"FUN," BUT "SCARY:" AN ANALYSIS OF THE GENDERED NATURE OF ALCOHOL CULTURE IN PUBLIC DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Many social traditions involve alcohol consumption whether it be through a glass of wine with dinner in an upper-class home, or a pint of beer in a tavern for a working-class man. In both cases, social norms indicating which drinking habits are acceptable, and which are not, are dictated by gender and social class. This qualitative research project uses a triangulation of methods to analyze the way gender dynamics operate in public drinking establishments in Edmonton, AB. The themes of gendered safety, visual culture, and hook-up culture are explored through this analysis.

INTRODUCTION

Many social traditions involve alcohol consumption whether it be through a glass of wine with dinner in an upper-class home, or a pint of beer in a tavern for a working-class man. In both cases, social norms indicating which drinking habits are acceptable, and which are not, are dictated by gender and social class. Although women have always consumed alcohol, they have universally had less social permission to do so (Heron, 2003, p. 6; Toner, 2015, p. 84). The legacy of these social permissions and restrictions, combined with gendered power dynamics at a larger level, contribute to a modern barroom culture that may be unsafe for both male and female patrons.

Bars today can attract varied age groups, but many cater primarily to young adults, and it is not uncommon to even find underage drinkers in some establishments. Alcohol consumption has been normalized in youth culture in a variety of different ways, with high-risk drinking making up only one part. Drinking culture amongst young people is particularly strong due to the social expectations and pressures that accompany it, and the consequences of this may be detrimental. High-risk drinking of college and university students is a major health and safety concern in present day society (Penhollow et al., 2017, p. 93; Government of Canada, 2016, p. 10). These high levels of consumption increase exposure to a plethora of health issues in the present and future, and are "the leading cause of death for women 18-24 in the Americas" (Ellis, 2016). In the United States for example, approximately 1700 college students die each year of alcohol-related accidental injuries alone (Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, 2007). Additionally, intoxication increases risk of victimization for both men and women (Kavanaugh, 2013, p. 22; Wells et al., 2011, p. 614). In the United States, approximately 700, 000 students are

physically assaulted by someone who is intoxicated each year, and 100, 000 are victims of alcohol-related sexual violence (Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, 2007).

This correlation between sexual violence and alcohol is related in part to increases in toxic traits of hypermasculinity such as aggression and sexual conquest as a result of over-consumption (Anderson et al., 2009, p. 324). Increases in negative hypermasculine traits contribute to a culture that encourages violence (de Andrade et al., 2016, p. 6). Studies have shown that in the barroom setting, men often participate in behaviours that would be considered sexual harassment in any other setting (Becker and Tinkler, 2015, pp. 235–36; Thompson and Cracco, 2008, p. 92). One study found that 90% of the sexual violence witnessed involved male perpetrators and female victims (Graham et al., 2014, p. 1421). The power dynamics that underlie this violence are grounded in systems of patriarchy and masculine entitlement. In these settings, normal rules about rights to the bodies of others and, in particular, female bodies seem to evaporate when physical contact is normalized in a way which ignores rules of consent. For example, one study exploring the normalization of sexual violence in public drinking establishments found that 80% of the male participants had "grabbed a woman's butt" while out at a bar (Thompson and Cracco, 2008, p. 89). The portrayal of alcohol by the media contributes to this image that men have the right to women's bodies. One study found that just under half of the 77 alcohol commercials analyzed contained women who were "highly sexualized fantasies… present to reaffirm a male's masculinity (Hall and Kappel, 2018, pp. 576-7). This same study found that approximately 30% of commercials portrayed men having romantic or sexual success as a direct result of their consumption. In this way, alcohol is connected with sexual and physical conquest for the men consuming it (Hall and Kappel, 2018, p. 577). Likewise, the media sends messages to women about their own consumption, often implying that "if they drink like men,

they'll share some of men's power" (Ridberg, Jhally & Alper, 2004). For example, the oft portrayed "party girl" enjoys alcohol and luxury without a care in the world in approximately 18% of commercials (Hall and Kappel, 2018, p. 577).

The culture that is perpetuated by these powerful messages is one where alcohol is the most commonly used drug in cases of "date-rape" (Kovac and Trussell, 2015, p. 196) where binge drinking is a critical health concern (Ellis, 2016; Jackson and Tinkler, 2007, p. 254; Ridberg, Jhally & Alper, 2004), and where 47% of the all-female respondents in one study report being inappropriately touched or pursued during a night out at a public drinking establishment (Kathryn Graham et al., 2017, p. 1428). This same study found that only 24% of women experienced neither "unwanted persistence" nor "unwanted sexual touching," meaning that only one fifth of the women surveyed were able to experience a night out free from unwanted sexual interference (Kathryn Graham et al., 2017, p. 1428). However, public drinking establishments and alcohol culture are still an important part of a young adult's life and in many cases experiences in these settings are characterized in positive ways.

This positivity often revolves around the association between alcohol culture and leisure, in which participating in alcohol culture is viewed as the main mode of socialization and recreation for many young people (Brooks, 2008, p. 338). However, this participation in leisure also proves to be gendered, with women having less social permission to engage in this activity than men (Brooks, 2008, p. 340). The way in which assumptions are made about the identities and tendencies of others in these spaces also contributes to the way individuals see themselves.

This ethnography analyzes the subjective experiences of bargoers in mainstream public drinking establishments in Edmonton, Alberta by taking into account the social environment that acts on males and females in these spaces. Through surveys and field observations, data on the

gendered nature of alcohol culture was collected directly through those who participate in it. Although violence is often a function of the gender dynamics which exist in the bar setting, it is only one of myriad possible outcomes of a night out. Instead of focusing only on violence, this ethnography reveals how individuals participating in the culture of alcohol more generally understand their role within it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following sections will review three distinct areas of literature. Beginning with feminist theory, historical and contemporary theorists and perspectives which prize equality amongst all people are considered. These perspectives take into account the complex power dynamics which exist in contemporary society, thereby creating a foundation upon which to consider alcohol culture in both the historical and contemporary context. The historical context of alcohol culture will first be addressed, allowing for a natural chronology, within a gendered framework. This provides pertinent information about the historical landscape of alcohol culture which has been built upon to reach the point it is at today. Following this discussion, the contemporary context, as influenced by this past, is described with a focus on contemporary research, conclusions, and aspects which have yet to be considered.

FEMINIST THEORY

Standpoint Theory

Standpoint feminism is a theory and practice that prizes the diverse standpoints of individuals based on their social locations (Donovan, 2012, pp. 194–95). Dorothy Smith, the founder of standpoint theory, states that "women's standpoint as a place to begin an inquiry into the social locates the knower in her body and as active in her work in relation to particular others" (Smith, 1999, p. 4). By applying this lens to female meaning making in public drinking

establishments, the importance of understanding the embodied experiences of the women who participate in this culture is made clear. One main critique of standpoint theory is that it is essentialist in assuming that there is something inherently different in the experience of all women that would relate them to one another (Wylie, 2012, p. 59). However, although it is critical not to generalize across all women under an assumption that they are a homogeneous group, it may be useful in analyzing social conditions that act on many women in similar ways. Intemann argues that this criticism is ungrounded, as standpoint theory "does not assume that members of marginalized groups all have a set of uniform or monolithic experiences, values, or interests" but, rather, it privileges their diverse voices (Intemann, 2016, pp. 275–76).

An important figure in standpoint theory is Patricia Hill Collins, who explores the perspective of Black women. She states the need to develop a "both/and conceptual stance" when analysing systems of oppression so that other equally important aspects of identity are not ignored by focusing on one way in which an individual is oppressed (Collins, 1990, p. 221). Collins explains how we can be both oppressed and oppressor at the same time. The use of qualitative research methods such as interviews is effective in accessing the multiple social locations that an individual may occupy. Kovac and Trussell make use of such methods in their research on young women who participate in the leisure space of bars, pubs, and clubs (Kovac and Trussell, 2015, p. 198). This is particularly effective given that public drinking establishments are experienced differently based on factors such as ethnic identity, class, gender, and sexuality.

Hegemonic Masculinity and Emphasized Femininity

Standpoint theory is necessary because of the way diverse standpoints are often undervalued based on their positions in the social hierarchy. R. W. Connell defines emphasized

femininity and hegemonic masculinity as the dominant ideas and behaviours that make up the 'right' way to be masculine or feminine at a particular place and time; that is, the type of masculinity or femininity at the top of the social hierarchy. Connell maintains that emphasized femininity and hegemonic masculinity are formed in relation to each other. Specifically, Connell describes that emphasized femininity is almost always subordinate to hegemonic masculinity: but they complement each other (R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 848). In the Western world, traits associated with hegemonic masculinity include nobility, sexual prowess, physical strength, confidence, and competitiveness. One criticism of the concept of hegemonic masculinity is that it creates an image including only negative characteristics of men (R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 840). Characteristics such as violence, aggression, and boisterousness tend to dominate popular conceptions of this term, thereby minimizing other characteristics, such as sportiness, chivalry, and loyalty which may also be included in dominant conceptions of masculinity. However, not all traits of hegemonic masculinity are characterized by negativity. Nobility and confidence for example are typically considered to be positive characteristics.

