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**UNDER THE INFLUENCE?  
THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL  
ADVERTISING ON YOUTH**

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COMMISSIONED BY  
**ARAPO**  
THE ASSOCIATION TO REDUCE ALCOHOL  
PROMOTION IN ONTARIO

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# UNDER THE INFLUENCE? THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL ADVERTISING ON YOUTH

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# Under the Influence?

## The Impact of Alcohol Advertising on Youth

By

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### Introduction

There is a controversy around the negative effects of alcohol advertising on the drinking attitudes and behaviours of young people. The industry argues that advertising encourages drinkers to choose new brands but does not make them drink more and that brand marketing is not targeted at teenagers. Despite the *intent* of the industry, research shows that *alcohol advertising does influence young people*. It pre-programs them to drink, attracts new drinkers, invites drinkers to drink more and makes it hard for those who have problems to stop.

The Association to Reduce Alcohol Promotion in Ontario (ARAPO) is a provincial association of people concerned about the influence of alcohol advertising on society's attitudes and choices about alcohol use. ARAPO's goal is to promote public health and safety by reducing the influence of alcohol promotion through education and other health promotion strategies.

*Under the Influence? The Impact of Alcohol Advertising on Youth* was prepared to provide public health professionals, the media and the public with current and reputable research on the link between alcohol advertising and its influence on society's attitudes and choices -- with a special focus on youth and the Canadian situation.

### Alcohol Advertising and the Canadian Marketplace

#### Definition

"Advertising" is defined as any message with content controlled by an advertiser that is communicated to influence the choice, opinions or behaviour of Canadians. Advertising messages are used to promote the use of goods and services, to improve the public image of corporations, organizations, and governments, or to advance a point of view (Advertising Standards Canada, 1999). Although advertising appears in different mediums (print, outdoor, internet, etc.), this report focuses on broadcast advertising such as radio and television.

#### Advertising Spending by the Alcohol Industry

Labatt and Molson, the largest beer companies in Canada, spend about \$200 million each year to promote their products (Brent, 1999a; 1999b).<sup>1</sup> Corby Distillers will spend about \$5 million in 1999 to

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed information about individual corporate spending by the Canadian alcohol industry is not publicly available (CRTC, 1999, personal communication, Leesha Lin, Chief of Statistics). However, it is collected by Advertising Expenditure Measurement (AEM) and available for purchase (ACNielsen, 1998).

promote its rye, rum and vodka products (Brent, 1999c) and British Columbia's Mark Anthony Group will spend \$6 million to promote *Mike's Hard Lemonade* (Brent, 1999d).<sup>2</sup>

Sports sponsorship is another type of commercial promotion available to the industry with about \$6.8 billion spent throughout North America in 1998 (House of Commons Subcommittee on Sport, 1998). Although 70% of the Top 400 Canadian Companies used this medium to advertise, beer companies accounted for 25% of all documented Canadian sports promotions in 1997.

### **Advertising and Drinking by Youth**

Canadians drink about 15% less per person than they did ten years ago, meaning that dollars for alcohol advertising are spent in an ever-declining market (Brewers Association of Canada, 1999). This situation seems to support the industry's claim that their ads encourage consumers to switch brands. Marketing experts, however, believe that young people are targeted in beer advertisements because one fifth of Canadians aged 18 to 24 (537,000 people) are heavy drinkers. Even though they make up only 2 % of the adult population, they consume about 11% of the total beer sold (Theobald, 1999). By targeting this age group, producers may win lifelong brand loyalty from new drinkers (Theobald, 1999).

While overall drinking may not be affected by how much the alcohol industry spends on ads (Barnes, 1984), research in the late 1980s, showed that advertising directly affects how much Canadian students in Grades 7, 9 and 11 drink and indirectly affects their problems with alcohol (Adlaf and Kohn, 1989). Today, about 66% (620,000 students) of Ontario students from Grade 7 to 13 drink alcohol each year – about 10% more than in 1993. Drinking is well entrenched in the high school culture, with four in five students drinking in grades 11 to 13 (Table 1). Drinking is not something Ontario teens do once in a while. Of all students, 23% drink on special occasions, about half (45%) drink 1-3 times a month and 21% drink at least once a week. (Adlaf et al, 1999).

Table 1  
Proportion of Ontario Students Who Drank  
in the Past Year, 1993, 1999

<b>Grade</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1999</b>
7th graders	31.8	39.7
9th graders	52.0	63.1
11th graders	73.2	82.0
13-OAC students	77.8	83.0
Overall	56.5	65.7

Source: Adlaf et al., 1999.

High risk drinking has also increased steadily among teenagers over the past few years (Table 2). In 1999, just under half (42%) of all teens that drink, said they had more than 5 drinks at one sitting -- at least once in the past month. Having more than 5 drinks on a single occasion is considered "binge drinking". More than 7% of all teen drinkers "binged" five or more times in the past month. This represents a dramatic increase over 1993.

Table 2  
Proportion of Ontario Students Having 5+ Drinks at One Sitting in the Past Month,  
1993, 1999

<b>Frequency of Drinking 5+</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1999</b>
Never	69.5	57.5
Once	13.6	16.1
Twice	6.4	10.4
3 Times	4.0	5.1
4 Times	2.3	3.7
5 Times	4.2	7.1
% Binging	30.5	42.4

Source: Adlaf et al., 1999.

## ***Advertising and the Consequences of Drinking***

Heavy, regular exposure of 12 to 22 year olds to alcohol ads is linked to heavy drinking and drinking in dangerous situations (i.e., automobile driving) (Atkin et al., 1983; Atkin, 1990).<sup>3</sup> When drinking is connected with a dangerous activity in an ad, the activity could appear safe to do under the influence and make young people accept heavy or hazardous drinking more readily. Heavy or hazardous drinkers may also look for ads to reinforce their own behaviour.

Research in the U.S. shows that spending on alcohol advertising is linked to problems like motor vehicle crashes (Hacker and Stewart, 1995; Saffer, 1997). Between 1986 and 1993, ad spending in the U.S. fell by 46%<sup>4</sup> while deaths from alcohol-related vehicle crashes declined by 29%.<sup>5</sup> Alcohol involvement in fatal crashes for young drivers fell significantly from 36% to 24% for 16 to 20 year olds and from 47% to 39% for 21 to 24 year olds (Hacker and Stewart, 1995).

Researchers hypothesize about what would happen to motor vehicle deaths if some important U.S. policies on alcohol advertising changed. For example, Saffer (1997) developed an industry wide measure of advertising to estimate how many people would die between 1986 and 1989 in 75 advertising markets in the U.S. The study found that spending on alcohol advertising significantly affects these deaths; a ban on all broadcast advertising (but not other types of marketing) could save from 2,000 to 3,000 lives per year (Saffer, 1997).<sup>6</sup> Also, according to Saffer, if the policy that allows alcohol advertising to reduce corporate taxes was dropped, alcohol companies would pay about 54% more to advertise. This increase would reduce advertising expenditures by 27% and fatalities by about 2,300 per year. As a result, total advertising in the US would be cut by about \$1 billion to \$850 million each year and increase tax revenue by about \$336 million a year. Similar studies are not available in Canada.

## **Alcohol Advertising in Canada**

### ***The Canadian System of Review***

In Canada, a combination of government and industry interests control alcohol advertising. Government regulates it federally through the CRTC's Broadcast Act and provincially with regional advertising guidelines (Solomon, 1997).<sup>7</sup> The CRTC reviewed all broadcast advertising for compliance with the "CRTC Code for Broadcast Advertising of Alcoholic Beverages" until February 1997, when Advertising

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<sup>3</sup> A sample of 1,227 young people (12 to 22 years of age) were shown ads with activities that could be dangerous when combined with alcohol. Of this group, 25% felt a depicted skier was drinking, 85% felt a fisherman in a motorboat was drinking and 57% felt rowers were drinking although alcohol was not shown. Forty-six percent felt it was OK for the skier to drink, 80% for the fisherman to drink and 68% for the rowers to drink despite the dangerous activity (Atkin et al., 1983).

<sup>4</sup> Ad spending was gathered for "measured" media including television, radio, print and outdoor advertising. Advertising expenditures fell from \$1.51 billion in 1986 to \$808 million in 1993. Beer and distilled spirits companies spent 40% less, wine companies spent 54% less, and wine coolers, 88% less.

<sup>5</sup> Alcohol-related crashes dropped from 24,000 to 17,500 over the same period.

<sup>6</sup> This study assumes that the alcohol industry would not substitute other forms of advertising (print media, outdoor advertising) for broadcast advertising if a ban was introduced. If other forms of advertising were substituted, the ban would have no effect.

<sup>7</sup> Provincial regulations are in guidelines such as the "Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario Advertising Guidelines".

Standards Canada (ASC) took over this responsibility. The ASC also imposes its own industry standard on alcohol advertisers in the "Canadian Code of Advertising Standards" and other regulations such as the "Gender Portrayal Guidelines".<sup>8</sup>

### **Restrictions**

The federal government sets rules for broadcast advertising through the "CRTC Code for Broadcast Advertising of Alcoholic Beverages". Messages are not allowed to encourage non-drinkers to drink, appeal to minors, connect drinking with high-risk activities or imply that drinking leads to social acceptance, personal success or achievements in business or sports. They cannot portray the immoderate consumption of an alcohol beverage or exaggerate the importance of any aspect of the product. Some federal restrictions apply only after the product is formally introduced in the commercial through a label, a musical signature, logo, brand name or other symbol that identifies the product or its manufacturer.

Each province has its own rules about marketing and advertising alcohol, as listed in Exhibit 1. In Ontario, for example, all ads must be reviewed and approved by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario before they air (AGCO, 1994). They must reflect responsible use or service. Specific brands or types of alcohol can be promoted, but not drinking in general. Advertisements cannot imply that drinking is important for social or business success, athletic prowess, sexuality or sexual opportunity, having fun or achieving a goal. Drinking cannot solve problems. Alcohol advertising must not appeal to people under the drinking age or be placed in media that are targeted at them.<sup>9</sup> Songs that attract minors are not allowed and well-known personalities that appeal to young people are prohibited unless the person is not promoted in the advertisement. Alcohol advertising cannot associate drinking with any activity involving care, skill or physical danger. Links between alcohol and driving motor vehicles or playing some sports fall within this regulation. Finally, advertising cannot suggest illegal activity involving alcohol.

