that is actually a really great thing about alcohol.

31 I2: That is where the liquid courage is great, but it isn’t great when you get the super
32 confidence that you think you are the smartest person in the room.

33 I1: Oh, no that is the worst. You know like liquid courage also sucks when it passes into the
34 territory of I am going to puke in the dumpster next to the club because I can’t hold my
35 liquor. Have you ever gotten lucky because the person was wearing beer goggles?

36 I2: Well first of all, it is never luck. Umm no I don’t think so (laughs). I just don’t think so.

37 I3: I thought I was going to be the one to say that. I don't think so either. Only because I feel
38 like you would have to see it happen after words to be sure. So if you got lucky and you
39 never hear from the chick again then you should be like oh I don't think she likes me.

40 I2: To me that never happens. There is always some kind of effort. There have been people
41 who have like had enough of me, but it is generally not like right away. By the way, there
42 have been many people who have had enough of me, but yea it usually takes a while for me
43 to tear people down and then it takes them a while for them to get entirely sick of me. But yea
44 both things have actually always happened.

45 I1: I just to answer my own question, well look at me (Laughs). I am obviously kidding. I
46 actually don't know. I honestly haven't had very many hook ups. I am not just trying to be a
47 goodie-too-shoes here. Like I don't usually get drunk and have crazy sex.

48 I2: No guy is ever going to sleep with you and say what the hell did I just do?

49 I3: Have you ever been surprised at once you did get the guy and go mmm, I thought maybe
50 he was a little too good for me. Not because you had the sex, but just because he responded
51 correctly.

52 I1: Yes, 100% I have been surprised. So yea alright tell us what you guys think? Answer the
53 question because we want to know if you have had similar experiences and if you have had
54 the luck of another person drinking to the point where they have had sex with you and you
55 thought that maybe you didn't deserve it.

7.5.5 Video 5: National geographic-sex how it works? *Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pU4_nMATs88*

- 1 I1: How does the consumption of alcohol affect our behaviour?
- 2 I2: Once you consume alcohol, it has a global effect across the brain so it results in lowering
- 3 your inhibitions. You're more likely to engage in certain behaviours that you wouldn't
- 4 normally engage in.
- 5 I1: Does the consumption of alcohol mean that we will look at people more favourably when
- 6 it comes to attractiveness? Is there a grain of truth to that?
- 7 I2: Once you consume alcohol you expect to engage in more social behaviour, you expect to
- 8 be more relaxed, you expect to meet people. You start to perceive individuals as more
- 9 attractive and favourable than normal.

Appendix 7.6: Focus group transcripts

7.6.1 Focus group 1

- 1 I: Let me begin by stating that all the information used here is confidential in that your
2 identity will be kept private throughout the study. You also reserve the right to leave the
3 study at any time if you wish. So let's begin.
- 4 I: So what do you guys think is happening in the video that I just showed you?
- 5 Ron: Beer goggles? (laughs). Umm, he thought that she was more attractive than normal and
6 upon waking up in the morning he came to the realisation that she wasn't that hot. Like she
7 didn't look like she did the night before.
- 8 I: Do you think this is the typical picture of what happens when you are drunk with beer
9 goggles?
- 10 Edward: (Pause) .It all depends on how much you have been drinking?
- 11 Jess: I think alcohol impairs your judgment a little bit and then people seem more attractive
12 than normal. So, yea that is kind of it.
- 13 Edward: Your inhibitions are lowered too, so you more likely to act in ways that you
14 otherwise wouldn't.
- 15 Mike: I think that they still can see what the other person looks like, but they just don't care
16 as much. I think the video doesn't suit what usually happens because I think he would have
17 actually seen that she was huge and black, but he just wouldn't have cared that she was ugly.
- 18 Ron: What do you guys think about him dismissing his friend's judgements? When they
19 came up to him, they were like dude don't do this. And yea, he was like so sure of himself at
20 the time. We all have like some hazy idea of beer goggles existing so we would kind of take
21 your friends advice seriously after having a few drinks. What your friends say kind of helps
22 you?
- 23 Edward: You mean more so than what he did?
- 24 Ron: Yea.
- 25 Steven: I don't know it depends how many drinks you have had. It is very depended on how
26 intoxicated you are if you actually listen to your friends at the time.
- 27 Edward: Yea he looked pretty drunk hey. Like way more drunk than normal with the asshole
28 name written on his head. But yea, it is also a movie so it's pretty unrealistic and dramatized.
- 29 Larry: I do sometimes sort of get that when he got like super wasted and looked at himself in
30 the mirror and he was like I'm looking all cool and stuff (laughs). And he was all super
31 confident about things. And then he was saying these cool pickup lines, but in real life he was
32 just being stupid going ohh shit.

33 Mike: I agree with that.

34 I: Ok, so here is the part where you guys just tell me about some of your or other peoples
35 experiences around beer goggles. Just give as much detail as possible.

36 Steven: Umm, ok. I have a fairly funny story. I don't know if this really counts as beer
37 goggles, but it's kind of the same thing. Quite a while ago I walked into friars quite drunk and
38 I ended up hooking up with this chick, and I had absolutely no idea who she was, and then
39 yea we ended up dating, and we are still dating to this day like two years later. But yea, at the
40 beginning on that night, it was properly not somebody that I thought of or would of normally
41 gone for you know? I was like really blotto drunk. But yea after I started spending time with
42 her then I really enjoyed her company (pause). But yea I think that would be a beer goggles
43 story as I didn't like her on the night really at all.

44 Ron: It seems almost like the opposite of beer goggles.

45 Steven: Yes that is true (laughs).

46 Ron: Yea I was thinking like you often think about beer goggles as being drink. You hook up
47 with an ugly chick and then you regret it. But you can also have the opposite, like I have been
48 wondering about this. Like almost any relationship or movement where you kind of romantic
49 with a person, normally happens with alcohol at the beginning. Those kinds of movements
50 (pause). If you can call it that? Like I think very few people, unless they have dated as
51 Christians who don't drink at all possibly? Or just people who don't drink? I think they
52 would be the kind of people who don't date and stuff. I think we kind of find it awkward to
53 date and alcohol just helps out with making that initial move.

54 Steven: Well yea even if it's not dating, it has become a kind of cultural thing to drink a lot
55 because you have to be intoxicated to some degree before you can approach someone

56 Ron: Yea and it's also like if you go out for dinner and it's considered like a fancy date then
57 you have wine. If you take a chick out for dinner and you said do you want a cream soda then
58 it would be strange.

59 Larry: I don't really get the beer goggles thing because I generally black out and don't
60 remember anything (laughs). So yea even if something does happen then it is normally
61 something where I can't even remember having the thought to do bad things. But I do get that
62 confidence boost that that guy did have in the video. Like the whole tap tap lunge thing, I
63 have done that and I was drunk and it worked. I was like super smashed and that is just not
64 something I would ever do sober. I would never go to the library and try tap tap lunge. So yea
65 it's also kind of contextual, but I'm sure that it wouldn't have worked if I wasn't drunk or if
66 that chick was sober either (pause). I don't actually know if she was sober or not, but I am
67 assuming that she wasn't because it's a pretty weird thing to do if not.

68 Edward: Was it at friars because then it's alright?

69 Larry: No it was at prime (laughs). She properly wasn't sober.

70 I: Some people say that drinking a lot of alcohol decreases your decision making skills so that
71 you don't think about the consequences of your behaviour. You can't do like a normal
72 cost/benefit analysis of the situation. Does anyone get that?

73 Edward: I think everyone can't make proper decisions when they drunk as fuck. Like your
74 whole judgement capability is impaired so it's understandable that you behave in stupid
75 ways. Like there the logical side of your brain isn't functioning as it normally would. So any
76 judgements on the kind of actions you should take will be kind of hampered.

77 Steven: Yea with the consequences, you don't really consider them at all when you pass a
78 certain point of intoxication. Like for me it seems like a great idea to steal bar mats when I'm
79 completely trashed. Like a lot of stuff I try steal which is not something I would normally do
80 when I was sober because it is a stupid idea to be stealing someone property. When I am
81 completely trashed for some reason it seems like a great idea. I am banned from champs for a
82 very very long time because I was caught with a lot of bar mats wrapped around my legs and
83 under my jeans (laughs).

84 Ron: I think that is embarrassing because champ's is not really always that full. It is always
85 like 10 people.

86 Steven: It was like 2 people so yea it was embarrassing. You could kind of just notice that all
87 the bar stuff was missing and there is like one guy in the bathroom busy trying to hide them.

88 Edward: A digs mate of mine stole one of those nice smelling things out of the urinal
89 (laughs). We were chatting about it at dinner one night and like the next weekend he brought
90 some home in his back pocket.

91 I: So do you guys have anything like stupid decisions that relates to hooking up?

92 Jess: When I have had a lot to drink I just find everything funny so everything seems like a
93 good idea at the time. So yea I think it does relate to everything, like not just hooking up.

94 Larry: For me I think you get drunk and the consequences don't seem as big or whatever he
95 said. But when you actually do think about it in the long run they are not really that big when
96 you are sober. Like if you tried to get with a chick and she gave you bat then it's not really
97 that bad. When you are sober the next day consequences seem really intense, but when you
98 drunk you sort of know that it is just not that bad. Like if some chick gave me bat then I
99 would just go ohh ok, who gives a fuck and I would then go for that girl over there. I would
100 then just go for the second best. But yea, it does sort of do the thing where you think
101 dangerous behaviours are a good idea, like drunk driving. Then the consequences are huge
102 and that is really stupid.

103 Ed; I think almost any judgement call is more likely to be bad. If you were sober you would
104 maybe be like whoa, but when you are drunk almost any judgement call in regards anything
105 is like ok yea well let's try that. Let's do it. (Laughs), but not heroin I don't think.

106 Steven: Yea, like what Larry was saying. Women and men use drinking as an excuse. Like if
107 you tap tap lunge a girl in the library and she goes for it then other people may be like ohh
108 what a slut. If she does that if friars then nobody cares as then yea she was drunk.

109 Edward: Yea it depends on the setting as well.

110 Ron: Like the setting of the library is to read books and like friars to some extent (pause).
111 Many people might not outright say, but it is kind of assumed for some people that you go
112 there to meet people or do tap tap lunge. And whatever else like leave friars with someone
113 that you just met at friars.

114 Larry: But there is also that yea you can use it as an excuse if you get with an ugly chick or
115 whatever. I was drunk you know and that's a funny thing. If you get with an ugly chick when
116 you are sober people will be like ewww. And there is like that whole game with like hunt the
117 grunt and stuff where it's like a fun drunk thing to go for like the worst looking person in the
118 club. (Laughs). And that is acceptable when you are drunk and everyone has a good laugh
119 about it and everything the next day. But if you play hunt the grunt sober, people will be, like,
120 you have got problems (laughs).

121 Everyone laughs

122 I: (Pause) so I want to ask do you guys think there is ever like an element of control when
123 you that drunk?

124 Mike: I think when you are that drunk; you are just going for whatever is most appealing at
125 the moment. So yea there is not much control.

126 Steven: I don't know. I think I am always in control to some degree. It is my inhibitions that
127 are lowered by alcohol, like right now if I find the guy next to me incredibly sexy I am not
128 going to do anything because I feel strange that there are people watching me. (Laughs) sorry
129 this is a bit weird, but yea after a few drinks I still want them and I think ah well there are
130 people watching me, but I really don't care so let me go for it.

131 Edward: It depends on the person as well in terms of how controlled they are. Some people
132 lose all sense of everything. Living with seven digs mates last year you see like a nice picture
133 of how well everyone handles their booze.

134 Larry: I get blackout drunk and there is no control with that (laughs). Yea, and another guy I
135 live with gets blackout drunk sometimes.

136 Everyone laughs

137 Ron: What to do you think about maybe. Like we think its beer goggles right. Like when we
138 go out to friars it happens to be at a time where like the main focus of friars is to look good
139 and possibly meet people. It is a time when girls and guys dress their finest. Girls put on
140 makeup. The like hood of making out. Everything is already enhanced for things to look
141 better even without you being drunk already. In the bright lights of the morning where the
142 make-up is faded and the clothing is off that would normally hide what else is beneath their.

143 You might not be as stoked with life then. And that feeling combined with a hangover from
144 the alcohol makes you think that it was something like the alcohol, but really it's just the way
145 of the night with you been misguided.

146 Edward: So it's like the optimum setting and that you are a little bit boozed. That makes
147 people find themselves in these situations.

148 Ron: (Pause). It's the bright lights and the fact that the make-up is off in the morning.

149 I: Umm so what do you guys think are maybe some possible consequences of beer goggles?

150 Ron: Aids (laughs)

151 Edward: that would be the worst case scenario.

152 Everyone laughs

153 Jess: Pregnancy

154 I: What do you think?

155 Alex: Umm, yea I think pregnancy is an issue. Just in general?

156 Ron: What do you think where the lines lies with this random girl that you have supposedly
157 had beer goggles with? If she falls pregnant like do you take responsibility?

158 Larry: But yea that is just a general getting drunk thing that people get pregnant not
159 necessarily a consequence of beer goggles? You could still get a chick that you find super
160 attractive but then again I guess it might be beer goggles in her eyes.

161 Jess: but if your inhibitions are so impaired that you don't even recognise that you know the
162 person looks different to you guys the next day, then hooking up with would be impaired in
163 general. You would do these bad behaviours and that would be a part of beer goggles.

164 Larry: There was a line from Louie C.K where he said he woke up next to some chick and he
165 could see the absolute grief in her face going what the fuck did I do? He said that he sort of
166 was that chick's rock bottom. (Pause) He said that just felt really bad for him so like he just
167 stopped going for better looking women because of that situation.

168 Edward: The reverse beer goggles effect.

169 Larry: I guess it could also be used as something to help people who look like certain ugly
170 people that I know get with chicks. It kind of levels the playing field in a way by a couple of
171 rating points.

172 Ron: Like I will buy chicks drink and think like yes, I am now more in her league with every
173 drink. Does anyone think that a girl has ever got with you because she thought you were more
174 attractive than normal? Like in the morning the person was like, oh shit what have a done.
175 Like that guy that Louie C.K?

176 Steven: No I don't think so.

177 Larry: I am too good looking to get beer goggled myself (laughs)

178 Ron: Like in the morning you go and try exchange numbers and she is like no I am out of
179 here. This was a mistake. Oh God.

180 Larry: I was thinking on the whole thing about the setting being an influence with make-up
181 and stuff. There is also more to that. When you go out it's a bit like a game almost or like
182 your cool if you get with chicks. Like in residents when you come back home and it's one of
183 the first few questions of the night. Like how was your night? It was good. Did you get
184 lucky? So there is that sort of pressure or expectation that you have to sort of try get in there.
185 There is like that whole thing with the (pause). When the night is starting to end then people
186 start getting more frisky and looking more partners because the night has been going and they
187 haven't got anywhere yet and that's just bad.

188 Ron: The main thing when you're looking for partners is to get sex right? If you can assume
189 that? So once you have fucked, then you don't have that desire anymore. I don't know, it is
190 anecdotal evidence, but I have heard it from numerous oles that like after you have fucked.
191 Maybe it's just from a guy's perspective, but after your coitus experience, your attraction
192 maybe diminishes for that person. You have kind of got the goods and now it's over, so time
193 to run away. So it's maybe something to that extent instead of just the effects of alcohol. I
194 don't know. What do you guys think? Did you understand what I am trying to say?

195 Larry: Yea

196 Jamie: So basically, you're saying beer goggles is like this counter effect to relationships?

197 Ron: (Pause) Ah, no. I don't think I am saying that. Like you want to have sex with the chick
198 and then you have had sex with her whilst you were drinking at the time and in the morning
199 you going to be not attracted to her anyway because you have fucked. I think pre-sex your
200 attraction is high.

201 Edward: I guess again it also depends on the girl.

202 Ron: Post orgasm.

203 Larry: I think what Ron means that it is not necessary that alcohol is having the effect of
204 feeling bad about the next day; it's the post-orgasm of you already getting what you wanted.

205 Jess: Yea, post-orgasm

206 Ron: You got your good, now you are satisfied. Wham bam see you next week.

207 Everyone laughs

208 Larry: What about when you just make out with the person then?

209 Jamie: It would be the same, just post-make out effect then.

210 Ron: Yea, you have just got your smaller present now.

211 I: Umm, so what do you guys think of the pictures and the video that I just showed you.

212 Ron: Those pictures were naughty.

213 Everyone laughs

214 Jess: I don't know. I think we all kind of laugh at them, but there are a lot of deeper issues
215 with statements like those that are not funny. But yea it's like a cultural norm; more
216 unattractive people go out and expect that only drunk guys will hook up with them. So yea I
217 think you laugh about it, but like deep down, you are actually lowering yourself by
218 associating with that kind of thinking.

219 Jamie: You can't really answer why they are funny.

220 Ed: Well one was a meme so that's why it was funny.

221 I: Well, ok. Do you think they portray like some element of truth?

222 Jamie: I said, it's properly funny because it's true.

223 Ron: There were a lot of assumptions stating what our assumptions of beauty are as that just
224 portrays it as visual beauty. It like takes the average of what everyone ugly person is. It like
225 says oh this chick is too fat. Like obviously you are not going to get a guy because you are a
226 fatty, meanwhile maybe there is like a guy that will like her for who she is. But now our like
227 cultural assumption portrayed in these images dictate that she is supposedly ugly when this is
228 not necessarily the case in every way.

229 I: Ok, so what do you guys think are like the usual rules for selecting a partner when you are
230 sober?

231 Mike: That they are not fat.

232 Larry: I think when you are sober the process is a lot slower so you actually get to know the
233 person and stuff. Umm, whereas if you get drunk in a nightclub it's like lets bang in a couple
234 of hours. You meet someone for a short time and it's loud. So naturally you're focused on
235 their looks as that is the first impression.

236 Edward: Yea, when you are drunk, it's more like physical. It is more mind orientated.

237 Jess: But I think when you sober you would go for someone who is more attractive than when
238 you are drunk, as you wouldn't be able to see properly. You wouldn't just go out with some
239 ugly person when you sober (pause). They have to be attractive first before you would go
240 through all that effort.

241 Larry: When you are sober, you find out who that person is and you match on other levels.
242 You don't necessarily go for the most physically attractive girl as they might just be a bitch.

243 When you are drunk you just want to go for something that is really hot. You know I am like
244 a squirrel; I just want to bust a nut when I'm smashed.

245 Jess: But you still need an initial attraction to someone when you're sober to sort of make the
246 effort to get to know them.

247 Larry: I generally find that if I start liking the chick then she gets more attractive.

248 Ron: Aww.

249 Everyone laughs

250 Larry: Like if the chick sort of matches your personality type thing, then you start to see past
251 your ugliness. I don't know.

252 I: How do you think drinking disrupt or violates these normal rules of dating?

253 Larry: The process is a lot faster. Also when you're sober you are able to make a bond and
254 focus on other qualities more. Whereas when you are drunk, it's like you want something
255 different entirely.

256 Mike: Umm, when you are drunk you just don't care. It's your first impression that counts. It
257 is just about what you see that really matters. You don't really bother or have the time to find
258 out much more.

259 Edward: But like when you drunk, you are like also more chatty so you can have like a really
260 good like connection with the person. You know like physical and stuff? I think that it is hard
261 to say that it is always going to be less physical and more even balanced when you are sober;
262 whereas when you are drunk it's mainly going to be psychical. It's not always the case.

263 Larry: I know a lot of people who have got drunk with girls and they don't even know their
264 names. So yea.

265 Ron: Do you think that they knew their names at the time?

266 Edward: They don't even know their own names.

267 Everyone laughs.

268 Larry: Also she didn't know my name. She called me Clive.

269 Ron: What did you call her?

270 Larry: It was just awkward, I don't even really remember. That was a really weird one
271 though. I think that that chick had something strange going on in her brain because there was
272 like four words that were said that night that led up to that. She sort of just slotted in between
273 me and she was like do you want to make out? I was like no. So she said do you want go to
274 my place and then I was like ok (pause). That was that whole thing.

275 Ron: Where? Why do you think she said that though? Why do you think she said that though
276 and why were you more willing to go back to her place?

277 Larry: Because it was a better deal (laughs).

278 Ron: Naturally the deal was good. You should have just followed the progression and made
279 out and then go to hers.

280 Steven: He was thinking. He was thinking that if he says yes then she might want to make out
281 and that was it. But if he held out then she might want to go for like you know? The full
282 thing.

283 Larry: I was playing hard to get.

284 Ron: You didn't want to be judged because you know you were at a club and whatever. You
285 were like oh shit these guys are going to see me making out with her so I must take her home
286 and run.

287 Everyone laughs.

288 Ron: Did you go back to her place or your place?

289 Larry: No we went back to my place.

290 Edward: So she invited you back to your place.

291 Ron: In the morning, was it embarrassing?

292 Larry: No the morning was really strange because I forgot that any of this had happened. I
293 was like really drunk. And then I was sort of hanging off the bed and I was trying to like push
294 myself back to the middle of the bed and there was like something there. I was like ohh shit.
295 So yea that is what happened.

296 Ron: Was it any way relatable to that first video we watched?

297 Larry: A little bit yea, it is not someone that I would usually get with so yea I think beer
298 goggles were definitely involved.

299 Ron: Do you remember her being the same the night before as she was in the morning? I
300 think it is already answered by the fact that you wanted to rush her home. You wanted to
301 smash undercover. You were aware. You knew she was ugly.

302 Larry: But yea there was still more stuff that happened in the morning that made me think
303 worse of her. I don't know.

304 Ron: So in the public of your own home where nobody can see it then its fine, but here it's
305 not.

306 Larry: I would say it's both. It is both. Ok let's go to another story as it just awkward for me
307 (laughs).

308 I: Umm, ok. So I was trying to get a lot of pictures for beer goggles. A lot of them were about
309 the chick being gazed at by the man. They were also very degrading to towards women. So
310 what to you guys think? Do you think beer goggles is a man thing?

311 Jess: I don't know I think that maybe guys have more of a desire to go and hook up than
312 girls. Like that that is the prize at the end of the night. But I think most girls definitely find
313 people attractive after they have had drunk a little bit. I remember when I was little someone
314 gave my mother a key ring that said drink till he is cute. I didn't really understand it so she
315 explained that if you drink enough then anyone is cute. So I don't know, I think it definitely
316 can go both ways.

317 Steven: What I personally feel is that women (pause). It is sort of is a masculine thing to sort
318 of brag about it the next day. It gives you power. It makes you more powerful than the next
319 man. Whereas, women are different because of hormones. They don't have that same
320 pressure on them. They don't brag about it. They might talk about it with their close friends.
321 Whereas with guys I will go to people I have never met and say that last night I banged this
322 really hot chick. This guy is inferior to me. Yea, maybe that has something to do with the
323 way that each sex deals with their beer goggles experiences.

324 Ron: I also heard of a thing with one of our economics lecturers. I don't know if you guys
325 know of him? He was telling us in an econometrics lecture that guys tend to over play their
326 sexual experiences; whereas girls tend to underplay it. So say that I have slept with like five
327 people; I will do a bit of fiddling around and say that I have slept with eight. Whereas a girl
328 even though she has slept with five people will only tell others she has slept with three. She
329 won't count some.

330 Edward: It makes sense though because in like modern day like slut shaming. It is just how
331 society views those things at this time.

332 Ron: So maybe guys are more open to the phenomenon and open to use it as an excuse to do
333 these kinds of behaviours and be around ugly girls.

334 I: Does everyone agree with he just said?

335 Everyone: Yes

336 Ron: Maybe you could tell us maybe what the approach around beer goggles is for girls? Like
337 what happens the morning after?

338 Jess: Umm, I don't really drink that much so I am not like the best person to talk to.

339 Ron: Well like with your friends?

340 Jess: Yea I don't know? I think also girls a lot of it is like feeling lonely when you are out and
341 stuff and I think that alcohol just makes that worse. Then you see other couples together and
342 stuff. So yea I think that could be a lot of incentive to maybe hook up with someone who is
343 not your usual type or is lower than you.

344 Ron: So like if a friend of yours had beer goggles experiences with a guy that she is above his
345 league like what's your maybe chat like? I am guessing you would be kind of like adverse to
346 it. You would generally stick up for your friends and they would push for it. But maybe the
347 next morning it would be funny to hear the conversation.

348 Jess: Yea, this is going to sound horrible. But what happens a lot with girls is like a guy
349 usually comes behind them when they are dancing and stuff. So a lot of the time a girl will
350 ask her friend like is he hot you know? So yea I think you get a lot of confirmation there.

351 Ron: Yea that is customary in the states. That is like how they dance. Like straight up, like
352 everyone. You go to a club and girls will come grind you. They grind for days.

353 Alex: That is so siff.

354 Ron: Yea they grind for days. Like you will see a guy standing and a girl like that bent up
355 against him. Yea like she is like against the wall in a club.

356 Everyone laughs.

357 Ron: That is like the considered like the standard club, in Kentucky at least. Even he got
358 grounded. He sat up straight and they like directed their bums towards you.

359 Alex: It was very awkward.

360 Larry: I actually heard of a story today where some chick got quite pissed and umm she woke
361 up in like graham hotel with some like old dude. Like an old man type of thing, she woke up
362 with in a hotel (laughs). And umm like, apparently she felt she shit. But like, it wasn't her
363 who told me the story. She told her friend and her friend told me because I told her that I was
364 coming to this thing. So yea I think it does happen with chicks as well.

365 Ron: Do you think that she thought that he was younger and then perhaps more attractive?

366 Larry: Maybe he got her like really wasted.

367 I: So what do you think about the way that these pictures construct gender? As in are they all
368 quite degrading towards women by reinforcing a certain standard of attractiveness?