Traits associated with emphasized femininity are slimness, beauty, fragility, and sexual availability - but also innocence - and nurturance. A similar critique to that of hegemonic masculinity may be applied to emphasized femininity as well, in that the traits associated with femininity seem to ignore any agency that they may have. However, given that the definition of emphasized femininity is based on a subordination to masculinity, this implication is in fact an important part of Connell's conceptualization of the term. It is notable that the traits associated with femininity and masculinity, when combined, make up the entire scope of human characteristics and behaviour that any human, male or female, may be inclined to express. For

example, any individual may be nurturing regardless of their gender identity. However, it is only for women that this trait is anticipated. It is also critical to understand that hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity, and the power dynamics that accompany these forms, are not "self-reproducing" (R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 844). They are not always engaged in consciously and purposefully by individuals with an intent of reproducing such systems; rather they are policed by society. Individual, institutional, and collective factors each play a role in this reproduction (p. 844). In the bar setting, for example, the environment itself may contribute to maintaining these tropes by hosting girls' nights with 'feminine' drinks on special, such as fruity cocktails and coolers, and ads featuring young, slender, scantily clad women, or by holding sports nights that often focus on young, tough looking male patrons and beer drinking. Boyd describes how "space is fundamentally shaped by a multitude of dynamics including gender and sexuality" (Boyd, 2010, p. 177). The shaping of public drinking establishments is often heightened by the way they are represented and integrated into existing social structures such as those of gender. However, although these spaces are shaped by societal pressures and expectations, those who operate within them also hold power over their person and decisions which in turn influence the space and others in it.

Agency

Agency, as explored in *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory* (McNay, 2016), works against social pressures of how one should behave in spaces such as bars, clubs, and pubs. Agency is defined most simply as an ability for individuals to influence the world around them (p. 39). However, McNay acknowledges the complexity of agency in practice as it becomes intertwined with power dynamics and questions of free will versus determinism (p. 40). It becomes difficult to determine which actions are indeed demonstrative of agency, and which are

influenced by, in the case of feminism, the male-dominated structure we call patriarchy. When analyzing women's interactions with alcohol and the social settings of bars, clubs, and pubs, this becomes a critical question. Women who participate in this culture presumably do so willingly, yet many women speak of the pressures that exist in this environment that they feel the need to conform to (Ridberg, Jhally & Alper, 2004; Ellis, 2016). The actions of these women in these settings are therefore a combination of agency to shape the space, and pressures of patriarchy which encourage them to wear make up and high heels and consume specific types of drinks. Similarly, men may feel pressure to participate in behaviours such as bar fights and copious alcohol consumption in these environments. These same patriarchal pressures act on both men and women in their day-today lives as the social world around them encourages participation in hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity in virtually every realm of life. This participation expands beyond decision-making and thought processes and also becomes relevant to physical embodiment as some individuals feel pressured to navigate their bodies in a way that responds to societal pressures.

Embodiment

This participation in 'femininity' through physicality is an important component of another key topic in feminist theory: embodiment. Shatema Threadcraft describes the ways that women have historically been associated with the physical body, while men have been associated with the mind (Threadcraft, 2016, pp. 208-209). In philosophy, the body was seen, and in some cases continues to be seen, as a temporary vessel, and therefore unimportant in comparison to the soul and the mind. In this way, women were demeaned in comparison to their male counterparts. In the modern western world, men and women continue to be associated with their bodies in

various ways, and their worth is determined based on their ability to maintain a specific physical image: that created by patriarchal dominant thought (pp. 211-212).

In the barroom setting, the results of these patriarchal pressures regarding body image become glaringly clear by the policing that occurs, even amongst women. In the CBC documentary *Girls Night Out,* one young woman describes the "competition [that exists] when it comes to dressing up and looking good," and more specifically that this competition is "amongst girls, for men" (Ellis, 2016). Kovac and Trussell find similar themes in their qualitative interviews with young, female bargoers, as many participants described the "pressure to look good" (2015, p. 201). Kovac and Trussell also bring out the difficulty in being "classy and never trashy" (p. 201). This wish is strongly tied to sexualized images of women in the media that young people are bombarded with throughout their lives. Women in this study often hoped for male attention in bars, but also did not want to come across as overly promiscuous.

As aforementioned, media promoting alcohol consumption "give[s] men the belief that they have the right to women's bodies" (Ridberg, Jhally & Alper, 2004). While women are often sexualized "props" in alcohol commercials, men are often portrayed as powerful conquerors of other men and women alike (Hall and Kappel, p. 578). These representations may be appealing to men who feel pressured to fit into the template of masculinity, in which power and control are important attributes. The way in which these dynamics of power and control are portrayed in the media may send harmful messages to those receiving them. One study found that "blurred lines" are often used as an excuse for sexual violence, with some men assuming that an action such as dancing in a barroom was "implicit permission" (Graham et al., 2014, p. 1421). The culture this creates is dangerous to both young men and women who are receiving sexist and harmful messages about their own bodies and the rights that they have to the bodies of others. Embodied

experiences such as these are key in understanding why men and women continue to participate in such a culture. Both men and women tend to be very bodily aware in public leisure settings such as these, which contributes to an environment conductive to violence (Graham et al., 2014, p. 1422)

Through the framework of feminist ideas such as those of Threadcraft, McNay, Collins, Connell, and Smith, the voices of both men and women may be heard and considered in ways that allows for reduction of risk in gendered spaces such as drinking establishments. It is useful to use such lenses to remain critical of the social world, and not to take patriarchal norms for granted. By using standpoint theory to prize diverse voices, acknowledging the pressures that act on men and women to conform to templates of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity, and recognizing the complex power dynamics that accompany the ability to exercise agency and feel comfortable in one's own body, it may be possible to thoroughly understand the gender dynamics of any setting in question.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Gendering of Alcohol

Historically, the consumption of alcohol has been largely gendered in that, across space and time, men have almost always had more social permission to consume than women (Heron, 2003, p. 6; Toner, 2015, p. 84). Unsurprisingly, public drinking establishments such as taverns and lounges were also male dominated spaces (Heron, 2003, p. 36). Women who broke the social norms and participated in the culture of alcohol in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were deemed "bad mothers, "fallen women," or "prostitutes" (Heron, 2003, p. 113). This gendering of consumption and of public permissions was undoubtedly tied to the larger social value of women in society and the social constructions of the so called 'innate' qualities of

women (Enefalk, 2015, p. 739). Because women were seen as mothers, wives, and homemakers first and foremost, anything that could potentially get in the way of this was a threat to men's way of life and their position as the head of the household. Women were expected to provide a 'haven in a heartless world' in which their homes created a safe space for their husbands to come home to after dealing with the cold immorality of the working world (Kimmel, 2000, p. 115). Alcohol simply did not belong in this haven for women, while men were permitted to consume at the end of a long day of work. Women were constructed as delicate and fragile and therefore incapable of dealing with "the stain of public life" (Enefalk, 2015, p. 740). In many cases, men were not expected to be concerned about the bearing that their own drinking may have on the lives of their wives and children in the same way that women were: their social role did not dictate that they have any concern in domestic life.

Temperance and Prohibition

Many women did become concerned about the drunkenness of their husbands, and in particular the habit of "drinking away their money" (Heron, 2003, p. 36). In Canada, temperance movements began in the late 1820s and rapidly became known as a women's movement (Heron, 2003, 53; p. 56). Some provinces in Canada had enacted prohibition by 1914, with federal prohibition beginning in 1918. The moment in time when calls for temperance began to evolve into calls for prohibition is difficult to definitively identify (Gray, 1972, p. 98). Enefalk describes similar trends in her research on nineteenth century Sweden, explaining that women's involvement in this movement was likely tied to the fact that their husbands controlled the finances, and addiction quickly diminished these resources, in many cases, without any chance for women to intervene (2015, p. 742). The temperance movement became very tied to class with women of the middle class taking on the role of moral entrepreneur as they strived to moderate

or eliminate the evil that they viewed alcohol to be. It is important to note that although this movement was rooted in elitist beliefs of moral superiority, alcohol was, in fact, integrated into middle and upper-class culture. Alcohol often was a part of business as men sealed important deals with a strong drink, and part of a woman's role as hostess for numerous social gatherings. The growth of the temperance movement among the privileged classes was not based on a distaste for alcohol across this group, but rather access to resources and particular social circumstances. Just as women were expected to be nurturers and homemakers, they were also expected to maintain the morality of society. This was not always the case, as men were once the protectors of the family in nearly every vein. However, as capitalism grew, and men were pushed almost wholly out of the realm of the home, women were made the protectors in the moral sense. Protestantism was closely tied to this movement, with groups headed by powerful women such as the Salvation Army and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. These roots led temperance movements, in Canada and elsewhere, to include a "relentless anti-male tone" as it was largely men who were targeted for overconsumption (Heron, 2003, p. 154). In Canada, the expectation for men to contribute to maintaining domestic bliss began to arise (p. 68), in Mexico propaganda targeted the "man" as the drunkard who was at risk of losing all reason (Toner, 2015, p. 139), and Enelfalk's descriptions of the gendered results of votes on prohibition are consistent across global movements of this sort (Enefalk, 2015, pp. 742-3).

However, despite similarities in response to drinking and, in particular, gendered responses, differences can be found across time and location. Perspectives on female consumption of alcohol changed at different times in different places. For example, Enefalk describes the reaction of a British traveller based on his time in Sweden, who was appalled by the drinking of both the upper class and the women in this setting (Enefalk, 2013, p. 301). In this

case, it was expected for lower class men to engage in drinking, but certainly not women, regardless of which class they belonged to. Heron draws attention to a similar scenario, where a British traveller to Canada describes in gendered terms that

> Indelicacy too prevails, decent & even pretty girls hawking and spitting abt the room, occasionally scratching & rubbing themselves & lounging in attitudes in their chairs in a way that in Britain wd be unpardonable and throwing out more than broad hints, occasionally as to sexual intercourse [sic] (Heron, 2003, p. 38)

The speaker here also hints at the social expectations of individuals based on their social class. Ironically, it was the working class who were subject to scrutiny for drinking, even though alcohol was an important part of middle and upper-class culture (Enefalk, 2013, p. 300).