### **Monitoring**

Although alcohol advertising is regulated by the industry and pre-clearance is voluntary in many parts of Canada, almost all alcohol ads are reviewed for compliance with the national guidelines before they are broadcast (Peace, 1999).

The ASC has reviewed alcohol ads for compliance with the CRTC Code since 1997 when the CRTC withdrew from that role. In addition, CBC Advertising Standards reviews all complete alcohol ads before they are aired on the CBC and the Telecaster(s) Committee of Canada reviews ads for all other stations.

In 1998, the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) reviewed 5,200 alcohol advertisements, 800 less than the previous year: 44% were approved, 44% were approved with changes and 12% were refused (AGCO, 1999). These numbers include all forms of alcohol advertising run in Ontario.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The "Canadian Code of Advertising Standards" is applied to ads that receive complaints from the public and is used to decide if an ad should be withdrawn from public airwaves.

<sup>9</sup> Media targeted at persons under the legal drinking age include movies in movie theatres with the Family (F) rating. Movies with ratings of Parental Guidance (PG) and Adult Accompaniment (AA) are reviewed specially to identify the audience. Billboard advertising may not be placed within 200 metres of a primary or secondary school. An alcohol advertisement may not be placed in areas targeted at minors if it endorses an alcohol product or drinking.

<sup>10</sup> These advertisements include broadcast, print, billboard, and exterior and in-house ads for licensed premises.

Between July 1998 and June 1999, 146 new alcohol ads aired on Canadian media, representing 12.7% of all new ads during that period. These ads ran an average length of 25 seconds, ranging from 5 to 90 seconds. About 80% were for beer, 13% were for spirits and 7% were for wine. Budweiser (30%), Molson (19.6%), Labatt (16.2%) and Miller (15.4%) ran the most new ads (ACNielsen, 1999).<sup>11</sup>

In 1998, the ASC received 75 complaints against alcohol ads, making up 9% of all complaints filed (Advertising Standards Canada, 1998). By contrast, 29% of all complaints up-held by the ASC were for ads promoting alcoholic beverages.<sup>12</sup> The ASC identified safety issues, reverse sexism and adult-theme advertising in family oriented programs as media trends that were not acceptable to the public in 1998.

## Advertising Techniques

Experts say the key to advertising is not in the message, but how the consumer interprets it (Ad News, 1998). Therefore, advertisers must know the mind of the audience to communicate effectively.

Advertising works by creating, building, and reinforcing images. Alcohol image advertising integrates ideas about alcohol products and drinking into the 'symbolic world' in which people live (Berkeley Media Studies Group, 1997). The impact of these images on behaviour happens slowly and may not take effect for months or years after exposure.

Alcohol advertising fashions the attitudes and behaviours of young people through role modeling (Slater et al., 1996; Strasburger, 1993). The physical attractiveness of drinkers in ads affects teenagers depending on how they identify with the model in terms of age, other characteristics and their attraction to them (Mazis et al., 1992):

- **Physical attractiveness:** A drinking behaviour is shown in the media and reinforced with characters who are more socially desirable than the intended audience, but who resembles them (Bandura, 1986). When adolescents are heavily exposed to characters they identify with in drinking situations, the more they see real-world drinkers as attractive, successful and athletic (Atkin and Block, 1981).
- **Age Identification:** Young people may think TV actors and actresses are closer to their own age than they really are. Junior High School students who drink more may age-identify with the actors to justify their own behaviour. This does not happen with older adolescents. Teens may be more susceptible to drinking ads when they first begin to make decisions and choices about themselves (Atkin and Block, 1981).
- **"Liking":** When adolescents or young adults<sup>13</sup> "like" certain ads, their drinking and drinking problems may increase because of the exposure (Grube et al., 1996; Wyllie et al., 1998).<sup>14</sup> Humour, music and "sexiness" are strong influences.

The role-modeling aspect of advertising is crucial to understanding how ads work (Strasburger, 1993). Children learn to behave by imitating attractive role models but rarely imitate what they see in the media immediately or directly. Rather, their attitudes are affected over time by mass exposure, sensitizing them to situations that are beyond their experience (Bandura, 1977; Strasburger, 1993). Images in the media

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<sup>11</sup> TV stations such as WUTV (34%), CIII (21.2%), TSN-T (11%), CITY (6.8%), CBLT (6.2%), CFTO (5.5%) and MM-T (4.8%) aired them.

<sup>12</sup> Five different ads promoting alcoholic beverages received 41 valid complaints (ASC, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Wyllie et al., 1998 examined a sample of young adults between 18-29 years of age.

<sup>14</sup> Drinking did not strongly influence attention to alcohol ads.

are interpreted differently by each person, based on their personal ideas about the behaviour and their own perceptions of the characters (Strasburger, 1993).

Research shows that “liking” ads has a large indirect effect on drinking among young people (Grube et al., 1996). Attention to alcohol advertising increases adolescent drinking but current drinking does not make them pay more attention to ads. Younger adolescents prefer image advertising to product advertising, especially those with a strong intention to drink as adults (Kelly and Edwards, 1998). There is also evidence that young people who "like" alcohol ads have probably developed brand allegiance by 18 years of age. "Liking" is also related to the volume of beer consumed at age 21 and self-reports of alcohol-related aggressive behaviour (Casswell and Zhang, 1998).

Research also shows that over half (52%) of viewers remember the ads aired during their favourite programs, while only 34 % remember ads in shows they watch casually (Paquet, 1999). The proper mix of advertising and promotion also enhances awareness. For example, promotions alone earn 25% awareness, using ads alone earns 42% awareness, but combining advertising with promotion wins 61% awareness. Research also shows that 10 quick ad exposures are enough to make an impact in a crowded media market. Finally, the more people "like" ads, the more effective the ads will be.<sup>15</sup>

Some Miller Lite (51.6%) and Budweiser (40.8%) commercials attract teenage interest more than any other promotions. For example, a 1998 research study found that Budweiser "Frogs" (47%) achieved the highest "liking" ratings of any ad ever tested, especially among people 18 to 29 years of age. Bud-Lite's commercial "I Love You Man" (34%) was the 6<sup>th</sup> most popular ad ever (Ad Track, 1999).

Table 3 shows how much money was spent by the alcohol industry on four brand commercials and teenagers' reactions to them. In 1996, the big advertising spenders allocated between 45% and 60% of their total advertising budgets on single brands like Miller Lite and Budweiser (Auto Channel, 1997).<sup>16</sup> For each commercial, teens were asked to estimate how many beers the characters in each scenario would drink. Most young people thought the personalities had several drinks (average of 3.7 beers) regardless of the characters and imagery in the ads; many thought the characters were binge drinking (having five or more beers at one sitting) and reflected high-risk situations. Characters in commercials were seen as young, attractive, fun loving and popular -- characteristics that are important to teenagers.

Table 3  
Heavy Drinking Modeled by Beer Ads<sup>1</sup> and  
Annual Advertising Expenditures by Brand, 1996

Beer Brand	1996 Advertising Expenditures	1997 Advertising Expenditures (% Change)	Adolescents Who Pay Close Attention <sup>2</sup>	Sample <sup>3</sup> 1996 Commercial	No. of Drinks Adolescents Say the Character will Consume		
					Drinks	Drinks	Drinks
Budweiser	\$119,560,800	\$98,411,000 (-17.7%)	40.8%	“Rookie Construction Worker”	17%	43%	40%
Bud Light	\$66,247,300	\$55,732,400 (-15.9%)	n.d. <sup>4</sup>	“Beach Play”	29%	32%	39%
Miller Genuine Draft	\$21,320,900	\$61,148,600 (+186.8%)	n.d. <sup>4</sup>	“Fantasy Island”	34%	34%	32%
Miller Lite	\$100,222,400	\$149,020,100 (+48.9%)	51.6%	“TV Drinking Party”	6%	26%	68%

<sup>1</sup> No. of beers consumed by characters in four 1996 commercials as perceived by adolescent viewers (CSPI/CAF, 1996).

<sup>15</sup> Effective ads for products that are accessible to consumers get 20% of the audience to buy within 24 hours of seeing an ad and 11% to buy the product within 28 days (Paquet, 1999).

<sup>16</sup> In 1996, Philip Morris (Miller) spent a total \$234,000,000 (US) on advertising and Anheuser-Busch (Budweiser) spent \$284,373,900 (US).

<sup>2</sup> Sample includes 470 randomly selected 7th to 10th graders from a California city (Grube et al., 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Adolescents estimated characters drank an average of 3.7 beers in a single advertisement (CSPI/CAF, 1996).

<sup>4</sup> n.d. refers to no data

Adolescents may also be the unintended targets of advertising that is directed at adults, because their developmental characteristics fit general consumer trends of the 1990s. For example, today's consumer is characterized by insecurity, a condition driven by changing family life, more single households, changes in cultural identity due to globalism and multiculturalism, the widening gap between rich and poor, and feelings of job anxiety (Ad News, 1998). These feelings of insecurity make consumers prefer the trusted things in life and brands must lift the consumer's spirits, presenting messages they relate to. Effective ads identify a consumer insight that is central to the message, present an image that fits the target market, have a message that stands out from others, and conveys the truth and magic of the product. They also tug at the heartstrings and have a "call-to-action" (Ad News, 1998). These elements may also draw insecure adolescent viewers into the adult marketplace.