369 Steven: I don't think they are intentionally degrading women. It is just that men are in fact
370 more willing to brag about it more than women do. Women are less open and feel shy about
371 their experiences. They don't want to admit it. Exactly as was claimed earlier. Men want to
372 claim that they have slept around far more than they actually have regardless of whether they
373 were ugly or not. Where women would underplay how much they have slept around.

374 Jess: I think it definitely makes it seem like you can only hook up with them if they attractive.
375 Like especially women. Like you know? Like the whole thing with hunt the grunt and
376 everything. Like why is it actually embarrassing to hook up with someone who is not
377 physically attractive?

378 Edward: These images like are placing physical beauty above everything else almost.

379 Larry: It did show very clear how this was ugly and this was good looking.

380 Ron: Most club scenes it is very much like loud music and everyone is dressed up and
381 hunting on the dance floor.

382 Steven: Yea like you are not really going to go and chat to the girl and attempt to connect on
383 an emotional level.

384 Jess: Yea.

385 Ron: Yea like an existential discussion on something. I don't know.

386 Jess: Yea it is true like if as a girl you can't really be offended comes up to you in a club like
387 friars or hit on your bum or something like that because like that is what happens in those
388 places. So yea I don't know.

389 Ron: It's like going to a strip club and asking for a chat, or a glass or milk.

390 Everyone laughs.

391 I: What is your opinion of the mistake video that we just watched? What do you think about
392 it?

393 Mike: Well by the looks of it she didn't have beer goggles. She didn't care at that point. In
394 the flash back the guy looked horrible I suppose, to her. When they flashbaked he still
395 looked exactly the same as he did in the morning. So he she just lost her inhibitions not her
396 vision.

397 Steven: It is pretty much the same as the first video we watched pretty much.

398 I: So what do you oaks think is the general opinion regarding these kinds of behaviours?
399 From the rest of society in general?

400 Steven: If I was her I would run away very quickly.

401 Edward: Like society's views. Like obviously it is frowned upon generally, especially the
402 way that it was framed in the video with like the haunting music. With the flashbacks and the
403 bottles lying everywhere in a dirty room.

404 Ron: Do you think it is fine from society's perspective if a chick or a guy is attractive and
405 you take them home? Is it just the main thing that societies is deeming unattractive that the
406 person is ugly or is the other factors like dodgy behaviour?

407 Edward: I think if they had replaced the dude with an attractive guy, it would have still been
408 like a little bit unnerving in that video because of the way that they framed it.

409 Jess: They properly wouldn't have used that kind of music and those flashbacks if it was an
410 attractive guy though.

411 Edward: No, definitely not because they are obviously over-emphasizing the fact that he was
412 fat.

413 Steven: Yea, but if it was an attractive guy society would have perceived it as totally
414 different. Everyone would assume that he was unattractive if you had regret. You are talking
415 about societies norms that repress you in some way.

416 I: Do you think there is like certain places where beer goggles would be less or more frowned
417 upon.

418 Ron: Russia (laughs). Literally because of the vodka rate and the men to women ratio is
419 apparently skewed in Russia. So you would have like a supply and demand difference.
420 Women being more in the supply and men being high in demand.

421 Larry: I think that it is not so frowned upon this society. I think pretty much everyone has had
422 a sort of beer goggles moment at Rhodes.

423 Edward: Yea I think it depends on the age as well. Like if you are at university then it's going
424 to happen. It is kind of expected to a certain extent. It is going to happen a couple times at
425 least.

426 Larry: Everyone has to give back to charity.

427 Ron: What is that sort of exacerbating factor? Umm yea that if beer goggles was seen as bad
428 you wouldn't say it was beer goggles. Whereas in the morning after you use it as a non-
429 aggravating. What is the opposite of aggravating. You use it as a mitigating factor. You are
430 like oh no I did that because I thought she was attractive. So if beer goggles was really
431 shunned upon, we wouldn't use it. We kind of tempted and want to use it as a rational in this
432 context.

433 Edward: Beer goggles is like a card that gets you things.

434 I: Are there any more places where you think beer goggles is normal?

435 Steven: Alcoholic anonymous.

436 I: Where is it the usual?

437 Steven: University really or wherever young people congregate. Because where there is
438 young people and a lot of drinking then it is going to happen. Like even a mate of mine was
439 telling me about a camp that he went on and he ended up umm (pause).

440 Edward: Kissing a fish?

441 Everyone laughs

442 Steven: No, they ended up having a few beers and half of them ended up hooking up with
443 each other. Wherever young people go, it is going to happen.

444 Edward: That is awkward (laughs).

445 Jess: It is quite crazy. Like in this video, like the worst thing is that they have had sex with
446 someone who is not attractive. Whereas, nobody is embarrassed that they are having
447 unprotected sex and just hooking up with random people. They are making it seem like the
448 absolute worst thing is hooking up with an ugly person, whereas there are actually other
449 factors.

450 I: Are there any places where it is abnormal?

451 Edward: Old age homes because they can't get drunk off rooibos? It's common in a place
452 where alcohol is readily available

453 Jess: I think maybe as you get older its more frowned upon.

454 Alex: I think as you get older it's less frequent, but you wouldn't care as you place less value
455 on looks and more on personality. Actual beer goggles is more relevant to younger society.

456 I: Does everyone agree?

457 Steven: I don't know. I disagree. I think it is more acceptable when you are younger. When
458 you get older and most people are forty, everyone is married. If you get drunk and hook up
459 with a weirdo then it is kind of like, well you're an adult you should kind of act your age.
460 You know when you are young you get to get drunk and hook up with a stranger. You know?
461 It is kind of ha-ha its funny.

462 Edward: But, like that type of behaviour is still frowned upon in general.

463 Courtney: It is, but I think when you are older you are kind of expected to not be going out
464 and getting so pissed anymore. I don't know.

465 Ron: Contrary to that, when you get older your wife and you don't look all that attractive so
466 you think alcohol would almost have become a pre-requisite to fornicate later. It's like shit
467 man, I can't do it without alcohol.

468 Everyone laughs.

469 I: Do you think alcohol related behaviours are in some way expected in any situations when
470 you go out? Does that make sense?

471 Edward: I know what you mean like there is like a social pressure to go and do that? It is like
472 we were chatting about earlier though. It is definitely the setting. Like, with the example of
473 the library that is low key. Like, when you are out it is expected. It is high energy, people are
474 having fun. Even if there was no alcohol involved; everybody's energy levels are high. If you
475 throw alcohol in the mix then it gets worse.

476 Ron: And if somebody is making out at the library you would be like what the fuck. Whereas
477 like in friars, it is not like you give a second stare or even care. It would be like quite a stir
478 up.

479 Jess: Yea I agree. I also think like the people you associate yourself with are like a large
480 determinant of how you are going to act and stuff when you go out. If you are with a bunch
481 of guys and that is your motive for going out then that is how you are going to act. Whereas if
482 you are just going out with very chilled people for a drink then you know that would be a
483 different thing even though alcohol is involved in each of them. So I think the people that you
484 are with are important.

485 Larry: I have noticed that like after a rough week of work here, I think like yea, I want to go
486 do something really stupid.

487 Everyone laughs

488 Edward: After a rough week of research hey.

489 I: Ok this is where I tell you a couple of stories. There was another story about a mate of
490 mine who went to a twenty first in Cape Town. And he ended up (pause). They were staying
491 at the parents' house after like Tiger Tiger and all that kind of stuff. And he ended up having
492 sex in an outdoor shower. But what he didn't realise was that for one the girl was ugly and for
493 second the outdoor shower was in front of the parent's room and that had a glass door. So
494 what happened was the father came out and was like you know there is scarce water why are
495 you taking a shower now. Then he got really embarrassed because he realised they were
496 getting it on right in front of their room. Everyone proceeded to mock him about that for
497 ages. He got called names and all that kind of stuff. What do you guys think about those
498 kinds of reactions to drunken behaviour? Do you think they are normal or acceptable?

499 Steven: Yes, most dining hall conversations all go exactly like that.

500 Larry: It is not malicious though. Like they will call you names, but it will be like a jokey
501 joke sort of vibe.

502 Steven: Yea you are right like it would almost be encouraging towards the end.

503 Larry: It is almost like a title or like a badge.

504 Jess: It reinforces the beer goggles. You know? Like you said, it is encouraging.

505 Larry: It is almost like you are famous for it. You know? Like everyone is calling you that
506 name and then like some random chick is like you know I want that.

507 Ron: You don't think that it is maybe like a sort of comforting kind of remark. It is like oh
508 you have had beer goggles? Well, everyone has had it. You are alright. You will get better.

509 Jamie: Well, maybe people use beer goggles as like an excuse for their behaviour and they
510 actually would do it anyway. Like they would normally do that, but suddenly their friends are
511 mocking them so they say that it was beer goggles.

512 Edward: It could become like a placebo thing. They could like trick themselves into thinking
513 that they had beer goggles to get rid of pain.

514 I: So do you think this mocking kind of jovial attitude to beer goggles is like a regular feature
515 amongst just guys? Or is it just girls?

516 Jess: I don't know. I am not really in the kind of friendship circles that would like mock
517 someone for that. Yea, you can definitely hear of girls being like yea she hooked up with
518 such an ugly guy last night. You know? And they laugh about it. It definitely exists both
519 ways. You can't just assume that it is just guys that mock each other.

520 Edward: Guys will obviously be like more open and in your face about it. There is no like
521 telling the whole dining hall with girls. It would be like more low key, just telling their
522 friends.

523 I: Do you think it is still friendly amongst girls?

524 Larry: I think so yes.

525 Jess: To their face it is friendly, but maybe to other people it is not. A bit judgemental.

526 Ron: What do you think the value compares? Do girls devalue their friends, whereas guys
527 kind of almost find pride in his beer goggles almost? They value him higher for it.

528 Alex: I think it can be more intense with guys, as guys will joke about it, whereas girls may
529 take it far more seriously.

530 Ron: Do you think it can be destructive towards a female's ego? Like the next day her friends
531 are all like what the fuck. You're not cool. I don't want to be friends with you anymore. You
532 have had beer goggles and that shouldn't happen.

533 James: I think that could kind of be the case.

534 Jess: I think they would be slightly more judgemental.

535 Edward: Yea I think it may hit a girl on like a deeper level than it would do for a guy.

536 Ron: Other guys may talk about it behind their back. But it would be like laughing about it
537 behind someone's back. Girls would be what's the word like bad?

538 Steven: Belittle?

539 Ron: Demeaning. Yea.

540 I: Do you think popular opinion would affect your behaviour whilst drunk?

541 Alex: I think it would make you more relaxed but it doesn't always mean that you are not
542 going to do anything. Like if you are in a situation like a club where people are around you
543 and the mentality is like to hook up. Then you would be more relaxed about it. But it doesn't
544 mean that the underlying psychology is that you are not going to do it anyway.

545 Jess: I think that if you are kind of with people who find it shameful, you would be less likely
546 to do that behaviour. I think a lot of our behaviour is from reinforcement. If you are with

547 people who are going to reinforce that behaviour then you are going to do it again. If people
548 judge you for that behaviour then you are not going to do it again. So yea that is my opinion.

549 Larry: I couldn't really give a shit what people think. If they were stranger, then I wouldn't
550 really care. But I guess if it was when a bunch of my mates were around and I knew what I
551 was doing was a bad idea and I still would properly. And I was going to do it anyways. I
552 would properly drag them into the corner or something where it was out of sight.

553 Ron: Put a bag over her head (laughs).

554 Larry: Must I tell a story where I got beer goggled? I was at a twenty first with the chick that
555 gave me the scar on my butt.

556 Everyone laughs.

557 Larry: It was actually kind of bad because it was the twenty first. The dudes twenty first and
558 then yea I got with his sister. We were like the last two that were awake at the time. And I
559 was really bombed. We like made out a bit and then she went in and got like blankets and
560 pillows and crap. And then took me by the hand and then dragged me to the back of the house
561 in the garden. Then we slept there. So I think that was also like getting me out of sight in a
562 way. I don't know if that was it or she just wanted to sleep under the stars to make it more
563 romantic. I think she got the beer goggles. This was weird because if people woke up in the
564 morning they would see us in the garden and they would definitely know. Which is kind of
565 what happened.

566 Ron: The thing is also that when you want to get naughty or freaky dicky, you are going to
567 get out of sight naturally. Unless you are some crazy oak and get it on in friars.

568 Larry: But it was her house so.....

569 Ed: Yea, like anal probes and stuff (laughs).

570 Ron: Credence in De beers. I don't know if beer goggles were implicated in that. But that oke
571 would get freaky dicky with chicks and the whole hall would hear it.

572 Steven: But the thing is that that kind of again ties in the male ego. It is kind of a badge of
573 honour that you got a woman to scream in front of the rest of us. Whereas for women it is not
574 the same case. That is why girls tend to go guys residents to hook up because they don't want
575 their female friends to know that they are hooking up. They don't want to be perceived as a
576 slut.

577 Larry: Because they made the guy scream?

578 Everyone laughs.

7.6.2 Focus group 2

- 1 I: Let me begin by stating that all the information used here is confidential in that your
2 identity will be kept private throughout the study. You also reserve the right to leave the
3 study at any time if you wish. So let's begin.
- 4 I: So what do you guys think is happening in that video we just watched?
- 5 Kurt: Sex.
- 6 Ben: He is pretty much just getting really fucked up.
- 7 Will: Ya, he is drinking and then his judgement becomes impaired because he is so fucked.
- 8 David: And he thinks he is a lot smoother than he actually is.
- 9 Kurt: Yea.
- 10 Steve: It is a loss of mind bru.
- 11 Jack: He just wants a slap and a tickle.
- 12 James: Well, she actually thought she was smoother than she actually was.
- 13 Kurt: Or did she?
- 14 James: Well, she did because she was like slap and tickle which is very silly and stuff. And
15 then when she did it in reality it was actually really bad.
- 16 I: Um, so do you guys think that this is the typical representation of what happens under beer
17 goggles?
- 18 David: It is an exaggeration of it, I guess.
- 19 Kurt: I think (pause). Umm, when I think of beer goggles, it is more like when I get drunk
20 and I go for an ugly chick. But yea (pause). I don't really think of myself as smooth. It is just
21 like I see chicks that maybe are not hot.
- 22 Will: Precisely.
- 23 Kurt: I don't really think that I am smooth. I just know that I am fucking wasted. Everyone
24 just looks fucking ten out of ten.
- 25 I: Does anyone think differently from that?
- 26 Will: I don't know. I think booze does give you a lot of confidence. You do feel a lot more
27 confident than when you are sober.
- 28 David: Ya.
- 29 Steve: Yea.

30 Jack: Then again sometimes I just don't care. You can see in that scene when he is looking at
31 himself in the mirror. When you see yourself in that situation, you don't see yourself in as
32 hotter. You think fuck man. Do you look ready bro; trying to make yourself look better?

33 Ben: Yea the bathroom is where you realise how drunk you are.

34 I: So you are saying that you don't feel more confident?

35 (Inaudible).

36 Jack: It is more of an: I don't care sort of thing with me.

37 Steve: It is pretty much loss of aversion hey. Things that you would look at and usually not
38 do you don't have the ability to not do anymore because you are so drunk.

39 I: Umm, this is the part where I get you guys to tell me about some of your experiences or
40 others that you know of. I am guessing you have something to say.

41 (Pause).

42 Steve: Yea, kick us off man.

43 Kurt: Well, yea. I was in friars last night and their where like a lot of fine hunnies that
44 probably are not that fine in real life. I don't know? I didn't hook up last night so I can't tell
45 you an exact story.

46 I: Do you have one from anyone else or from a past experience?

47 Will: Ya, no look I have hooked up with some girls that I would not when I was sober.

48 David: Ya, everyone has really.

49 Will: Yea, it just makes her look a little bit prettier and it makes you not care at all. And yea
50 your inhibitions just go I guess. That is the main reason for me. I guess.

51 Ben: Yea, it is that time when you just think like what the fuck. I will just do whatever.

52 David; I think that you know exactly what they look like regardless of how drunk you are.

53 Kurt: No, I don't think so.

54 (Inaudible).

55 Kurt: Well, what I have heard about beer goggles and we were actually speaking about this
56 the other day. People say that your inhibitions go away or whatever. I have read something
57 that it is more actually about how you see someone's face. Like umm, I read this thing that
58 said that when you are drunk then you have something. You can't discern the symmetry.

59 Steve: I read the same thing like two days ago.

60 Kurt: You can't discern symmetry, so when you look at someone's face and that you are
61 drunk, their face looks more symmetrical. Like symmetry in the human brain. Like
62 somewhere in there is like linked to beauty.

63 Steve: Yea, I read the same thing. Like two days ago on twitter. It ruins your ability to
64 observe the symmetry in someone's face that is so important.

65 James: So everyone looks pretty.

66 Kurt: You know what they look like, but you can't like gage it as well. So yea, that is like my
67 thing. I don't know.

68 I: I like that you okes know these things? Does anyone have like an actual experience that
69 they want to explain? You can talk about anyone.

70 Will: This is all private right. Like this is just for your study right.

71 Kurt: (laugh).

72 I: Yea there are not even any correct names in it like I said.

73 Will: Last year, Tri-Var, I hooked up with a chick that I definitely would not hook up with
74 sober.

75 Ben: And she was a bad person.

76 Will: Yea, and she is a horrible person, but I just didn't care.

77 I: Well, explain like the night if you could?

78 Will: Umm, Yoh. Ok. Sure. I was very fucked. I remember walking around on my own. You
79 know sort of just trolling around Grahamstown. It was Tri-Var so everyone was going
80 fucking HAM (laughs). Umm, yea, actually I walked back into friars because I needed to
81 chunder. There were too many people in the streets that I couldn't chunder outside of friars.

82 Kurt: What?

83 Will: I walked back in and I didn't even make it to the bathroom. I chundered like fucking
84 half way through the dance floor.

85 (Everyone groans).

86 Will: Yea bro, then I was like (pause).

87 Kurt: You were just like fucked it bro.

88 Will: Yea. I had basically just chundered on myself. So I thought I am not going to get
89 anything better than this. So yea I hooked up with her and after that while walking elsewhere.

90 I: What happened the next morning?

91 Will: Yea, I took her home.

92 Kurt: What a nice guy.

93 Will: No I drove her, so it was very chilled.

94 (Everyone laughs).

95 I: Does anyone else have any similar or different experiences that they would like to share?

96 David: I think we have all got like one story where we have liked hooked up with someone
97 that you didn't want to.

98 Steve: I did quite a bad one in Tiger Tiger in Fourways, that wasn't my proudest moment.
99 Umm, she took my number and then I saw a picture the next day on Facebook and I was like
100 fuck it man. It was a fucking disaster. But it was only a kiss.

101 Kurt: The worst one for me was probably like in Matric. No, it was younger than that. It was
102 like grade eleven. It was actually the first time that I had gone beyond actually making out a
103 chick. It was like my first like sexual encounter and it was so fucked up. It was so fucked up
104 because like this chick who was at my school was always like had this thing for me. And like,
105 we were at this lumo party as you do in high school. And umm, we were all jamming and shit
106 and like she cornered me and then took me to her car. Dude she was like why don't you come
107 home with me and stuff like that. I was like that is not a good idea. So yea I was able to
108 control that, but the stuff in the car I wasn't.

109 Ben: Yea, there does seem to be like a line where things happen. You don't really mind if you
110 are just making out with her. But anything more there is something in your mind that just
111 helps you go out and stop sex.

112 Steve: Ya.

113 Kurt: Dude? But still the next day even if you just make out with a chick. Likes that with beer
114 goggles on then I don't feel happy.

115 Ben: No, me neither.

116 Will: No, you never feel good about it, but I can see the comedy in it sometimes. Like, it's
117 not so bad. What does it matter that you got some subpar chick? Who even really says that
118 she is actually subpar? It is just that she is not attractive to you.

119 Kurt: Ya, it is kind of like whatever because if you are both at friars, you are both going there
120 for the same shit.

121 Will: Ya, exactly.

122 Ben: I just go to friars to dance.

123 Kurt: (laughs).

124 Jack: I know a mates story. I was there when it happened. I won't mention his name. He was
125 quite hammered and yea we were dancing like, when Union was still cool.

126 Ben: Yoh, you are old man.

127 (Everyone laughs).

128 Jack: And umm, yea, so this girl comes to him. We can see that this girl is not good looking.
129 She is disproportionate (laughs) and just ugly. And yea he is dancing with her and we are like
130 telling him like hey stop! Don't get involved man. He lunges her. He can't see her face
131 because he is so drunk. Then we finally get him away from the kisser and we pull him away.
132 And then he saw it and his face went blood red because he realised what he had just done. It
133 was so funny.

134 Steve: Yea that shows like the important issue of like mate intervention. You have like a
135 definite duty to help them out.

136 Ben: Yea, definite.

137 David: Yea, when I was studying in Maritzburg in my first year. She looked average hey and
138 so like, I was chilled. We ended up hooking up and hooking up. Next thing my mate grabs
139 me. You know just pulls me and I was gone. I saw the chick the next day and I was just fuck
140 my life.

141 Ben: Sometimes you just need to accept when you are drunk that your friends know better
142 than you.

143 David: It is your duty to at least warn them. To give them at least one warning.

144 Kurt: I feel like you would be like don't do that, and then just not do anything else. You
145 wouldn't actually help people.

146 David: He would probably take a few pictures and put them on Facebook.

147 Kurt: Yea (laughs).

148 I: Umm, so some of the readings say that when you get so drunk, you kind of loose the ability
149 to make good decisions. So like when you are out with a horrible chick or doing risky sexual
150 behaviours you lose the ability to make an adequate cost/benefit analysis of the situation.
151 Does anyone have that?

152 Kurt: That is interesting dude.

153 Will: Yea, I think that is definitely true.

154 David: Yea, that is true. You want instant gratification. You want what's their right their right
155 now.

156 Steve: Nailed it.

157 Ben: Like with Kent, I can also see the comedy in it. And you know that your mates are
158 going to laugh. So yea, it provides a comedy for them also. You know? You think oh well
159 what the fuck why not? I don't really mind. At least it provides some comedy for other
160 people.

161 Will: Yea, it is like hunt the grunt. That game. Like there is comedy for everyone.

162 Kurt: What the fuck?

163 Will: Plus you get to hook up. Like whoever hooks up with a chick that maybe you normally
164 wouldn't have or whatever wins some money.

165 Steve: It is very similar to jumping on the grenade.

166 Kurt: That is basically the ideology of that game.

167 I: Ok, next point. Umm, do any of you think that there is an element of control that occurs
168 when you are that drunk?

169 Kurt: Self-control?

170 I: Yea.

171 David: There is an element, but not that much.

172 Ben: To an extent there is. There is because like as we have already said. Like hooking up is
173 fine and you will usually just go with it? It doesn't really fucking matter. But the second that
174 it goes more than that then there is something in your mind that thinks that this is where I
175 should stop.

176 Kurt: I think that your inhibitions do just go out of the window and then so does your
177 indulgencies.

178 Tryon: I don't know if you guys agree, but something like, regardless of how drunk I am. I
179 can always tell. Like I don't dig it like when a chick is like too keen. Like you have to at least
180 input some effort dude. If you are just literally standing there and it just happens then I don't
181 dig that at all. So like no matter how drunk I am, I can discern between the two.

182 Kurt: Yea, because when that happens you think well maybe she is fucking ugly.

183 Tyron: Yea (laughs).

184 I: Is there any situations where you are that drunk that you don't have any control?

185 Will: You are still making decisions as yourself. It is just a fucked up version of yourself.

186 Ben: I suppose those nights that you can't remember, you can't really tell if you have control.

187 David: Yea, true.

188 Ben: But like, not the patchy nights. The nights were it is ten o'clock and just everything else
189 after that is just black.

190 Will: Yea, when you can't remember after pre-drinks.

191 Kurt: Ya, I think that you still maintain some level of self-control and then when you pass a
192 point then you are like sloppy drunk and then you do stuff. So you still maintain some level
193 of self-control I think.

194 Ben: Like, with Jack for example. The guy couldn't really see the other persons face so there
195 is not really that much control there. He had to actually step back and see her face.

196 Jack: Ya.

197 I: Ok, well what do you guys think are the possible consequences of getting that smashed?

198 Steve: STD's?

199 Ben: (Laughs).

200 David: Kids are on the way?

201 Ben: Umm, well just like awkward social consequences, where there is a lot of
202 embarrassment.

203 David: Ya, in the next morning (laughs).

204 Kurt: Yea the next morning is so awkward dude.

205 Will: Ya, I don't know. It can make you feel a bit siff. Like you know? If you let it get to
206 you.. You can feel a little bit siff with yourself. Like why the fuck are you doing this.

207 Steve: Because you are chowing losers?

208 Kurt: Yea (laughs)

209 Will: Like the next day you get that post party depression, you are just like what the fuck was
210 I doing?

211 Kurt: Ya. Like, oh god!

212 David: You don't really learn from it though because then you just go do it again.

213 Will: Ya, no of course because it is fun. At the same time I recognise that these things are
214 fun. Getting that smashed.

215 Kurt: Yea, in the moment.

216 Ben: You won't do it too often. Like you won't get beer goggles. Like if you have had a bad
217 beer goggles experience last weekend you probably won't get so drunk the next weekend.

218 Steve: Ya, you won't make a habit of it.

219 Kurt: But then it will happen again sometime. Tramp stamp.

220 Ben: It will happen again. Like, you have got to do your bits of charity every now and again.

221 David: (laughs).

222 Ben: But, yea beer goggles won't happen on a regular occurrence. I think.

223 David: It depends on the person really.

224 Ben: Yea, well I know this guy has always got pretty drunk. So I don't know. You tell me?

225 You didn't have a hot streak of hunt the grunt did you?

226 Will: Ya, not really. Like you kind of (pause). I suppose with that kind of thing, you tend to

227 slow down a bit when you have been getting that drunk for a while.