Public Drinking Establishments as a Social Setting

Historically, taverns have been a key component of the social and political lives of the working class (DeLottinville, 1981, p. 11). For working class men, in particular, taverns were, and in many cases, continue to be a source of social solidarity and a place where the tenets of hegemonic masculinity could be exercised. These environments encouraged sport, violence, and the objectification of the female population (who were largely absent in this setting) (Heron, 2003, pp. 110–12). In these settings, "[men] could shift their gaze upward to the walls and the images there celebrating "manly" interests: pictures of scantily clad women, scenes of hunting trips and sporting events, or large stuffed animal heads" (Heron, 2003, p. 108).

One example of a historically significant tavern which followed this same pattern of catering to a male clientele was Joe Beef’s Tavern, which became not only a masculine retreat for members of the working class, but also a political symbol for these men and the impoverished from around 1869-1889 in Montreal, Canada (DeLottinville, 1981, p. 10).

"[W]orking-class taverns probably represented one of the most basic forums of public discussion" (DeLottinville, 1981, p. 11). In this way, when women were excluded from such spaces, they were missing out not only on the literal uses of taverns (for alcohol consumption and leisure), but also the larger discussions that occurred therein.

Importance of History

As can be understood from this gendered history, alcohol culture has always been gendered and highly influenced by social circumstance and policy. Given this relationship, an analysis of the present cannot ignore such circumstances and their roots. In order to target the well-rooted gendered inequalities in this culture and the spaces that go along with it, we must have an understanding of what factors have created the climate that exists in the modern world.

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Public Drinking Establishments as a Social Setting

Bars, pubs, and clubs, as part of a historically "sexualized environment", continue to be charged with gendered expectations and interactions (Grazian, 2007, p. 221). In particular, these environments tend to cater to male patrons. As a female researcher described based on her observations in a nightclub:

> The environment felt masculine to me. There was a very male type of gaze. I felt men controlled the tone of the party ... Males seized visible power. Women's power came from their hanging out with female friends and from decisions about dancing liaisons with males. Males seemed to control physical space of venue; they also seemed to be more there to pick up females than to hang with buddies. (Anderson et al., 2009, p. 322).

This description of an environment created for hegemonic men is a common theme in recollections of such atmospheres. Rivera (2010) shines light on the way that bars even cater to

the needs of hegemonic masculinity even through their entrance policies. Through interviews with door-staff of an elite American bar, Rivera found that women would be let into this elite bar regardless of any other factors because their presence increased the appeal of the bar for men, and encouraged these men to buy more drinks (p. 239). In this way, women were objectified as a feature of the environment that was appealing to men. It is also notable that only those men who encapsulated the image of hegemonic masculinity were allowed to enter the bar. Men who were white, appeared wealthier, and were wearing certain types of clothing were more likely to be admitted (p. 245).

Ladette Movement

In the late 20th century, the Ladette challenged many norms governing gender and alcohol. The Ladette is a woman, as represented in news, magazine articles, and popular culture who engages in heavy drinking, and independence both financially and otherwise (pp. 253-4). According to media portrayals, she is "rowdy," "reckless," and takes unwarranted liberties (Karikari, 2006). Although this term is no longer popularly used, reports on drinking behaviours of women continue to be of interest to the media (Glosswitch, 2013; Reinburg, 2017; Painter, 2013). The Ladette movement emerged as a response to the social scripts and policing of the bar setting. It began in the United Kingdom in the late twentieth century when women began to participate in the masculinized bar culture (Jackson and Tinkler, 2007). Although there are apparent health and safety concerns involved with excessive amounts of drinking and high-risk sexual activity while intoxicated, Jackson and Tinkler propose that the most disturbing aspect of the Ladette identity for the media, as a reflection of society, is the creation of gender disorder and engagement in activities typically associated with men (Jackson and Tinkler, 2007, pp. 261–62). This gender disorder refers to the discrepancies that arose between what one would socially

expect of a young woman and the 'masculine' behaviours that the Ladette engaged in. This illustrates the strong double standard that dictates what men can do, and women cannot. For example, Whitehead, an editor at *UK News*, expresses concern that violent crime arising from alcohol consumption was increasing for women, yet indicates that men have always been, and continue to be, more likely to commit this type of assault (Whitehead, 2009). Another article directly compared the behaviours of men and women describing that it was alarming that women were beginning to participate in behaviours such as binge drinking, violence, and cigarette smoking at levels that matched or exceeded their male counterparts (Karikari, 2006). Ladettes also engaged in the pursuit of pleasure by taking their sexual wellbeing into their own hands, and were not afraid to embrace a hedonistic lifestyle that satisfied these needs (Jackson and Tinkler, 2007, 263; p. 254). It is notable that in many cases, the acts of their male counterparts were not focused on to the extent that the women's actions were. The issue seemed explicitly to be that women were now participating in behaviours that men always had and this broke societal expectations of what women were allowed to do, and brought attention to behaviours that should, perhaps, be inappropriate for either gender to begin with.

Hookup Culture

Bars, pubs, and clubs are sites of what is popularly called "hookup culture," which refers to a culture of finding a person with whom to engage in casual sexual acts (Currier, 2013, 704; Penhollow et al., 2017, p. 93). As in the case of the Ladettes, many women and men find engaging in hookup culture to be a positive experience, and in recent years its negative connotation has begun to diminish (Currier, 2013, p. 707). Despite this, expectations regarding sexual conduct still frame the way hookups are spoken about by many. A "strategic ambiguity" is adhered to in order to avoid discussions of meaning and preserve societally accepted

definitions of masculinity and femininity (Shaw et al., 2008, p. 4; Danielle M. Currier, 2013, p. 717; p. 720). This strategic ambiguity refers to the ways that men and women interpret the act of 'hooking up' in differing ways in accordance with the way they see themselves as gendered persons. Men and women may attach different meanings to the same acts and, when combined with the lack of communication that is characteristic of such encounters, this may result in emotional misunderstandings. For example, the meaning of 'too many sexual partners' looked very different for males versus females, with females being more ambiguous about numbers in order to protect their reputation and avoid the title of "slut" (Currier, 2013, p. 718). Additionally, hookup culture combined with alcohol and the gendered setting of bars, clubs, and pubs can create many concerns for the safety of those involved.

Violence and Aggression

In Rivera's research on bar entrance policies, one concern which arose was whether or not individuals hoping to enter the bar would be likely to instigate violence. Door attendants assumed that women would be less likely to engage in violence (Rivera, 2010, p. 239). Men were judged based on factors such as race and ethnicity as indicators of level of threat (p. 245). Research does indicate that men are more likely to be perpetrators in violence than women (Forsyth and Lennox, 2010, p. 75; Wells et al., 2011, p. 613; Graham et al., 2014, p. 1421; de Andrade et al., 2016, p. 2). However, this likelihood of perpetration is linked closely to gender socialization. Aggression, confidence, and the social permission to express anger are all related to the way men are socialized in society. For example, boys are often taught from a young age that crying is an inappropriate way to express emotion, and that they should always be brave and courageous no matter the situation.

Literature Review Conclusion

Research conducted on the social setting of bars, clubs, and pubs has previously focused largely on aggression, violence, and victimization, which prove to be highly gendered phenomena (de Andrade et al., 2016, p. 2). The high levels of aggression in these settings are often attributed to high levels of hegemonic or hyper-masculinity which are encouraged by the atmosphere of the environment (de Andrade et al., 2016, p. 6; Wells et al., 2011, pp. 616–17). As aforementioned, hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity are relational concepts. The barroom setting provides an atmosphere for this relationship of subordination and domination to be carried out. Previous research has demonstrated that male patrons, and even bouncers, feel that they have a right to women's bodies in these settings, often demonstrated through engagement in behaviours or physical contact that would be entirely inappropriate in any other social setting (Thompson and Cracco, 2008, p. 83; Graham et al., 2014, pp. 1416–17). This is strongly tied to male domination and the subordination of women at a larger level.

It becomes evident when analyzing the historical and modern context through a feminist sociological perspective that alcohol culture is gendered in a variety of ways. Intertwined with this environment are pressures from the media, varied sexual scripts, and a legacy of social permissions revolving around such spaces. Given the strength of these legacies and the evident complexity of the culture surrounding alcohol consumption, further research is needed to generate a more comprehensive understanding of why individuals continue to participate in this culture, and in what way it continues to operate within a gendered framework.

CURRENT STUDY

Although research has been previously conducted on subjective experiences in public drinking establishments (Ellis, 2016; Kavanaugh, 2013; Kovac and Trussell, 2015), it is limited

in number and frequently focuses on only one gender identity at a time when exploring meaning-making. By reaching out to both men and women, it was possible for me to differentiate between universal experiences of public drinking establishments and those which are informed by gender. This also provides a more comprehensive view of the gendered dynamics in which bar patrons operate. Demographic information of this sort, as well as age and sexual orientation, are taken into account during analysis. In this way, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on alcohol culture which combines survey and observation data and is grounded in the historical legacy of the gendered history of alcohol consumption. Canadian research is currently limited, with important exceptions including Kovac and Trussel's qualitative research on female experiences with alcohol culture, Boyd's research of the nightscape in Vancouver, and a study by Ratcliffe and colleagues on drinking habits in Edmonton lounges in 1979 (Boyd, 2010; Kovac and Trussell, 2015; Ratcliffe et al., 1979). The field of focus for my study was narrowed to Edmonton, Alberta, thereby adding to the limited research that has been conducted on this setting in Canada.

METHODOLOGY

In order to better understand the culture that is predicated on and glorifies alcohol consumption and the social world in which it takes place, a critical ethnography was conducted (Creswell, 2007, p. 7) involving those who participate in drinking culture in bars in Central Edmonton, Alberta. Ethnographic inquiry was used in order to give voice to the culture-sharing group that was investigated, thereby improving the validity of my data. In order to maximize the accuracy and breadth of data in this study, I used a sequential multiple methods design using participant-observation followed by surveys. Observations were conducted prior to and partially during the survey period so that the data acquired could be used to shape the survey questions.