## **Advertising Exposure and Behaviour**

In 1997, Ontario children (2 to 11 years of age) and teens (12 to 17 years of age) watched an average of 18 hours of television per week, about 5 hours less per week than in 1990 (Statistics Canada, 1999). It is estimated that the top broadcast networks run an average of 11 minutes and 12 seconds of commercials each hour of primetime (Slater et al., 1996).<sup>17</sup>

### ***Effects on Children***

Children's ability to remember commercials and specific brands depends on how much TV they watch on the weekend especially sports programs (Wallack and Grube, 1990). Children who pay the most attention to commercials are less aware that ads "try to get people to drink" and believe in a commercial reality (e.g., cool and macho) of drinking. Although most children expect to drink as an adult, those who know more ads have stronger feelings about drinking than most.

Girls and boys see alcohol advertising differently (Wallack and Grube, 1990). Boys watch more sports, pay closer attention to commercials and like the programs more than girls, even though girls watch just as much TV. Children who look forward to drinking, more than others, see more beer commercials, recognize them and recall the brands, regardless of how their parents drink, or their gender or age.

An exposure study of Anheuser-Busch's 1995 frog campaign on children 9 to 11 years of age found that 95% of the children recognized Tony the Tiger<sup>18</sup> while 81% recognized the beer frogs (Leiber, 1998). Overall, 73% of the sample recalled the commercial slogan "Bud-weis-er" and 81% knew the frogs sold beer. Boys were significantly more likely than girls to recall the product. There was no gender difference for "Tony the Tiger": boys and girls were just as likely to remember that Tony the Tiger sold cereal. More children recalled the Budweiser slogan than the slogans for commercials and characters shown during children's programs.

### ***Effects on Teens***

Canadian teens prefer sports programs, music videos and horror movies, as well as adult programs that deal with subjects like growing up, dating, alcohol, drugs and sex (Josephson, 1995). These programs carry high levels of alcohol advertising. One study showed that alcohol appeared in two thirds of all

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<sup>17</sup> The CRTC allows a maximum of 12 minutes of commercial advertising per hour (CRTC, 1999).

<sup>18</sup> Tony the Tiger is the "spokes-character" for Kellogg's Frosted Flakes Cereal.

programs and had an average rate of 8.1 drinking references per hour (Robinson et al., 1998). An equally high number of drinking references were in music videos. Over 1.5 alcohol advertisements appear each hour during sports programs, nearly all of it for beer (Slater et al., 1996). One in four music videos have content where the lead performer smokes or drinks and involve situations with a high degree of sexuality (Durant et al., 1997). This glamorized picture of drinking and smoking, connected with sexuality, affects teen drinking even at low levels of exposure (Browne and Schulze, 1990).

Once teens start to drink, alcohol ads on TV do not affect their drinking (Robinson et al., 1998). For 14 to 15 year old non-drinkers, however, every extra hour per day spent watching music videos or videotapes poses a 31% higher risk that the adolescent will start drinking in the next 18 months (Robinson et al., 1998). Chances of drinking alcohol rose by nearly 10% for those who watched an extra hour of regular television programming per day over the same period. Hours spent on computer and video games do not have this effect (Robinson et al., 1998). Research also shows that the amount of wine and spirits 18 year-old women drink depends on how much TV they watched between 13 and 15 years of age (Connolly et al., 1994). Young men, who remember more beer ads at 15 years of age, tend to drink heavily at 18 years of age.

Research also shows that 3 beer commercials aired in a half-hour program arouse a desire to drink (Kohn and Smart, 1984). This response disappears when extra (4+) beer commercials are shown. Frequent, positive media portrayals of drinking situations shape adolescent beliefs about drinking and its consequences because teens lack experiences to help judge the images. While the media images encourage teens to take up the behaviour, attitudes about drinking after the habit starts are shaped by personal experience.

### ***Advertising and Sports***

The ethics of promoting beer during sports or using sports content in beer ads is a concern given the interest of young people in sports (Slater et al., 1996). Pre-teen males who are still in the process of defining their masculine identities may pay more attention to persuasive messages in these situations.

Developmental differences may explain how young men respond to beer commercials (Slater et al., 1996). Males in Senior High School prefer beer ads without sports content during sports programs and sports content during entertainment programs. The opposite is true for boys in Junior High School, who like beer ads with sports content more than beer ads without.

Young men who are actively involved in sports and who identify closely with sports personalities may be more affected by these ads than others (Slater et al., 1996). Sports programs may also influence male attitudes more if the commercials are watched with other males who drink regularly.

## **Public Opinion**

The Ontario public is divided about how advertising promotions by the alcohol industry should be addressed (Addiction Research Foundation, 1995). Forty-three percent want the government to ban TV ads; women and people over the age of 35 tend to favour an advertising ban while more men under the age of 35 are against it. One in three people think the alcohol industry should not sponsor sporting or cultural events.

## **Conclusions**

Regardless of the alcohol industry's arguments that their advertising only encourages drinkers to try new brands, research indicates that there is a relationship between alcohol advertising and adolescent drinking. Research shows that alcohol ads pre-program certain young people to drink, recruits new

drinkers, increases consumption among existing drinkers and makes it difficult for problem drinkers to abstain. Alcohol advertising is also linked to patterns of heavy drinking, drinking in dangerous situations and deaths from alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes. Most of these studies are done in the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Although these findings may apply to the Canadian situation, the high proportion of Ontario students involved in hazardous drinking signal the need to examine the Canadian context more closely.

The spill over effect of alcohol ads on Ontario youth is disturbing. Over 42% of Ontario teenagers who drink, have more than 5 drinks at a single sitting -- and they've done so in the past month. It is not known, however, *exactly* how alcohol advertising contributes to these problems. Pre-teens and young adolescents may be particularly susceptible to the messages in alcohol ads as they begin to form their personal identities. Some boys and girls may create their self-images from the attractive, popular and fun characters depicted within in a commercial reality. Young people are also caught in the web of effective advertising that bombards their favourite programs with alcohol messages at the right frequency, and with the right kind of humour, music and "sexiness".

Canadian law forbids advertising messages that could harm young people. Messages are prohibited that influence non-drinkers to drink; appeal to minors; associate drinking with high-risk activities, and link drinking with social acceptance, personal success or athletic achievement. Provincial regulations cover similar areas, but include policies that serve the unique needs of each jurisdiction. Despite these regulations, almost one third of all complaints against Canadian advertisers were against the alcohol industry.

This paper identifies several important directions that could inform the advertising controversy in Canada. For example, why are some young people more susceptible to the images in alcohol ads than others and how do these images help make drinking, especially heavy drinking, such a big part of the Ontario high school social environment? It would also be helpful to know how advanced techniques used in alcohol advertising capture adolescents and children within a broad web of exposure that is beyond current regulation and public monitoring. This knowledge would help inform the public and educate service providers about how to challenge the advertising practices of the alcohol industry and move towards childproof advertising. Finally, research is needed on the Canadian situation to assess the contribution of alcohol ads to current levels of drinking among young people.

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Exhibit 1

**CRTC CODE FOR BROADCAST ADVERTISING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES August 1996**

Commercial messages for alcoholic beverages shall not:

<p>(a) attempt to influence non-drinkers of any age to drink or to purchase alcoholic beverages;</p>	<p><u>Interpretation</u>  <i>A message should not challenge or dare people to drink or to try a particular alcoholic beverage. In the event of a promotion, contest or premium offer, there should be at least one clearly stated option that permits participation without purchase of the product and without cost to the participants. It should also be stated that participation is limited to those who are of legal drinking age in the province where the message is to be aired. In television advertisements, in deference to members of the audience who may have impaired vision or hearing, such options and restrictions should be described both verbally and in writing. The written version of the message should be of such size, placement and duration as to be clearly visible.</i></p>
<p>(b) be directed at persons under the legal drinking age, associate any such product with youth or other symbols, or portray persons under the legal drinking age or persons who could reasonably be mistaken for such persons in context where any such product is being shown or promoted;</p>	<p><i>The message should be overtly directed to persons who are of the legal drinking age in the province where the message is broadcast. No such message should depict, under any circumstances, children, children's toys, children's clothing, playground equipment, or wading pools. Objects that are commonly used by children, but not considered childish when used by adults (e.g. most sports equipment, Frisbees and colouring pencils) may be depicted in such messages. Mythical or fairy tale characters appealing to children, such as Santa Claus, the Tooth Fairy, the Easter Bunny or Halloween characters and symbols, should not be depicted in such messages under any circumstance.</i></p>
<p>(c) portray the product in the context of, or in relation to, an activity attractive primarily to people under the legal drinking age;</p>	<p><i>The product should not be portrayed in the context of, or in relation to, for example, a performance, event or activity where the audience or the participants are expected to be predominantly people under the legal drinking age or where the television or film audiences of the featured performer(s) consist predominantly of people under the legal drinking age.</i></p>
<p>(d) contain an endorsement of the product, personally or by implication, either directly or indirectly, by any person, character or group who is likely to be a role model for minors because of a past or present achievement, association with charities and/or advocacy activities benefiting children, reputation or exposure in the mass media;</p>	<p><i>Once established as a role model for minors, a person will be considered to remain a role model for a period of 10 years from the date of retirement from the activity.</i></p>