228 (Pause).

229 Will: Ya, but I don't know. Getting that drunk is about losing your inhibitions completely. It

230 is about all the stress you have during the week and all that time building up to that.

231 Kurt: Yea.

232 Will: So, you don't really want control sometimes. I guess you just want to be hammered and

233 be not thinking too much. It is the whole point.

234 Ben: Like, when you have so much work that like you just decide to do nothing. You have so

235 much stress on you. That like you're just like, I'm so fucked I just can't do anything about it

236 now and let's just enjoy the drunk.

237 Kurt: I just figured that out with night clubs.

238 Steve: Like when you have had a mad week, you have just got to get a reset button. You

239 know?

240 David: Yes reformat that hard drive bru.

241 David, Kent and Jack: (laugh).

242 I: Umm, does any know of any positive consequences of beer goggles?

243 Ben: Of beer goggles?

244 I: Yea.

245 David: You might meet a girl with a nice personality.

246 (Everyone laughs).

247 Ben: You could make some good friends.

248 James: Ya, you could approach a really hot chick because you are not scared. You don't
249 really know how hot she is.

250 Ben: She might not be hot. She might not actually be good looking.

251 Kurt: Yea, you could have like the confidence to do things.

252 Will: Or you could meet a sick hot chick that maybe you wouldn't have given a second
253 thought if you were sober.

254 Kurt: Yea, I think James is right. It does give you a lot of confidence.

255 Jack: It is not always just a confidence thing. Sometimes I just don't care. If this chick speaks
256 to me or not it doesn't matter.

257 Kurt: Yea, but that is good that is positive I think.

258 Steve: So maybe like how much positivity comes from it depends on how much confidence
259 you already have when you are not super fucked.

260 Will: Ya.

261 Kurt: You think so?

262 Steve: Because I mean if you have absolutely no worry in getting rejected when you sober
263 then drinking is going to have little benefit.

264 (Pause).

265 I: Umm, so do you think that any relationships ever start with alcohol.

266 Ben: What types of relationships?

267 I: Any type. Even the proper ones.

268 Ben: (laughs) Ya, Clarke and Sarah. They met each other in friars and they are still dating.

269 Kurt: What? And it is the weirdest couple.

270 I: Do think they start with beer goggles?

271 Ben: Ya, he was fucked. He said umm, I mean Ya. He said that he saw her dancing or he saw
272 her sitting down or whatever and he just lunged her without much being said between the
273 two. So that is you know the whole thing. They both didn't really care and then from there
274 they actually realised that they liked each other.

275 Kurt: How long have they been dating?

276 Ben: Over a year.

277 Jack: True love.

278 Will: I don't know, but being drunk is often like the most relaxed fun version of yourself. So
279 like if you can see that in a person often a relationship might spark off. If you are off with a
280 chick whilst you are drunk or whatever. Maybe not completely fuck faced. But drunk enough
281 to be confident and relaxed is often when the chick might take an interest in you when she
282 might not have done when she was sober.

283 Steve: But then she could also be. She could seem like awesome when she is fucked but then
284 she is actually a heinous bitch when she is sober.

285 Will: That is also true.

286 (Everyone laughs).

287 I: Umm, so have you ever had the luck of a person drinking to the point where they have had
288 sex with you and you think that they normally wouldn't have if they were sober?

289 Jack: No, I don't think I have ever been in that situation.

290 Kurt: Say the question again.

291 I: Do you think anyone else has ever been so drunk that they have had beer goggles for you
292 or for another person? If you can talk about one of those?

293 Kurt: That is hectic.

294 Ben: No, I am puss sexy so (laughs).

295 Steve: That raises interesting questions of like self-worth because like if you know that
296 someone is only digging you because they are fucked. Then like how do you feel about
297 hooking up with them?

298 Will: It depends on how drunk you are?

299 David: Ya, it does (laughs).

300 Steve: It is the principle of reciprocity

301 (Inaudible).

302 Will: Ya, I think I have definitely seen guys that have taken a bit of an advantage before.

303 Ben: Yea, mostly from the guy's perspective.

304 Will: Some okes have questionable morals. Like I have definitely hooked up with a chick
305 because I was too drunk, but then I have never have taken it further than that because they are
306 that fucked. But I have definitely seen okes like take advantage because they can check that a
307 chick is hammered.

308 Kurt: I have a story, but umm; it is going to sound bad. I was getting drunk with this chick
309 and we were still in res. I was ok like let's go home and she also lived on the hill. So we were

310 walking up the hill and I said to her well you know I have got a bottle of wine in my room.
311 And like, I knew that she was fucked. So I was like ya, cool with her. And we got into my
312 room and I was like, ok yea this is going to happen. But then I was like ok I am not going to
313 do this because she is smashed.

314 Ben: How drunk were you?

315 Kurt: I was pretty smashed. I was able to like control myself. I didn't because I felt terrible
316 about it. Because she was super fucked, I wasn't about to do anything.

317 David: Was she drunker than you?

318 Kurt: Yea.

319 Ben; Do you think you even would have been able to have sex with her?

320 Kurt: Yes, I guess.

321 (Everyone laughs).

322 Steve: In that instance I think that you would feel shit about yourself.

323 David: If you wake up in the morning and the chick is so embarrassed to see you that would
324 be so shit.

325 Kurt: Your self-worth would just go like that (points downwards). I don't think in the
326 moment you would do it.

327 I: So what you are saying in the moment you would think it was cool.

328 David: Yea.

329 I: But then depending on how drunk you are I am guessing you would feel bad?

330 Kurt: No, what I am saying is that if the chick has beer goggles for you. You don't know that
331 she is having beer goggles for you so you are pretty stoked about that. But if you found out
332 that she is embarrassed because she hooked up with you then that would just destroy your
333 confidence.

334 David: I think I would rather be rejected than find out that she had beer goggles for me.

335 Steve: Absolutely, that is a good point.

336 Kurt: Jesus! That is deep dude.

337 Jack: Even if you found out that she had or has beer goggles, I doesn't matter you still are
338 going to get your dick ridden (laughs) and that is what matters.

339 Kurt: I guess, it is true it goes a little deeper.

340 Ben: When you then hear that girl's story of I got so fucked and I hooked up with that ugly
341 guy?

342 Steve: And then they give your name and especially this type of community amplifies the
343 social humiliation because it's so small.

344 Jack: I am just like as long as I get some.

345 David: Desperado Jack (laughs).

346 Kurt: So what about this chick in the video. The one that says I'm going to break your dick
347 off.

348 Jack: Yea (laughs).

349 Kurt: Would you be stocked about that?

350 Jack: If it was a chick like the big women in the video?

351 Kurt: Yes.

352 Jack: Umm, I wouldn't get that drunk though (laughs).

353 Kurt: (Laughs).

354 Jack: If I was in a situation like that then I would have to be more plastered to the point of
355 passing out.

356 Steve: Yea, I feel you bro.

357 I: So what do you guys think of the pictures and the video I just showed you? Do you think
358 they portray some element of truth in regards to beer goggles?

359 Jack: They are a bit extreme.

360 David: They are a bit of an exaggeration.

361 James: The progression of time picture was quite good.

362 Steve: I reckon I have honestly felt that first progression photo all my life drinking. It's like
363 oh wow she is actually not that bad. Oh look now she is decent and now she is hot. Now I
364 want to take her home.

365 Kurt: Yea (laughs).

366 I: Jack what do you think?

367 Jack: What everyone else has said (laughs).

368 Kurt: Yea, there is a lot of exaggeration in the video. Umm, but yea, the video was also cool.
369 But I liked that second picture. That was also cool.

370 I: So you think that the second picture relates?

371 Kurt: No, I think that it is just representing beer goggles. If you scroll up, you can see that the
372 chick is fat behind the glass and then thin through the glass. This obviously means he is
373 drunk. Like she is skinny, she has got nice tits.

374 Steve: Yea through the lens of the beer glass everything is better.

375 (Pause).

376 I: Umm, so what do you guys think are the usual rules for selecting a partner when you are
377 sober?

378 Will: Mutual attraction I guess. Chemistry. Ya, that you are interested in one another. Ya,
379 personality is obviously a big part of it, but you have to look at looks as well. You can't force
380 that attraction. It is just not possible. As harsh as it is, if you are not attracted to a girl
381 whatever she looks like you are just not going to be able to force that.

382 Kurt: Ya, sure.

383 Will: You might be able to hook up once or twice. If you want to date a chick though, you
384 can't just force yourself to be able to look at someone and find them attractive.

385 Kurt: Attraction is very subjective as well. Like some people can find certain things attractive
386 whilst others can't.

387 Ben: Are we talking about in terms of a relationship or in terms of just someone to sleep with.

388 I: Both. Either or really.

389 Kurt: That is obvious though.

390 Steve: Yea, but with regards to the second one just wanting to sleep with someone. Everyone
391 has a story of a mate who has met a chick that they really dig like on a personal level and
392 then they have tried to date them, but they just haven't been an underlying sexual attraction.
393 The relationship has gone tits up as result of that. And there is a lesson in that. Like you just
394 can't force that physical attraction. It just has to be there or not there. That is just it.

395 I: What do you think James?

396 James: Ya, ummm. You just need that attraction really and the same wave length. You must
397 feel their vibe and they must feel your vibe (laughs). That is about it though.

398 I: Ok, umm, well how might the consumption of alcohol disrupt these rules that you have just
399 spoken about?

400 David: You might be a lot better with them when you are drunk. You would be a lot easier
401 and a lot smoother.

402 Jack: Distortion. What you perceive reality to be at that time (pause). So you might see that
403 person as wonderful, such a nice person.

404 Ben: Ya.

405 Jack: Soft, gentle and everything that you want.

406 Kurt: Although like when you are drunk you start to see people's true colours a little bit
407 more. You know like people put up this façade and you think they are such a nice person. But
408 then we they get drunk they are actually get pissed off and fucking rage.

409 Steve: That is what I mean. Like the only truth you get from society is from really small
410 children and drunken people.

411 Kurt: Yea (laughs)

412 Steve: I think though, that a greater truth is that it is about short term satisfaction when you
413 are super fucked. And that distorts the rules entirely because all you can think about few the
414 next few hours is enjoyment.

415 David: And not thinking of the next day.

416 Steve: Yea true.

417 Kurt: Yea that is actually very true that drunk people go for instant gratification.

418 Steve: It is the same kind of thing with like druggies. It is the same principle.

419 (Pause).

420 I: Ok, well I was trying to find a lot of pictures and I could only really find these ones. Most
421 of them were about women and not about men. Also a lot of them were very degrading
422 towards women and that kind of stuff. So this kind of illustrates the idea that men are
423 supposed to be like the active pursers in sexual relations. They are the only ones that are
424 supposed to go up to the chick. So what do you guys think? Do you think beer goggles is
425 purely a masculine thing? Do you think men are supposed to be the only active pursers?

426 Steve: I think it is definitely a two way street in terms in terms of what actually effects you in
427 terms of beer goggles. Girls definitely hook up with guys that they wouldn't otherwise hook
428 up with. But all this is over laden with the general construction of society where men should
429 pursue women and not the other way around. I don't know. I think beer goggles can manifest
430 in like an extreme form where chicks just like lunge you like straight out and that is
431 interesting.

432 Kurt: Umm, I also think it is a little bit different with guys and girls. Like we talk about beer
433 goggles as in would feel bad about it the next day because he is an asshole and not
434 necessarily because he is ugly. It is about attractiveness and looks, whereas a chick would
435 probably be more emotional, like personality wise. She might hook up with a dude that she
436 would soberly perceive as asshole.

437 David: Yea I think the nature of attraction for a man and a woman is different.

438 David: Ya.

439 David: Obviously there are still the underlying looks and physical attraction. But women I
440 think take in the deeper emotional vibe more. I have got a mate. He is not the best looking
441 guy. He is actually quite ugly.

442 (Everyone laughs).

443 David: But he is very confident and he is very good with women. And he takes home the
444 prettiest girls. So ya, the nature of attraction is different for men and women in the first place.
445 Women are more attracted to I think social status as well and confidence and other stuff.

446 Will: Ya, it is not always physical. With us it is a lot more physical.

447 David: Ya with guys it is. Ya.

448 Kent; It is just different ratios I guess. With women they are like as you say confidence. To
449 feel safe is like a thing with women. If a guy makes them feel safe then he has got them you
450 know. But with beer goggles in terms of women, it is more of a lowering of inhibitions. They
451 don't think so much about whether they would have hooked up with them when they are
452 sober. Rather, with us, we might see a chick as prettier. They are not thinking so much on like
453 a physical level.

454 I: We have kind of already explained it, but do you think that men are supposed to be the
455 active pursers in sexual relations. Normally and when you are drunk?

456 Will: Socially that is what it is.

457 David: It is frustrating that nowadays there is so much emphasis on men doing the job.

458 Will: It is supposed to be both ways. But I mean you don't really see it as much. You don't.

459 Ben: It is the way it is, whether it is right or wrong.

460 Will: Ya, it is a social thing. You know? Guys are meant to court and chase. Chicks are
461 meant to be earned in a way.

462 I: So what do you think if it happens the other way around?

463 Will: It is fine, I am cool with it. It just doesn't seem to happen that way around.

464 Jack: It would make things so much easier (laughs).

465 Steve: I think there is like an implied. Like I perceive like an issue with a girl. If she is good
466 looking and she comes onto me then I think. I don't know why, it is completely irrational, but
467 that something is wrong. And that is why I was saying even when I am super fucked I can
468 still tell that because I expect from all my experiences in my life that I need to put effort into
469 it to pursue her and if she doesn't require that then something is like wrong in my mind.

470 James: Yea, I bit of a chase is nice.

471 Kurt: Ya.

472 Will: If you chase and then achieve that's good.

473 David: It implies value.

474 Steve: Ya.

475 Ben: Maybe that is why guys actually enjoy doing the pursuing.

476 David: I enjoy like throwing out bait bru and then watching her come.

477 (Everyone laughs).

478 David: You surprise her and then you put it off for a bit and then Boom.

479 I: Does everyone think that way? Does anyone think it would be better if the chick made the
480 first move?

481 Will: Of course, definitely.

482 Kurt: It is great. But I guess it has to be a kind of mutual thing, because if you get into a
483 situation where she is just coming onto you, then you do think like what there is something
484 wrong. So it has got to be kind of like a mutual thing. She can make moves and you make
485 some moves. That is how it should work and it very often doesn't. If it was just the chick, I
486 would probably think something is wrong. But I would also probably be a little bit flattered
487 by it.

488 Will: Ya that is exactly it. You would be a bit confused because it is not normal. But I mean
489 like I wouldn't be offended. That is if it came out to be thing or whatever.

490 I: What do you think Jack?

491 Jack: I would get suspicious first of all.

492 Will: Exactly bru.

493 Jack: Ya, you get used to the hunt as we call it. So when a girl does that then you would
494 think why she is doing it firstly.

495 Kurt: It is also kind of intimidating. Like if you think about it, it could be almost like an
496 attack on your masculinity.

497 James: Yea.

498 Kurt: Because that is what you are supposed to be doing as a man. And if she is doing it to
499 you, it is kind of like taking away your ability.

500 Steve: It is definitely the underlying reason why I don't like it.

501 I: So what do you think of the way that these pictures construct women? As being objects to
502 be pursued and nothing else?

503 Will: It is funny. Like we can all laugh about it but it is stupid because it ends up making men
504 look. Like it makes men look stupid. That kind of shit. We can all have a laugh at it, but it
505 makes us look like that kind of stuff is all we think about. You know?

506 Kurt: Ya.

507 Will: Some women they take that shit to heart. They see that and they are like that is how
508 guys think and that how they act. They are all dogs.

509 Kurt: Well, some guys do.

510 Will: Yea, some guys do, but it is not everyone.

511 Jack: I understand what you are saying. When you see these pictures you think that we all
512 objectify women. We want the perfect girl to be you know? Slim and trim and have a nice
513 bum, and nice boobs.

514 Ben: Yea, not a chubby.

515 Jack: Yea we don't want a chubby or anything.

516 I: Do you think that it is a bad thing?

517 Will: Yea, it is bad.

518 Steve: Yea, dude.

519 Jack: But that is how we are wired. You know?

520 David: Yea, it is a bad thing, but at the same time it is also very important.

521 Kurt: What it comes down to I think is sexual reproduction. Because generally I think that it
522 is wired in our brains that if someone's attractive they have better genes to carry on the
523 healthiest offspring and stuff like that.

524 Steve: Yea, but they might be dumb as fuck so that is not going to help.

525 Kurt: Yea, I know. That is true. But I think that is where it comes from in evolution.

526 Jack: But I think as young males we are not so much concerned about the reproducing part
527 anymore. We are more worried about look what is on my arm.

528 Kent; I don't know. I disagree. I think that it is all biological. You will spot two chicks and
529 both will be sort of like eight out of eight. But you will want to fuck one more because I
530 genuinely believe that biologically you see someone that you would want to procreate with as
531 better with children. Like on a level that we can't even register. Like chemically you will
532 think I want to bang her.

533 Ben: Yea.

534 Will: It is not even saying that you consciously register it.

535 Kurt: So maybe it isn't even bad that we are portrayed to think this way only in the pictures.
536 Maybe it is just society that is telling us that it is bad?

537 Steve: Ya.

538 I: So what do you think women think of it?

539 Steve: That all men are dogs and that they laugh at shit like that. But ultimately (pause).

540 Kurt: It is just the way of the world.

541 Steve: Ya.

542 David: It is also a cultural thing, you know. Like if that was a Zulu like thing, they would be
543 like yes, you have got weight. With us it's different. Our culture like favours slim girls.

544 Jack: Like, she would be a good woman to have (laughs).

545 Kurt: In those kinds of cultures like where weight and that kind of stuff are associated with
546 wealth and success that you can eat well.

547 I: So what do you think is the general opinion regarding these beer goggles kind of
548 behaviours?

549 (Pause).

550 Will: It is sort of just something that happens. Something that people go through. You know
551 if they are making adverts about it then it must be something that people can associate with.

552 David, Ben and Jack: Ya.

553 Will: Everyone has been through it or a lot of people have been through it.

554 David: You should foresee it. If you do it often you know?

555 Steve: Someone said it earlier I think it was David. That like that you generally won't do it if
556 you again if you have done it recently. And I think that is true over the long term as well and
557 eventually you will desist from doing it. Because it feels like shit.

558 Kurt: What do you mean by opinion?

559 I: I mean public opinion.

560 Ben: I think everyone accepts that it is true.

561 Kurt: Ya, I think everyone kind of knows that it happens. That is how we were saying that
562 people can relate to this advert. Like they know exactly what is going on here. Like, as soon
563 as that girl in the advert woke up- everyone knows that she is experiencing beer goggles.

564 I: Ok, well. Do you think there are any situations or places where it is frowned upon or not
565 accepted?

566 Steve: I reckon there is a thing in South Africa where like that taking advantage of women
567 and stuff flows from these kinds of behaviour. Like when women get too drunk. That has a
568 sexual crime connotation and shit like that. Umm, I don't really know.

569 Will: It is something that we are aware of more in this country because of the amount of like
570 sexual crime. You can't take advantage and if it's borderline then don't. If you are not sure
571 then don't.

572 Steve: I have personally discussed in my life about oaks taking advantage and I may have
573 even intervened. Like everyone knows that kind of situation at a fucking digs where someone
574 is just like going too far and everyone is like what the fuck are you doing bru. Like that chick
575 is barely fucking conscious. What are you doing? Helping yourself oke are you?

576 Ben: Yea, there is a level when like beer goggles is funny when you are just hooking up with
577 someone and you realise that you probably wouldn't have done it the next day. But there does
578 still have to be some sort of reciprocity from both sides. If people see. Like if people are
579 doing that at a digs party where the chick is not keen, or just a bit too drunk, or is actually a
580 bit hesitant at first. But the guy keeps pushing because he thinks she will make a mistake then
581 okes will stop him.

582 Kurt: I heard this story. Like this chick that I know. She was at friars and this dude tried to
583 lunge her and she was like no fuck you and he slapped her across the face.

584 Ben: Who is he? Guys must get punched.

585 Kurt: A guy called Don.

586 David: Okes must get a broken neck bro.

587 Ben: Did nobody try fuck him up.

588 Kurt: Yea, dude. I was saying to her that that is fucking hectic. I was like shit dude, I know I
589 am fucking small but I would of tried.

590 Jack: Head butt him right to the nose.

591 Kurt: Ya, fuck him up.

592 I: Ok, well umm. Do you think there is any like environments or places where it is more
593 frowned upon than others?

594 Kurt: It is an awkward situation, because like whatever this advert of movie is-It is meant to
595 funny and so we laugh at this kind of stuff. But it is actually a very serious thing. Like you
596 know? Like when it happens in real life, it is actually a serious thing. Like we are talking
597 about sexual crime and babies and stuff like that. Like it is weird because it is portrayed as
598 being funny. Like in adverts. Like this dude is obscenely unattractive. That is why it is funny,
599 but is actually really serious. But I don't actually know if it is more accepted.

600 Steve: I think it should be less accepted in a situation in like let's say for example, Rhodes.
601 Hardly anyone at Rhodes comes from Grahamstown. There are a few, but they not many and
602 they don't go out often here. So a lot of people are experiencing liberty and freedom that they
603 haven't previously encountered for the first time when they come here. That fact generally
604 perpetrates that kind of stuff happening. So there should be more social intolerance towards it
605 than there is because that would lessen like the negative consequences that arise. I think.

606 Will: I don't know. I think as long as it is consensual.

607 Ben: Like Friar's verses The Rat. Friars is definitely the place where this kind of thing
608 happens more often. So there are different environments. Rat in more of a friendly kind of
609 social vibe and everyone knows friars- you go there to hook up. Everyone has that sort of
610 connection in their mind. That is what the environment friars is.

611 Kurt: Ya. And I guess in an environment where you know people well. When you are kind of
612 with friends. Obviously it is less accepted there.

613 Will: But there is a big culture of sexual violence in South Africa.

614 Kurt: Ya, like even in Grahamstown you hear about things like corrective rape. You know?
615 Where women who are lesbian; guys will try and correct them and rape them.

616 Steve: It has been recognised by the constitutional court as one of the most serious social
617 problems.

618 I: So what do you guys think about in other countries?

619 Will: Obviously in like a Muslim state this is not going to be so much of a reality. So a lot of
620 the world might not accept it.

621 Steve: Ya.

622 Will: I mean western youngsters who drink. That is quite a small margin of the world. But it
623 is the one that dominates social and popular media and stuff like that.

624 Kurt: Yea it is a very western thing.

625 Will: Even in the places where people are older it is not really accepted anymore. It is a
626 younger generation thing.

627 Kurt: Ya, it's a young man's game.

628 Will: Like a drunken night club is pretty much it. Like with us we know that it is a reality for
629 us, but it is not a reality for the whole world.

630 Steve: Tonnes of people in South Africa just probably haven't been to a club. They just don't
631 have the means to.

632 Will: Ninety per cent of them don't.

633 I: Ok, so is there any situations where you guys think that beer goggles is like a normal thing?

634 Ben: Friars? Or in a night club?

635 David: University.

636 Jack: Yea definitely.

637 Ben: Like Steve said, you know? People at university are experimenting with their liberty and
638 making choices for themselves. You know, with alcohol, it is a drug that makes you lose your
639 inhibitions and you don't care. So this is the type of environment to drink a shit tone because
640 you can. You know? And then the drug has that effect on you and you go out do whatever.

641 Kurt: You experience a level of freedom here that has a lot to do with it.

642 Steve: When I came to Rhodes everyone was like , you know this kind of shit doesn't happen
643 here because it is a small community and everyone looks after each other. I call bullshit on
644 that whole idea honestly. Like this kind of thing can be exercised by an individual. Society
645 doesn't really have a chance to intervene much on this kind of behaviour because a guy can
646 just take a really fucked chick home before anyone else can see.

647 Will: Ya, in any university it is common. As long as there is enough people out then it is
648 going to happen.

649 I: What do you think?

650 James: I think is common generally in universities really.

651 (Pause)

652 I: So do you think there are any environments where it is not normal?

653 Ben: Alcohol has to be involved.

654 Steve: Ya.

655 Ben: So that rules out many other places.

656 Will: Any religious, older communities. Like here, the Rhodes population is all within a
657 certain age. Umm, we are reckless and we drink and stuff. If you had the same
658 conglomeration of forty year olds you wouldn't get it much.

659 Ben: So this is the environment where it works. Whereas if you go somewhere like a dinner
660 or something where you are drinking alcohol, but not really that much then it's not going to
661 happen. Like it has to be in a big place where there is a lot of people that you may know, but
662 also that you may not know.

663 Kurt: That is interesting.

664 I: So you are saying that it has to be in an environment where you know people.

665 Ben: No, rather people that you wouldn't know. Because it is Rhodes you kind of know
666 everyone. But there are always going to be some people that you don't know. No, I'm telling
667 lies, I was going to say that you are not going to hook up with someone that you do know.
668 Actually beer goggles with someone that you are friends with that does happen.

669 James: That does happen.

670 Ben: But that is just because of the environment that we are in. Say if you in Joborg, you will
671 go out to and you will be out with friends and there are people you don't know. So it has to
672 be in a big group environment where beer goggles can happen.

673 Kurt: Yea, I also think where it doesn't occur is like with people in religious communities. I
674 think it doesn't occur with people over the age of like thirty. Because once you reach that age
675 you are kind of like into your career and kind of like your experimental student like twenty
676 something stage is over.