Participants were recruited during observations through the use of contact cards (See Appendix B) and recruitment posters (See Appendix C). In this way, the survey demographic resembled that of the bar population. This triangulation allowed for multiple views of the same phenomena, thereby creating a more comprehensive data set (Chamberlain et al., 2011, p. 164). Triangulation "is a validity procedure" which increases levels of validity in qualitative research by drawing information from multiple sources (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 126). In this way, I was able to increase the validity of my findings by looking for consistencies and inconsistencies in the data sets.

Participant-Observation

Observations were conducted in mainstream bars in Edmonton, Alberta on Friday and Saturday evenings, as well as holiday Sundays, for an average of 2 hours and 16 minutes on each occasion between 9 p.m. and 2 a.m. These time slots were selected to ensure that observation data was collected during times when there were plenty of patrons to observe. Observations occurred between August and December of 2018. A total of 20 nights of observing, resulting in approximately 40 hours of observation data were conducted. Bars were selected based on popularity, longevity of establishment, and typical demographic. This was determined by using a search engine to generate a list of all Edmonton bars. Practicality was also an important factor, resulting in a selection of bars which were located in the vicinity of Jasper Avenue and Whyte Avenue. Both of these locations were accessible to me given their proximity to my own home. During observations, I ordered non-alcoholic drinks in glasses intended for alcohol, and picked tables or booths with appropriate vantage points of the dance floors and/or bars of each location. Field notes were typed in a password protected application on my cellular phone so that it was not evident to an onlooker that observation and note-taking were occurring. This limited the

chance of the Hawthorne Effect, which refers to changed behaviour in participants of a study based on their knowledge that they are being watched or studied (Rossen, 2013). These notes included both observations of the setting and individuals in it as well as personal reflections on my thoughts and state of being. This allowed for me to be aware of any impact my state of being may have had on the quality of observations taken on any given night. These observations allowed me to observe behaviours that respondents may not have thought to address in surveys. It also allowed for me to be aware of potential biases that may have arisen in survey responses based on my identity as the researcher and the formal nature of this form of questionnaire.

Kenneth Stoddart explores the "Problem of Presence" in ethnography as the issue that arises when the very presence of the researcher in a setting has the potential to influence the space (Stoddart, 1986, p. 4). This discussion includes further strategies that reduce the Hawthorne Effect and my influence as researcher. Stoddart's proposed solution is through "disattending" and "misrepresentation" (p. 5; p. 8). I utilized several versions of these techniques in order to counter this problem. The first was to "ero[de]… visibility by display of no symbolic detachment" (p. 6). This means that I became less visible in the setting by eliminating any signs that I was not naturally a part of this setting. Given that I am a member of the demographic that I am studying, as a young, White, heterosexual female student, "symbolic detachment" was minimal to begin with. Further to this, I also disattended through the "display of symbolic attachment" (p. 6). This involved conscious efforts to participate in the setting, such as the aforementioned strategies of drinking a non-alcoholic beverage in an alcohol glass and typing field notes into my cellular device. Another method of disattending that was used during observations was in the form of misrepresentation. Given that observations occurred in a public

space, I had the opportunity to "mask" my identity as a researcher from those that I observed (Stoddart, p. 8).

Recruitment for surveys occurred in part during observations. My exit strategy involved passing out contact cards to as many bar patrons as possible before exiting the premises. These contact cards had an e-mail address which was designed exclusively for this study, and upon handing them out I briefly explained that I was doing research on drinking culture and would be interested in following up with them on this topic. Although this recruitment method yielded some participants, individuals were largely unresponsive to the contact card strategy. As a way of ensuring that enough individuals would complete my survey, recruitment posters were posted on social media, in bars, and on streets populated with public drinking establishments.

In order to ensure my own safety during data collection, I brought a companion on each research outing. The identity of this companion was noted on each occasion so that any potential influence based on the extent to which they fit the demographic being observed could be accounted for. Given the gendered dynamics that exist in the bar setting, I predicted that my gender and that of my companion would also have a bearing on the likelihood of being approached by other bar patrons. Noting the gender of my companions allowed any difference in the behaviour of patrons to be addressed. Going with a companion reduced my chance of being approached as a young, single, female in a bar. Given that bars are known to be settings prone to violence (de Andrade et al., p. 2), I was cautious of my surroundings and did not put myself in danger to acquire data.

Surveys

Previous studies that have explored gender dynamics in public drinking establishments and, in particular, violence, have used surveys as their primary method of data collection

(Thompson and Cracco, 2008; Wells et al., 2011; Schnitzer et al., 2010; Franklin, 2010). This method is a useful way of gathering sensitive information that individuals may be less likely to disclose in a qualitative interview.

For this study, surveys were e-mailed to those who responded to the distributed contact cards and posters. Additionally, the survey was posted to various locations on social media to allow a broader ranger of individuals access. Survey questions were qualitative in nature and involved open-ended questions with opportunity for participants to formulate their responses based on their own experiences and subjectivities (See Appendix A). Demographic information was collected in these surveys so that comparisons can be made between the experiences of individuals of different ages and gender identities.

Reflexivity

Throughout the duration of this study, I was committed to being aware of my own biases based on my identity in the demographic I am studying. Having experienced the gendered setting of public drinking establishments myself, I found it important to be aware that I may be sensitive to others in this setting with whom I identify. As someone who has witnessed and been subject to the sexual harassment that has been normalized in such environments, the way in which I interpreted these settings may have be impacted.

My own social location had the potential to influence not only the data collection, but also my interpretation of the data, the articles I chose for literature review, and the topic and methods I selected. I had no intention of denying these biases, but only to be aware of them in order to minimize them to the best of my ability, while being as attentive as possible to alternative choices and interpretations. In order to ensure that I was aware of my own biases, I

carefully noted my own thoughts, feelings, and questions along with my observation notes. This allowed backward reflection on my state of mind and thought processes during data collection.

Ethical Concerns

There was a low risk for psychological or emotional discomfort associated with the discussion of experiences with and surrounding alcohol culture. If an individual has experienced violence in this setting, perceived risks may be heightened. The nature of the questions in the survey were broad and did not directly address topics of sexual violence. Participants were asked to agree to a digital consent form which informed them of this potential risk. They had the right to withdraw at any time before, during, or after they completed the survey. There was no monetary compensation for filling out the survey. Thus, there was no chance of participants feeling coerced into participation. Given the nature of the topic, I speculated that participants would be eager to speak of their personal experiences without needing to provide compensation to do so.

The identity of participants was kept entirely confidential through the use of pseudonyms and the removal of any identifying information. Pseudonyms were also assigned to the public drinking establishments. Field notes and completed surveys were stored on my password protected laptop. Data was viewed only by myself and my supervisor. These files will be destroyed by April 2020.

Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred using the coding software MAXQDA. Coding refers to the process through which "analytical term[s]" are assigned to "fragment[s] of data" (Charmaz, 2017, p. 3). Survey responses and observation data were both analyzed with the use of this software and coding process in order to identify themes and trends across all data. In order to

minimize bias, all data was first action coded, a process which forces the researcher to address all data fully. This is sometimes referred to as line-by-line coding (Charmaz, 2015, p. 1615). During this part of the coding process, memos were written to keep track of any pertinent thoughts or ideas that arose at this time. Memo writing allows for closer analysis and engagement with the material which leads into the next step of the coding process where deeper themes of the data may be acknowledged (Charmaz, 2015, p. 1617). This next and final step of coding is often referred to as the "creation of analytic categories" (Charmaz, 2015, p. 1617). At this stage, data was organized into categories which allowed for its use in final conclusions and discussions. Observation data was coded first, followed by survey data in order to be consistent with the way in which data was collected. In this way, field data was verified or checked based on the subjective experiences reported by survey respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 72 respondents filled out the 19-question survey through google forms (See Appendix A). Sixty-two of these respondents were between the ages of 18 and 30. Four disclosed that they were over the age of 30, while the remaining six chose not to provide their birthdate. Fifty-three of the respondents identified as female and 19 identified as male. Sixty of these respondents described that they were heterosexual, ten as bisexual, and one individual expressed that they were unsure of their sexual orientation. Another chose not to answer this question. 38 respondents described their relationship status as single, while another 30 described that they were in a relationship. Two disclosed that they were married, and another that they were in a polyamorous relationship, increasing the number of individuals in some form of relationship to 33. Overall, the demographic reached by the survey resembled that of those observed in the bar setting. This observation data consisted of approximately 40 hours of field

work. The following table indicates the basic demographic information of the participants quoted in this section. They have all been assigned pseudonyms in order to protect their identity. Through the responses of these individuals and field observations, three key themes of visual culture, 'the mating ritual,' and gendered safety emerged.

Respondent Pseudonym	**Gender Identity**	**Age Range**	**Sexuality**	**Relationship Status**
Dora	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Vera	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Gloria	Female	Over 30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Tanya	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Chad	Male	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Sarah	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Lois	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Dawn	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Kia	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Emma	Female	18-30	Bisexual	In a Relationship
Gary	Male	Over 30	Heterosexual	Single
Trevor	Male	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Zelda	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Tiffany	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Rosemary	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Married
Anastasia	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Amy	Female	18-30	Bisexual	Single
Holly	Female	18-30	Unsure	Single

Visual Culture

Markus Schroer describes the culture that we live in today as a "visual culture" wherein individuals are both consumers and producers of images (Schroer, 2014, p. 207). The way that individuals present themselves in the bar culture is indicative of this. Dora describes, for example, that one of the reasons that people may go to public drinking establishments is for "attention," implying that individuals go to these spaces with the awareness that they are presenting themselves as an image to others who are consumers of this image.