(e) attempt to establish the product as a status symbol, a necessity for the enjoyment of life or an escape from life's problems, or attempt to establish that consumption of the product should take precedence over other activities;	
(f) imply directly or indirectly that social acceptance, social status, personal success, or business or athletic achievement may be acquired, enhanced or reinforced through consumption of the product;	
(g) imply directly or indirectly that the presence or consumption of alcohol is, in any way, essential to the enjoyment of activity or an event;	<i>Commercial messages should not suggest that the presence or consumption of alcohol may create or contribute to an apparent change in mood, atmosphere or environment, or that a social gathering, celebration or any other activity is, or would be, incomplete or unsatisfactory without the product. In the depiction of alcoholic beverages as part of a celebration, advertisements should not imply or suggest that the presence or consumption of the beverage, itself, is essential to the success of the activity. It is acceptable to say that one alcoholic beverage is superior in some way to any or all other similar alcoholic beverages, but it is not acceptable to suggest or imply that it is superior to any or all foods or non-alcoholic beverages.</i>
(h) portray any such product, or its consumption, in an immoderate way;	<i>Under this provision, a message should not portray (i) an unrealistic or excessive number of cases or containers or excessive volume of the product in a context where consumption may reasonably be expected to occur; or (ii) any quantity of containers or volume of the product in a context where the number of individual standard serving represented exceeds or may appear to exceed the number of individuals shown. This provision does not prohibit depiction of the manufacturing, warehousing, distribution or commercial storage of alcoholic beverages.</i>
(i) exaggerate the importance or effect of any aspect of the product or its packaging;	
(j) show or use language that suggests, in any way, product misuse or product dependency, compulsive behaviour, urgency of need or urgency of use;	
(k) use of imperative language to urge people to purchase or consume the product;	
(l) introduce the product in such a way or at such a time that it may be associated with the operation of any vehicle or conveyance requiring skill;	<i>Introduction of the product will be deemed to have occurred upon the introduction of a flat label, jingle, musical signature, logo, brand name, character or other symbol commonly used to identify the product or its manufacturer. It is unacceptable to suggest or imply that the product is or should be consumed prior to or during operation of any vehicle or conveyance or the riding of an animal. It is acceptable to suggest or imply that the consumption may occur after all operation depicted in the message has been clearly completed for the day. It is also acceptable to suggest or imply that consumption may occur (among passengers only) on an aircraft or vessel operated by a professional crew.</i>
(m) introduce the product in such a way or at such a time as may associate the product with any activity requiring a significant degree of skill,	<i>Introduction of the product will be deemed to have occurred upon the introduction of a flat label, jingle, musical signature, logo, brand name, character or other symbol commonly used to identify the product or its manufacturer. It is unacceptable to suggest or imply that the product is or should be consumed prior to or during any such activity. It is acceptable to introduce the product after all such activity</i>

care or mental alertness or involving an obvious element of danger;	<i>depicted in the message has been clearly completed for the day.</i>
(n) contain inducements to prefer an alcoholic beverage because of its higher alcohol content;	
(o) refer to the feeling and effect caused by alcohol consumption or show or convey the impression, by behaviour or comportment, that the people depicted in the message are under the influence of alcohol;	
(p) portray persons with any such product in situations in which the consumption of alcohol is prohibited; or	
(q) contain scenes in which any such product is consumed, or that give the impression, visually or in sound, that it is being or has been consumed.	

Exhibit 2  
**Broadcast Advertising of Alcoholic Beverages<sup>1</sup>:**  
**Summary of Provincial Guidelines<sup>2</sup>**

Issue	Rule	B. C.	Albta.	Sask.	Man.	Ont.	Que.	N. B.	N. S.	P.E.I.	Nfld.
Legislation	Date	1996	1997	1995	1995	1994	1994	1994	1989	1997	1996
Compliance	CRTC Code		√	Pre-clear	√	√	√	√	√	ASC <sup>3</sup>	√
	All Canadian law		√	√	√	√		√	√	√	
	Pre-Clearance	√		√	voluntary	√	√		√	voluntary	
Underlying Principles:	Responsible use or service		√		√	√		√	√		
	Moderate use		√		√						√
	Safe use		√		√						√

**ADVERTISING CONTENT**

Ads:	Within the limits of good taste and propriety		√			√					√
	Accurately portray alcoholic beverages		√			√	√				
	Accurately describe product details		√	√					√		√
	Showing liquor in a prohibited setting can include a beauty shot without people		√			√					
	Encourage food		√								
	Based on normal drinking situations permitted in the province	√	√			√					
Ads cannot promote:	Drinking in general	√	√	√		√		√	√		√
	Non-drinkers to drink		√	√				√	√		√
	Non-drinkers to buy			√				√	√		√
	Personal endorsements					√			√		
	Illegal sale, purchase, or drinking of alcohol					√					

<sup>1</sup> If the provincial regulations state that advertising practices must comply with the "CRTC Code for Broadcast Advertising of Alcoholic Beverages", the CRTC provisions are listed.

<sup>2</sup> The advertising regulations for the Northwest Territories are currently being revised (Delilah St. Arneault, Personal Conversation, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> ASC - Advertising Standards Canada's "Canadian Code of Advertising Standards", 1999.

Issue	Rule	B. C.	Alta.	Sask.	Man.	Ont.	Que.	N. B.	N. S.	P.E.I.	Nfld.
<b>PORTRAYAL OF USE</b>											
Ads cannot:	Show use or consumption			√	√		√	√	√	√	√
	Show immoderate drinking		√	√	√		√	√	√		√
	Show compulsive use.		√	√				√	√		√
	Show having more than one drink per person		√								
	Show excessive or prolonged drinking (e.g., 3 drinks)					√					
	Induce irresponsible drinking		√	√			√	√	√		√
	Claim healthful, nutritive, dietary, curative, sedative or stimulating qualities	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
	Exaggerate the importance or effect of a product or packaging			√				√	√		√
	Suggest higher alcohol content is better			√				√	√		√
	Refer to the effect caused by drinking			√				√	√		√
<b>LIFESTYLE</b>											
Drinking cannot be important for:	Enjoyment of any activity			√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Social success		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Business success		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Athletic prowess			√	√	√	√	√	√		√
	Sexuality or sexual opportunity				√	√			√	√	√
	Having fun			√	√	√	√	√	√		√
	Achieving a goal			√	√	√		√	√		√
	Resolving a problem			√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Status symbol		√	√		√		√	√		√
	Take precedence over other activities			√				√	√		√

Issue	Rule	B. C.	Alta.	Sask.	Man.	Ont.	Que.	N. B.	N. S.	P.E.I.	Nfld.
<b>SAFETY ISSUES</b>											
Ads cannot:	Show characters with alcohol before, in anticipation of or involving activities demanding care, skill, attention or physical danger.		√	√		√	√	√	√		√
	Show alcohol with a motor vehicle	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Show alcohol with any vehicle in motion			√		√					
<b>MINORS</b>											
Ads must not:	Encourage or promote drinking by minors							√	√		
	Refer to minors			√		√		√	√		√
	Appeal to minors		√	√		√		√	√		√
	Be directed at minors		√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√
	Include scenes with persons mistaken for minors	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Be placed in media targeted at minors		√		√	√				√	
	Broadcast when audience is mainly minors	√		√	√	√					
	Include symbols of minors			√				√	√		√
	Show family scenes with alcohol, adults and children	√		√				√	√		√
	Use children's fairy tales, nursery rhymes, or characters that may appeal to children		√		√	√	√			√	
	Use personalities that appeal to minors unless the person is incidental to the advertisement		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	Use songs that attract minors		√		√	√					

Issue	Rule	B. C.	Albta.	Sask.	Man.	Ont.	Que.	N. B.	N. S.	P.E.I.	Nfld.
Media targeted at minors:	Videos and movies in movie theatres rated as Family (F) <sup>4</sup>				√	√					
	Billboards & school					200 metres					200 metres
	Activities where most people are minors			√		√				√	
	Business names can be advertised if there is no reference to alcohol		√			√					
	No alcohol ads on clothes or equipment in any activity for minors						√				

## PRODUCT ADS

Type of Promotion:	Ads for price <sup>5</sup>	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No		
	Ads for free drinks	No	No	No	No	No	No	No		
	Reference to brand in drinks		Yes	No						
	Happy hours		Yes		No	Yes	No			Yes

<sup>4</sup> Parental guidance (PG) and Adult Accompaniment (AA) are reviewed specially to identify the audience.

<sup>5</sup> Includes prohibitions against ads for reduced price.

### Exhibit 3

## Advertising Restrictions for European Countries<sup>1</sup>

Since 1991, European countries have set national restrictions on alcohol advertising (Institute of Alcohol Studies, 1997). Most countries have guidelines -- usually voluntary codes for the content of advertisements and to whom they can be directed. All countries have a self-regulatory body and act on one complaint.

Country	Advertising Code
Austria	Legal ban on spirits advertising on radio, otherwise voluntary code.
Belgium	No commercial ads on State TV and legal ban on spirits ads on commercial TV. No alcohol ads on radio. In other media, voluntary guidelines prohibit encouragement of 'drinking to excess' and ads targeted at minors (under 21).
Denmark	TV and radio ads are not allowed for alcohol over 2.25% alcohol by volume (ABV). Other media cannot target minors.
France	A legal ban on TV ads for drinks over 1% ABV and on ads in publications for young people. Ads are not allowed at sports events. In other media, all alcohol ads must promote moderation.
Finland	Formerly, legal ban on alcohol advertising. Now, advertising is allowed for beer and wine up to 22% ABV.
Germany	By voluntary agreement, most spirits are not advertised on TV. On other media, a voluntary code is in place similar to that in the UK.
Greece	There are no specific restrictions other than limitations on the number of ads per day for TV and radio.
Ireland	A legal ban on spirits ads on TV and radio, and alcohol ads may not be shown before sports programs. The same ad may not appear more than twice per night on any one channel. On other media, a voluntary code is in operation.
Italy	Alcohol advertisements on TV may be shown only after 8 p.m. A voluntary code similar to the UK's governs content.
Luxembourg	TV and radio ads must not show alcohol being consumed "in excess" or show young people, sportsmen or drivers drinking. Otherwise, no restrictions.
Netherlands	Only ads for individual brands are allowed in the broadcast media. A warning against heavy drinking must be carried by 40% of audio-visual ads. Ads should not encourage minors to drink.
Portugal	No alcohol ads on TV before 10:00 p.m. and ads must not show alcohol being consumed.
Spain	A ban on TV and radio ads of spirits and alcohol over 23% ABV. Other alcohol ads may be shown only after 9:30 p.m. A ban on all TV spirits ads in the Basque country.
U.K.	Until 1995, spirits were not advertised on TV due to a voluntary ban. Ads should not encourage heavy drinking, exploit the young or those who are mentally or socially vulnerable. Ads should not be directed at minors through selection of media, style of presentation or contexts in which they appear. No medium should be used to advertise alcoholic drinks if more than 25% of its audience is under 18. Ads should not show drinking by minors, feature real or fictitious characters who appeal to minors in a way that encourages them to drink. Ads should not suggest that any drink could enhance mental, physical or sexual capabilities, popularity, masculinity, femininity or sporting achievements.