677 James: Yea. Where you are reckless.

678 Kurt: After that it kind of doesn't become a thing anymore.

679 Steve: Ya, except if you have like a midlife crisis. Then you might still rock it in your thirties.

680 James: Ya.

681 Will: I don't know. There are lots of environments where it is not as acceptable. I don't
682 know. I can't really think of anything specific. Like in the majority of situations, it is not
683 going to be acceptable.

684 David: The Amish people?

685 Kurt: Actually most environments don't accept beer goggles. I think like it is a very specific
686 like demographic where this kind of beer goggles thing happens. It is very specific to
687 universities and people in like your twenties or twenty nine. But then after that outside of the
688 demographic it might not happen as often.

689 James: Big cities?

690 Ben: I don't know. My uncle is over forty or whatever and he drinks big time. So like every
691 Friday he goes out with his friends and he gets fucking slaughtered. Ya and he has had it
692 before. So maybe it is not sort of an age thing, but maybe just drinking is.

693 Will: Maybe in big cities where there is a culture of partying? It is not like a small rural town
694 or anything like that.

695 Kurt: There will be outliers like that, but I think it's more prevalent here.

696 Ben: Where it is the same type of environment. Like going out having lots of alcohol and
697 being social. Where there are lots of people around.

698 Steve: I don't know. Like what you said about the difference between Joberg and Rhodes. If
699 you go to a club in Joberg with say like five mates. And then you party with your five mates
700 and hopefully you hook up with some dolls or whatever. But like there is this element of
701 hostility that I have always perceived. And that does not exist at Rhodes.

702 Jack: Yea, I agree.

703 Steve: It is that hostility, I would say, that prevents this kind of shit to some extent.

704 Ben: Ya, because then you don't really want to go and approach someone's because then it
705 gives them a reason to fight you if they know that person.

706 Steve: Ya exactly.

707 David: I think it is big in Cape Town more so than Joberg.

708 Kurt: What the hostility?

709 David: No hooking up with beer goggles.

710 Will: Ya, I think that I actually find if a go out in like a group of like four mates and I don't
711 know anyone else, it might be more likely for me to do that behaviour. You kind of go a bit
712 reckless because of the fact.

713 Ben: There are no consequences when you are not going to see them again.

714 Will: Ya, there are no consequences because you are anonymous.

715 Kurt: Are you talking about here or over there.

716 Will: No, elsewhere. Say I am at home or somewhere and I have no idea who this chick is
717 and I know that I am not going to see her again because she is a holiday maker or whatever.

718 Kurt: Ya, but I do get what he is saying about the hostility. Like I get that in Joberg
719 especially.

720 David: Down south dude, okes are just on a bunch of steroids and stuff and want to box. In
721 Durban.

722 Will: But I would still fuck around because of that anonymity. That drives me around more
723 than my feelings of being secure. What will drive me is the fact that nobody know me, so
724 who cares.

725 (Pause).

726 I: Ok, well I got my next question. Do you think that the expectations of the alcohol related
727 behaviour in certain situations kind of influences your actions regardless of whether you have
728 had alcohol?

729 Steve: Dam straight dude. Rhodes people they come here and they know the vibe is to get
730 drunk and hook up so they even do that when they are not really shit faced. I have seen that a
731 million times.

732 Ben: Yea, I guess so. But at the same time I love getting fucked up. I love drinking a bunch
733 and just doing stupid shit. I loved getting fucked up. I kind of enjoy it.

734 Steve: Young and fucking stupid.

735 (Everyone laughs).

736 Will: You have to do it. If you don't do it you feel kind of like an urge to.

737 Steve: If you don't try it then you are going to have like a mid-life crisis.

738 Kurt: That is the only reason why I went out last night. I was like I need a good drunk night
739 out and that is why I went out.

740 I: So do you ever think like when I am in friars that just because I am in friars that I can do
741 those beer goggles associated behaviours regardless of my alcohol intake?

742 Ben: I go to friars because I want to do those behaviours. I don't do them because I am in
743 friars. It is not because of the environment that I am in.

744 I: Ok, but do you think that there are certain situations where it is the environment that plays
745 more of a part than alcohol?

746 Ben: Yes.

747 David, Kurt and Steve: Ya.

748 Ben: Not for me. But like for other people who say have some of my jug and because they are
749 in friars they will try hook up. So yea that does play a part.

750 Will: If I am in a night club and it is all geesed up, then it is a lot more likely that I am going
751 to do something stupid and reckless than if I am in a fucking restaurant having a bottle of
752 wine.

753 Kurt and Steve: Ya.

754 Will: It is obvious for whatever reason. It is just that socially everyone has let their guard
755 down, like they have taken their inhibitions away. To an extent a lot of people.

756 Steve: That just emphasizes the fact that there are many other social situations that lead to
757 this kind of shit and many others that don't.

758 Will: Ya.

759 (Pause).

760 I: Ok well, this is the part where I tell some stories about other people or myself.

761 Jack: Dirty mike (laughs).

762 I: Umm, there was an oke, I am not going to say who, but there was night in my digs where
763 we all got much fucked. So we all got absolutely smashed and umm two of our digs mates
764 came home with chicks. Actually wait three out of four. Which is good because our digs is a
765 bunch of idiots.

766 Will: Yea (laughs).

767 I: But what happened is an I remember that I was in my room and I was with some chick. My
768 one mate brought home a rural chick and I remember seeing them two in the kitchen and I
769 was like ohh fuck. You can do what you want and look the other way and I will just walk
770 back to my room. In the middle of the night there was this banging on my door. I didn't know
771 what to do because it could have been one of my drunk mates or a bugler. What happened
772 was that one of my digs mates girls that he brought home. The one that I was just telling you
773 about was so drunk. His rationale was that he didn't perceive the chick as more attractive
774 didn't really care. He wanted to bust a nut. The reason why the person was knocking on my
775 door was because she couldn't find the toilet even though we all have en suite bathrooms. So
776 she had taken a massive pee right in front of my door. So it was extremely awkward when I
777 wake up and I am like what the hell is this. The guy in my digs was so embarrassed because
778 first of all he had to wake up this chick and realise that she looked horrible. And then he had
779 to walk her past her own pee and stuff.

780 Jack: How does a chick even do that (laughs).

781 David: She probably didn't dig you man.

782 I: Another story was last year when there was this chick that I wanted to get with. We were at
783 rat. Umm and I saw the chick that I wanted to get with upstairs with another one of her
784 friends looking at me. So I thought I am in there and so I will leave that be. Then I started
785 talking to people and there was this one big chick that started flirting with me and buying me
786 drinks. So yea, I started getting pretty hammered. Then I showed an aspect of stupid
787 reasoning when I thought maybe that I can get in there with both chicks even though I didn't
788 like the second one at all. The first one said she was going to go to friars and that I should
789 meet her there. So when she was gone, I then took the big chick out of rat and tried to hide
790 away so nobody would see. I don't know if you guys remember the dumpster round the
791 corner of rat where the kids' corner is now.

792 (Everyone laughs).

793 David: Dude that is sick (laughs).

794 I: Yea, so we started making out in and amongst the rubbish, which was just horrible. And I
795 don't know if you okes know Mr Benson the hobo? Well he comes out from underneath the
796 rubbish and starts screaming. So then I just run away.

797 Steve: Dude that is a horrible story.

798 Kurt: Best story I have ever heard in my life.

799 I: Umm, so basically, I then tried to go to friars and hook up with the original chick. But then
800 it ended up that the original chick saw me making out in a dumpster next to a hobo. So in the
801 end I didn't even get with the chick I actually wanted to.

802 Ben: So was that a deal breaker?

803 I: Yea I was a total deal breaker. But basically my illustration of both of these stories is to say
804 that most people mock you for doing these things. For me I always get mocked. There are a
805 lot of stories about my other digs mate for instance bloody Sunday. So my point is what you
806 guys think about these particular reactions that people have?

807 Steve: I think that, a lot of people like criticize each other for being judgemental and all that
808 shit. But I think that people forget that judgement plays a rather nice role of regulating
809 behaviour. So people mock you about that and now I bet that you haven't gone and done
810 those types of behaviour again.

811 I: Not exactly.

812 Jack: Dirty mike.

813 Steve: You may have hooked up with an ugly chick again, but you haven't done that exact
814 behaviour again.

815 Kurt: That is kind of true.

816 Steve: So in that role, I think that judgement can help you.

817 Ben: The way I look at it is that it is all in good fun. It is just all in good fun. Umm, I don't
818 know. I bet you that whilst you were doing those behaviours, you just knew in some small
819 part of you that god I am never going to regret this.

820 Jack: (Laughs).

821 Will: Yea, everyone was probably having a great time thinking about you doing that kind of
822 stupid shit. Like that is a good story.

823 Steve: Ya, like that is probably one of the better stories I have heard.

824 David: (laughs).

825 Will: Like that is life. Like fucking around like that.

826 Kurt: Yea, I think Steve is right in saying that it plays a role in managing society and
827 behaviours.

828 I: But do you think these kinds of reactions are fair?

829 Ben: It is all the same really. It is all relative. I mean, Ya they are. Jesus.

830 Will: Ya, it depends on the grossness of the story.

831 Ben: I mean they are all the same. I mean a chick pissed all over your floor and you made out
832 in a dumpster. I brought a girl home who got up in the middle of the night and ran flat out
833 into my wall. She like ran face first into the wall and then like lay there. Like I don't know if
834 she was too fucked or if she was sleep walking. Yoh, I mean I lay there for like five minutes
835 just trying to understand what happened. It is just a drunken story where you are too fucked
836 up and shit happens.

837 (Inaudible).

838 Ben: Ya.

839 Kurt: She just had to get out of there.

840 I: Do any of you ever try to keep your actions a secret and explain why you do?

841 Kurt: Yea, I just hide.

842 Ben: No, I don't.

843 I: Kurt?

844 Kurt: I don't know dude. As much as social judgement may regulate behaviour, like I do not
845 want some of my stories told.

846 Steve: One hundred per cent man.

847 Kurt: Like there are some stories that I will just never tell you.

848 Steve: And that is because you know that you will be judged by the same standards that you
849 judged yourself and that is why you don't want it to come out. It is that your behaviour is
850 contrary to whatever regulations you think that society has.

851 Kurt: Jesus.

852 Will: Ya that is it. But like at the end of the day what it comes down to me is that it is private.

853 Jack, David and Steve: Ya.

854 Will: It is what it is. If you feel like sharing it then there is a reason that you want to share it.

855 Ben: I don't think I have ever done anything that bad that I have had to keep shit private.

856 Will: I have done stuff that I need to keep private.

857 Kurt: I have done many things.

858 David: So have I.

859 James: What is that saying from the hangover? Just like put that shit deep down and never
860 think of it again.

861 Will: Ya, well that is the thing, you do. A lot of it, you pack down and keep it there.

862 Ben: So you are ok with telling us these stories? Are there stories that you are hiding as well?

863 I: Yea.

864 Ben: Jesus Christ okes are fucked up hey.

865 Jack: Dirty mike (laughs).

866 Steve: I actually know a guy who has the same piss situation. This guy actually knows him.
867 Like a chick just pissed herself in his room bru. Straight up jumped out of the bed and
868 squatted on the floor.

869 Will: Why not just use the sink. That is awful.

870 Steve: She did it like right in front of like the toilet dude. He had an en suite bathroom and
871 the door was open. And she did it like one foot to the right of the toilet.

872 David: Was she really fucked?

873 Steve: Ya, she was really fucked. But yea he like watched her do it. You know this guy, it's
874 another dirty mike.

875 Will: Maybe she has some weird shit going on or was just too fucked.

876 Ben: She was probably just too fucked to realise he was watching and there was an en suite
877 bathroom.

878 Jack: Why didn't he say anything?

879 Steve: I guess he just found it too awkward to confront her.

880 Ben: But yea you make mistakes because like you don't know where you are. Like I mean
881 you are not going to run into a wall because I don't know? She obviously didn't know where
882 she fucking was.

883 I: Ok, well I got another question. Do you think that mocking each other is a regular feature
884 amongst guys?

885 Steve: Yea

886 Kurt: How can we not do that?

887 (Pause).

888 I: Do you think that it is a feature amongst girls as well?

889 Ben: Not as much.

890 Steve: I think so. Like outside of the view of men they do for sure.

891 Sea: Ya.

892 Ben: Actually yes. I mean I have made fun of girls who have done bad decisions as well. So
893 you know, it is not completely separate. Everyone makes mistakes and then you can laugh
894 with them about it. Most people realise that it is not the end of the world.

895 Steve: Girls are more sensitive than men though so the mocking has to be like more
896 controlled.

897 Kurt: Ya that shit can ruin friendships and stuff like that with chicks. With dudes it is more
898 like a laugh. It is not like friendship breaking kind of stuff.

899 Kent; It is actually more like a bonding experience. Ya, because the stigma is much worse
900 attached to a chick who fucked an ugly dude on a drunken night than the stigma attached to a
901 guy who fucked an ugly chick on a drunken night.

902 Steve: Ya, that stigma is really true and it is unfair when you think about. What is the fucking
903 difference between randomly fucking a guy and randomly fucking a girl? It makes no fucking
904 sense.

905 I: Ok, so do you think that what people think of your behaviours effects the way you act
906 whilst you are really intoxicated?

907 James: Once you are drunk I think you don't really care too much.

908 Ben: Ya, it does just come to not caring really.

909 David: It is also the fact that you know everyone else is drunk. At friars you know that
910 everyone else is drunk and that everyone else is doing stupid shit.

911 Will: Umm, my decisions might be different if I know that my mates can see me and they are
912 going to mock me. If I know that nobody can see me then my decisions will be fucking way
913 different.

914 Ben: Behind the trash (laugh).

915 Will: Ya, I will take a minute behind a tree where nobody can see and tear shit up. I am just
916 being honest.

917 David, Sean, David and Jack: (laugh).

918 Kurt: It is so true.

919 Will: If nobody can see you then you might be more likely to do these things.

920 David: Because there are no consequences.

921 Will: Ya, exactly. If these oles are all sitting here watching me then I am going to be a lot
922 more controlled. But if I can get her away and cut her from the heard somewhere quite.

923 Ben: Like if you have made a mistake. Kurt is not going to have much say into what
924 happened on the weekend. Everything is just going to be turned around into what he has
925 done. Then it will blow over sometime, but then it will affect the way that you act next
926 weekend.

927 Jack: Ya.

928 Kurt: Like I actually have an example, with the chick because I will never fucking do that
929 again in my life.

930 I: Explain?

931 Kurt: You gave me so much shit Ben, you fucking slapped me. Ok, umm what happened was
932 that we were at rat watching the rugby or some game. Leslie and Gaby decided to drink a
933 whole tower each. Like they will never be drunker. So eventually she made out with me and I
934 made out with her. It was just a bad situation because like she was having a thing with Fabio
935 at the time.

936 Ben: We were like all mates and stuff.

937 Kurt: It ended up ok because Fabio was like ok dude I understand. It is just something that I
938 would never do again. It happened in front of everyone.

939 Jack: Bleak I missed this.

940 Ben: Ya, well I was quite bleak at the time because we are all supposed to be mates with him
941 and the girl was super fucked. So it was just bad decisions all round when it was probably
942 better not to.

943 Kurt: Ya. I sort of instantly regretted it, like straight afterwards.

944 Ben: Ya, but at the same time she is a pretty girl.

945 Kurt: Like in my defence. The thing is like I didn't know she was having a thing with one of
946 our friends. I only found out after Ben had told me. Then Fabio was like all bleak with me
947 and then I had to apologize.

948 Ben: I guess that is beer goggles when I guess the girl is not ugly, it is just the wrong girl to
949 get with at that time.

950 Steve: Ya totally different manifestation there.

951 I: OK, sweet thanks guys. We are finished. I really need to pee.

7.6.3 Focus group 3

- 1 I: Let me begin by stating that all the information used is confidential meaning that your
2 identity will be kept private throughout the study. You also reserve the right to leave the
3 study at any time if you want, but please don't. Cool, so let's start.
- 4 I: Umm, basically so what do you guys think is happening in that video?
- 5 Paddy: Rape?
- 6 Jamie: (Laughs).
- 7 Martin: Well, obviously its full blown beer goggles and the bugger took full advantage of it.
- 8 Nikki: Yea.
- 9 Paddy: Well, at least he had a good time at the time (pause). Except with the plastic bag part
10 bru.
- 11 Jamie: (Laughs).
- 12 I: Ok well, do you guys think that this is like the typical thing that happens when you are that
13 drunk? Like under beer goggles.
- 14 Jackie: Maybe it is slightly exaggerated in the video, but more or less.
- 15 Paddy: Like have you met our friend Boswell? (Laughs)
- 16 Jackie: No.
- 17 Arnold: Umm, to a degree, yes. But umm that video is quite extreme.
- 18 Martin: I think that there is beer goggles and then there is beer blindness. This was obviously
19 the latter. Like you can take someone home and they can be not that great, but like in your
20 drunken state you can understand why you were keen. But for this example, I don't think he
21 knew.
- 22 Paddy: No, bro you have got to do the test
- 23 Jamie: (laughs)
- 24 Paddy: No the finger test where you put your thumbs together and your pinkie. If they don't
25 fit around her waist then you can't take her home.
- 26 (Everyone laughs)
- 27 Jamie: What is the rule though? For every beer can you have what?
- 28 Paddy: For every beer can you can put your cell phone in between your fingers and add some
29 length to her belly. Like long ways.

30 I: What do you think?

31 Nikki: I'm terrified.

32 Jackie: Ya, like it can actually go both ways. Like both people could be like that drunk. So it
33 could be the same for like both people. It doesn't have to be just like one person. She might
34 regret it just as much.

35 Jamie: That is just sad. At least like in this case in the video at least like maybe one person
36 was happy.

37 Paddy: Ya, look at that satisfied smile on her face.

38 Jamie: Ya, she is happy boy.

39 Arnold: Ya, she is happy.

40 Martin: Either she has just eaten a steak in her dream or she is just enjoying memories from
41 the last night.

42 (Pause).

43 I: Ok, well this is the point where I have to get you to talk about some of your experiences or
44 about someone else that you have heard of. You can name someone else if you want.

45 Martin: (laughs) don't everyone look at me. Umm, I have had a bad case of beer goggles.

46 Paddy: Ah in high school hey.

47 Martin: Ya, in high school. But obviously that was just me lunging someone. I didn't
48 obviously take them home. But ya, that was 100 per cent regret the next morning and I don't
49 know what came over me because that was like an extreme event.

50 Paddy: You know what he regretted the more than lunging her? Was doing it in front of all
51 his mates.

52 (Everyone laughs)

53 Martin: Ya, so I guess that does happen. Umm the proof is there. But ya, that is my story. I
54 don't really want to go into too much detail.

55 I: Can you give any detail?

56 Martin: Well, I guess I was in high school. We went out drinking. And umm, I guess when
57 you are young you don't know how easy it is to get super hell blasted. Ya, I guess then I
58 made some poor life choices.

59 Paddy: Under a bridge. (Laughs)

60 I: So what happened at the time though?

61 Martin: Um, I don't really know. You can't really understand what your thinking was when
 62 you are that drunk. Like when I see her in reality I am like oh my god. I assume that I must
 63 have thought that she was at some point decent.

64 Arnold: (laughs)

65 Martin: But I can't really know what I was really thinking then because it was also a long
 66 time ago. But I guess I must have thought that she was hot sometime.

67 Paddy: I think what beer goggles does is that it doesn't like make the betty seem hotter. Like
 68 in this video, he like perceived her as hotter. It just like makes your acceptable scope (pause).

69 Martin: Broader?

70 Paddy: Yea.

71 Nikki: Like in other words, it lowers your standards kind of.

72 Jamie: I think that it makes the moment better. It makes you enjoy the moment and have fun.

73 Paddy: Ya, your inhibitions are also taken away. Like if your inhibitions are normally holding
 74 you back.

75 Arnold: Ya like say you are walking around friars and you are going to lunge someone. Like
 76 you are going to start first looking at the hot people then as you get drunker everyone
 77 becomes hotter. Then you think like maybe her.

78 Martin: No, like I see someone hot at the beginning of the night and when I have a few drinks
 79 I can still tell that she is a lot hotter than everyone else. But if she is not responding to me and
 80 I am going to change my direction and go for the second option. Which is decreasing.

81 Arnold, Jackie and Martin: (Laugh)

82 Martin: So it is not like that they all just suddenly become like on equal planes. Like there are
 83 still betties that are obviously a lot hotter, but I am not going to get any there.

84 Paddy: So, ya that would mean that you are ok.

85 Martin: Ya, so the belter poured a drink on me so I don't think she is too keen. So I am going
 86 to go to the other girl and she is ok and she seems super keen. So like it's like easier fishing
 87 in a way.

88 Arnold: (laughs). Instead of using the lure, just use the bait.

89 I: Does anyone else have any stories? Even if they are about me. It is fine.

90 Arnold: What like Nombi?

91 Arnold: I have one about an old mate Devon. He was going for like this chick (laughs). Ok, I
 92 think he prefers the larger betties. But umm, anyways he was going for this one chick that

93 was fairly large, but her friend was very large. I don't know what he did. He says he got
94 drunk and to celebrate making out with her he made out with the friend.

95 Paddy: So like he got confused between the two of them.

96 Arnold: Ya, he was like I made a mistake. I was supposed to go for that one, but instead I
97 hooked up with that one. But ya, I just started laughing at him. But ya, I think that he kind of
98 regrets that.

99 Martin: Umm, I am pretty sure, you two can expose here, but maybe some of us are not
100 felling too comfortable.

101 I: You can talk about anyone.

102 Paddy: Umm, no. I don't know.

103 (Everyone laughs)

104 Paddy: I dated a betty for like a week and she got ugly after that.

105 Jamie: But the beer had an effect their too right?

106 Paddy: No, at the time it was a good decision. I wasn't drunk so maybe it falls outside the
107 study.

108 I: Ok, well there are a lot of readings that say when you get so smashed; you lose the ability
109 to make adequate decisions. So like you don't think of the cost of your behaviour. Does
110 anyone find that happens?

111 Arnold: Ya.

112 Jackie: Yea.

113 I: Why?

114 (Pause)

115 Martin: Well, I guess I can explain one situation. Like it wasn't me hooking up with someone
116 who was unattractive. It was just a bit of a stuff up.

117 I: Yea, that's fine.

118 Martin: So like, I mean on one occasion on earlier this year.

119 Paddy: Heart and souls are coming out here hey (laughs)

120 Martin: Umm, you must enjoy this.

121 Jamie: Okes are going to start crying after this (laughs).

122 Martin: Like I got drunk. It was with someone who I find attractive, but I was currently
123 getting with someone else at the time. But like when happened (pause). Umm, I had been
124 drinking and the girl that I was vibing with, we had a fight that day. So yea, that basically
125 excels it into a place where you think this could be a good decision. Especially if you are
126 hammered. Like then you realise the next morning that it is not. So it is not just about you
127 taking home a betty that you don't find attractive, it is also about making a decision that is
128 definitely not for the best.

129 I: Does everyone agree with that?

130 Paddy: Ya.

131 (Pause)

132 Nikki: (laughs)

133 Arnold: Like I think when you tend to get drunk, I think you tend to say screw it and then like
134 the next thing you do something stupid. Like you can also relate it to spending a lot of
135 money.

136 Paddy: Ya, I will back that up.

137 Arnold: Like ya, you think I can do it if I want.

138 Paddy: Ya, like the first time you go to the ATM, you withdraw 20 bucks, which buys you
139 two drinks. Then the next time you draw 100 bucks and then the next time you just draw
140 whatever you have left.

141 Arnold: Ya, but I mean like you can also relate that to girls. You can be like really keen to
142 hook up with someone and like the next morning you can be like oh shit why did I do it.

143 Martin: What I was trying to say with my story is like that there is boozing. But also like
144 there are things that can make it excessive. Like if we were all out and Arnold got bat from
145 some girl and we were egging him on. I think then any guy would start like picking up
146 whatever he can. Like it could happen to anyone. Like for betties it happens all the time. Like
147 they see their guy hooking up with someone else . Or their ex hooking up with someone and
148 then they will try and find like whichever oke is around them to hook up.

149 Nikki: That is a massive stereotype.

150 Martin: Ya, ok. It is a bit of a generalisation, but I have seen it happen so many times.

151 Paddy: I think this whole study is about generalisations really.

152 Jamie: I have a story. Umm, ya it was a long time ago. I was still young and fresh and I didn't
153 understand the ways in this new world.

154 Arnold: So last year.

155 Jamie: No, it was like four years ago. I hit a bump, broke up with my first girlfriend. Umm,
156 ya there was this academic thing to go on for camp.

157 Arnold and Paddy: (laugh).

158 Jamie: Ya, that night I was getting very drunk. Let's just say that brandy was involved and
159 the starts where out that night. Ya, there was this hot blond hitting on me the whole night and
160 it was going very well. Ya, the girl told me her name. Ya, we met and we had a braai. It was a
161 lovely time. I got drunk as the night went on. I went to bed at the normal time because my
162 mom is very strict. Umm, in about two hours or maybe half an hour.

163 Arnold: Ten minutes.

164 Jamie: Ya, ten minutes later. Arnold was sleeping next to me and Ruan was on the other side.
165 This girl came and she woke me up and started making out with me. I was like who the hell is
166 this and she told me her name. I was like great, so is this the girl that I met earlier. And it was
167 dark at this stage. I couldn't see and it was very romantic. The stars and the ocean and things.
168 I was drunk and I passed out. The next day I got woken up by this old lady who was like this
169 will not be tolerated on an academic camp. It was because I didn't wear any clothes. I was
170 very regretful the entire time. It would have been very awkward if we had invited some other
171 girls.

172 Nikki and Arnold: (laugh).

173 (Pause).