In the bar setting, as in any public setting, people are always watching one another interact. In the bar setting in particular, the production of image becomes heightened. For example, individuals often dress up to go to the bar, or in some cases wear particular costumes such as colourful hats, matching clothing with friends, or themed outfits. Goffman likens the idea of wearing a costume to that of being visibly intoxicated in the fact that both endeavours encourage one to be approached by others in way that violates regular social boundaries (Goffman, 1963, p. 126). In the bar setting, both of these activities are common. In particular, 18 respondents described that the very purpose of going out to a bar may be to become intoxicated. Given this however, it is important to distinguish that dressing in a costume and being intoxicated are not equal invitations to socialize. Becoming intoxicated may be the goal of the night, with the fact that this visual cue often makes one more easily approachable, independent of intent. Wearing a costume seems to be a more direct invitation, yet it is critical not to assume that those who wear a costume are doing so to receive attention. However, it can be speculated that there was some conscious thought put into the choice of particular clothing to wear to such a venue. For example, during observations, there were multiple individuals who wore flashy costumes and socialized with strangers throughout the night. For example, one night a group of young people wore neon coloured work-out clothing and spent most of their evening leaning against the bar and socializing with others in the venue who they appeared not to have been previously acquainted with. On a separate occasion, two males wore matching politician t-shirts which featured close-ups of the politicians faces and received attention from strangers in the bar on multiple occasions for their clothing choices. From flamingo hats to Elvis hair, many people seemed to purposefully present themselves in particular ways in the bar. It cannot be assumed definitively that these clothing choices were intended to attract any form of attention, as they

may have simply been clothing choices that the wearer enjoyed or felt appropriate for other reasons. However, such choices caused them to stand out visually in the setting.

The way in which people receive others visually was also notable, as this is not always in alignment with the ways people hope to be perceived. On one night of field work, my companion and I were in the line up to enter a bar for two hours, creating a unique and unanticipated vantage point to listen to conversations amongst waiting patrons as others walked by outside of the bar on the busy strip. As one woman walked by, dressed in a minimal amount of clothing as was fitting for the particular Halloween costume she wore on this occasion, a male patron yelled out "Holy shit! A free show!" while gesturing to her so his friends would understand to whom he was referring (October 27, 2018). This response implied that her body was there specifically for his viewing, thereby indicating a gendered understanding of visual culture in which certain bodies are visually coded differently from others. This also relates back to discussions about the gendered history of alcohol culture, in which women were not allowed into taverns, yet the ceilings of many of these venues featured images of "scantily clad women" (Heron, 2003, p. 108). As described above, women's entry into such venues came with intensive policing in which behaviours that were common of men in such settings were considered indelicate when engaged in by women (Heron, 2003, p. 38). In this way, women continue to face differential treatment in terms of visuality and are expected to present themselves in more specific ways than are men.

The heightened sense of visuality and the different rules that govern men and women exemplify the concept of *the male gaze,* a term coined by Laura Mulvey to refer to film perspectives that take the male point-of-view to appeal to male viewers (Griffin, 2017). This term has been adapted by other scholars and applied to visual culture and lived experiences of

men and women in society. For example, Nicholls applies this term to the bar setting, describing that women are often aware that they are the subject of the male gaze and portray their bodies in particular ways accordingly (Nicholls, 2017, p. 263). Although women in my study did not speak of changing their appearance in any way based on being subject to the male gaze, they did express awareness that they were its subject. For example, Holly described that she hates that "we live in a world where women are so fiercely pr[e]yed upon at bars." Tiffany similarly described being uncomfortable at the centre of the male gaze as she had been "followed around bars by males." She adds that when she goes out with her "boyfriend or [her] male friends [it] is a good deterrent of stopping males from even approaching [her]." The fact that being in the presence of male friends inhibits the approach of strange male patrons highlights another part of the male gaze: the fact that it acts on both men and women. Both men and women adapt their bodies in conformity to the male gaze. One male who presents himself as masculine and perhaps dominant may cause another male patron to alter their behaviour to match and fit the social scripts of gender and hegemonic masculinity. The collective nature of hegemonic masculinity is highlighted through this, as men tend to perform hegemonic masculinity primarily for other men. As Connell states, within the conception of masculinity is a hierarchy of masculinities which arrange themselves in patterns of "domination and subordination" leaving a tendency for competition amongst men to reach the dominant form (Connell, 1995, p. 35)

Another way that individuals produce images in the bar setting is by taking photographs of themselves and others. Schroer describes the use of camera phones as contributive to a voyeuristic culture (Schroer, 2014, p. 218). In the bar setting, it was impossible to go a night without witnessing multiple "selfies," and bars themselves contributed to this visual culture by hiring their own photographers to fill their social media with images and in some cases including

photo booths in the venue. Individuals were often witnessed filming strangers on the dance floor from the periphery. These people did not seem to be trying to hide the fact that they were filming, without permission, in any way. Other patrons did not respond poorly to this filming. In this way, visual culture is normalized in bar settings. It also becomes an aspect of the social experience in bars, as individuals interpret visual cues in the course of social interactions with strangers.

The Mating Ritual

Public drinking establishments were regularly described by participants as places to go to socialize and to meet new people. Tanya and Sarah both explicitly referred to bars as a "social environment" and eight respondents felt that the social atmosphere of the bar was characteristic enough of the setting to mention this in their descriptions of "a typical bar environment." Fourteen respondents also noted that one of the reasons that they believed people go to bars is "to meet new people." This means that bars were framed not only as "a nice place to go to catch up with friends" as Kia describes, but also as a place to make new friends. A total of 16 respondents described that they believed one of the reasons people go to bars is to spend time with friends.

Erving Goffman devoted considerable time to the study of social gatherings and the way that individuals present themselves in these spaces. Although he does not study alcohol culture, he does make note of the impact that intoxication has on social gatherings, of which alcohol is often a part. In particular, he notes that "when an individual is visibly intoxicated, or dressed in a costume, or engaged in an unserious sport, he may be accosted almost at will and joked with, presumably on the assumption that the self projected through these activities is one from which the individual can easily dissociate himself" (Goffman, 1963, p. 126). In simpler terms, Goffman

implies that engaging in these behaviours (such as intoxication, and costume), all of which are common in public drinking establishments, increases the likelihood of interaction between strangers. Goffman's theory can be applied to the behaviour observed in the bar setting as well as statements made by respondents in the survey. Tanya summed this up quite neatly with the statement that bars are "a loud social environment where drinking alcohol is the central factor for socializing." Many respondents described alcohol as a social lubricant in this way. Some described that they purposefully consumed alcohol before going out to a bar in order to improve their ability to interact with strangers. As Lois described, "I drink enough to keep me from getting sober because alcohol helps me be a little more social." Alcohol was a tool used by many to improve their ability to present themselves to others with confidence. This implies that individuals were not only more approachable when intoxicated, but also more likely to approach others.

I observed this combination of intoxication and socializing as patrons interacted with strangers in the bar setting. I often observed patrons socializing with alcoholic beverages in hand and purchasing drinks for others was often used as a tool to interact with strangers. For example, on two occasions my research companion and I were approached by strangers in the venue who offered to purchase us drinks (Observation Data, October 5 & 6, 2019). This only occurred when my research companion was also female and those approaching were always male. This offer was typically followed with a period of conversation.

This begins to illuminate a more specific aspect of the social culture that exists in public drinking establishments. As the scholar David Grazian once described, "sexualized environments have historically defined downtown zones of urban nightlife" (2007, p. 221). This understanding was validated in this study through the way participants identified that many people go to bars

with the intent of meeting a romantic and/or sexual partner. I have used the term 'the mating ritual' as the title of this section to describe the ways individuals engage in social interactions with the hope or result of finding a sexual and/or romantic partner. Hook-up culture exists in the overarching category of the mating ritual and refers more explicitly to casual sexual encounters such as 'one-night stands.' Eight respondents explicitly described that they believed one of the reasons that people attended public drinking establishments was to, as Sarah describes, "find someone to have sex with." This statement was supported by the way that people in bars were observed interacting with one another and snippets of overheard conversation. It is notable that both men and women exhibited this sort of behaviour. For example, as one woman passed by the table I was sitting at, she exclaimed "I'm going man-hunting." This was also exemplified through the request of a male patron to a female patron to invite more of her female friends to the venue (October 27, 2018). In each case, the speaker indicates a hope or intention of finding someone of the opposite sex to interact with in the bar setting. This relates to previous findings that imply that casual sex is a normalized component of our culture (Currier, 2013, p. 712). However, it does not highlight the presence of the gendered double standard in the same way previous research has. For example, in Currier's aforementioned study, women felt the need to navigate a strategic ambiguity in order to not be labelled as 'slutty' when engaging in the culture of hook-ups (2013, pp. 718-9), while the woman I overheard describing her "man-hunting" mission was far from ambiguous. This difference may be explained by the nature of the setting in which this was overheard. Given that Currier's study involved speaking to women directly, it is likely that social pressures which act upon women in society to police their sexuality would have been more prevalent. In the bar setting, spaces in which behaviours such as hooking-up and intoxication are normalized, it is less likely that someone would police their actions around this

topic. This is supported by past studies which have found that women feel they are able to "let loose" in the bar setting in ways that they can't in their normal lives (Kovac and Trussell, 2015, p. 201). In the current study, six female respondents used this specific language of 'letting loose' to describe why people may enjoy going to bars.