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Alcohol Studies, Alcohol and Advertising Fact Sheet, [www.ias.org.uk/factsheets/advertising.htm](http://www.ias.org.uk/factsheets/advertising.htm).

# Under the Influence?

## The Impact of Alcohol Advertising on Youth

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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### Introduction

This report began by focusing on Canadian law, young people's drinking and consequences, and how alcohol advertising influences their decisions about drinking. As the study progressed, however, we learned that there is little *current* research on the effects of alcohol advertising on youth in Canada and few complete and accurate estimates available of how much the alcohol industry spends in Canadian media. Special studies are needed to gather this information. With this realization, this paper drew significantly on advertising research from around the world.

The references for this report, and those summarized in this annotated bibliography, were gathered from three sources. Rutgers University Library completed a literature search of Medline, an electronic reference service to identify the most recent articles. Key references on the effects of alcohol advertising on young people were selected from this list and then sources from those references were gathered, and so on. The Internet was another helpful resource. For example, the Advertising Centre at the Trauma Foundation at San Francisco General Hospital summarizes U.S. advertising research and Statistics Canada has data on Canadian media activities. The summaries are listed in alphabetical order.

Addiction Research Foundation, 1995. The Ontario Experience of Alcohol and Tobacco: New Focus on Accessibility, Violence and Mandatory Treatment. Anglin, L. (Ed.), Toronto: ARF Internal Document #122.

Key words: public opinion, policy, taxes, outlets, hours of service, legal drinking age, drinking problems

The 1995 Ontario Alcohol and Other Drug Opinion Survey asked questions about drinking, alcohol-related policy issues like taxation, hours of service, and legal drinking age, drinking problems, smoking, tobacco policy and types of outlets. Results showed that three quarters of the Ontario public thought alcohol taxes should stay the same or increase and 90% thought the hours of sale in beer and liquor stores should stay the same or decrease. Although half of the respondents (55%) thought the legal drinking age should stay the same, 41% wanted it raised. The majority of women (84%) and men (62%) did not want alcoholic beverages sold in corner stores and opinion was divided about selling alcohol at sporting events (52% for and 48% against). Respondents who drank more and more often wanted less government control over alcohol, including broadcast advertising by the alcohol industry.

Adlaf, E.M., and Paglia, A. and Ivis, F.J., 1999. Drug Use Among Ontario Students: Findings From the OSDUS. Toronto: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Research Document Series No. 5.

Key words: student, drinking, high risk, drugs, alcohol, starting to drink

The Ontario Student Drug Use Survey is the longest ongoing study of adolescent drug use in Canada. The purpose of the study is to monitor the use of alcohol and other drugs among students in Grades 7 to 13 every two years. Between 1997 and 1999, use of 8 of 20 drugs increased significantly.

In 1999, 67.5% of all students drank alcohol at least once in the past year. The level of use peaked by grade 11, ranging from 39.2% of all students in grade 7, to 82% in grade 11, and 83% in grade 13. The proportion of drinkers having five or more drinks on a single occasion during the past four weeks increased from 30.5% in 1993 to 42.4% in 1999. One in five students started to use alcohol in the past 12 months. About 16% of students reported driving within an hour of having two or more drinks, and 6% said they had two or more alcohol problems. About 40% reported impaired mental health and 5% (46,200 of Ontario students) had both alcohol and mental health problems.

Aitken, P.P., 1989. Television Alcohol Commercials and Under-Age Drinking. *International Journal of Advertising* (8): 133-150.

Key words: alcohol, advertising, youth, Scotland, children, adults

This study of 10-16 year olds from Scotland indicates that younger people who are beginning to experiment with alcohol may be more strongly influenced by alcohol advertisements than older drinkers. Discussion groups and individual interviews with 150 children showed the majority liked alcohol ads. Brand recognition increases with age. Teens between 14 and 16 years old interpret these ads in the same way as adults and do not focus on what is shown in the ads, but the wider context of images to which the ads allude. While most ads are targeted for young adults, the imagery is attractive to children.

Children who drink know the brands and recognize the imagery used more than others. "Attention" is the key. The authors suggest that since advertising builds on people's needs, industry claims that ads do not promote consumption are questionable. The study focuses the debate on ads to specific market niches by suggesting that advertising is key to capturing the dynamic market of youth who are beginning to experiment with alcohol.

Atkin, C.K., 1990. Effects of Televised Alcohol Messages on Teenage Drinking Patterns. *Journal of Adolescent Health Care* 11 (1): 10-24.

Key words: alcohol, advertising, youth, attitudes, beer, wine, consumption, problems and drunk driving

This paper summarizes ideas about how portrayals of drinking on television effect adolescent audiences, focusing on the influence of beer and wine ads and entertainment depictions of drinking behaviour. A crucial review of survey research evidence indicates that alcohol commercials contribute to a modest increase in overall consumption by teenagers and may have a slight impact on alcohol misuse and drunk driving. No studies yet measure the effects of entertainment programming on adolescents, but content analysis suggests the potential for

increased pro-drinking attitudes and behaviours. Policy implications for addressing the negative effects of televised drinking are discussed, and priorities for future research are identified.

Atkin, C.K. and Block, M., 1984. The Effects of Alcohol Advertising. *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 11. Thomas C. Kinnear (Ed.) Provo UT: Association for Consumer Research: 699-693.

Key words: advertising, exposure, youth, adults, heavy drinking

This study examined links among exposure to alcohol advertising and youth drinking, drinking by adults and heavy drinking. A U.S. national survey showed that 31% of respondents between 12 and 18 who had “high exposure” to alcohol advertising said they tried 11 brands listed in the survey, compared to 15% who had low exposure. Half (52%) of these respondents said they tried each of six beer brands, compared to 37% of low exposure respondents.

Atkin, C.K., Neuendorf, K. and McDermot, S., 1983. The Role of Alcohol Advertising in Excessive and Hazardous Drinking. *Journal of Drug Education* 13 (4): 313-325.

Key words: advertising, heavy drinking, hazardous activities, attitudes, brand awareness

The study examined the impact of advertising on heavy drinking beyond normal levels and whether or not advertising is responsible for drinking and driving and other hazardous activities. It was hypothesized that occasional messages may directly influence audience attitudes, making the activities appear safer and more acceptable to perform while drinking. General alcohol advertising stimulates more drinking, more often to increase the chance that drinking occurs during a dangerous activity. A sample of 1,227 respondents between 12 and 22 years old were surveyed. Brand awareness, alcohol knowledge, images of drinkers, brand preferences, attitude toward drinking and personal patterns of drinking were examined. Advertising may lead to certain forms of problem drinking in the 12 to 22 age range. There is a moderate relationship between the day-to-day exposure to beer, wine, and liquor ads and both excessive alcohol consumption and drinking in hazardous contexts such as automobile driving.

This study shows that exposure to alcohol advertising is related to heavy drinking, problem drinking and hazardous drinking. Much of the influence of advertising works through everyday drinking behaviour, such that ads stimulate consumption and greater consumption leads to heavy drinking and to drinking in hazardous situations. Advertising may have an impact beyond drinking alone, perhaps by producing a more accepting attitude toward heavy or hazardous consumption. Furthermore, a reverse flow of influence may operate as heavy or hazardous drinkers look for advertisements to reinforce their personal practices.

The authors conclude that mass media advertising for alcohol plays a significant role in shaping young people’s attitudes and behaviours regarding excessive or hazardous drinking. Research is needed using more sophisticated measures to examine the undesirable influences of alcohol ads and a thorough discussion of controversial issues about disseminating advertising messages to young audiences. The impact of repeated exposure to the attractive pro-alcohol advertising messages may reduce the effectiveness of campaigns to discourage heavy and hazardous drinking.

Brewers Association of Canada, 1998. Annual Statistical Bulletin. Ottawa, Ontario.

Key words: per capita consumption, beer, wine, spirits, taxes, export, sales

Per capita consumption of total beer sales in Canada decreased slightly to 64.76 litres per person with Quebec, Newfoundland and Alberta being the largest beer drinkers in Canada. Consumption of spirits increased by 0.5% and wine increased by 3.9% in 1997 over 1996. Canadian export sales decreased by 2.1% from 1996 and ranks as the sixth largest exporter of beer on an international basis. Taxes currently make up 52% of the average Canadian retail price of a bottle of beer.

Casswell, S. and Zhang, J.F., 1998. Impact of Liking for Advertising and Brand Allegiance on Drinking and Alcohol-Related Aggression: A Longitudinal Study. *Addiction* 93 (8): 1209-17.

Key words: alcohol advertising, brand preference, aggressive behaviour, New Zealand

This study examined the effect of televised alcohol advertising and allegiance to specific brands of beer on subsequent beer consumption and self-reports of aggressive behaviour linked with drinking. Structural equation modeling was used to assess a birth cohort at ages 18 and 21 years every few years, in Dunedin, New Zealand. Information was gathered from 630 beer drinking participants. The model found a positive impact of liking alcohol ads and brand allegiance at age 18 on the volume of beer consumed at age 21 and self-reports of alcohol-related aggressive behaviour. The model was a good fit to the data from the longitudinal study. This measurable impact of alcohol advertising occurred when the aggregate consumption of alcohol was declining in New Zealand. While this effect was not large enough to stop the fall, it does indicate a measurable, specific impact of broadcast alcohol advertising on alcohol consumption and related behaviour, which is relevant to public health policy.

Centre for Media Education, 1998. Alcohol and Tobacco Advertising Targeted at Youth on the Internet: Alcohol Sites are Still Going After Young Consumers.