174 I: Ok. Well, do you guys think there is ever like an element of control when you are that
175 drunk?

176 Jamie: Well, like in this case. In this scenario. Acohol didn't change the way she looked or
177 change anything else. It was just that I was focusing more on not falling on my face than
178 identifying features (laughs).

179 I: Ok. Well do you think there is ever some element of control when you are that smashed?

180 Martin: It depends on what level that smashed is?

181 Arnold: I think there definitely is.

182 Nikki: I think there is a degree of control in that you know what you are doing. It is just that
183 you don't care at that point.

184 Arnold: Ya.

185 Nikki: You know whether or not the person is not the best looking. You know whether or not
186 they are kind of a douche. But you just want to hook up with someone. And when you are
187 drunk they seem like they are decent looking so you go for it thinking- well, you know I just
188 don't care. So like you do have the control. You just don't have the mental capacity to follow
189 up thinking that is this what you should be doing.

190 I: Ok, well are there things that you wouldn't do whilst that drunk?

191 Jamie: What?

192 Martin: Well, I guess you do have some control. I mean you are not going to go and (pause).

193 Paddy: You are not going to go and punch a doll.

194 Martin: Ya.

195 Paddy: Or like be rapey or anything like that. You know?

196 Martin: Ya there must be some sense of control then.

197 Paddy: Ya, like I don't think if I got as drunk as I would ever get, I would never be like
198 violent towards a women or anything.

199 I: Jamie?

200 Jamie: Ya, I think you do have all your control (pause)

201 Paddy: You have all your control?

202 Jamie: No, Jesus. I don't know how to express this.

203 Martin: You just make worse life choices?

204 (Pause).

205 Arnold: I think that you know what you are doing as Paddy said. But if there was like if there
206 was this really large chick and she was like hey how are you doing? I would be like be
207 chilled, like no. I don't know, that is just for me. But I know in some cases if you were that
208 drunk, it could happen. Like it happened to Sam. Some guy just lunged her and then she
209 realised and like clapped him. But I mean she was that drunk and she didn't realise what she
210 was doing.

211 Paddy: Ya, she didn't know what she was doing.

212 I: What do you guys think are the possible consequences of these kinds of behaviours?

213 Jackie: Getting laughed at by your friends?

214 (Pause).

215 Jamie: Ya, you can express lots here Martin.

216 Martin: Ya, I guess it depends. When that happened in high school, I guess it added a lot of
217 banter. But umm. Ya like in a way it is not that nice for you. So you have to get over it as
218 well. You are not going to be too chuffed with the story.

219 Jamie: I think the big thing is like you don't think about the consequences. Like in this case I
220 just told you, I made out with a friend, instead of making out with someone I thought was
221 nice. So you don't think that far about the future, you only care about that moment.

222 I: Well, like the next day though?

223 Jamie: Well, then you regret it a lot.

224 Martin: Ya, there is lot of regret.

225 Paddy: Ya, I suppose.

226 Arnold: There is always like that fear like. Did I use a condom when I was so drunk?

227 Paddy: Ya that is a big thing.

228 Arnold: And then like over the next few weeks you are scared. I have had many friends say
229 that to me. Like oh, shit. What did I do?

230 Paddy: Ya, I can't remember if I used a dome or not.

231 Arnold: Ya, so obviously there is that big elephant in the room (laughs).

232 I: Ok, so do you guys think there are like any positive attached to doing these kinds of
233 behaviours?

234 Paddy: Fat girls need love too.

235 (Everyone laughs).

236 Nikki: Surely in that moment you are enjoying it. So that is good.

237 Paddy: Also, like it could be that you wouldn't normally do it when you are sober right. But
238 not because you don't think she is hot. Just because you would be shy if you were sober. Like
239 maybe losing your inhibitions is good. Like that is why a lot of people drink.

240 Nikki: Ya, some Dutch courage.

241 Paddy: Ya, to bring yourself out. Like make you do things that you might not do otherwise.

242 Martin: Umm, I think there is a positive to drinking and having fun and stuff like that. But I
243 don't think there is a positive of taking someone home that you 100 per cent regret the next
244 day.

245 Paddy: Ya. It is like that what we are saying. I think the issue that we are having here is like
246 what is beer goggles? Because like if you say that beer goggles in general is people making
247 decisions that they properly wouldn't have made if you were sober. But specifically beer
248 goggles is also taking home a girl that you think is ugly and you wouldn't have taken home if
249 you were sober. But when you were drunk, you didn't think she was ugly or you didn't care.

250 Martin: So what is the one option?

251 Paddy: So what are we defining beer goggles as?

252 Martin: Well, I guess the one where you take someone home. Like I don't really think you
 253 can talk about both. Like the one where you take someone home and have a lot of regret. But
 254 the other option of doing like stupid shit when you are drunk. That is like so much fun. Like
 255 if you bring a donkey home or something. It is not the best life choice. Like an animal or do
 256 something stupid.

257 Paddy: What?

258 Arnold: No, like he is saying like you could go out last night and come back and say like I
 259 made some poor life decisions, but I enjoyed it. You know?

260 Martin: Ya, it could be fun and pretty funny.

261 I: So you are saying that you couldn't have the same thought process of it being fun for
 262 hooking up?

263 Paddy: Look, it could increase you experiences of life. Like you know? You have the one
 264 story of that one time you had beer goggles. Surely you regretted it in the next few weeks or
 265 whatever. But one day down the road you will have a flipping cool story to make your mates
 266 laugh. And sometimes that is worth it.

267 Nikki: You also might learn from it. You might start looking at the stupid shit you do whilst
 268 you are drunk and think maybe I shouldn't get that drunk or maybe I should know not to do
 269 those things anymore. Like, you learn from it.

270 Paddy: Ya, it makes you look out to do those things.

271 Arnold: Ya.

272 I: Ok. Well do you guys think that any relationships ever start with alcohol?

273 Arnold, Don and Jackie: Ya.

274 Paddy: Ya that is what we were saying before.

275 I: Ok. Well also in terms of beer goggles.

276 Nikki: Like you got drunk and thought the person was hotter than they actually are?

277 Paddy: Maybe Boswell?

278 Martin: Ya, like I guess you could say that. Like if a girl takes a guy home who she doesn't
 279 find attractive and they hook up and have naps. Then the next day she finds out he is actually
 280 a really nice guy and they chat. Like I think there is always that possibility of them like
 281 growing something from there. Like maybe she would have never looked any further than his
 282 face value because she made a poor life decision and took him home.

283 Paddy: It is interesting that you flip it around like that.

284 Jackie: Ya, I was just thinking that.

285 Martin: Ya, but it can go either way. But yea(pause). I just think that I have known that. I
 286 have seen it happen. From one of my old friends from Botswana.

287 Jamie: (Laughs)

288 Paddy: Yea, he did well for himself hey.

289 Arnold: Is beer goggles, just based on looks. Like is there nothing else?

290 Nikki: No, I don't think so. Like if you look at it from a different point of view. Like in my
 291 experience there have been one or two experiences. Like let's say the night before when I
 292 was really drunk I thought someone was really funny. Then I wake up the next day and I
 293 think that person wasn't being funny, they were actually being a dick. Like if I take home a
 294 guy for example. I would wake up the next day and think why I would do that. He is such a
 295 dick. My beer goggles made me think that he is funny when he actually just wasn't. So
 296 sometimes it isn't just looks, it is about how they behave and what they do.

297 Arnold: Yea.

298 (Pause).

299 I: Ok. Well does anyone think here that another person has got so drunk that they have got
 300 beer goggles for you?

301 Nikki and Arnold: (laugh)

302 Paddy: What like they wouldn't have sex with you if they had not been so drunk?

303 Nikki: Who would admit to that?

304 I: Some people do.

305 Martin: Ya, I am pretty sure I have had a betty not have sex with me, but lunge me because
 306 she was drunk. Like I am pretty sure because it happened once and then we never really saw
 307 each other again. But like I don't know if it was a mutual thing or she just didn't know what
 308 was potting.

309 Paddy: Actually you remember that time with Kiera knightly. I got really drunk and then I
 310 kissed her.

311 Arnold: What?

312 I: So what did you feel about that Martin?

313 Martin: It was actually kind of ideal because I wasn't really keen to have anything serious. I
 314 was just like either way I had my fun. I don't know who got burnt, but I was just like fuck
 315 yea- I don't have to deal with it the next day. Like she was as keen to forget about it as I was.

316 I: Has anyone else had this? Would you feel differently than Martin if it did happen?

317 Nikki: I think I would feel a bit hurt if I was being completely honest. But yea, if I found out
 318 afterwards that some guy only hooked up with me because he was drunk. If he thought I was
 319 hotter than he thought I was the next day, I would feel a bit hurt. I also don't know if I would
 320 want much to do with that guy. Even if it turned out that after his beer goggles he was
 321 actually an alright guy, I don't think I would want much to do with him. I don't know. He has
 322 let his friends egg him on like that or he has let that kind of thing get to him. I don't know.

323 Arnold: If the chick was like really really hot. I would just be like hell yea. Confidence boost
 324 (laughs).

325 Paddy: That is true actually. You could claim that. Go on Facebook and show people what
 326 you did (laughs).

327 I: Jamie what do you think?

328 Jamie: I really don't know bro.

329 I: Ok, so what did you guys thinks of the video and the pictures I just showed you?

330 Paddy: It is funny, but in like a dick kind of way if that makes sense. It is like funny in taking
 331 what is really not acceptable. You know?

332 I: Why?

333 Paddy: It is like watching the show shameless. It is funny because it is shameless.

334 Arnold: Ya, because it is so rough

335 Paddy: Ya, it's not like acceptable behaviour, but that is what makes it funny.

336 Jamie: It definitely bad.

337 Martin: It is exaggerating. You know? But there is also a point to it. Like the girl in the video,
 338 she is not trying to do anything with her life to like motivate some guy to be keen on her. She
 339 like thinks that the only way she can get a guy is only if she has like beer in the fridge. So
 340 like I don't know if it means that she should go exercise to look good. But she obviously
 341 doesn't even have any confidence in herself. So like I think to a point that is true. Like if you
 342 don't have any confidence in yourself, it is going to be difficult for a guy to take you
 343 seriously. Like the video is obviously super extreme. It is supposed to be comical and whilst
 344 it is extreme it does have some point.

345 I: So the point is telling the chick that she must go to gym and fix her life?

346 Martin: Well, like if going to gym builds her confidence then that is what she needs to do.
 347 She needs to have more confidence in thinking that the only way she can get a guy home is
 348 by having a fridge full of beer.

349 I: So are you saying that advert is kind of positive as it facilitates people in improving
350 themselves.

351 Martin: Umm (laughs). I don't think that it is the best way to go about it. But I can see what
352 the point is that they are trying to make.

353 Paddy: I think what they are trying to do. I mean the aim of that particular advert is a pretty
354 rough version of trying to make someone feel insecure about themselves to make them gym.

355 Jamie: Well, they are advertising beer in the same way that they advertise make up man.
356 Make up makes you look better. Beer does the same. So why not?

357 Jackie: (Laughs).

358 Jamie: It is like if clothing advertisers can advertise that these clothes can make you look
359 hotter then surely beer companies can advertise the same.

360 Arnold: That video was trying to advertise a gym right?

361 Martin: Yea. It was hectic.

362 Martin: At the same time. If you make yourself more attractive there is more chance.

363 Nikki: Also she has like no motivation to do that. Like she knows that beer brings the guys
364 over and she is not okay with that. Yet she still does it. Like if it really wasn't okay with you
365 then you should stop doing that and try something else.

366 Martin: I need to go to gym.

367 Nikki: And stop eating your pies.

368 I: Okay, well what do you guys think of the other pictures? Like the last one which says
369 beauty is only a beer or two away?

370 Martin: Jesus.

371 Paddy: I think it is just a funny picture to be honest.

372 Martin: I think that is the most dick one out of all of the pictures.

373 Arnold: Ya.

374 Martin: The other ones are just like funny because it is just visuals. But there this is just like
375 saying like you will only ever find that chick beautiful after you are quite hammered. I think
376 that is the roughest one. But I do get it (laughs).

377 Nikki: (Laughs).

378 I: Ok, so what do you people think are the usual rules for looking for a partner when you are
379 sober? Like what do you look for?

380 Martin: Rules? Are you talking about your like dream person?

381 I: No it can be like an immediate or long term thing.

382 Nikki: I think people are scared to admit that they need to find people attractive because they
383 would seem vain or slutty. But I feel like that it is a fact, people need to be attractive.

384 Paddy: Ya that is definitely a fact.

385 Arnold: Ya it probably starts with attraction and then moves onto the more personal stuff.

386 Jackie: Ya, but there has to be attraction involved (pause).

387 Nikki: I think humour is important as well. I think a lot of people find funny people more
388 attractive than they might otherwise do in a normal situation.

389 Paddy: I agree, I think that a lot of the time you can meet someone and they can be like. I
390 have got an example. Like that Nicole betty. I rate she is like really hot. She is a really good
391 looking dog.

392 Arnold: Ya, she is a belter.

393 Paddy: Like when you first see her, you think wow this chick is fly. She has got like these
394 really sexy glasses and stuff. And then you start talking to her and she is literally the most
395 annoying person I have ever met in my whole life. I would not want to spend more than five
396 minutes with her.

397 Martin: You see! But I have got a different point. Like I find her really hot so like if it was
398 just for a night then I would be ok with it (laughs). So like I get what Paddy is saying, but I
399 still might.

400 Jamie: So the question here is when you drink does the betty become less annoying?

401 Paddy: I think she became more annoying. Whoever drank more? Either way. As the night
402 wore on she got more and more annoying.

403 I: Ok, well how to you guys think alcohol disrupts these normal rules or things that you look
404 for in potential partners? Like we have kind of touched on it, but I shall ask it again.

405 Jackie: Because it lowers your standards. You have these rules that you have already made
406 for yourself. But when you get really drunk, you don't stick to them.

407 Paddy: It probably also lowers your ability to judge things well.

408 Jamie: I think alcohol is good because it lowers all your own bad things. You don't care
409 about those things. You focus becomes about the core things that matter. You know?

410 Martin: I think the most important thing about drinking is that like (pause). Why people love
411 it is that it builds confidence. Like.

412 Paddy: Yes, it takes away your doubts.

413 Nikki: Ya.

414 Martin: Like for me when I have a couple of drinks and go and chat to someone. It is not
415 someone. It is probably someone that I thought was attractive all along, but I didn't think it
416 was a good idea for me to go up and talk to her. Whereas like after a couple of drinks, I might
417 think like that is like the best idea in the world. So like I think it just builds confidence.

418 Arnold: I know I am definitely more talkative when I am drunk.

419 Paddy: Ya.

420 Martin: I think everyone is.

421 Arnold: No, but I think like if we were all in a room I wouldn't be like the guy that is the
422 centre of the party. When I am very drunk I will be.

423 Martin: Ya, lots of gees.

424 Arnold: Ya, it definitely builds your confidence.

425 Martin: So in a way alcohol is beautiful. Actually alcohol is love. Its liquid love

426 Nikki, Arnold and Jamie: (laugh)

427 Paddy: I can think of a different type of liquid love (laughs).

428 Arnold: (laughs) that is quite raucous.

429 (Pause).

430 Martin: What I was trying to say is that I think that there are a lot of relationships that would
431 have never started if it wasn't for alcohol.

432 Paddy: Ya that is what I was going to say earlier.

433 Jackie: Ya.

434 Martin: Like I know for sure that Jamie and his girl like would have ever met each other in
435 different terms. Like it is not like you guys had seen each other on campus before. Like I
436 don't think they had made a move on each other before that. Like an opportunity arose and I
437 don't think he would have done that if he was sober. I don't think he would have gone up and
438 like tried to chat to you. So I think that there are a lot of things that happen. Maybe it's
439 negative because you do some stupid shit, but at the same time some really good stuff can
440 result from it.

441 I: Does everyone else agree with that?

442 Paddy and Arnold: Ya

443 (Pause).

444 I: Ok well in terms of getting these pictures. I spent a lot of time on it and most of them are
445 about women and are very degrading to them. For one, it portrays the guys as the active
446 pursuers in sexual interaction. It was never the girls going for the guys. And for another, it
447 portrays women as objects of sexual desire and nothing else. So do you think beer goggles is
448 mainly a masculine thing? Do you think it is just for men?

449 Paddy: I think even the name beer is largely surrounded by masculine culture. Even
450 traditionally beer was drunk by the men of the tribe or whatever. Throughout society is has
451 been. I am pretty sure that SAB's largest contingents of buyers are male by quite a long way.
452 And umm, even just the name beer goggle is associated with men. That kind of thing. Also
453 generally. I know it is a kind of generalisation, but generally men are more the pursuers in
454 this kind of society.

455 Arnold: I think anyone can have it. It is generally guys that picked girls up. I mean I am sure
456 that there are girls though.

457 Martin: Ya.

458 Jackie: I definitely think anyone can have it as it's not just beer.

459 Martin: But do you think it is just guys that pursue?

460 Nikki: Well, like a guy might see a girl and see that she is totally out of his league. But then
461 the girl might start losing her inhibition and the guy will think lets go for it.

462 I: So do you think girls actually get beer goggles?

463 Nikki: I think that they do. But I also think that you are right about girls being the objects
464 and being objectified and being pursued in a certain sense. Men will pursue women that they
465 wouldn't normally go for if they have beer goggles. But women who have beer goggles will
466 accept those men if they think that they are below their standards and that they wouldn't do
467 things ordinarily. Because they have beer goggles on.

468 Jackie: Yes, like you wouldn't mind being treated in a different way. You would find it kind
469 of funny. That is beer goggles.

470 Nikki: Like when you think about it you might just go well that guy was actually just being a
471 complete dick.

472 I: Ok, well what you guys think of the way it constructs gender? The way it portrays women
473 or even men by association?

474 Nikki: I think those pictures kind of prove. Umm, obviously this is going to be a
475 generalisation again. The idea that a womens looks like is the most important thing about her.
476 And that if she is ugly then she has no redeeming qualities, expect the fact that she can get

477 people to have beer goggles. I think it just proves the idea that men do look at women as if
 478 they are sexual objects. Which they do and think we have agreed on that.

479 I: So you think that it is bad thing?

480 Nikki: Yea, because often it does. This might seem like a slight exaggeration. But it's almost
 481 men's attempt to dehumanise women and that they are not really people anymore. That they
 482 are just sex on legs.

483 Jackie: Something that you can own and then treat how you want.

484 I: What do you guys think of that?

485 Paddy: I didn't say that you girls could say that.

486 Nikki, Jackie and Arnold: (laugh)

487 I: So what do you guys think of the way that it constructs men or even women?

488 Paddy: It also constructs men as these oles who are super shallow and just care about pretty
 489 stuff.

490 Arnold: I think with the last picture, that no dude will ever want a chick like that who looks
 491 fat.

492 Paddy: It is basically saying that if you are a guy going for a big girl then you are doing
 493 something wrong. So the other men can ostracise you. It is basically like. It reinforces what
 494 Nikki was saying about that for men who would not necessarily do that anyway.

495 Jackie: It also makes it seem that it is only okay to do that with women or like when you are
 496 that drunk. Like in the first video at the beginning, that guy says it's ok because he is drunk
 497 and everybody else is too. And that is the only way to do it. Which isn't necessarily the case?
 498 At some stage some other person whose unattractive might find another person who looks
 499 like that girl attractive. There might be a (inaudible). Some people can have like weird
 500 fetishes and stuff. So there are guys who would find a fat girl like that attractive. It makes
 501 them seem abnormal and strange.

502 I: So what do you guys think is the general opinion regarding beer goggles related
 503 behaviours? Like what do people think about it?

504 Jamie: Is the chick in the video just upset because he is quite fat? She is not exactly skinny
 505 herself.

506 Jackie and Arnold: (laugh)

507 Paddy: This is so funny.

508 Jackie: I feel like she would be frowned upon a lot more for like judging him than like the
 509 previous example.

510 Arnold: Like it could be exactly the same the other way around.

511 Paddy: No, if it is ok for her to judge then it is ok for guys to judge.

512 Jackie: I just feel that she is definitely going to be labelled a lot more harshly than like the
513 guy would.

514 Paddy: I think what everyone is feeling bad about is that there are different levels of
515 attractiveness right? Everyone feels bad classing people. In these situations there are always
516 one person who is classed as attractive and another who is unattractive. The mistake is that
517 they got together right? This video shows that it can be either way. Like that it is a gender
518 neutral concept in a lot of ways.

519 Arnold: Also here like the dude who got with this hot chick could be labelled as like a hero.
520 And at the same time the chick people will be like what are you thinking?

521 Jamie: Like I don't know if it is just me? But I feel that they don't feel bad because they
522 actually do it. People just care about what their friends would say. What you guys have all
523 being saying is that like that oke is going to be labelled as a hero and her friends are going to
524 think low of her. It is not really how she feels about it. It is just that she is scared of telling
525 her friends.

526 Arnold: Ya, she is going to regret it and he is probably not.

527 Jamie: How do you know that she is not that attractive?

528 I: Ok. Well do you guys think there are any places in terms of environments that beer goggles
529 is completely frowned upon? And any places where it is more accepted?

530 Jamie: Yes, in the Afrikaans community.

531 Paddy: Do you mean that if you make those bad life decisions. A place where it would be less
532 accepted than others?

533 I: Ya, places where it is less accepted than others.

534 Arnold: Like in shameless. Like in there in that poor community, they don't really care. But I
535 think in the upper class sort of places; people will like judge you more.

536 Jackie: I think that if a guy does it on numerous occasions then it is still just banter and
537 people laugh. But if a girl who does it, making all these wrong choices. She is going to
538 become like a slut and things like that. So women get viewed a lot harsher.

539 Martin: I think it also depends on how much like you beat yourself up. Like if a guy mate
540 keeps getting beer goggles and hooking up with ugly betties. Like if he just laughs about it.
541 Then it is humour and that is fine. That is just what he wants to do. But if he comes to us and
542 he keeps hooking up with ugly betties then we are going to be like no that is your own fault.
543 So it depends on how the person who is in this situation handles it. If a betty just shrugs it off
544 and goes like ohh that was a mistake, I assume that her friends are not going to say that she is

545 a slut. She could have just been having one bad night. Well not bad night, but a night which
546 wasn't maybe her first choice. But if she keeps doing it and complains to her friends, then she
547 is going to be labelled as a slut because she can't handle the consequences.

548 I: Okay. Well do you think there any places where beer goggles are more normal than others?
549 I am using the word normal here, not accepted.

550 Jamie: I think what you have to include here is that in this type of situation like Rhodes then
551 it is fine. It is not big deal afterward. I mean who made a mistake. But if he does it in like a
552 small Afrikaans town or community and you slept with that chick then you are going to have
553 to marry her or explain to her dad why you are not seeing her anymore. It is a much bigger
554 circumstance there. You are not going to tell the dad you are not seeing his daughter anymore
555 just because she is fat. You are going to man up. You are not going to get out of that easy.

556 I: Ok, well does everyone agree that it's more accepted here?

557 Arnold, Jamie, Jackie and Nikki: Ya

558 Paddy: Because generally sex is more accepted here. It is much more of a liberal community,
559 student community and experimental than anywhere else.

560 Arnold: And we do drink excessively.

561 Nikki: Ya, people drink more than they normally would here. You go out and still go to your
562 lecture on Thursday. Like how many adults do you know in your working environment that
563 will party Wednesday, Saturday and Friday? Oh it's a public holiday tomorrow, lets party
564 today and tomorrow.

565 I, Ok. Well do you think that the expectations of doing these kinds of behaviours can affect
566 you even if you haven't had any alcohol?

567 Paddy: Okay, well like the placebo effect of alcohol.

568 I: Ya.

569 Jamie: Well, I couldn't speak English very well when I came here. So basically by drinking I
570 would get the confidence to speak English and then try learning it.

571 I: But the question is do you think you might get that same confidence if you weren't so
572 drunk, but you were just in a club?

573 Martin: Umm, I don't know. I think there is maybe a bit of a placebo effect to a degree
574 because you might not have lost your inhibitions but everyone else has around you. So you
575 kind of care less. You know what I mean?

576 Arnold: Ya.

577 Martin: So if you are in Friars and you have had one or two drinks so you are not feeling that
578 hammered. I think that everyone else's acting out and geesing around you would firstly just

579 rash you because you're not that drunk. But if you could just look past that and get involved
580 and start dancing and stuff. Even though you wouldn't normally be dancing if you had two
581 beers and were at home. So I think it does have a bit of a placebo effect to a degree, but it
582 also depends on where you are.

583 Paddy: I don't think there is a placebo effect.

584 I: Why?

585 Paddy: I just think that (pause). Umm you don't get drunk to go and hook up with people you
586 wouldn't normally go for. You don't get drunk to go and hook up with the fat doll. You
587 know?

588 Arnold: Yea, I understand.

589 Paddy: So why even if you were not drunk would your mind make you even think that you
590 were going to do that.

591 Martin: Well, if you are talking about that beer goggles. Then I don't think you could have
592 this placebo effect to that degree.

593 I: Well, what about the other effects of alcohol? So the increased confidence?

594 Nikki: I think maybe something like confidence would work, but in losing your inhibitions
595 would happen not as much. You might have a lot more confidence than you would normally
596 thought you could have. Just because of the environment and not because you have drank too
597 much. But that doesn't mean that your standards or inhibitions will go.

598 Martin: I guess that there are certain factors that could be linked to being drunk that could be
599 considered placebo. So it just depends on the environment. Like if I am at church, I am not
600 going to be as loud and bashful as when I am at friars, even if I haven't had a drink. If you
601 are. If I am at home having tea with everyone and it's a chilled environment compared to me
602 being at friars. I am going to be a lot louder and geesy because of the environment that I am
603 in. That is related to being drunk. While I am not actually drunk, just in a different
604 environment. I don't know if that answers the question (pause). I think it depends on the
605 environment. Like I definitely know as a guy, we talk differently when it's just guys than if it
606 was just my parents. It is just the difference in environment. I think the same thing can be
607 said for if you are in a club or any other place.