The space in which different understandings and perceptions of hook-up culture did arise was in the survey data, as many female respondents voiced concerns about the way the culture of drinking establishments lends itself to high amounts of physical contact such as "being groped," "boys [who] are often too touchy and/or aggressive" and spaces that are generally filled with "mostly horny young people." These descriptions indicate that the mating ritual in bars is not experienced in the same way by male and female patrons. Although both male and female respondents described that they thought people go to bars to hook up, and observation data revealed both men and women engaging in behaviours which fall within 'the mating ritual,' male respondents did not describe experiences with unwanted physical contact in this same way. Emma describes that "getting hit on in bars is exhausting." This statement, along with a chorus of others describing that there are often people in bars who, as Vera describes, "will not take no for an answer" illuminate a culture of non-consent in which women's voices are often not heard.

Gendered Safety

This culture of non-consent became one of the most prominent factors which arose in terms of gendered safety in both data sets. In particular, it became clear that safety concerns were different for male and female patrons in bars. Overall, feelings of safety were expressed largely in terms of sexual violence and physical safety in bar fights. Female respondents were more likely to recount stories in which they had felt unsafe in bars due to male patrons who harassed them or refused to take "no" for an answer. Male respondents described fear in different ways

than female respondents. For example, Gary described that he had been in multiple bar fights before and that in such fights, "fear is ubiquitous." Trevor similarly described that based on the bar fights that he had been in, such experiences are "exhilarating but also upsetting." Gary also used the word "victorious" as a way of describing how he felt after bar fights. It is notable that the way in which male respondents framed experiences of fear or discomfort was generally accompanied with positive caveats such as this. This indicates a reliance on the templates of hegemonic masculinity, as traits such as aggression, confidence, and strength are brought out in the way bar fights are framed. Nobility is also present, as respondents were careful to describe the "upsetting" nature of these fights along with feelings of pride when they came to a close and 'justice' is reached.

Descriptions of the typical bar environment also differed between male and female respondents with most male respondents describing the environment either ambivalently or positively, leaving only 11% describing negative characteristics in their idea of the typical bar. This can be compared with the 36% of female respondents who spoke negatively of bars in response to this preliminary question. Many of these responses were oriented around safety. Examples of negative descriptions included that bars were "obnoxious" and "aggressive." Past research in the bar setting has generally found that males feel more safe than females in such settings (Fileborn, 2016, p. 1111; Kovac and Trussell, 2015, p. 205). It is important to note that these trends may be related to the gendered social pressures that govern men and women more broadly, as men are encouraged to express confidence and aggression in ways that women are not. As Fileborn describes, "men are…encouraged to be strong, protective and not afraid when 'doing' masculinity" (Fileborn, 2016, p. 1117). In this way, men are discouraged from discussing safety concerns in the same way that women are encouraged to. Safety in the bar setting is often

framed as "a women's issue" (Fileborn, 2016, p. 1115). This implies that women in such settings have a greater responsibility to keep themselves and others safe and are at a higher risk of being victimized to begin with. Often, this victimization is related to expressions of hypermasculinity.

Previous studies have found that hypermasculine behaviours increase with the consumption of alcohol (Anderson et al., 2009, p. 324). Consistent with this finding, Dora describes that "the most typical violent men" became problematic "later in the night." During observations, individuals were found to become increasingly boisterous, loud, and sexual as the night progressed. Past research has found that perceptions of fear in the bar setting tend to increase when the majority of patrons are male (de Andrade et al., p. 13). These perceptions of fear increased for both men *and* women. Although no bar fights were observed during the observation period, it is notable that over half of the survey respondents had witnessed a bar fight. Out of these individuals, six respondents described having been a participant in a bar fight. Five out of these six were male. This shows that although female respondents were more likely to describe fear and safety issues, physical safety also impacts men in bars. Previous research has found that men are *more likely* to be victims of violence such as bar fights (Wells et al., 2011, p. 613; de Andrade et al., 2016, p. 2).

Gendered safety was also observed in the treatment of drinks by female patrons. I observed that female patrons were far less likely to leave their beverages unattended, even carrying them with them into washrooms. I speculate that the reason female patrons were so much more likely to carry their drinks with them at all times is based on the fear of leaving their drink exposed to being drugged by another patron. In contrast, I often saw male patrons consuming drinks which they had left unattended. Zelda framed the issue of drinks being drugged as a women's issue as she described that women may be wary of going to bars because

"[i]t can be dangerous for girls… worrying about spiked drinks." However, it is notable that one male patron disclosed having been drugged in a bar, no female respondents made such a disclosure, and both men and women expressed concern about drugged drinks in the survey. For example, Chad, a male respondent who identifies as heterosexual, included in his description of a typical bar environment that "[m]ost times in a bar you have to watch all of your belongings as well as your drink in terms of theft/tampering." This illuminates a discrepancy between observation data and survey data. Female patrons were more likely to be witnessed engaging in defense mechanisms generally.

Throughout the course of field observations, I observed female patrons engaging in various forms of defensive strategies. A study conducted by Fileborn (2016, p. 1112) explored such defense mechanisms and found that females engaged in these behaviours in the bar setting regularly and at a higher rate than their male counterparts. These mechanisms included ensuring that drinks were never left unattended, not consuming too much, surrounding oneself with the right people, and choosing the right venues (Fileborn, 2016, pp. 1112-1113). Notably, Fileborn's study also found that safety was often framed as an individual responsibility, and therefore placed at least partial blame on those who 'risked' their safety through overconsumption. Brooks similarly found that although in the modern Western world women have more social permission to engage in consumption, "a sense of vulnerability is embedded in these new freedoms" (Brooks, 2008, p. 342).

During my own observations, I observed women dancing in close, circular formations in response to the approach of men. The act of dancing in this formation alone is not indicative of a defense mechanism. However, the specific circumstances of these actions lead me to interpret them in this way. Often, these tight circular formations would be further tightened in response to

the approach of a male patron. The closure of the circle was accompanied by glances amongst the women, and at times gestures toward the approaching individual. When the approaching individual left, the circle formation would open back up and return to normal. On some nights, I observed the same groups of girls engaging in these strategies on multiple occasions. I also observed female patrons dancing intimately with one another in direct response to the approach of a male patron until he departed again. Once again, this behaviour alone is not indicative of a defense mechanism, as many women dance with one another in bars, but the timing of its use along with the way this dancing stopped after the approaching person departed implied that this was the intent.

Female patrons were also observed watching out for one another in various ways. For example, on one occasion a visibly intoxicated female patron was pulled off the dance floor by a female friend and given water to drink. Female respondents also described looking out for one another in their survey responses. Gloria advised others that "[w]hen you go out and know you will be drinking go with friends you can trust." Although this type of care was more blatantly evident in the data collected amongst women than amongst men, there were men who described expressing care in the bar environment in similar ways. For example, Chad describes that he goes to public drinking establishments with "[c]lose friends that [he] can trust with my [his] health and safety if things happen to turn to an unfavorable situation." In this way, he acknowledges the potential risks of the bar environment and the importance of having trusted individuals with him in case these risk factors become problematic. As aforementioned, males are more likely to be victimized in the bar setting when it comes to physical violence such as bar fights (Wells et al., 2011, p. 613; de Andrade et al., 2016, p. 2). Women however, are more likely to be victims of sexual violence (Graham, Bernards, Osgood, et al., 2013, p. 1420).

The impact of keeping a friend nearby when at the bar was demonstrated through observation as well. For example, on one occasion two girls were dancing together on the dance floor. One departed towards the washroom, leaving the other to dance alone. Within seconds after the departure of her friend, a male patron began approaching the now-solo dancer and repeatedly making efforts to touch her. She consistently moved away but he persisted until she was once again accompanied by another person. This is also an example of the way rules of consent are blurred in the bar setting, resulting in engagement in behaviours that would not be appropriate in other settings. As Vera describes it, although she likes going out to bars "[s]ometimes you do run into people that are very agressive (sic) or will not take no for an answer." Dawn describes this as one of the drawbacks of public drinking establishments, stating that her favourite venue is one where there is "not a lot of touching."

Despite the more numerous accounts of safety concerns by female patrons, it is critical not to assume from these outward expressions that males in bar settings have no regard for safety and care for fellow patrons. There were multiple expressions made by males that indicated their care in ways which were appropriate within the template of Connell's model of hegemonic masculinity, such as, taking on the role of "wingman." In popular discourse, the wingman refers to a male who helps another male friend to 'pick up' a female. During observations, I witnessed on multiple occasions pairs of males in which one patron would speak to female patrons regularly throughout the night while the other accompanied but stayed on the periphery of the interaction. Although I cannot assume the intent of these behaviours from my own data, previous research supports that young men often support each other in such ways in the bar setting (Grazian, 2007, pp. 231–32). Such research has argued that one may vicariously fulfill the masculinized goal of finding a sexual partner in the bar through their friend's success (p. 232).

Perpetuating the Culture

As the 'wingman' aids his friend through social interactions with various women throughout the night, he may be encouraged by various aspects of the venue itself. The band's reminder that "this is baby making music" (Observation data, October 6) or the DJ's assertion that "there's only a few weeks before [the bride-to-be celebrating her bachelorette is] a married woman, so tonight's your only chance!" (Observation data, November 17) may contribute to his goal of finding a romantic or sexual partner, and the way he goes about this. The role of drinking establishments themselves in perpetuating a culture in which overconsumption, hook-up culture, and visual culture flourish in interaction with one another is significant. DJs and live bands at the venues where I conducted my observations often made comments which adhered to the mating ritual as well as the visual nature of the setting. For example, a DJ who, between songs, praised the audience with the statement that "you guys are looking good tonight" or the lead singer of a band who finished her song with the exclamation "well, that was a hot song! For a lot of hot people!" Thus, attention is called to the visual nature of the space and patrons are encouraged to conform to this expected image.