([www.tap.epn.org/cme/981218/alctobpr.html](http://www.tap.epn.org/cme/981218/alctobpr.html))

Key words: internet, advertising, tobacco, alcohol, beer, spirits

Sophisticated advertising techniques are being used to market alcohol and cigarette products to youth online. Alcohol companies are taking full advantage of the increasing use of the Internet as marketing territory to attract young consumers. A U.S. survey by the Centre for Media Education (CME) found that 82% of the 28 beer sites made some appeal to youth. Similarly, out the 29 spirits sites, 72% made some appeal to young consumers.

Centre for Science in the Public Interest, 1996. Adolescent Responses to Televised Beer Advertisements: Children of Alcoholics and others. Centre for Science in the Public Interest.

Key words: advertising expenditures, youth, children of alcoholics, TV commercials

American Brewers spend hundreds of millions of dollars advertising their products on TV. Beer ads often feature youth-oriented themes, and many now use animated animals that appeal to young people. No previous research has attempted to detect the effects of beer

advertising on children of alcoholics (COAs), a population at particularly high risk of alcohol dependence. This study examined the responses of adolescent children of alcoholics, and other adolescents, to TV beer commercials.

COAs were more likely than other respondents to perceive the actors in the ads as being involved in heavy drinking. They also felt confused about the images, and have embarrassed, sad and angry feelings after watching the ads. They anticipate both positive and negative consequences of drinking. Although the adolescents recognized that actors in the ads were older than the legal drinking age, they believed that beer companies target their advertising towards teenagers; younger adolescents were more likely to estimate that characters in the ads were younger than 21 years of age.

Forty-five percent of the adolescents thought that characters in the ads drank beer at binge-levels and only 1 in 5 thought that drinkers would stop after one or two drinks. The study also shows that teens pay attention to and are influenced by televised beer advertising. The authors conclude that future research should examine the quantity of alcohol portrayed in ads and its relationship to viewer beliefs about moderate drinking and intentions to drink.

Connolly, G.M., Casswell, S., Zhang, J-F., and Silva, P.A., 1994. Alcohol in the Mass Media and Drinking By Adolescents: A Longitudinal Study. *Addiction* 89: 1255-1263.

Key words: drinking, youth, mass media, exposure, gender differences

This study indicates that the exposure of young New Zealand males to beer commercials influenced how much they drank when they were older. The respondent's recall of alcohol-related mass media, the number of hours spent watching TV, drinking patterns, non-media factors such as peer approval of drinking, living situation and occupation and the difference between male and female drinking were examined. At 15 years of age, beer television advertising was the main advertising recalled. The frequency and quantity of wine and spirits consumed by 18-year old women were positively associated with the hours spent watching television at ages 13 and 15 years. Among men, there was a positive relationship such that those who recalled more alcohol advertisements at age 15 years drank larger quantities of beer at age 18 years. No relationships were found between the commercial advertising and wine and spirits consumption, for either men or women.

Durant, R.H., Rome, E.S., Rich, M., Allread, E., Emans, J. and Woods, E.R., 1997. Tobacco and Alcohol Use Behaviors Portrayed in Music Videos: A Content Analysis. *American Journal of Public Health* 87: 1131-135.

Key words: advertising, exposure, music videos, MTV, tobacco, alcohol, sexuality

Music videos from 5 genres of music were analyzed for portrayals of smoking and drinking and these behaviours combined with sexuality. The study found that a higher percentage (25.7%) of MTV videos than other networks portrayed tobacco use while the percentage of videos showing alcohol use was similar on all networks. In these videos, the lead performer was most often the one smoking or drinking. This study indicates that modest levels of viewing provides high exposure to glamorized depictions of drinking and smoking, and drinking coupled with sexuality.

Fisher, J.C., 1993. Advertising, Alcohol Consumption and Abuse: A Worldwide Survey. Westport, Connecticut, Greenwood Press.

Key words: advertising, mass media, alcohol, economic studies, experimental research, empirical studies

The review looks at the content of the mass media and advertising and evaluates how alcohol use is portrayed on television programs, commercials, newspapers, magazines, etc. Empirical studies examine the relation among advertising, mass media and alcohol use and abuse. Exposure studies examine the frequency and content of alcohol messages to determine how many messages exist in the environment and where they are likely to be encountered. Experimental and quasi-experimental studies investigate the effect of advertising on individuals either by direct manipulation of experimental stimuli thought to affect behaviour or by studying subjects with specific characteristics. Econometric studies examine advertising variability and its relation to rates of consumption and abuse.

Furnham, A., Ingle, H., Gunter, B. and McClelland, A., 1997. A content analysis of alcohol portrayal and drinking in British television soap operas. *Health Education Research, Theory and Practice* 12 (4): 519-529.

Key words: media portrayal of drinking, soap operas, Britain, content analysis, alcohol problems

The study examined the extent to which six soap operas on British television accurately represent the problems associated with heavy drinking and alcoholism. Findings showed that alcohol was referred to visually or verbally in 86.7% of the programs, while in 73.3% the actual or implied consumption of alcohol was shown. Ninety-six drinking scenes, 145 verbal references and 140 scenes with visual references to alcohol were recorded. The authors suggest that close monitoring of how alcohol is depicted by program producers would ensure that a more 'educational' and 'real life' picture of alcohol and its problems would be portrayed. However, guidelines on the acceptable presentation of alcohol on television may not affect the drinking practices of soap opera viewers.

Grube, J.W., Madden, P.A. and Fries, B., 1996. The Effects of Television Alcohol Advertising on Adolescent Drinking. Poster Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Research Society on Alcoholism, Washington, June, 1996.

Key words: advertising effects, exposure, experimental studies, youth, liking, humour, music

The authors examined 4 hypotheses about how advertising affects youth: 1) exposure of advertising increases adolescent drinking; 2) adolescent drinking increases exposure to alcohol advertising; 3) drinking and exposure influence each other; and 4) the relationship results from another factor that influences both drinking and exposure to alcohol advertising. A random sample of 470 students from grade 7 to grade 10 was shown 22 videotaped television advertisements for beer, wine and soft drinks. After viewing each advertisement, they were asked how often they had seen it previously, how much attention they usually paid to it and how much they liked it. Each advertisement was rated on humor, music, romance and sexiness. Subjects were asked how much they drank, as well as how often they drank to intoxication.

The authors conclude that attention to alcohol advertising increases adolescent drinking but drinking does not influence attention to advertising. Attention to alcohol ads depends on how much the young people liked them. Therefore, “liking” ads had a large indirect effect on drinking. The authors suggest that prevention efforts focus on reducing exposure to alcohol ads. Alcohol advertisers should be encouraged to avoid using types of humour and music that appeal to young people.

Grube, J.W. and Wallack, L., 1994. Television beer advertising and drinking knowledge, beliefs and intentions among school children. *American Journal of Public Health* 84 (2): 254-259.

Key words: advertising, youth, beer, children, counter-advertising, California, brands

Awareness of television beer advertising may influence children’s drinking knowledge, beliefs and intentions. The study is based on surveys and face-to-face interviews with 468 fifth and sixth grade students from public schools in Northern California. Researchers measured children’s viewing habits, awareness of beer advertising, knowledge of beer brands and slogans, beliefs about the positive and negative effects of drinking, intentions to drink as an adult and parental and peer drinking. Children who are more aware of television beer advertising know more beer brands and slogans, have attitudes that are more favourable to drinking and have stronger intentions to drink as adults.

The authors suggest that anti-drinking prevention programs should limit alcohol advertising during prime-time hours for children and sports programs. They should work with advertisers to reduce their ads' appeal to young people and mount counter-advertising campaigns that compete with advertising alcohol ads in quality, interest and frequency of exposure. Education programs should help children develop critical skills to resist the persuasive power of these ads.

Hacker, G. and Stewart, L.A., 1995. *Double Dip: The Simultaneous Decline of Advertising and Alcohol Problems in the United States*. Washington DC: Centre for Science in the Public Interest.

Key words: advertising expenditures, alcohol industry, beer, wine, spirits, fatal motor vehicle crashes, youth, US, taxes

Between 1986 and 1993, spending for alcoholic beverages declined by 46.5% (in inflation adjusted dollars). All segments of the alcoholic beverage industry reduced their ad spending: beer ad spending dropped 40%, liquor dropped 41%, wine dropped 54%. Expenditures for wine coolers dropped 88%.

The retreat from media advertising paralleled declines in per capita alcohol consumption (-10%) to a 26 year low in 1992. Although revenues from the sale of alcoholic beverages rose between 1986 and 1993, when adjusted for inflation, sales actually declined 20%. Deaths from alcohol-related vehicle crashes declined from 24,000 in 1986 to 17,500 in 1993. Alcohol involvement in fatal crashes for drivers between 16 and 20 years of age decreased from 36.5% in 1986 to 24% in 1993. For drivers aged 21 to 24 years of age, fatal crashes declined from 47.3% in 1986 to 39.4% in 1993.

Policy recommendations are: (1) eliminate the tax deduction for alcohol advertising expenses; (2) ban all broadcast and print alcohol advertising for young people or heavy drinkers; (3)

require broadcasters to balance alcohol advertising with messages that promote abstinence among young people and oppose heavy drinking among adults.

Hovius, B. and Solomon, R.N., 1996. *Alcohol Advertising: A Legal Primer*. Toronto: The Association to Reduce Alcohol Promotion in Ontario (ARAPO).

Key words: Canada law, Charter of Rights and Freedoms, alcohol advertising

This report summarizes existing law governing Canadian alcohol advertising. It discusses the constitutional basis of law and potential challenges under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The actual federal and provincial alcohol advertising laws are discussed.

Kelly, K.J. and Edwards, R.W., 1998. *Image Advertisements for Alcohol Products: Is Their Appeal Associated with Adolescents' Intention to Consume Alcohol?* *Adolescence* 33 (129): 47-59.

Key words: youth, lifestyle advertising,

Alcohol advertising has been criticized because of the use of image (lifestyle) advertising, and its potential influence of teenage alcohol consumption. This study tried to determine if adolescents who drink, or intend to drink alcohol at some future time, find image ads for alcohol more appealing than product ads. The results show that image ads were preferred to product ads, particularly by younger adolescents. A positive relationship was found between preference for image ads and intent to drink in the future. Policy implications of the findings are discussed.