608 Arnold: Basically, when you go into friars, you think okay I need to be drunk to go in here.

609 Martin: Ya, to enjoy it.

610 Paddy: Ya, you don't want to be sober.

611 Arnold: If you walk into friars, you might think I am too fucking sober for this.

612 (Pause).

613 I: Ok well this is the part where I tell you guys a few stories. I know of one guy who went to
614 this girl's 21st in Cape Town and stayed at her house with all the party people. Umm, they got
615 extremely drunk and my friend ended up hooking up with this chick that was not so good
616 looking. Everybody knew it was bad. But they all went back to this chick's house who was
617 staying with her parents. I think everybody else went to bed and this guy just continued being
618 smashed and hooking up with this ugly betty. They started having sex in the house and
619 everyone could hear. So they decided to go outside and be out of view. Umm, there was like
620 a huge water shortage in the town, but they decided to take a shower in the outside shower and
621 continue getting it on. What they didn't realise was that that shower was right outside the
622 parents room with the glass doors. So in the middle of having sex the father of the girls
623 whose birthday comes out and starts shouting at them saying there is no water. Like what are
624 you guys doing. Umm, but after a while he realises they are having sex and runs away
625 embarrassed.

626 Arnold, Jackie and Jamie: (laugh)

627 Paddy: Jeez.

628 I: Yea, then they had to all have a big breakfast together after and he said it was very
629 awkward (pause). So basically my point of this story is that people get mocked by these kinds
630 of behaviours. I mean I know I have many times. What do you think of that? Do you think it
631 is fine to mock people in that way? What do you feel when it happens to you?

632 Paddy: I think it is alright.

633 Jamie: I think it is like fun.

634 Martin: I think it is like banter between guys. It is humour. It is not intended to be harmful.

635 Jamie: I think with girls it can be a little bit harmful though.

636 Martin: I think girls take it less easy. But at the same time there can be a story where a guy
637 has done something bad and as his mates you can just know that this is not something that
638 you are allowed to joke about. It is something, like really bad. Like me with this cave troll, it
639 wasn't that bad. I mean it was fine. It happened a long time ago and it happens to everyone. I
640 remember guys were saying look it is tough, but you have to slay a few dragons to get to the
641 princess.

642 I: So what do you ookes do like the next day? Do you hide away from people? Or do you go
643 up to everyone and say this is what I did, let's have a laugh?

644 Arnold: It depends if you are a really secretive person.

645 Paddy: I think it depends on the circumstances.

646 Arnold: Ya. Well, if you think that this is really bad then you won't tell anyone.

647 Paddy: If it is like, you regret it, but it is funny then it's chilled. It depends if you think the
648 story is going to be funny or not. If it's really worth it.

649 Martin: Emma at this weekend. She was sleeping over. So she is a stooge. She slept in my
650 bed, so I went to Arnold's bed because he was still out. So then when Arnold got home he
651 went and slept with Emma when he got home. So apparently the next morning the story
652 comes out that when she was lying with her hand out Arnold somehow had gone for a cuddle
653 and put his junk in her hand. Basically it is his own version of tent fishing (laughs).

654 Arnold: I don't think that happened.

655 Martin: That was funny because it is just known that everyone is going to take that as
656 humorous. There is like no bad intent there.

657 I: Well, what do you girls think?

658 Nikki: I don't think that I would tell people. I am generally too embarrassed to tell anyone at
659 least until much later.

660 Jackie: It also depends who your friends are. Like some of my friends I would tell, but other
661 ones I wouldn't.

662 Nikki: I think it is generally just more easy to label and girl when she makes mistakes with
663 alcohol and sex. So girls are generally more cautious when telling people.

664 I: Okay, so last question. Do you think that people's opinions of these behaviours effect your
665 behaviours whilst you are really smashed?

666 Nikki: Assuming that you have some control?

667 I: Ya.

668 Nikki: Ya. I think a lot of guys will go out and hook up with five or ten girls in one night and
669 that is seen as okay. Whereas girls won't do that. Well, we do sometimes, but we generally
670 try and avoid it because it is seen as like slutty behaviour.

671 Jamie: I think that girls use alcohol as a disguise. They want to make out with some guys so
672 they just say that they were drunk. When actually half the time they weren't actually that
673 drunk.

674 I: So do you think that people's opinion affect girls more than boys?

675 Nikki: It affects girls way more. It is definitely more acceptable for men to do it then women.

676 Jackie: It is banter when it comes to boys, but when it is girls it is more emotional.

677 Martin: At the same time I also think it is important how the girls wear it.

678 Nikki: Smetimes guys can take it fairly emotional.

679 Martin: Ya. It depends on like. If I had a betty friend and she keeps telling me that she made
680 mistakes like in a month like six times. Like oh my life is so terrible because I keep doing
681 this. I would be like well that is your own fault. But if the same betty hooked up with six guys
682 and was bantering about it saying this has been such a dog show for me, I would banter with
683 her. So I think you kind of draw the perception of yourself by how you present yourself. So if
684 you complain about it, then that girl should definitely not be doing it ever. But if it's just a
685 joke then its fine. I think that is what guys do. They are like Jesus that was a funny story. So
686 therefore it is not taken as heavily. Also I think like a big thing. I very big thing is how girl
687 tells the story and how she relates herself to it. I mean if she gets bleak then she mustn't do it.
688 But if she can laugh about it? Like you can laugh about your stories and it's ok because it is
689 funny. So you like worked through these things and you were ok with it.

690 I: Eventually I was ok with it (laughs). Ok, cool shot okes for helping me out. I think we are
691 about done.

7.7 Interview transcripts

7.7.1 Interview 1

- 1 I: Let me begin by stating that all the information used here is confidential in that your
2 identity will be kept private throughout the study. You also reserve the right to leave the
3 study at any time if you wish. So let's begin.
- 4 I: Have you ever heard of beer goggles and what is your understanding of it. Please provide
5 an example of the behaviours and emotions that you think are associated.
- 6 P: I have definitely heard of and experienced beer goggles. I have seen other people get beer
7 goggles. Essentially from my understanding beer goggles means is when you drink too much
8 and people who you normally wouldn't find sexually attractive or wouldn't be on your sexual
9 radar suddenly become more attractive.
- 10 I: Yes
- 11 P: Then ya, you end up hooking up with them if you are successful and pulling them. But
12 usually what happens is that you hook up with someone who is far below your usual standard
13 (Laughs).
- 14 I: So have you experienced beer goggles yourself. Please provide some examples.
- 15 P: Ok. I have experienced beer goggles, I think on two occasions. One was in matric where i
16 went to a club called Roxy's in four-ways mall. Actually this first beer goggles, actually this
17 one is like an epic, a chapter, it was like lord of the rings beers goggles.
- 18 I: Yes (Laughs)
- 19 P: Because what happened was that there was this girl, who is at Rhodes now by the way hey.
20 She has a boyfriend. But what happened was that I went to this club in Roxy's. You know
21 when you are young, you just. You only started drinking and when you are that age you just
22 don't give a shit whether you put fucking petrol in your mouth or whatever. So way to drunk,
23 being an idiot and I end up hooking up with this chick. And I thought she didn't seem too
24 bad. I was like yea, yea, yea. Then we were hooking up and then we were getting really. It
25 was actually disgusting. It was kinda embarrassing cus like I hooked up with her on the couch
26 and then I started sticking my hand up her shirt. Felling her breasts, going like second base.
27 Then eventually we were getting so siff about it in the club that the bouncer had to come and
28 like pull us apart. He was like no; this is not the place for that to happen. So what happened
29 from there was then, I went to another party two weeks later or something.
- 30 I: Yes
- 31 P: And this is how she would work. Every single time she would do this I would be really
32 drunk and I would be at a cigarette machine. I would be buying cigarettes and then she would
33 be like a fucking Velociraptor. I would just be chilling and out of nowhere she would come
34 and she would jump me and then we would hook up for like two hours. Just kissing, all that

35 shit. So that happened there. And then after woods she just tried to speak to me outside of the
36 drunken thing. I remember after each night regretting it a lot because she wasn't that hot and I
37 was kinda embarrassed. She kept trying to message me, and talk to me. I would be polite but
38 I would never you know like, like I wouldn't initiate anything. And it sort of came to head
39 during matric vac. Like I don't know where this girl got my number from. She sent me
40 messages, like but I don't know where she got my number from I really don't. And. Maybe I
41 could have actually given her my number, but then I got to Durban, ready to party mmmmm.
42 And then I get this message from this girl. She was like "hey baby-shoes, hope you touched
43 down well" like we were fucking going out or something. It was the shittest thing ever. Umm
44 and then she got me like twice during the vac. I would see her out on the beach and I would
45 just be filled with regret every single time. But I had the feeling, every time we hooked up. It
46 wasn't that I was powerless, but I was just so drunk that I didn't care and it was just
47 something to do. So my inhibitions were just gone. My standards were gone and this chick
48 just took advantage of that. Unless she was really drunk as well. I don't know. But, ya so that
49 is pretty much what happened there.

50 I: Yes, Ok.

51 P: And then second beer goggles happened here at Rhodes. Ummm there was this girl who
52 stayed in I think Nelson Mandela hall or something. She was from Botswana, I don't know. I
53 remember, my friend Vince, like, we were, it was after a (Pause) Greek society night.

54 I: Yer.

55 P: I didn't go to the Greek soc night, but I went to Friars where all the Greek soc sort of after
56 party people go. And Vince introduced me to this girl and she was wearing like a toga and i
57 think the toga might have actually sort of hid what actually was behind. What was truly, you
58 know

59 I: (Laughs)

60 P: I remember thinking the whole night was (Pause) I. All I saw was above the shoulders. I
61 remember thinking like ahh she is not so bad. She had long black hair that was curly, umm
62 and I thought like ya she is not so bad. She had leaves and shit in her hair, like Cleopatra or
63 something. And ya we ended up hooking up hectic dude, and, but like hectic hectic at friars.
64 And she was biting my lip, my lip was bleeding afterwards. Like it was raucous bro, it was
65 really really raucous. And then we ended up walking back up to my place in residents and we
66 had sex. Well it didn't last very long. I think she realised she had made a huge mistake as
67 well (Laughs). I mean I sort of realised that this was fucking stupid, like this is the dumbest
68 shit ever actually. So ya, it was like very briefly. I was actually very bleak because it ended
69 so quickly. I didn't finish but she went to bed, and I suddenly realised that I didn't have a lot
70 of space in my bed to sleep.

71 I: Yer.

72 P: And I looked to the side and then I saw this fucking whale taking up half my bed, pushing
73 me up against the wall basically. It was the most uncomfortable sleep of my life, of my whole

74 life. And then she sort of woke up in the morning. I didn't know what her name was. I don't
75 think she really knew my name. And then she went on to see John downstairs, she knew
76 John personally. And I walked down with her to John's room and then I said goodbye. We
77 shook hands, literally shook hands. And that was it. Once again this girl also tried to make
78 herself a future in my life, which is also annoying. She kept (Pause). I remember I once took
79 a random, and this was after I started going out with Leigh as well.

80 I: Alright.

81 P: Like she asked me to go down. Like I accompanied her on this like whole long journey
82 around Grahamstown, visiting her sister (Laughs). Talking to all these people, it was like we
83 were friends. It was weird. We weren't really friends, but it felt like we were friends, but I
84 didn't like it so I never spoke to her again after that.

85 I: So it seems that in these two situations the other person was way more interested in you
86 than you were in them.

87 P: I think so, but then again I drunk so I properly looked like I was really keen for them to be
88 honest. Ya but they always try to speak to me after the beer goggles which is mainly why i
89 used to regret it a lot.

90 I: Ok, so when was the last time you experienced beer goggles and how often would you say
91 it occurs.

92 P: Ummm, well the thing is I have been going out with someone for three years now, so you
93 could say I experience (Laughs) implicit beer goggles. So I don't actually act on the beer
94 goggles as I would never cheat on my girlfriend. But ya definitely people start to look a lot
95 hotter. Like every time I go out I think I get beer goggles. I think pretty much everyone looks
96 more sexually attractive, expect for men. (Laughs) Ya expect for men. But for woman it
97 happens. I think if I wasn't attached these types of situations would have properly happened
98 to me a lot more. That is what I am saying.

99 I: Ok, so what is the usual pattern of events that precede you getting beer goggles and give
100 some examples therein?

101 P: Ahh, it would often be (Pause). Umm it would be like how any sort of night would evolve
102 and when I actually act on the beer goggles, it would usually be when I drink a lot. Like
103 drink so much. So when it happened for me in matric, we were dropped off by somebody's
104 parents or something and we had been pre-drinking like straight vodka or ah straight cane.
105 We were pretty fucked. And also the umm beer goggles the beer goggles at Rhodes the same
106 thing happened. I mean that is what happens usually. But we would never (Pause), whenever
107 I would hook up with these chicks, it would never be like, we would never talk really. It was
108 weird. Especially the first story. The first one we were on the dance floor and we were
109 dancing and then it was almost like this sort of like gravitational field just sort of. It was sort
110 of like a natural sort of submission (Laughs). But like you know, you're dancing; you sort of
111 go back into someone and then maybe your hands brush them. And then they reciprocated the
112 hand brush. Then the next thing you know you are sort of turning around a bit and then you

113 are hooking up. But I think with the second one at Rhodes, we were talking for a bit and then
114 we just ended up hooking up dank dank on the dance floor. Ya, but also dancing as well, that
115 is how it always starts. Every single time it was the dancing. I mean friars is so loud, it is not
116 like you can talk about fucking war and peace or something.

117 I: When you have these kinds of experiences, what are your usual thoughts and feelings
118 during it?

119 P: During it (Pause). During it I am feeling awesome. But I am also not aware of what I am
120 doing. Like I am just focused on hooking up with this person. I am sort of in this sort of
121 bubble, where I become oblivious to the outside world. So the only thing I am thinking about
122 is hooking up with this chick and how awesome it is that I am hooking up with this chick. I
123 am not thinking about whom I am hooking up with really or what I am doing. I am just
124 hooking up. And ya.

125 I: Ohh ok ok, and how do you behave in relation to those feelings

126 P: I just don't care what happens. I completely loose out on my inhibitions. I mean you saw,
127 the example I set in those two stories, like the one thing, the one time I had my hands up this
128 girl's shirt in a public place on a couch in front of like a whole huge crowd of people. And
129 the other one, I took her to my room in residents and we had sex so it was pretty risky
130 behaviour. Ya I had no inhibitions. I didn't give a fuck.

131 I: Umm do you usually follow through follow through with your desires when under the
132 influence or not?

133 P: When I was under the influence of beer goggles, I wouldn't restrain myself. I don't think I
134 ever retrained myself. But not in the like creepy rape sense where (Pause). If I thought
135 someone was hot then I would try like you know. But if I ever got some sort of modicum of
136 interest like if I could tell there was an opening for me, I would go for it and I would just let it
137 go. But I mean when I hooked up with chicks when I am drunk like the same thing would
138 always happen. So whether she was a beer goggled chick or just a normal chick it wouldn't
139 matter. I think beer goggles are sort of random in a way. You sort of get (Pause) because
140 your inhibitions are so low that it just sort of depends upon whoever you sort of happen to
141 come across that shows an interest in you. And sometimes it's like you know lucky draw.
142 Sometimes you get a hot chick and sometimes you get the not so hot chick, but you try to get
143 the hot chick. But I would say eighty percent of or like seventy percent of my hooking up
144 experiences while under the influence have always been with someone that I found sexually
145 attractive after the fact. So if I was sober I would still hook up with them, whereas the beer
146 goggles chicks I wouldn't even (Pause), I would feel sick if I did again.

147 I: Ok, Ummm what was it like when you woke up the next morning after experiencing beer
148 goggles?

149 P: Ohh, well you have woken up from a hangover and you know you have done something
150 dumb. And you just get that shame blanket that sort of wakes you up and it's sort of like "hey
151 bro, hey, guess what ... you fucked up last night". (Laughs). And you don't want to get out of

152 bed because you are so embarrassed. Ya pretty much I just feel embarrassed (Pause) and siff.
 153 Embarrassed, dirty and ya (Pause). Ya I would say feeling embarrassed and sheepish

154 I: How do you behave in relation to those emotions?

155 P: I tend to want to stay in bed the whole day and not look anyone in the eye. I watch movies
 156 all day and just try forgetting about it. After about a week I begin to just not feel anything and
 157 pretend the situation never happened.

158 I: Do you ever feel any positive emotions after beer goggles?

159 P: Ummm, I don't know. I guess (Pause), I have one proud beer goggles moment. Proud Beer
 160 goggles (Pause), was when I hooked up with the hottest chick in the world. (Whispers her
 161 name). Hooked up with this chick and I was drunk beyond belief. She was also very drunk as
 162 well. And she came onto me. It is actually a fucked up story. I was just minding my own
 163 business because I had never thought that she would ever be interested in me. I never fucking
 164 thought that, you know. She was like (Pause). Yoho, what if I was the beer goggles? OHH no
 165 (Bangs the table) I just realised, I just had a fucking mind explosion, I think I just beer
 166 goggled, I was the beer goggles. Shit, dammit (Bangs table). Ok well so we hooked up. So
 167 she came onto me in the parking lot or in the grassy area. Well the whole fucking place was a
 168 grassy area, so by the cars. And we are chilling, and she asked me to walk with her. So I am
 169 like chilled I will walk with you. And then she led me to this shed or this building and she
 170 took me inside the building and I went inside the building and we were just chilling and then i
 171 looked at her and then she sort of just dropped trou (pants) and then just like pissed on the
 172 floor, like on the concrete. (Both Laugh). She is pissed and she has urinated on the concrete
 173 and then I sort of turned away in embarrassment.

174 I: Ok yea, carry on.

175 P: So I hear like whizzing on the concrete and I am like mmm. I don't know, but I wasn't. I
 176 don't know. I couldn't decide whether (Pause). I don't know, it was kinda hot I think. It was
 177 hot dude, she was a hot chick. She just took her pants down in front of me. It was awesome.
 178 Ok so then (Pause), we walked outside of the building and we sort of look at each other and
 179 she looks at me. And then we just started hooking up (Pause). Hooking up bro. Tongue, like
 180 Blab la blab everywhere, against the wall. Against a car, like that is where everyone saw me,
 181 like over the bonnet of a car and then we went somewhere else. And then we waited in line
 182 for the meat because you know there is meat at oxbraai. We are waiting in line for the meat.
 183 She fucking ate the meat, she chewed it and then she fucking fed it to me whilst we were
 184 kissing. So I took the meat out of her mouth and I was chewing her meat (Both laugh). Ya it
 185 was like that hectic dude. And then we hooked up for like three hours, doing our thing. And
 186 then eventually we went to the barn. Night had just fallen. I went to the barn. She went to the
 187 barn. We started hooking up in the hay. Sort of went to third base a bit. Did my thing, took
 188 off her pants. We pretty much banged, ya we banged dude. It was awesome. Um without a
 189 condom, we didn't use protection, which came back to bite me a little while later. Not
 190 pregnancy, but you will see. Um ya and then we woke up the next morning and we didn't talk
 191 to each other like at all and then I think I just sort of left. And that is how it ended. And then

192 what happened was is that my friend took my cell phone because everyone knew we had
193 unprotected sex. Oh yea, people were also taking pictures of us as well. It was like the
194 raunchiest night of my entire life.

195 I: Is this normal behaviour for you?

196 P: No, dude (Pause). It was like in a barn in front of like a thousand people. That is insane.
197 Well, I mean, I guess in my mind when I was that drunk, I thought it was like covered, but it
198 wasn't at all. I don't know whether it was just the chick was really hot, or whether I was just
199 drunk. Maybe it was just because I was really Horney. We had been hooking up for hours so
200 it had just been building up (Both laugh). So we just hit the barn. I am pretty sure I cannot run
201 for public office anymore because there is properly a picture floating around somewhere of
202 me looking drunk. And like this unflattering picture of me like over this hot chick with a face
203 like I couldn't believe my luck. Umm and then ya, the next day I felt really bad. I felt like it
204 was almost my fault that we had hooked up. Like I had taken advantage of her or something.
205 But fuck, she came onto me man, I don't know, but I felt like I had taken advantage of her.
206 And then we didn't speak. And then my friends, they changed the number on my phone to
207 her. Neil changed his number on my phone to this chick's number and then he sent me like
208 this whole long message saying like I am pregnant like what are we going to do? So ya, it
209 has happened to me before that type of shit bro (Both laugh). And then we spoke to each
210 other on facebook like a month later. I was like we need to talk about this and I was like you
211 know I am really sorry about what happened blab la. Then ya, it just sort of ended.

212 I: What were her feelings about the whole thing?

213 P: I don't really know, we never really got into the whole thing. I think she felt, I think she
214 regretted it. I don't know if she regretted it because she thought that she had beer goggles or.
215 Hope not. But I think she might have regretted it because it just looks bad you know.
216 Especially in front of all those people. We basically just threw our names away dude. My
217 name is in Oxbraai. My reputation and everything was left in the gutter.

218 I: Ok, umm next one. You have kind of already covered this, but do you think alcohol has
219 ever clouded somebody else's judgment of you. Maybe you could try providing another
220 example?

221 P: Umm. Maybe that chick I just mentioned was one. I don't know if I am usually in her price
222 range. You know, she usually goes to the Bentleys. I think I am more like a range rover
223 (Both laugh). But I am still high level dude, but she is fucking really high level. Actually she
224 is with a short boyfriend now, like he is even shorter than me. So I think she digs short guys
225 actually. He is like a bit shorter than me, so he is fucking short. I don't know, I think it
226 might have been beer goggles. I don't know if she would ordinarily hook up with me. I don't
227 think it has happened in any other situations. I think the chicks who have hooked up with me
228 have all been pretty stoked (Both laugh). I never felt like I was the beer goggley. Although
229 the only person maybe was that chick because she was (pause). Fuck she was hot.

230 I: Ok, umm what do you think your friends thought of any of your experiences of beer
231 goggles?

232 P: well, they laughed at my face. Well they think it's the fucking funniest thing ever with my
233 beer goggles. Like we came up with the nickname for the one girl. The first one in matric we
234 called her the "quasasour" because quas means like getting drunk. Back then, we used to say
235 ya let's get quased. And you know she is like this fucking huge ugly dinosaur. So we called
236 her quasasour. (Both laugh). So they thought it was hilarious, they loved it. Um Vince, he
237 had the same thing with the one I hooked up with her at Rhodes. Same thing happened to
238 him. Same girl and he also had beer goggles. But they didn't have a condom so they didn't
239 have sex.

240 I: What is your friend's opinion of when they do it themselves?

241 P: When they do it themselves, I think it is the same. I think people tend to feel embarrassed.
242 I mean, there is also my one friend Blaine. I spent a year at UCT as well, and I and he used
243 to go out a lot. And he only likes to hook up with fine ass chicks. He usually gets pretty hot
244 chicks. This one night I remember. And he usually sticks to his own race as well. He doesn't
245 hook up with black chicks or anything. So we went out to this digs party. Me him and another
246 friend Nick. It was this whole big digs party up the road. We walked up to the digs party and
247 we were wearing like police hats, wife-beaters. Um what else? Um ya pink things. And then
248 there was this girl. And I walked into the kitchen with Vince as well. We walked in there and
249 then I turned my back for two seconds and Blaine was literally lifted up by a black chick and
250 he was being pushed against like the oven. Like they were just hooking up hectically. She
251 was like riding him, like you know he was the bitch. (Both laugh). Vince as well was leaning
252 against the stove hooking up with this black chick that he would never normally hook up
253 with. Speaking of which I also nearly had another bad beer goggles experience at UCT. It
254 was at the tennis club. And these three women and I was wearing? Do you remember those
255 boxers that I wore during first year? The penis boxers, the ones with the penis one them.

256 I: Yes, I do remember those.

257 P: I was just wearing those and like a pink woman's tank top and a cowboy hat and then like
258 sunglasses or something. It was like this cool party at this place. I remember these chicks
259 walked up to my friend Blaine and they grabbed his cock through because he also had the
260 penis boxers. They tried to touch his dick and stuff. It was an Indian girl and a white girl. I
261 can't remember how hot they were, but I don't think ordinarily I would have hooked up with
262 them. And then they both walked up to me and they were like "hey you wanna come back to
263 our place". I was like fuck yea because I think I was on the verge of having a threesome that
264 night. Luckily my friend Ziggy had all my money so I couldn't get a cab with these two
265 chicks. He was in the front of the line and by the time I had got my money they had
266 disappeared. My other friend left with them. But then he subsequently got freaked out by
267 them and so he ran away.

268 I: Yes, so what were your feelings after that?

269 P: After that? I was like that was a close fucking call. It was bad, I had a negative, i could
270 have gone. Jesus. I nearly went home with two fucking average looking and had sex with
271 them. Like it is in Cape Town. This is not like Rhodes. You know you wake up on beauford
272 street saying where the fuck am I? No this is different. Bro, you wake up in the centre of the
273 city and then I have to catch a Taxi or like a Jammie. Like it is just a mare and like it is
274 dangerous as well. Like it is just not a good idea to do that type of thing in Cape Town. That
275 is how you get kidnapped and stuff. It is bad (both laugh).

276 I: Ok, so what is your opinion of other friends that had experienced it?

277 P: I think it is hilarious. I just think it is something funny. The thing is I don't think badly of
278 them. You know in like a negative way. It doesn't make me loose respect for them or
279 anything like that. I think it is just a funny thing that happens to them. It happens to people
280 and you have to just laugh with them about it.