The gendered nature of the bar is also perpetuated in this way. For example, various DJs often referred specifically to the "ladies in the audience" when playing different songs or attempting to encourage participation of patrons on the dance floor. For instance, one DJ devoted a song to "all you sophisticated ladies out there" (Field notes, October 26, 2018). Advertisements in the bar were also highly gendered, with certain beverages advertised towards men or women specifically. For example, an ad featuring the popular video game characters Princess Peach and Donkey Kong portrayed the masculine gorilla holding one beer per paw, contrasted by the Princess who was featured daintily holding a pink cocktail (Field notes, October 20, 2018). Some

bars also held "girl's nights" which allowed women to enter the bar without paying cover. The marketing mentality behind such nights is that more female patrons in the bar will also attract more male patrons. This lends itself to the theme of the mating ritual as well, as it implies that a bar with more women will attract more men.

Bar staff also regularly encouraged drunkenness. Upon entrance to certain establishments, the bartender would be ready and waiting to receive drink orders. It was impossible to walk by the bar in one of the venues without a bartender calling out "Welcome! What can I get for you?" After ordering a drink, the bartender would often complete the interaction with the statement "See you back here soon," thereby not only encouraging an initial drink order, but also a second round. Rosemary described that when "bartenders… get a bit pushy" she finds it "annoying." Over-intoxication was regularly linked to safety outcomes in the survey data, which makes this encouragement of consumption problematic, in particular when it is in combination with the encouragement of hook-up culture where issues of consent may arise. Tiffany describes that she is wary of talking to people who are overly drunk in bars, because "if the person is heavily intoxicated and touching [her] without consent [she] feel[s] very uncomfortable." In this way, she directly links over-intoxication to issues of both consent and gendered safety. It becomes clear through this that the culture created in public drinking establishments is one that is perpetuated in various ways. Challenging this culture as a way of reducing the risks associated with it would involve both education for patrons and bar staff. This study, along with others of a similar nature, provide a starting point for how to target issues of gender in order to ensure safety in bar settings.

LIMITATIONS

It is important to acknowledge that the sampling techniques used for this research created a biased sample. Given that I posted the survey to social media, many of those who received it are those who are connected with me on social media or part of social media groups that I also belong to. The survey was also posted on multiple student pages which resulted in the recruitment of many students. Although it is important to acknowledge the potential drawbacks of this sampling technique, the demographic of respondents who filled out the survey do resemble that of the people who were observed in the bar setting in terms of age group. Drinking culture is also a large part of student culture, which minimizes any problem that may be associated with the fact that many respondents were students.

I acknowledge that the conclusions made in this study cannot be generalized to alcohol culture as a whole as these conclusions were made based on a sample of bars in Edmonton, Alberta alone. However, the amount of qualitative research in this location is very limited and any that was conducted is very dated (See Ratcliffe et al., 1979). In this way, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of alcohol as a whole by adding this location to the repertoire of research and by specifically exploring gender dynamics in this setting.

Limitations in the methodology used are also present. By combining survey data and observation data I was able to access intent based on specific statements by respondents. However, intent can only be speculated upon in the observation data. It is also impossible to be entirely unbiased in qualitative research of this nature, and although intensive coding procedures and research were done to minimize this effect, my social location still has an impact on the final product of the research and the questions that were asked to begin with.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This paper began with an overview of the way alcohol culture has historically been gendered. It has become clear through this research that the gendered nature of alcohol culture has changed, in some ways, from the days of male-only taverns. However, the bar setting is still one in which conceptions of gender are heightened and relevant. Both men and women have similar reasons for going to public drinking establishments, yet gender norms and expectations prevent these experiences from resembling one another. Who has the right to operate in this culture is still limited by these societal norms. Participants in the survey reported that they go to bars to meet sexual and/or romantic partners, they go to consume alcohol, they go to dance, and they go to catch up with friends, yet the safety implications of these same actions are different for men and women and this impacts experiential descriptions of the setting. It is important to note that although gendered safety is often framed as a "women's issue," targeting elements of gendered safety would have a positive impact for both men and women (Fileborn, 2016, p. 1115). For example, Dawn described a bar fight that she had witnessed which was an outcome of a male patron attempting to protect a female patron from another male patron who was not taking no for an answer. Alexa similarly described that bar fights are "usually caused by someone standing up for another individual." In this way, it becomes clear that targeting the way gendered norms operate in bar culture could help to reduce such instances of violence, not just instances typically associated with gender inequality such as sexual violence.

The prevalence of sexual violence was illuminated in the intersection in the themes of 'the mating ritual' and 'gendered safety.' The fact that individuals go to bars to meet other people is not problematic on its own and many respondents reported having positive experiences in bars overall which in many cases involved socializing with strangers in this way. However,

when alcohol is mixed with this culture of socialization and 'hooking up' it creates problems surrounding the issue of consent and increases other risk factors. Studies have indicated that intoxication on the part of female bar patrons often results in the questioning of her right to "withhold consent" (Brooks, 2008, p. 334). Women who are intoxicated during the time of assault or harassment are often blamed for the violence against them.

Overall, the safety implications that are interrelated to the major themes in this study indicate a need for action. Specific safety programs in bars which focus on these gendered outcomes could reduce violence of multiple forms in the bar setting. In Edmonton, one way in which safety concerns have been acknowledged is through a program called Best Bar None. Bars may voluntarily sign up for this initiative, implemented by the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, to achieve recognition as a bar that is "serious about safety and service" (Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, 2017). The initiative involves a checklist that must be met by bars in the program. A 'mandatory' item on this checklist is to "[h]ave a written policy in place to make staff aware of and prevent drug facilitated sexual assault" (Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, 2016, p. 8). A 'bonus' item on this checklist is to have "[s]ignage… posted within the premises, identifying behavioural expectations for patrons" (Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, 2016, p. 14). Both of these requirements encourage bars to be mindful of some of the potential dangers of the heightened sense of gender expectations that often arise in the bar setting. However, there is no specific direction on what these policies should consist of and the items on the checklist largely ignored issues of gendered safety in lieu of a strong focus on aspects of physical safety such as ensuring there is a policy to clean up broken glass. A reframed view of safety that includes gender along with more specific guidelines to approach these issues could lead to an increase in safety overall. It may reduce violence such as bar fights as well as

sexual violence thereby resulting in an environment that can be enjoyed by all genders on a more equal plain.

Along with these practical implications, my research also draws attention to theoretical bodies of literature, such as Connell's understandings of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity. As stated above, Connell defines emphasized femininity in relation to hegemonic masculinity in that it is subordinate to it, seen in abundance in the bar setting (R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 848). The fact that so few women spoke of public drinking establishments without mentioning safety in some way contributes to the normalization of beliefs that bars specifically cater to the desires of men, implying that women are subordinate to men in this setting. The high prevalence of concern on topics such as drugged drinks, experiencing unwanted touching, or being afraid to say 'no' to a male patron also highlight women's subordinated position.

The data highlights a reliance on the templates of emphasized femininity and hegemonic masculinity which contribute to understanding the different ways that male and female respondents experience the setting. For example, Trevor displays both bravery and aggression by describing his past participation in a bar fight, illuminating two key components of the 'right' way to be masculine. Similarly, Sethe describes one of best parts about going to the bar as being able to "dress up" and calls herself a "social butterfly" when she is "tipsy," thereby adhering to multiple components of the 'right' way to be feminine. The fulfillment of and pressure to fulfill such templates contributes to interactions between bar patrons and the way the bar setting is experienced by people of various social locations.

This study reveals the perspectives of various patrons by relying on qualitative research methods and the tenets of standpoint theory by giving voice to individuals who have attended

public drinking establishments and allowing them to speak from their own experience based on their social location. A person's social location impacts the way they interpret the world around them and interact with others, which made the qualitative research methods of this study paramount. This approach also allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of the topics of agency and embodiment in the bar setting.

Agency was most clearly understood through descriptions of why individuals chose to attend the bar, and assertions by some that they had consciously chosen not to attend public drinking establishments for various reasons. Agency was also practiced when patrons took safety into their own hands. Anastasia described that when she attends bars, she does so with "a group of friends that [she] trust[s] to go out with." Anastasia also described that she has "had occasions where [she has] chosen not to drink" and that her decision has been respected by those she has been with. These are two examples of ways she has taken her experience of public drinking establishments into her own hands so that she could enjoy "hav[ing] fun with friends" while at a bar. Many participants also spoke of taking their experience into their own hands through levels of alcohol consumption. For example, Amy describes that on nights when she wants "to get really drunk [she] will drink before" she goes out to the bar, while if her goal is to "get a little tipsy" and focus on "hanging out [and] getting to know people" then she will "just drink during" her night out. In this way, Amy is able to take control over her body and experience on a night out through levels of consumption.

This focus on the body in relation to alcohol demonstrates the connection this research holds with theories of embodiment. The visual nature of the bar setting creates a strong awareness of one's own body and the bodies of others. Issues of consent in this setting are related to both embodiment and agency, as some patrons are forced into positions where they

must proactively consider the safety of their bodies. Two respondents described that "the amount of physical contact that happens in bars" may be a reason why people avoid these venues. In this way, protection of one's body becomes a factor in the decision to participate in alcohol culture to begin with. It is notable that both of these respondents are female. Male respondents overwhelmingly left out discussions of the body, even when describing bar fights. Although there are pressures about how to present the body for both males and females, female bodies were characterized by risk in a way that male bodies were not. This is related back to the social scripts of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity, as men are expected to be 'tough' and 'strong.' Even though men are more likely to be involved in violence such as bar fights, discussions of male bodies as vulnerable were absent from the survey data, which indicates a reliance on the social expectations regarding what it means to be masculine and how masculine bodies should be framed. In these ways, this research contributes not only to the practical landscape of alcohol culture, but also to feminist theory on various levels.