Kohn, P.M. and Smart, R.G., 1984. *The Impact of Television Advertising on Alcohol Consumption: An Experiment*. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 45 (4): 295-301.

Key words: alcohol ads, sports, exposure, drinking, students, youth, males

A videotaped indoor soccer game, interspersed with 0, 4 and 9 beer commercials, was shown to 125 male college students to assess their drinking in response to the advertisements. Refreshments were available to the students during the program; half of the subjects had immediate access to beer and half had delayed access to beer. Exposure to the first few commercials increased consumption, but continued exposure did not. Students who saw the most commercials (9), responded by drinking more beer initially, but then stopped drinking before subjects in other groups. The results suggest that limited exposure to television beer commercials (3 commercials/half hour of viewing) briefly stimulate consumption. However, further exposure does not lead to further consumption. Students who were delayed access to beer yet exposed to 9-beer commercials, drank significantly less at the end of the game, than those in other conditions.

These results do not support strong concern about the effects of televised beer advertising on a young male population, even with ongoing immediate access to beer. Although moderate exposure to advertising increased consumption, the effect was brief. Furthermore, this consumption was counterbalanced by a "saturation effect" in that subjects exposed to 9 commercials and had delayed access to beer, drank less than other groups.

Leiber, L., 1998. Commercial and Character Slogan Recall by Children Aged 9 to 11 Years: Budweiser Frogs versus Bugs Bunny. Centre on Alcohol Advertising. ([www.traumafdn.org/trauma/alcohol/ads/budstudy.html](http://www.traumafdn.org/trauma/alcohol/ads/budstudy.html)).

Key words: advertising, beer, marketing campaigns, television, frogs

This pilot study tested a practical method for assessing the recognition and recall of one of Anheuser-Busch's marketing campaigns among school age children. 221 children ages 9-11 were shown still, color images of characters from TV, including a picture of the frogs from a Budweiser television commercial, and were asked to recall the slogan for the pictured character and to identify the product being advertised. The children had better recall of the Budweiser frogs' slogan (73% said Bud-weis-er) than the slogans for characters such as Tony the Tiger (57 % said "They're Grrreat"), Smokey the Bear (43% said "only you can prevent forest fires" or "don't play with matches") or the Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers (39% said "It's Morphin' Time" or "power on"). Only Bugs Bunny elicited a more accurate response, with 80% saying "Eh, what's up doc?". Eighty-one percent of the children identified beer as the product promoted by the frogs. This study shows that the extent to which beer promotions are seen and noticed by the unintended audience of underage viewers is measurable. These methods could be used to identify ads that reach young people. The company could take steps to reduce children's exposure to its promotions and/or eliminate ads, including the frogs, with special appeal to children.

Lieberman, L.R. and Orlandi, M.A., 1987. Alcohol Advertising and Adolescent Drinking. Alcohol Health and Research World (Fall): 30-43.

Key words: advertising, adolescents, children, media exposure, drinking

Social science has trouble connecting exposure to alcohol ads and early drinking because the issues and impact are complex. The laboratory situation is unlike real-life drinking situations because they measure only the effect of ads as an immediate cue to drink on a specific occasion among current drinkers. The effect on adolescents when they form their attitudes to alcohol cannot be assessed in this way. Nor can it be examined through direct observation of a large group of young people who are exposed to advertising. Surveys that gather self-reports of exposure and responses to advertising and drinking are invalid because people underestimate the influence of ads on their drinking behavior.

Another problem is linking the effects of events that are separated in time. The problem of connecting exposure to ads and later drinking in adolescents is due to two ideas. First, children respond to certain messages in a "black or white" fashion, which tend to be good or bad. As children reach their teens, however, their development allows thinking that is more abstract and the ability to consider several points of view at once. Although young children and adolescents have negative attitudes toward alcohol and say they will not drink when they get older, exposure to ads during this age may predispose them to positive attitudes, eventually realized in early drinking.

Madden, P.A. and Grube, J.W., 1994. The Frequency and Nature of Alcohol and Tobacco Advertising in Televised Sports, 1990 through 1992. American Journal of Public Health 84 (2): 297-299.

Key Words: advertising, alcohol, tobacco, beer commercials, sports

This study examines the frequency and nature of alcohol and tobacco advertising in a random sample of 166 televised sports events representing 443.7 hours of network programming broadcast from the fall 1990 through the summer 1992. More commercials appear for alcohol products than for any other beverage. Beer commercials predominate and include images at odds with recommendations from the Surgeon General of the U.S. The audience is also exposed to alcohol and tobacco ads through the appearances of stadium signs, other on-site promotions, and verbal or visual product sponsorships. Moderation messages and public service announcements are rare.

Robinson, T.N., Chen, H.L. and Killen, J., 1998. Television and Music Video Exposure and Risk of Adolescent Alcohol Use. *Pediatrics* 102 (5): e54.

Key words: California, survey, youth, media exposure, music videos, alcohol

Researchers followed teens' television viewing patterns and their drinking experiences for 18 months between 1994 and 1996. Questionnaires were sent to over 2,600 9th graders attending 6 California public schools. The study found that watching TV and music videos increased drinking risks among teens and may reflect the high incidence of alcohol use in these broadcasts. In one study of prime-time television programs, alcohol appeared in two thirds of all programs and had an average rate of 8.1 drinking references per hour. An equally high number of drinking references was in music videos.

Watching TV and music videos were associated with starting to drink -- but not with increased drinking once teens already began to drink. In the absence of personal experience, frequent (positive) media portrayals of alcohol use can shape adolescents' beliefs about drinking, encouraging them to take up the behaviour. Attitudes about drinking after the habit starts are shaped by personal experience, rather than by media images. Future anti-drinking efforts should help adolescents resist the positive portrayals of alcohol use in the media.

Saffer, H., 1997. Alcohol Advertising and Motor Vehicle Fatalities. *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 79 (3): 431-442.

Key words: advertising expenditures, motor vehicle fatalities, advertising ban, economic study

The debate over alcohol advertising asks if the effect of alcohol advertising is limited to brand choice or whether it also increases total alcohol consumption. The industry says that alcohol advertising only induces brand switching and has no effect on overall consumption. This paper examines the relationship between alcohol advertising and motor vehicle fatalities. The study examines a market-specific price of advertising to estimate price elasticity of alcohol advertising and focuses on metropolitan areas as the unit of observation. Motor vehicle fatalities are used as the outcome measure. The data include 1,200 observations from 1986 to 1989 for 75 advertising markets in the U.S.

Two policy options are examined. The first extends the voluntary ban on broadcast advertising to include beer and wine. The second policy eliminates the tax deductibility of all alcohol advertising expenses. The regression results show that alcohol advertising has a significant and positive effect on motor vehicle fatalities. While advertising is significant, it is less important than alcohol price as a determinant of motor vehicle fatalities.

A complete ban on broadcast alcohol advertising could save about 5,000 to 10,000 lives per year. If a ban resulted in substitution to other media, the ban would have no effect at all.

The elimination of alcohol advertising as a cost that reduces taxable corporate income would raise the price of advertising by about 54%. This increase in the price of advertising would decrease spending by about 15% and reduce fatalities by about 1,300 per year. Total advertising in the US would be reduced from about \$1 billion per year to about \$850 million per year.

Smart, R.G. and Walsh, G. W., 1995. Do Some Types of Alcoholic Beverages Lead to More Problems for Adolescents? *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 56: 35-38.

Key words: drinking, students, beer, wine, spirits, delinquent behaviour, heavy drinking

This study identifies groups of high school students who drink beer, wine or spirits exclusively, as well as those who drink multiple beverage types. It examines whether problems are limited to a beverage type or a combination of types and uses data from the 1991 Ontario Student Drug Use Survey. In this study, most students (82%) drink a combination of beer, wine and spirits. However, drinker type is not related to alcohol problems, drinking and driving, tobacco use, cannabis use or drug problems when age, gender and alcohol consumption are taken into account. Only for heavy drinking and delinquency is there a significant association with drinker type. Exclusive beer and spirits drinkers and drinkers of all three beverages are more likely than the other drinker types to have five or more drinks on a single occasion and to engage in delinquent behaviour. Drinkers of beer and spirits and all three beverage types are not only heavier drinkers but probably more rebellious and deviant. It is speculated that their heavier drinking leads directly to delinquent acts such as fighting and theft. Wine, if taken exclusively, appears to be the beverage of moderation.

Sobell, L.C., Sobell, M.B., Riley, D.M., Klajner, F., Leo, G.I., Pavan, D. and Cancilla, A., 1986. Effect of Television Programming and Advertising on Alcohol Consumption in Normal Drinkers. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 47 (4): 333-340.

Key words: male, students, advertising, TV, experimental study

The drinking behaviour of 96 male normal drinking college students was assessed after they saw a video tape of a popular prime-time television program with advertisements. Different versions of the videotape were used to evaluate the effects of a television program with and without alcohol scenes with ads for beer, non-alcoholic beverages and food. After viewing the videotape, the subjects were asked to perform a taste rating of light beers, which gave an unobtrusive measure of their alcohol consumption. The results did not support the assumption that drinking scenes in television programs or televised ads for alcoholic beverages stimulate drinking. This finding must be considered in the context of the laboratory setting of the study and may not generalize to real-life television viewing.

Sobell, L.C., Sobell, M.B., Toneatto, T. and Leo, G., 1993. Severely Dependent Alcohol Abusers May be Vulnerable to Alcohol Cues in Television Programs. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 54 (1): 85-91.

Key words: alcohol abusers, advertising, beer commercials, counter-argue, relapse, TV

The ability of 96 alcohol abusers to resist the urge to drink heavily was assessed after being shown videotapes of a popular prime time television program with advertisements. Several versions of a videotaped television program -- with and without alcohol scenes with beer, nonalcoholic beverages, food commercials -- were used to evaluate the effects of exposure. Subjects completed several drinking questionnaires. One questionnaire examined their ability to resist the urge to drink heavily. Dependent alcohol abusers could not resist the urge to drink heavily after watching a television program with alcohol scenes. Beer commercials did not have the same influence as drinking situations in TV programs because the cues depicted in television programs are less obvious than those in commercials. When people receive a persuasive message they disagree with, they “counter-argue” against the message in their mind, negating its effects.