281 I: How common do you think beer goggles actually is?

282 P: How common do I think it is?

283 Um ya this conversation has sort of made me think. (Pause). Like I think it is common but I
284 don't think it is something that is almost like the luck of the draw in a way. I think when you
285 have a lot of drunk people in a room like you are bound to sort of get people of different sort
286 of social stratus hooking up sometimes. But, ya. And the only way that will ever happen is
287 with alcohol because that is the only way you lower peoples inhibitions. But I would say that
288 it is pretty common. I am pretty sure every night at Friars at least like thirty percent of the
289 hook-ups are between people who are not ordinarily the same sort of hotness.

290 I: Ok, um do you think the rest of society views it as a normal experience?

291 P: Well, it depends what part of society you are. I would say. I would say are usual, like the
292 social norms that me and you for example have grown up in sort of white male drinking sort
293 of maybe private schools. That sort of boychie culture. You know? Which we are all kind of
294 a part of in a way I think.

295 I: What do you mean by Boychie?

296 P: Like jockie. Like a white male type sort of thing. And black male and stuff. I mean you
297 have noticed at Rhodes there are different ways that people conduct themselves. Like I don't
298 think everyone at Rhodes gets drunk. I think like actually we are like the minority, but like
299 the most vocal minority.

300 I: So you're saying it is more common amongst white people and less common amongst the
301 other group?

302 P: I think it is more common. Um I am trying to think (Pause). No I think it is the same for
303 both races, but I know. I am pretty sure there is a section of Rhodes students (pause). What I
304 am trying to say is that it is common amongst people who drink basically. So it is not
305 amongst racial lines, but rather amongst social lines.

306 I: Ok, do you think it is normal to have beer goggles?

307 P: Yes, because it is like a logical thing. If you have alcohol, you lower your inhibitions and
 308 you do things that you wouldn't ordinarily do.

309 I: Does the acceptance or non-acceptance of beer goggles in society affect the opinions of
 310 behaviours that are associated with it?

311 P: I guess you could say it because I don't look at beer goggles as like. I will tell you, where I
 312 would be bleak with beer goggles would be if I ever got some pregnant under beer goggles.
 313 Like if I had sex with someone I wouldn't ordinarily be having sex with and something
 314 happened where either I got like a disease from them or I got them pregnant. You know
 315 Lauren was a nice girl, but I don't find her attractive at all. It wasn't really beer goggles
 316 because we didn't actually hook up. But I guess it does kind of count because. The thing is I
 317 was thinking it was. She claimed that (Pause). The whole prank was around was that she said
 318 she hooked up with me on my birthday when I was so drunk that I did have beer goggles. I
 319 don't remember anything from my birthday. So I took what she said as like a given. So
 320 chances are that I would have had beer goggles because I was that drunk. So this girl and a
 321 whole bunch of people from my residents got together and they realised that I was too drunk
 322 to remember anything from my birthday. They hatched a scheme where lolly would act like
 323 we had sex and that she was now pregnant as a result. When she told me those things, I think
 324 it is the single most worst thirty second experience of my entire life. I don't think I have ever
 325 gone through such extreme emotions in such a short amount of time.

326 I: So are you saying that there is a fine line when beer goggles are ok. It is fine getting drunk
 327 and maybe having sex, but if there are implications thereof such as pregnancy then it is not?

328 P: Ya then it is shame dude. I felt shamed. If it is an innocent like beer goggles thing like oh I
 329 hooked up with a fat chick then you can all laugh. But like can you imagine if I had actually
 330 her pregnant dude and then I had like a kid with her? I have been tricked into thinking I got a
 331 chick pregnant twice now. Like, everyone has that worry and can imagine themselves in that
 332 situation.

333 I: What would you say if somebody else got into that situation?

334 P: Yes I would. I would feel so terrible for them. I wouldn't lose respect for them because
 335 beer goggles happens to everyone and that is just bad luck. I wouldn't think any less of them
 336 because in my mind I feel like that could have been me, you know? Because when you are
 337 that drunk. I mean fuck I had sex with girls in public without a condom. Like I am scared
 338 about what I will do when I am that drunk. So I would be like ya, I feel so sorry for you dude.
 339 I can imagine being in that person's position and I am sure others can too.

340 I: Ok, that was great I think we are bout done. Let's go now?

7.7.2 Interview 2

1 I: Let me begin by stating that all the information used here is confidential in the your
2 identity will be kept private throughout the study. You also reserve the right to leave the
3 study at any time if you wish. Ok, so if you are ready then let's begin.

4 I: Ok, so umm have you ever heard of beer goggles and what is your understanding of it?
5 Could you please provide some examples?

6 P: Umm, yes, I have heard of it and I personally know many of my friends that have
7 experienced it, including myself. It is when you get so piss drunk that umm; you end up
8 thinking that somebody who is not hot is actually very attractive. Yes, it's just something you
9 end up regretting afterwards in the morning.. Well, I have been exposed to it. I have
10 experienced beer goggles myself. Umm, yea I got pretty drunk and some fat chick sort of
11 came onto me and I just you know? Things led from there and I sobered up very quickly and
12 ended up taking her home as quickly as I could. Trying to forget about the situation.

13 I: Ok yea. So you have kind of answered the second question. It is so chilled. The next
14 question was have you ever experienced beer goggles yourself and if so can you produce
15 some examples? Describe some of the feelings and thoughts that come with it.

16 P: Umm, ok. I suppose, you kind of think well that you are using the wrong head to think so
17 to say (laugh0. Umm, so I suppose the more drunker you get, the more control you loose of
18 the situation. So you become more primal and you don't really think too much about genetic
19 matching or you know whether the chick is like hot enough for your standards. Whatever.
20 Like that. You just think about sewing your seeds so to say. So to speak. So, umm (pause).
21 You end up hooking up with this chick and ya, it is a bad idea.

22 I: So, how do you feel about this situation?

23 P: Umm, really bad. Like what the hell did I do that for? Like I am such an idiot. She is ugly.
24 I feel like that you could have done better than that (laughs). Basically, I feel embarrassed
25 about the situation and that it does not show off my true potential. I feel that I should never
26 get into the situations where these kinds of things can happen. Like, umm getting that drunk
27 is never a good thing. Like, if you did that with a fat chick imagine what else you also did
28 whilst you were drunk. You probably also made a fool out of yourself.

29 I: Ok, next question. How often was often do you experience beer goggles? How often does it
30 occur?

31 P: Jeez, my last one was umm (pause). It occurred like last year third term. But I mean it
32 doesn't always happen that often. I don't think I get drunk too often. You know what
33 happens? You go out, get drunk, get horny. The chick is interested. You know? Like I said
34 before, you don't really care what she looks like. You just want to sew your seeds so to

35 speak. Take her home, bang her and then leave. She was a friend of a friend and I suppose we
36 kind of chatted like over Facebook or something like that. So it wasn't completely random,
37 but yea I kind of. If I had ever been sober or a little bit clearer thinking then I don't think
38 would have hooked up with her. But because I was drunk and she was keen? You know? One
39 of us just sort of takes the opportunity and just sort of goes it it. Like I said. I sobered up very
40 quickly and regretted what I had just done and so I tried to fix the situation but I couldn't. I
41 started off at Rat and then met up with her at Friars. Umm, I don't even think we hooked up
42 in friars. We only hooked up when we got home. I suppose then I was kind of aware of the
43 fact that she was fat and ugly. But beer goggles sort of (pause). Umm, that would be an
44 aspect of beer goggles wouldn't it? Knowing she is ugly, but just not giving a shit. Ya so you
45 know? I just sort of went for it.

46 I: Ok, so the next question is what are the usual patterns of events that precede you getting
47 beer goggles? Can you provide some examples?

48 P: Usually, going out and drinking a hell of a lot of spirits. Spirits definitely does it for me.
49 Spirits definitely raise my libido and (pause). But then I suppose the added effect of not
50 wearing my glasses when I go out also really adds to that beer goggles because I an actual
51 fact cannot see. So you know? Ya, well maybe it is a good thing because it sort of just adds to
52 the excuse. You know Ah, I could see that the seemingly attractive chick in front of me was
53 not a princess, but actually a whale because I was that drunk and I didn't have my glasses on.
54 So you know? Umm, but ya usually it is followed by drinking a heavy amount of spirits. Um,
55 sherbet, the last time it happened to me I must have had a pre-drinks somewhere and
56 (pause). Umm I think it was at that stage where I used to drink like a sever fifty mills
57 of (pause) What is that liquorish stuff called? I think it was Sambuca or something. Ya, I used
58 to drink like a full seven fifty mills of that shot vodka in one night at pre-drinks. Ya, then you
59 end up drinking more afterwards because you get thirsty (laugh). Ya, because you have some
60 silly idea in your mind that it is good to drink more. I think it lowers your inhibitions in that
61 way too. It not only makes you want to hook up with girls m e, but also drink more and do
62 more raucous stuff. Ya, it is like a vicious cycle that like keeps you crazy. You just have to
63 stop drinking.

64 I: Um, so what does it feel like during these situations?

65 P: Umm, what when you're hooking up with a chick? Well, probably pretty good actually.
66 When you are hooking up with a chick you know? You think you are satisfying her primal
67 needs and all the rest. So you know you kind of think, well this is great as I am getting my
68 dick wet. During the time there probably wasn't much thinking going on. Beside the fact that
69 you are thinking Yay! I am having naps man. You know? It never enters into your mind at
70 the time that you are going to regret what you are doing. You are not even really thinking.
71 You just focus on the immediate moment of hooking up with the chick and enjoying yourself.
72 I think that when you are under the presence of beer goggles, you sort of live in the present.
73 You know? But afterwards you sort of think what the shit did I do that for? Did I use a
74 condom that time? That was fucking stupid.

75 I: Um, so how did you behave in relation to those feelings on the night?

76 P: Well, when it happened I didn't behave very well. I ended up well. The chick ended up.
77 Well I only had a three quarters bed at the time and so the chick ended up taking up all of that
78 space. She kind of left me dangling on the floor. So I ended up you know? Like sleeping next
79 to an elephant seal (laugh). So I ended up making the excuse that I don't want to do the whole
80 one night sleep over after a one night stand thing. Yea, so I used that excuse and drove her
81 home and left her residents. Instead of saying you're so fat that you are taking up the entire
82 bed, I used the excuse that I don't generally let girls sleep over after we have had naps. So I
83 had to say, well put your clothes on and I am taking you home. Needless to say the chick
84 wasn't too happy with me afterword's, but I didn't actually give a shit at the time. I just felt
85 like getting her out of there. So she put her shit together and got in the car. There was no
86 sound and it was awkward. Which was fine with me because I didn't really want to talk?

87 I: Um, so how did you feel about this the next day?

88 P: Umm, I actually feel quite bad about the whole situation hey. At the time I thought it was
89 the best thing to do. But then again I think my whole judgement capability was completely
90 messed up by alcohol. Maybe that was just an excuse. Umm, like you know? Everybody has
91 those times when they make a mistake with a girl and they don't know what to do afterwards.
92 How do you spare their feelings? Like I could have just waited until the next morning to kick
93 her out, but then what good would have that done if I was never like going to see her again
94 anyway. We never really spoke again after that: I saw her once again on campus and it was
95 like really awkward. We never really said hi or anything. We just walked past each other sort
96 of like it doesn't always have to be associated with alcohol, but most of the time it is. Like I
97 felt bad the next day, but like I tried not to let these types of things get to me. I just sat and
98 watched TV and tried to take my mind off of things and just try forgetting about it. Urn, like
99 it is not. It is not like the sort of thing you want to happen with your night. Nobody say yay I
100 had beer goggles last night. Like, it is just something you would rather forget and leave
101 behind you. Umm, so ya.

102 I: Ok, well umm. Do you usually follow through with your desires when under the influence
103 of beer goggles? Provide one or two examples?

104 P: Ok, well, I must admit, in my shame, that I have actually hooked up with a girl or two
105 when I was sober that has not exactly been the hottest girls I know. But when I am drunk I
106 have also hooked up with a few. Yea, I do usually follow through with my desires when I am
107 that drunk. Umm, an example would be (pause). I remember vibing with this one girl at a
108 club. I think beer goggles for me, is enhanced when I am under stress (pause). So when I am
109 pressured to like. Umm to like date this girl or go and chat to this girl or whatever and I don't
110 want to. Particularly in this situation I didn't want to. You know? I will go and hook up with
111 another girl just for the sake of it. Umm, ya

112 I: Please elaborate on that as I don't quite understand.

113 P: Umm, ok. Well I feel pressurised to do it so I drink more to try and take my mind off the
114 pressure of these situations. But due to my personality type... You know the fact that you tell
115 me to do one thing and if I don't like it then I will do the exact opposite. And ya, so you
116 know with that. And I think because you know when you are drunk you sort of loose your
117 inhibitions and all the rest of it. You sort of think, oh well fuck the system. I am going to do
118 whatever the hell I want to do in this situation. You know? Umm, so ya. I ended up hooking
119 up with this chick in Monastery, who I now look at and shudder with regret because she is
120 not what I thought she was. That place is so dark and crazy anyway. Things like random
121 hook-ups just happen their anyway. She was really very gross. But, you know? Instead of
122 being a stress induced beer goggles situation, which then it ya (pause). I could have easily
123 have not hooked up with, you know. She was below my own social or appearance level if you
124 know what I mean? I could have just walked away, but I decided to anyway. I knew I had
125 been vibing with this other girl and I would properly fuck things up if I was to hook up with
126 her instead, but I decided to anyway. I was vibing with this other girl you see. I won't
127 mention names. And her mates. Well one of her mates is a good friend of mine. This mate
128 kept saying how stocked she was with me and this and that. You know? That we should date
129 etcetera etcetera. And I wasn't too sure if I wanted to. So you know? At the time I didn't
130 want to hurt people, but then again I didn't really want something too serious. So to
131 completely blow everything out of the water. You know, I went and got pissed and you know
132 hooking up with an ugly chick was an outcome. It was my way of saying that I wanted other
133 things instead of like having that awkward conversation. You know? So beer goggles helped
134 provide an excuse for my behaviour in that situation and also tell the chick that I wasn't keen
135 for her. Umm, that is not to say that I was extremely intoxicated. I was definitely under the
136 influence of beer goggles when I got with that fat chick to warn her off. I hooked up with
137 ugly chick because I was fooled about her sexiness and desperate to show that other girl that I
138 wasn't interested. Using beer goggles as an excuse for my choice of not hooking up with a
139 hotter chick was convenient.

140 I: Umm, ok. Umm, so are there any times where you haven't followed through with your
141 desires?

142 P: Umm, yea let me think. Umm, ya, there has been a few times. You know you end up
143 getting quite drunk most weekends at Rhodes. Because I am sort of naturally sort of a
144 friendly person. You know? You end up chatting to all these girls who are sometimes actually
145 unattractive and all the rest of it. But, you know? You just don't see it. But when you are
146 drunk. As soon as they start coming onto you, you might start moving back sort of quite
147 quickly. I don't know whether that is still beer goggles because like you are still pissed but
148 you can't think clearly, but you can sort of see the fact that they are not attracted to them and
149 you are actually not keen on them. So kind of like, being drunk made me very stupid in my
150 decisions of which girls I was talking to. But soon as shit started getting raucous in those
151 times, I realised that the chicks weren't pretty and run the fuck away.

152 I: Yea, I understand.

153 P: You know? Like sometimes you will notice your friends looking at you strangely when
154 you are flirting with these girls and you will begin to think that maybe I shouldn't be doing
155 this. Or your levels of alcohol start decreasing and then you begin to think oh fuck this chick
156 is way larger and less pretty. Why was I chatting her up in the first place? I think drink makes
157 me flirty with everyone. And like because I am just having fun and not thinking, I end up
158 chatting to these crazy chicks and only realising my error after a while. Like oh, fuck! How
159 am I going to get out of this one?

160 I: Yea that makes sense. Can you think of any other times maybe?

161 P: Umm, I don't know. Like I have had times where I have to restrain myself because I am in
162 a relationship. You know? Like you can't just go getting with other chicks when you're drunk
163 and use that as an excuse for when your girlfriend gets mad. Other chicks do definitely start
164 to look more attractive you know? But there is nothing you can do about it. I think everyone
165 starts to look more attractive when people are getting drunk. When you have drunk people
166 everywhere, like you are bound to get a few people hooking up because they have had too
167 much booze. You know? Like girls always start to look hot when you are very drunk. I mean
168 it is difficult depending on how drunk you are, but I would never cheat and so you just have
169 to stare maybe (laugh0. Like you shouldn't do anything.

170 I: Thank you. Umm, so what is it like when you wake up the next morning after beer
171 goggles? Could you maybe provide some examples?

172 P: Well there is an example. Well, there was a time when I ended up jamming with these hot
173 girls and umm you know I think I ended up driving my car home. I don't remember the walk
174 back to residents and stuff. But anyways I woke up in the morning thinking. Ya jeez last
175 night was great. And then the next minute you know pictures are being posted on Facebook.
176 And you sort of get the impression that you might have hooked up with this hot chick, but
177 you don't really remember much of it. So ya It was kind of like, the more talking you do to
178 people and the more you like look at the picture, the more like your memories come back and
179 all the rest. The more you know, people determine the fact that she was not hot at all: Which
180 I, suppose leaves you, umm feeling a bit bummed, I don't know. I kind of hoped that I had
181 hooked up with this hot chick, but I didn't. Ya, I kind of just stopped talking about it after
182 that because what I thought happened didn't actually happen.

183 I: Ok, umm do you have any other examples maybe?

184 P: Umm, jeez, you want another example. Yea (pause) I don't know (pause). To be honest
185 like you know, you might meet a chick out and you might think she is quite cute. You know
186 then you don't hook up with her the first night whilst you are out. And then you know you
187 meet her again a couple fo nights later. You know? You might have gotten her number or
188 something. You get horny and what not. You know? You just like want to have fun. So you

189 call this chick up because you know she is keen. Even though she is average you sort of use
190 the situation to your advantage. Umm ya.

191 I: What do you mean by your own advantage?

192 P: You know? You would go out and you hit like rock bottom and she is like you know your
193 last resort sort of thing. You get so pissed that you just don't give a shit. Like you just say like
194 oh sweet I know I can get action on her so like let's call her up. And ya. Like, you just don't,
195 your inhibitions just disappear and you just don't give a shit as long as you get action. And
196 that is regardless of any of the sort of consequences.

197 I: umm, so what are your thoughts and feelings when you wake up the next morning?

198 P: Umm, well, it depends if the girl is under the same sort of mind-set. If you feel that you are
199 took advantage of her in the situation because she was drunker then you, then you really feel
200 bad. I mean, like it depends on what you did. If you just hooked up then is fine, but if you had
201 sex with her then you're a bad man. That is if you were sober and she was drunk drunk. The
202 other way around though, like you know, when you hook up with an ugly girl isn't as bad.
203 When I have hooked up because of beer goggles, the next day I have just felt really dirty and
204 kind of ashamed of myself. You know? I felt like I could have done better and that I had let
205 myself down. There are many other possibilities and I talked to the average one. For an
206 example, after like the morning after. Whether you hooked up with this girl or not. You know
207 you meet a girl that is an average appliance for beer goggles right? It doesn't mean that she
208 has to be horrific. You know, it could be someone average. Whether you hook up or not, you
209 use the fact that she is still keen on you as a back-up. Alcohol definitely plays a role because
210 the next morning after you meet the girl you end ya that girl was pretty cute. Because you
211 were drunk and perceived her as hot, you are more likely to use her as a back-up. As you only
212 meet her again when you are also pissed you wanna and do hook up with her. Because you
213 make some sort of connection with this girl through being pissed. Now I had this mental
214 picture in my head of this girl being quite nice and I am drunk the second night so I hook up
215 with her. The beer makes a false image of her. By the time like we went out again, I was
216 pissed. So I had no way of correcting that image. So in this, the alcohol kind of compounded
217 over two nights. Once you think you have developed that connection, you might go stalk
218 Facebook and think what did I do that for?

219 I: Umm, ok. Continue. So you think you wouldn't hook up with her if you were sober?

220 P: Ya, ya. If I was sober you know you might meet this girl and yes you might have a
221 connection. But if you were sober, you sort of have that extra bit of ability to sort of put her
222 in the friend zone and such. To say, yea, she is kind of cool to go and hang out with and such,
223 but I would never really want to go and like hook up with her. Drunk environments sort of
224 elicit hooking up. If I was drunk, like the likelihood of me throwing away an opportunity to
225 hook up with a girl would be less. Beer goggles are not only like a sight thing. It is also to do
226 with emotions. So when like you are under the influence of alcohol your emotions are almost

227 tampered with. Umm, so yea. You know? You would think differently compared to if you
228 were sober. You kind of like become more desperate and horny because you are in a club
229 context. Ya, like that makes sense right?

230 I: umm, yea it does man I think. So do you feel that alcohol has ever clouded anyone else's
231 perception of your own attractiveness?

232 P: My attractiveness? Umm, to be honest, yes. Umm, I remember night at Origin in Durban
233 sitting there kind of drunkish. And umm, this hot like really hot blond girl coming up to some
234 of my brothers mates that were there. I was with my brother mates. And she said to them that
235 he is kind of cute and then she came and like lunged me. She bloody sucked my face for like
236 three hours afterwards. Umm and. You know? I like got her number and tried to contact her
237 the next day. She didn't want anything to do with it. You know that is like the first time I
238 have ever got rejected on BBM. Like it was hectic. It was like this number has rejected your
239 request to be friends. Umm, so ya.

240 I: Umm, so what were your thoughts and feelings in relation to that rejection?

241 P: Umm, quite sad actually. You know, you kind of feel a bit rejected. Sort of like a bit sore,
242 like ouch that hurt. I thought she was kind of nice, but obviously she was not. During it, I
243 kind of felt a bit insecure. I though like is this chick only hooking up with me because she is
244 pissed or because she thinks that I am hot. You know? Like is she going to go and have sex
245 with someone in the bathroom and then start kissing me (both laugh). You know? You also
246 kind of worry about the diseases and other consequences that come with a girl that just hooks
247 up randomly.

248 I: How did you behave in relation to those feelings during and maybe after she rejected you
249 in those stories?

250 P: Umm, jeez. I don't know. Well during the time, I really enjoyed it hey. I mean who
251 wouldn't want a hot blond chick with big boobs hooking up with you. But you know, then ya
252 I suppose then you sort of think afterwards that it would be nice if I could chat to her and then
253 you find out she is not interested in talking to you. You know, although she is a hot chick,
254 you just don't like that sort of feeling of someone not wanting to get to know you. Ya it hurts
255 a bit. It bashes your confidence levels. I went about my daily happening, but like you know
256 like every day I would check to see if she had accepted my request. Which weirdly enough
257 she had actually she had actually put her pin in my phone. So I kind of think she was really
258 pissed and didn't remember. But like on the off chance that she did remember. I was excited.
259 There was a build-up of emotion being happy and then just a big let-down after the rejection
260 where like I kind of just felt sad like blaaaa.

261 I: What do you think your friends would think of your experiences with beer goggles? Umm,
262 please provide some examples if you can.

263 P: Umm, ya my mates have always been sort of making jokes about it. They have ripped me
264 off a few times with the fact that I have hooked with a few whales in my time (laugh). Like
265 you know? One of my friends likes to refer to this girl as Mrs. Piggy. Like oh ya remember
266 when you hooked up with Mrs. Piggy ha-ha. You know it sort of makes you feel a bit like a
267 shitty character on Sesame Street.

268 Umm, so what are you feelings in relation to those jests?

269 P: Ahh, completely indifferent really. I know my mates are just making fun, so I don't really
270 get too touched by it all. Because well, I know that I fucked up and you know things like that
271 happen. Everyone has to have those experiences some time. Obviously I regret my behaviour,
272 but you can't dwell on it for too long you know? I think your mates making fun of you is kind
273 of a way to help you get over the situation. It kind of like you know? Creates a comedy out of
274 it and takes all the seriousness away. It kind of makes the whole situation seem light hearted
275 and fun.

276 I: Ok, so umm, what is your opinion of others who have experienced it?

277 P: How I feel about other people, like other peoples beer goggles experiences? Umm, jeez, I
278 always make fun. I always make fun of other people. I mean it is fantastic when you see one
279 of your mates hooking up with a minger of a chick. You know, I mean you always expect a
280 little bit of flak back if you do the same. But you know, it is always so much fun. Making fun
281 of the guys who hooks up with the person who nobody wants to hook up with because they
282 are manly or too fat or whatever. So ya, but I mean it is all good and fun, you know? It is not
283 sort of like mean really. It is like ya, everybody does there bit for charity: It is like shame he
284 is doing his bit for the community. Everybody does it. But you know, it is not like ah you
285 didn't go to church on a Sunday, like you are going to hell sort of a situation. It is chilled. The
286 fact that you had beer goggles does not mean society views you as a bad person. I don't take
287 getting drunk as always been a good excuse, but at the same time I don't think society really
288 is too touched by it. Rhodes society is very chilled about naps and all those kind of things. So
289 nobody can judge because everyone has hooked up. Well hopefully (pause).

290 I: Could you provide any examples?

291 P: Umm, I don't know (pause) Umm, well, a friend of mines story. Well, him and another
292 good friend of mine ended up going out to friars in first year. And he ended up hooking up
293 with this chick in the comer of friars against the wall, who he thought was really hot. Umm,
294 but then ya, like the day afterwards my friend pulled him into his room and said like ya dude
295 you hooked up with this chick who was really ugly. My friend was still thinking she was
296 really hot. He proved that the chick was not hot. You know? Showed him pictures etc. I mean
297 this chick was large in first year hey and my friend even managed to pick her up on the dance
298 floor (both laugh). He was so drunk that he actually thought that chick he hooked up with was
299 hot, but she wasn't. We had so much fun mocking him about it. But then that friend of mine
300 is such a slut anyway we have to make fun of him all the time with all the girls he brings
301 home over when he is drunk. Umm, so ya.