FUTURE STUDIES

My study prioritized depth within a specific research question, which resulted in a large amount of collected data not directly relevant to the research question. Data collected for this study could be used to address questions regarding overconsumption and addiction, the relationship between social culture and addictions, the relationship between alcohol culture and theories on leisure and recreation, and the connection between student culture and consumption. Further exploration of such topics would contribute to Canadian data on this topic and may contribute to the body of literature addressing the safety concerns of the setting in order to ensure that this culture, and the large body of people influenced by it, does not become or continue to be a social ill in society.

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APPENDIX A: Alcohol Culture Survey

Demographic Information:

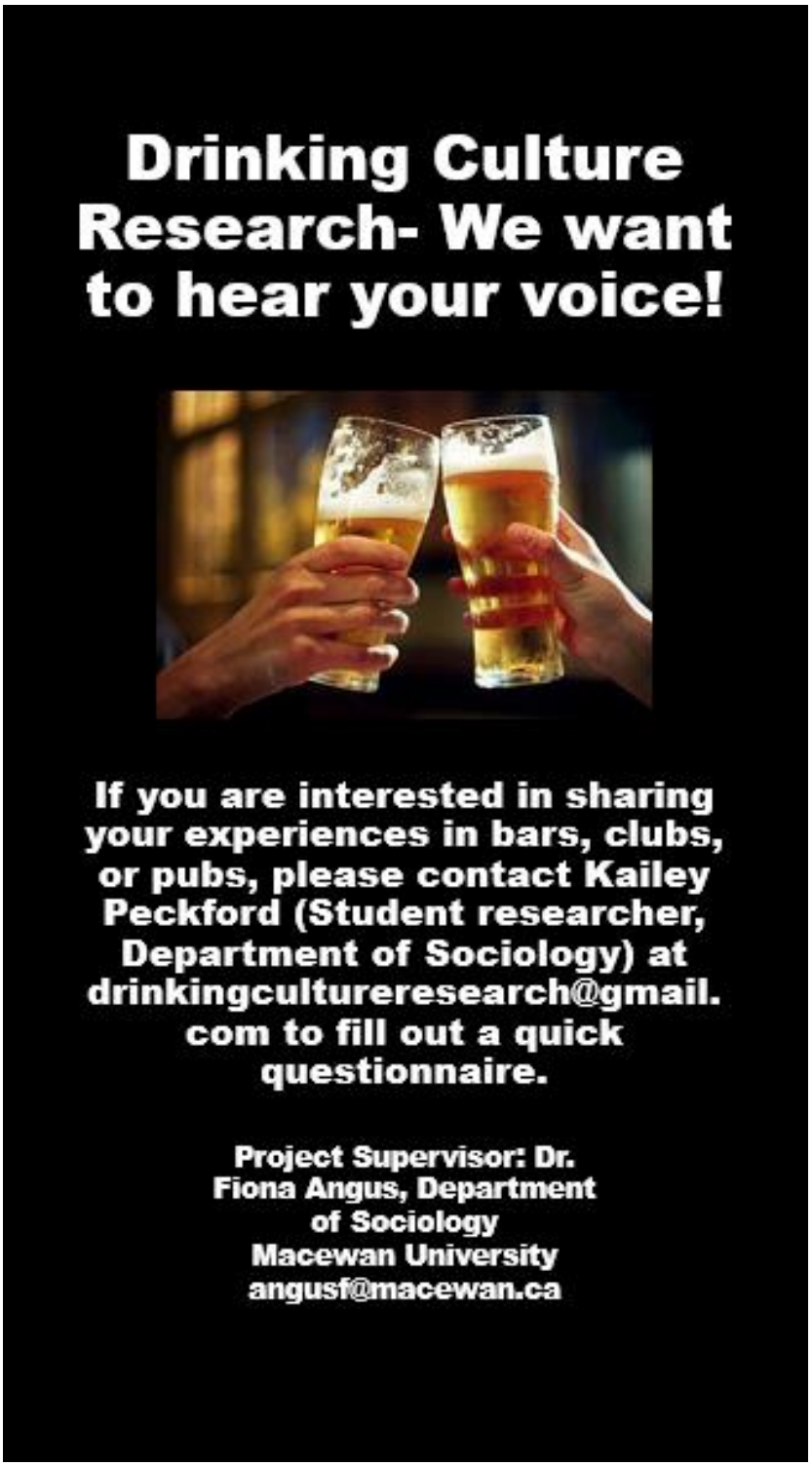
1. What is your birth year?
2. What is your gender?
    a. Female
    b. Male
    c. Prefer not to say
    d. Non-Binary
    e. Other: _____
3. What is your sexual orientation?
    a. Straight
    b. Bisexual
    c. Gay
    d. Prefer not to answer
    e. Other: _____
4. What is your current relationship status?
    a. Single
    b. In a relationship
    c. Prefer not to answer
    d. Other: _____
5. What is your current employment status? What do you do?

Drinking and alcohol culture questions:

1. How would you describe a typical bar environment?
2. Do you have a favourite venue? What is it about this space that makes it appealing?
3. Why do you think people like going out to bars?
4. Why do you think people may dislike going out to bars?
5. Do you consume alcohol before, during, or after a night out? Why?
6. Do you feel pressured to drink alcohol? If so, by whom?
7. How do you feel about Alberta’s legal drinking age?
8. Who do you typically go to public drinking establishments with?
9. Have you ever witnessed a barfight or any other form of violence on a night out? How did you feel in this situation?
10. Do you feel comfortable speaking with strangers in bars?
11. Are there any other stories or thoughts you would like to share about your experiences in bars, clubs, or pubs?

APPENDIX B: Contact Cards

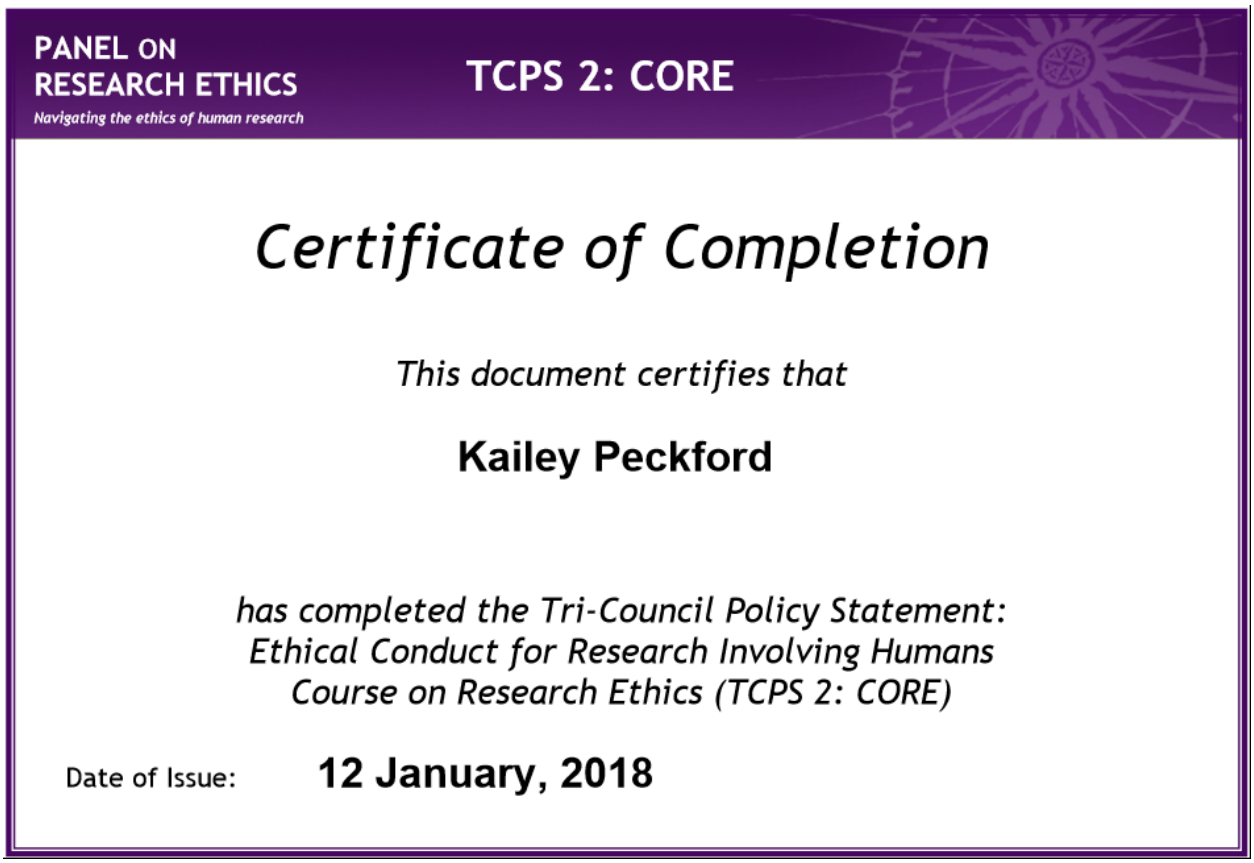
APPENDIX C: Recruitment Poster



APPENDIX D: Respondent Information

Respondent Pseudonym	**Gender Identity**	**Age Range**	**Sexuality**	**Relationship Status**
Dora	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Vera	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Gloria	Female	Over 30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Tanya	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Chad	Male	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Sarah	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Lois	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Dawn	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Kia	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Emma	Female	18-30	Bisexual	In a Relationship
Gary	Male	Over 30	Heterosexual	Single
Trevor	Male	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Zelda	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Tiffany	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	In a Relationship
Rosemary	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Married
Anastasia	Female	18-30	Heterosexual	Single
Amy	Female	18-30	Bisexual	Single
Holly	Female	18-30	Unsure	Single

APPENDIX E: TCPS2 Certification



PANEL ON RESEARCH ETHICS
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Kailey Peckford

has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)

Date of Issue: **12 January, 2018**