302 I: Umm, so how common do you think beer goggles actually is?

303 P: I feel as though it is quite common. Especially at a tertiary education system like Rhodes.
304 You know? Like people are often getting very drunk and having their senses fucked up to a
305 point where they will do anything really. Umm, so ya. Although I don't know what it would
306 be like in a normal society and when I say normal I mean like working people. I think a place
307 like Rhodes allows things to happen that wouldn't necessarily happen as frequently in a
308 normal situation. So it is uncommon in most other places, but common in sort of like drinking
309 places like Rhodes.

310 I: umm, ok so do you feel that society views beer goggles as a normal thing?

311 P: Umm, look (pause). Ya I think I do. It is a phenomenon that has being proven to occur. I
312 mean our old psychology lecturer has lectured us on it. We even had to do an assignment on
313 it. So yes I think it is a thing that is normal in a sense. Umm, when I say normal, umm I want
314 to say not necessarily accepted, but something that happens that isn't out of the ordinary. If
315 you talk about society general, you are looking at a whole variety of demographics and
316 cultures. One culture in society could still be aware of it but not necessarily accept it. If it
317 were to happen for example within some sort of culture. Umm like when I say this I mean
318 that it is a phenomena that everyone knows about and it's not out of the ordinary. Therefore I
319 think it is normal, in inverted commas. Ya but(pause).We just have too many different
320 cultures and different environments to say that it is going to be accepted and as well
321 welcomed as like it is in Rhodes to everyone else. Not everybody will accept it as a valid
322 excuse. Umm, we just can't make any huge generalizations.

323 I: Umm, ok so we have kind of covered this already but do you think beer goggles is normal
324 and maybe why?

325 P: Umm, yes. If you had asked me the same question four years ago when I wasn't in
326 University I wouldn't have said so. But yes because I have been exposed to and affected by
327 it. That is my answer. It is as plain and simple as that. Umm (pause). You know, you can't
328 exactly have been subjected to beer goggles and be aware of it and then completely deny it. I
329 used Rhodes as an example of a drinking community. Where people drink more it is more
330 likely to like occur hey.

331 I: Umm, ok so does how others feel about your beer goggles experiences affect your
332 behaviours and feelings at all?

333 P: Ya, umm definitely. Ya I think that you know, most people are socially aware of things.
334 Unless you are that pissed that you just don't give a shit about anything, I think you are going
335 to care what society thinks about beer goggles. Umm, ya, you are going to be affected by
336 what people think of you, you know how people view you. What the people around you think
337 of the situation, you know? If you are with a bunch of church going happy clappy friends,
338 you are less likely to get pissed and less likely to not behave accordingly. In this situation,
339 with like your normal mates and your just having a absolute fat jol. And nobody actually

340 gives a shit. You are just like yea I have got to hook up with a few frogs to hit the princess's.
341 Then ya, you are more likely to be like ya fuck it whatever. It is so chilled. What is hooking
342 up with this grunter going to do? How is it going to affect me really, like you know? Like you
343 know? Any experience is sometimes a good experience. Well, not necessarily, but you know?
344 Any experience is a good experience because it can be used to sort of enhance your future.
345 Here I would be so chilled. If I was under the influence of beer goggles, I wouldn't think
346 otherwise about hooking up with a girl, other than I just wanted to hook up with this doll. I
347 wouldn't be thinking ohh, what are my mates really going to think or whatever. People accept
348 it here. I was just thinking now. Obviously if you are really drunk then it doesn't seem to
349 matter because you are not thinking correctly. But ya, if you are not that drunk, then um you
350 know? Your own morals and levels of standards sort of come into play. You know? It is not
351 only society or what people think of the situation around you. It is what you deem to be good.
352 So doesn't matter sometimes whether society is fine with it. What matters is that I did not
353 want to my own opinion get with chicks that I wouldn't normally find attractive. Umm, ya,
354 that is it.

355 I: Cool, I think we are about done.

7.7.3 Interview 3

1 I: Let me begin by stating that all the information used here is confidential in that your
2 identity will be kept private in this study. I must also state that you reserve the right to leave
3 the study at any time if you wish. Ok, now, that is out of the way. Let's begin.

4 I: Ok, so we are starting. Have you ever heard of beer goggles and what is your
5 understanding of it? Please provide an example of the behaviours and emotions that you think
6 are associated with it.

7 P: Umm, I have heard of beer goggles. Umm, as I understand it, beer goggles is umm when a
8 person could get inebriated using drugs or alcohol whatever. Umm, beer goggles tends
9 towards alcohol. Umm, and they become. Beer goggles is when they become so inebriated or
10 drunk that they start losing their inhibitions and they think they are surrounded by pretty girls.
11 They hook up with a girl that they think was really pretty. Think that they have done well.
12 Then the next day they wake up hungover and realise that the person they had hooked up
13 with was not as pretty as they had thought. Ugly as shit (laugh).

14 I: Ok, umm. So have you experienced beer goggles yourself? So please provide like some
15 examples. Say your feelings and emotions that were attached therein.

16 P: Umm, Yes, I have myself. Umm, one of my most hectic beer goggles situations was umm,
17 actually a 21'1 in Clermont. I would say a friend of a friend. Umm or a friend of my resident
18 Botha was having a 21'1 and she invited quite a few Botha boys along, me included. Umm, it
19 ended up being a group of like 20 people. Umm and ya, we got to the house in Clermont and
20 we met everyone. And there were some pretty girls and some not so pretty girls. Umm and
21 we were just chilling around. Hadn't really started drinking and one of the chairs was a
22 rocking chair that started squeaking? We all made this joke you know umm that we were
23 going to to hear the squeaking because people were going to have sex on it. Somebody
24 squeaking on this chair. Everybody is going to know. Ahh we know exactly what you are
25 doing. So we started drinking. You know drinking, drinking and playing drinking games. We
26 started off with punch and then the spirits came and then drinking games like drinking limbo
27 How Low can you go. Umm, yea that was a horrendous idea. Umm yea and we ended up
28 going to the beach and this is late at night. I mean all of us were fucked out of our minds.
29 And umm, a friend comes up to me and he says and says this, Ris is keen on you. I am ohh
30 who is this chick. She was shall we say not one of the pretty girls (laugh). So we get to the
31 beach, we carry on drinking and eventually we end up skinny dipping in the umm lagoon.
32 Umm, and again this is fucking late at night. And, umm, so we chatting whatever and it ends
33 up with just me and Ris in the water, in the corner. And I can't really remember, but we
34 ended up hooking up naked as the fucking day we were born. Umm, and still to this day I
35 have not received a BJ that was as good as that because it was an underwater BJ. Oh my god.
36 Dude, oh my god. Umm, so we hook up and she gives me a BJ whatever. And umm I am like
37 you know what I am ok with this. She might not be the prettiest looking girl, but you know
38 she gave a dam good BJ. I was so horny that I didn't really care (laugh). And you know
39 Rhodes is Rhodes, you know? I didn't really give a shit. I mean ya she wasn't the prettiest
40 girl, but she was a nice person and it was a good hook up. So I was fine with it. At least at
41 that stage(pause)

42 I: Ok, so carry on (laughs)

43 P: Ok, so umm we ended up going back to the house. Surprise surprise we carry on drinking.
44 3, 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning whenever it was, people start tending to go towards bed. And
45 of course me and Ris we are hanging back. Soya (Both laugh). We get on that rocking chair
46 and we fix the squeak (Laughs). Umm and to this day my nickname with some of the guys
47 over there is still rocking chair because we fix that squeak. Umm, yea but it gets better. So we
48 fix the squeak because we realise that maybe we are making a bit too much noise. So ya we
49 get on the floor. Get some carpet burns, you know? Umm, so anyway we do the dirty and we
50 are quite sweaty afterwards because its summer. So we are like cool, let's go for a shower.
51 You know maybe take this to the shower kind of thing. We thought he inside shower would
52 make more noise and people would wake up and they would know. We hadn't realized that
53 everybody had already hear the rocking chair and woken up already. So we go to their
54 outdoor shower. Umm, so we go to their out-door shower. We start showering and making
55 out and whatever. What we didn't know was that the out-door shower was right next door to
56 the birthday girls parents room. (Both laugh). And it was in the middle of a water crisis in
57 Clermont. So the dad comes out and shouts did you know we are having, like what the hell
58 you are doing man. You know like going off at us. Like going off at me because I am
59 standing in the front. Eventually suddenly he stops and he goes all red and he is like ohh
60 sorry sorry man and he runs off. Umm needless to say the mood had been somewhat
61 diminished thanks to the dad. So we went off to bed and we slept. We woke up the next
62 morning and the whole place knew. Obviously the dad and the mum had been talking (Both
63 laugh). Everyone had heard the rocking chair. So everyone knew. And you know it was quite
64 a genial thing. It wasn't even like mocking. Everyone was like chilled and laughing. So at
65 that morning I was quite positive about it. I wasn't like oh shit, I hooked up with an ugly girl.

66 I: Ok, so how did you feel about it like later the next week or something?

67 P: Yea, yea, I am getting to that now. Umm, so basically we ended up coming back to
68 Rhodes. They are like you know man should we like tell the other guys that you hooked up
69 with Ris because apparently one of the other Botha guys has also experienced Ris. So I was
70 like, you know? I don't care. I was still very positive from the morning almost. So I was like
71 ya its chilled. You can tell everyone. Ya that is when the hectic mocking started (Both laugh).
72 Everyone started telling everyone. Like saying ha-ha he hooked up with this girl etcetera. To
73 this day, we still mock each other about it, because the other guy had it quite rough. He ended
74 up getting scratches on his back so bad like it almost scarred him. I have also got my
75 experiences with her. So we still mock each other. So for like the next week or two afterward
76 I was like jeez maybe I shouldn't have done that because people were mocking me and being
77 mean. You know? Stuff like that.

78 I: Alright, so when was your last beer goggles experience and how often does it occur?

79 P: Umm, for me I would say my last proper beer goggles experience was probably sometime
80 last year. Umm, how often does it occur you say? It depends on my mood I would say. You
81 know, if I am more in the mood to party and have a good time and I don't really care about
82 girls. Umm, then I don't really try to go for any type of girl or whatever. I don't even try
83 going for girls, I just have fun with my friends. But if I am more in you know, a raunchy type
84 of mood (both laugh), then umm having a few can exacerbate that need or desire associated
85 with beer goggles. Like my mood helps bring out the beer goggles.

86

87 I: Ok yea that's fine. Umm, so what is your usual pattern of events that precedes you having
88 beer goggles? So like provide an example.

89 P: Umm. My usual pattern. Umm ya, it is almost the usual night out at Rhodes. You know? I
90 go have some pre-drinks wherever I am going. It can be my old res, it can be at digs, and it
91 can be wherever. So ya, lots of alcohol is involved. Umm for example, so I will give an
92 average night. So pre-drinks at a place, followed by definitely drinking games. You know to
93 help get more alcohol in me. Followed by maybe some drinks at Rat. It is normally round
94 about here were guys are you know guys become less focused on the drinking and more on
95 the girls. Guys are like ohh that girl is pretty. Umm, so ya it moves from you know let's get
96 drunk and have a look around at the same time. Umm, yea and then we move to friars and
97 then we look all around. Or even at the girl that you had your eye on. Of course we carry on
98 drinking at friars or whatever and I will just go up to a girl and go hey howzit, how you
99 doing? (Both laugh).

100 I: Ok, ya that is good. You pretty much covered that. Umm do you usually follow through
101 with your desires when under the influence of beer goggles? Please provide some example of
102 those behaviours?

103 P: Yes I do. Umm. Jeepers. Umm I (pause). There was one night a couple of years back. We
104 have been drinking at a friend's digs. Of course we were drinking so we didn't want to drive.
105 So we were walking out. The drinks had been quite excessive because we were very very\
106 drunk. Umm. And then this car pulls up and there is this blond chick saying do you want a lift
107 I am going to friars. I am like aweh cool; we are going to friars as well, so we jump in the car.
108 As we start chatting I'm like you know this chick she is quite the pretty one. You know blond
109 with big boobs you know? Quite a genial type of personality. So we get to friars and we start
110 jamming at the bottom bar and I start thinking you I could take this girl home. Umm and then
111 it ended up just me and her. And the power cuts and I am thinking lovely Eskom, lovely
112 Eskom (laughs). So I was like praise Eskom and then I lunged. And um we went back to her
113 place and went back out and then we went back to my place. Jeez desires were definitely
114 followed through

115 I: Ok, so what happens after that story?

116 P: Umm. Ok. Umm so I woke up and she was still kind of pretty. She wasn't really hot, but
117 she was average. So we became fuck buddies after that. So yea that was a fun experience. So
118 we ended up hooking up quite a number of times when I was wasted just for desire sake. But
119 a couple of weeks down the line I started noticing that she was quite the crazy one. And she
120 wasn't that hot so ya. Umm, she even wanted to do anal without a condom and stuff, which
121 freaked me the fuck up. Umm, so and she almost stalked me. Almost. She always messaged
122 me. All the fucking time. It was horrible. And even when I was talking to other girls. You
123 know just being cordial and being friendly. She was like you cannot do that. It was like all
124 this between us is just sex. And eventually it got to the stage where she was like harassing me
125 and also the people I was with. Because during the week she would meet some of my friends
126 when they were out. And if I wasn't out then she would be like where is he? Where the fuck
127 is he?

128 I: Ok, so how did you feel about these consequences?

129 P: Umm (laugh) the consequences of this crazy chick? Umm, initially I enjoyed it. I enjoyed
130 the first week thinking yea I am a man I have a fuck buddy. But then the realisation of how
131 crazy she was and much of a stalker she was made me think fuck, I should not have done
132 that. I have to bail. And I bailed hard. I sent her quite a mean message saying this is over. I
133 sent her a text, I didn't even see her face to face. So I was quite a dick. Umm, but basically I
134 saw her a couple of weeks later and she gave me this terrible look. And I was like you know?
135 Actually I am glad I got that out of my system. Yes I have had the experience and that was
136 good, but I am glad to get that crazy bitch the fuck away from me (laugh). It was kind of
137 embarrassing as one of my friends brings it up every now and again. But it is in a joking fun
138 manner so I am fine with it.

139 I: Ok, yea that is a good example. But would you say it's your usual thing? Are there any
140 occasions when you don't follow through with your desires?

141 P: Umm, there are some nights where I go out and I am looking for some strange almost.
142 Umm, it is almost like I try too hard. I don't know why but if I go out to have fun with my
143 mates then I hook up. But if I go out to find chicks. You know I am going to get a betty like
144 tonight then it doesn't happen. It doesn't happen as much than if you just go out to have fun.
145 It is many a few nights this has happened to me. I have gone out to find a Betty and I go
146 home alone and unhappy. So, yea like when I really have those desires, often I cannot follow
147 through with them because I am too keen. I only get girls when I don't initially have those
148 desires to begin with. Umm, like when I just want to hang out with friends.

149 I: So have there ever been times where you have had those desires because you are really
150 drunk, but you can't act because you are in a relationship for example?

151 P: Umm, No, I have never really had that experience when I have a girlfriend. I just don't
152 think about other girls really. I have had a couple of girlfriends and I have never had the urge
153 to go after other women when I am drunk. I mean ya I might agree that a chick is good
154 looking, but you know it would just never enter into my mind to cheat. You know?

155 I: Ok, cool, we are doing well. So what is it like when you wake up the next morning after
156 beer goggles? Please provide an example.

157 P: Umm, it ranges actually. But most of the time I am thinking you know I had a good night.
158 Ya, maybe the chick wasn't as mooi as I thought she was but I had a good night so thanks
159 almost. I mean I am not 100 per-cent oh my god you are a fucking siffass chick, get out my
160 house kind of thing. You fucking grunter. Umm, I am like cool, you know? I properly
161 wouldn't do you again. Although I have done that before. But most of time I am like I
162 wouldn't repeat that again, but it is chilled we had fun almost.

163 I: ok, so how do you behave in relation to that?

164 P: Ya, I just try to react casually. I hate awkwardness. I am always just trying to be casual and
165 trying to just keep her happy so she doesn't get all shy and all that kind of stuff. So we wake
166 up in the morning and I am like hey howzit baby how you doing? I will get up and make her
167 coffee or something and you know just keep it casual. You, know? You are here at Rhodes to
168 have every kind of experience, you know? You are here to have a good time. Just go along
169 with it. It is all part of the learning process man.

170 I: Ok, well, have you ever had any negative feelings after a beer goggles event?

171 P: Umm, ya there was this one chick where it took me a while. Where I was like maybe I
172 shouldn't do that again. To be fair it was after a couple of times of doing it again. So umm in
173 the end. Umm basically we hooked up and I wasn't keen to do it again. And jeez she nagged
174 and nagged. Sending me messages and messages forever. The awkward thing was that I was
175 good friends with one of her digs mates. So umm, I caught it in the ear from my friend, but
176 that was more her mocking me for hooking up with her than anything else. But, umm in the
177 end I just started ignoring her messages. I tried explaining to her that I am not keen and
178 whatever and then she would go on a whole rant saying she is not pretty and whatever. You
179 don't love me anymore and all that kind of stuff. And once I actually got pissed off with her
180 and said yes you are a fucking ugly bitch and still she came back to harass me all the time.
181 Crazy girl with her harassment. I felt kind of kak telling her off. Because you know I am
182 quite a nice guy. But at the same time I was like this chick has been messaging me for like
183 weeks now and this is after I told her that I had had enough. Eventually I just didn't give a
184 shit. I started ignoring her messages. Once I actually got a friend to call her and say that I am
185 currently in a relationship so stay away from my guy (laugh).

186 I: Ok, yea (laugh, so do you feel that alcohol has ever clouded anyone else's perception of
187 you? Can you maybe provide an example?

188 P: Jeez, Umm, I would hope not (Laugh). Umm again I haven't. There have been some
189 awkward mornings when waking up. But I don't know. It hasn't been obvious like a chick
190 saying oh my god this guy is disgusting. Get out my house kind of shit. Yea, it hasn't been
191 obvious. Once or twice I think I have kind of got that feeling. I once hooked up a while ago
192 in like first or second year. Umm, I hooked up with a very pretty very pretty girl. Umm and I
193 found her number and I messaged her and no reply. I was ok cool whatever. And I saw her
194 the next weekend and she pretty much ignored me. I mean she was working as the bar tender
195 at friars. Umm but at the same time I was at least expecting the courtesy of hey how you
196 doing that kind of thing. So yea I would say yes it has happened. I think she was misguided in
197 her attraction to me because she was so fucking drunk.

198 I: So what were your thoughts and feelings in relation to that?

199 P: Umm, I was a bit peeved. Umm just a bit of common courtesy would have been
200 nice you know. Umm to say ok cool we hooked up and it was a cool night but I am not
201 keen anymore. I would have been ok with that. Like I had a good night and that would
202 have been fine. But yea, none of that kind of happened. So I was peeved that she hadn't
203 you know? That she had been so stand-offish against me. I pretty much just left her bar
204 and went to another bar. I got together with my friends and got horrendously drunk. I got
205 taken home by my friends.

206
207 I: Umm, ok. So what do your friends think of any of your experiences?

208 P: Umm, jeez, they are quite verbal on a number. The Ris from Clement being one of them.
209 Whenever I see a couple of my friends who were around at that time. They always bring it up
210 in the conversation at least once or twice. Umm, same with my friend who was mates with
211 that other girl. She always seems to bring it up at least once in the conversation whenever I
212 see her. It is almost like a kind of mocking joke, like hey do you remember doing that? Ha-
213 ha. The best was that six friends of mine knew that I had hooked up with the crazy of all
214 crazies. And jeez they always bring it up, mocking me about doing the dirty with her. It is

215 almost like this mocking joke. It is very genial, but it has kind of allured to me that maybe I
216 should pull back a bit and be a bit circumspect when hooking up with chicks so I don't get
217 mocked kind of thing.

218 I: How do you feel in relation to those jokes?

219 P: I know, it actually brings a smile to my face. Because first of all that night is a good
220 memory and then you know? It is a fun time between me and my friend talking about my sort
221 of screw ups in inverted commas. But then at the same time, I know there beer goggles
222 events so I can always get them back. It is kind of like friendly verbal banter, you
223 know? I am always fine with it because it's very light hearted and fun.

224 I: Cool umm, so what is your opinion of others who have experienced it?

225 P: Pretty much the same. Yea, Yea. I mean, I always say we are at Rhodes to have fun and to
226 have certain experiences you know. And if you hook up with an ugly chick or ugly guy, it is
227 part of your experience. It is part of sort of life lessons or whatever that kind of stuff. So I am
228 almost pro hooking up with gruntes through beer goggles. You know, everybody does their
229 bit for charity (laugh). Umm, if both people know, you know. It is a drunk event and it gives
230 you that experience. Like for myself I have learnt from my experiences and from mocking
231 my friends. I have learnt that don't get as drunk and don't always get as raunchy. Later in my
232 Rhodes career, I have had all these experiences and whatever and now I know my limits. I
233 know how to tell the difference or whatever. It is all about experiences. As I said I am almost
234 pro beer goggles because it teaches you life lessons that you need to develop in the future.

235 I: Ok, cool we done that. So how common do you think beer goggles is?

236 P: Umm, it depends on the context I guess and where you are. Like here at Rhodes it is a
237 common term and a common experience. People are always drinking. Pretty much every
238 weekend. You know, on a Sunday or a Saturday night there is always a person been tuned to
239 saying ha-ha you hooked up with a grunter on Friday or Saturday night. Umm, it is almost
240 like a rite of passage. At Rhodes you kind of have to experience beer goggles. And umm. But
241 at the same time I go home and it's different. With my friends at home, they also know the
242 term, they also experience it. But they experience it a lot less you know, because my home is
243 a lot larger than Grahamstown. Umm I also hear and know about them less. You can take this
244 even further and say it is a term that my parents hardly know. I mean I am pretty sure that I
245 have heard it and they have probably back in their day experienced it. But you know, it isn't
246 such a common term in their circles, whereas it is a very common term in my circle right
247 now. Umm, like I said it depends on the context. Here at Rhodes its fine.

248 I: Ok so do you feel that beer goggles is a normal experience in general

249 P: Umm, I don't know (pause). Like I said society in general. Yea I don't know. It is hard
250 because I am trying to weigh up the society in general. Here at Rhodes it is common, very
251 common. Umm other universities are also very common. Umm, but society in general, I think
252 it would almost be frowned upon. I don't know (pause). It is a common occurrence; it is
253 actually in the drinking places. But it is not quite accepted in the general society. It is more
254 like ohh you, your dirty doing that, just stay away kind of thing. It is not that it is not strictly
255 accepted, but just that it is not so good. It is frowned upon. It is not necessarily thought of as
256 a good thing in all the circles although most people are ok with it.

257 I: Ok, yea that makes sense. So do you, yourself think beer goggles is normal?

258 P: Umm yea I definitely think it is normal. I mean we are in a society where you got drinking
259 that is almost needed to help people cope with the stress load, of their experiences every
260 week. You know? You know it is often that people go out. On a Friday night people go wild
261 on Friday nights because it is the weekend bro. You know that saying work for the weekend.
262 That is it. You know, halleluiaah it is the weekend: I can go out and let off some steam. So
263 people they all go out. People are bound to drink a lot and hook up with less attractive people.
264 Beer goggles is bound to happen.

265 I: Ok. So umm, does how others feel about beer goggles affect your behaviour?

266 P: Umm, my behaviour depends on where I am. Umm, at Rhodes I am not affected at all.
267 Like because I mean it is such a common occurrence here. It is pretty much an accepted
268 behaviour. As I said, it is pretty much a rite of passage almost. So yea here it doesn't affect
269 my behaviour at all. What has affected my behaviour here is more the sort of mocking of
270 some of my experiences. Umm, it is not really mocking, it is sort of just jokingly saying ha-
271 ha you hooked up with a grunter. And by the same time I know that they don't feel badly
272 about my beer goggles. I know that they are my friends and they are just having fun with me.
273 They have also experienced beer goggles. Umm, you know? It is just that after the week in
274 which you have that an experience where the friend is like saying ohh joking saying you
275 hooked up with a grunter that you are like ok cool I need to keep myself in check almost. It
276 influences my behaviour a little bit. It has taken me a couple of years to say that maybe I
277 should calm down so it's not that hectic. So people they joke about my behaviour and I have
278 to check my behaviour. But at the same time I know they are joking and I don't have to take
279 their jests too seriously. So if I go out and I hook up with a grunter this weekend it won't
280 really affect me that bad. I know it's normal here and that the jests are a bit of fun. I won't
281 really mind. It kind of facilitates my beer goggles in a way. Umm, it has checked my
282 behaviour a little bit, but at the same time I know it is ok here so I can go and have some fun.
283 I will have to be mocked but it's not that bad.

284 I: Ok, cool

285 P: As I said it depends upon the context. So here at Rhodes I will be chilled with it because it
286 is accepted and common here. But at home if I am with family friends or with people I know
287 what I do will get back to you know my parents or my family. I know that if do anything bad
288 or if I hook up with anyone my parents will find out and that kind of stuff. So it is more here
289 at Rhodes I am free of that family kind of judgment like come on now you are doing bad son
290 that is a naughty thing (laugh). Here I am away from that. But if there is a person around
291 related to home, it does affect my behaviour. I know that I need to stop at this limit and that I
292 must be very well mannered and you know a courteous guy. And not just go you know? I
293 can't just hook up and follow my every desire.