Beer commercials may not affect a person’s self-control because messages in advertisements are easy to identify. Counter-arguing may explain why subjects could resist their urges to drink heavily compared with subjects who were shown the programs paired with food commercials. The results suggest that alcohol cues in television programs might increase the likelihood of relapse for severely dependent people. Confidence to resist urges to drink heavily was assessed right after seeing a single program. It is possible that effects that are more powerful might follow repeated exposures to such programs.

Strasburger, V.C., 1993. Children, Adolescents and the Media: Five Crucial Issues. *Adolescent Medicine* 4 (3): 391-415. ([www.cyfc.umn.edu/Media/crissues.html](http://www.cyfc.umn.edu/Media/crissues.html)).

Key words: advertising, effects, susceptible, physician

Television and other media are the single most important modifiable and neglected influences on children and adolescents in the 1990s. For teenagers, peers play a powerful role, but the media also influences them. This report examines how much influence the media has on young people, what children are most susceptible, how valid media research is, ways in which the quality of television be improved and the role of the primary-care physician.

Tandemar Research Inc., 1990. A Report on Young Peoples’ Perceptions of Alcohol Advertising on Television. Research report prepared for the Alcohol and other drugs directorate, Health and Welfare Canada.

Key words: Canada, youth, high risk drinking, minors,

This study examines the impact of alcohol advertising on the adoption of high-risk drinking practices among Canadian young people. About one fifth of young people (22% of legal drinkers and 15% of illegal drinkers) are classified as high-risk drinkers - those who drink 5 or more drinks per drinking occasion. Although most drinkers had responsible views of alcohol, some exhibited a more positive attitude toward the pleasurable and relaxing effects of drinking. Analysis of personal-values data identified two attitudinal groups: “Enjoyers and Lifestyles”. “Enjoyers” found regular alcohol use more acceptable than other groups and mild intoxication appealing. “Lifestyles” felt alcohol enhanced their social relationships and contributed to their personal appeal.

Researchers concluded that alcohol advertising communicates positive messages about alcohol use, especially the social benefits of drinking (having a good time/fun). The way ad characters are viewed leads to the overall perception that alcohol ads associate alcohol use

with having good time/fun with other people. Young people who associate alcohol use with enhanced social status (Lifestyles) are likely to see ad characters as popular.

The findings in this study confirm previous work, which indicated that alcohol commercials are targeted to young adults, 18-25 years of age. The age of ad characters, settings and activities in ads appeal to young people. The present study also showed that perceptions of alcohol advertising did not vary by the age of respondents. Adolescents as well as young adults perceive the ad characters, settings and occasions as relevant to them -- regardless of the intentions of the advertiser.

Unger, J.B., Johnson, C.A. and Rohrbach, L.A., 1995. Recognition and Liking of Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Among Adolescents: Relationships with Susceptibility to Substance Use. *Preventive Medicine* 24 (5): 461-466.

Key words: tobacco ads, alcohol ads, adolescents, brand names, liking, recruitment

Exposure to tobacco and alcohol ads has been associated with adolescent substance use. It is not clear, however, whether favourable reactions to ads are an antecedent to or a consequence of substance use. This study examined the relationship between adolescents' susceptibility to substance use and their recognition and liking of tobacco and alcohol ads.

Subjects were divided into three groups of substance users: non-susceptible non-users (have never used and do not intend to do so), susceptible non-users (have not used but have not made a firm commitment not to experiment in the future), and users (have tried the substance). With brand names and identifying information obscured, subjects were asked to identify the brand name and type of product being advertised. Subjects then rated how much they liked the ads. Susceptible non-users liked the tobacco ads significantly more than the non-susceptible non-users and the same as users. Liking alcohol ads increased with alcohol use status. These results suggest that tobacco ads targeted to adult smokers may effectively recruit new adolescent smokers.

Wallack, L., Cassady, D., and Grube, J., 1990. TV Beer Commercials and Children: Exposure, Attention, Beliefs and Expectations about Drinking as an Adult. Study funded by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Washington, D.C.

Key words: beer commercials, adolescents, brand awareness, slogans, sports programs, gender differences

This study examines the effects of televised beer commercials on 468 11 and 12 year old children. Children's ability to recognize commercials and recall the brands advertised is significantly related to their levels of exposure through weekend viewing and particularly sports programs. Boys are more likely than girls to watch sports programs, pay closer attention and enjoy these programs more than girls, even though they watch just as much TV. The key finding is that expectation to drink as an adult is related to exposure to beer commercials, recognizing commercials, recalling the brands and beliefs about the social and ritual uses of beer. The relationship remains when socio-demographic variables such as parents drinking, gender and age are accounted for. The authors conclude that policy makers should assume that youth see and are influenced by beer commercials.

Slater, M. D., Rouner, D., Murphy, K., Beauvais, F., Van Leuven, J. and Rodrigues, M.D., 1996. Male Adolescents' Reactions to TV Beer Advertisements: The Effects of Sports Content and Programming Context. *Journal of Studies in Alcohol* 57 (4): 425-433.

Key words: beer ads, sports, youth, males, exposure

The ethics of promoting beer during sports or using sports content in beer ads has been questioned, given the interest of underage youth in sports. It is possible that males, especially adolescent males who are still defining their masculine identities, may be more receptive to alcohol messages that include sports content or are broadcast during sports programs. This study examines white male adolescent responses to TV beer ads with and without sports content and to non-beer ads in sports and entertainment programming.

Results suggest that the effects of alcohol ads may be cumulative, over years and thousands of exposures. The incremental impact of exposure to a few ads on behaviour or even on attitudes is unlikely to be great.

The study showed an interaction among age, ad content and program type, which signaled developmental differences in how young men respond to beer commercials. Senior high school males preferred beer ads without sports content during sports programming and with sports content during entertainment programs. The opposite was true for the junior high school male. The idea that sport programming increased interest in drinking did not hold up. Rather sports programs may depend on viewing ads with other males who drink regularly. If priming for the acceptance of drinking occurred, it was more likely with those who were actively involved in sports. The finding that male adolescents are especially responsive to non-beer product ads during sports suggests that brewers who use sports content in their ads, during sport programs, may be spending unnecessary dollars in this area.

Slater, M. D., Rouner, D., Murphy, K., Beauvais, F., Van Leuven, J. and Rodrigues, M.D., 1996. Adolescents' Perceptions of Underage Drinkers in TV Beer Ads. *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education* 42 (1): 43-56.

Key words: alcohol ads, role modeling, age identification

One dimension of the impact of alcohol advertisements on young people is adolescents' perception of the ages of persons portrayed in alcohol ads. Ads may influence the attitudes and drinking behaviours of young people through role modeling. The physical attractiveness of the actors and actresses hired to portray drinkers depend on the product advertised and the perceived model age. Effective modeling illustrates the behaviour and reinforces it with models who are more socially desirable than the intended audience but who resemble them. One study indicates that the more heavily exposed to advertisements adolescents were, the more they believed real-world drinkers to be attractive, successful and athletic.

Although researchers have not studied how adolescents judge the age of TV characters, a study of models in magazine cigarette advertisements among persons 13 to 55 years of age found that 17% of models were believed to be significantly younger than the 25 years targeted by the cigarette advertising code. Researchers argue that since TV actors and actresses are attractive, young people may judge them as being more like them than they really are.

Perceptions of underage drinkers in ads were positively related to the amount of alcohol use among junior high school students, but not among high school students. This finding suggests that potential role models in ads may influence adolescents when they are making initial

decisions and choices about themselves. Junior high school students who drink more may perceive people in ads to be underage to justify their own behaviour. These results indicate that persons perceived to be underage in beer ads are associated with the drinking patterns of younger, though not older, adolescents. The brewing industry and their advertisers should use older models to avoid confusion among young people.

Solomon, R. 1997. The Law Regarding Alcohol and Drugs in Canada. In: McKenzie, D.M., Williams, R. and Single, E. (Eds.) Canadian Profile. Ottawa: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse and Addiction Research Foundation.

Key words: Canada, advertising law, provincial jurisdiction, federal jurisdiction, drug law

This report summarizes the division of responsibility for alcohol and drug law in Canada. The federal government has authority over importing and exporting alcohol products, alcohol-related excise taxes and broadcast advertising. Provincial governments control alcohol marketing and advertising.

Wyllie, A., Fang Zhang, J. and Casswell, S., 1998. Responses to televised beer advertisements associated with drinking behaviour of 10-17-year-olds. *Addiction* 93 (3): 361-371.

Key words: New Zealand, youth, advertising, exposure

This study examined the relationship between 10-17 year old New Zealanders' responses to alcohol advertisements and their drinking behaviour and expectations. The study supports the idea that positive responses to beer ads increased the frequency of current drinking and expected future drinking in this age group. There was no evidence that current drinking affected how much the respondent liked beer advertisements. Young people, especially 10-13 year old males who accepted the ads as realistic, felt that alcohol ads encouraged teenagers to drink.

Wyllie, A., Fang Zhang, J. and Casswell, S., 1998. Positive responses to televised beer advertisements associated with drinking and problems reported by 18 to 29 year olds. *Addiction* 93 (5): 749-760.

Key words: advertising, beer, drinking problems, "liking", youth

This study examined the relationship between responses to alcohol advertisements and drinking behaviour and problems. The results support the idea that people who like televised beer commercials drink more when they drink, which adds to the level of problems they experience. The authors indicate that the results are consistent with a growing body of research that suggests that alcohol advertising influences the drinking behaviours of younger people.

# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS: FACT SHEET

## Under the Influence? The Impact of Alcohol Advertising on Youth

Research shows that advertising affects young people. It pre-programs them to drink, recruits new drinkers, increases consumption among existing drinkers and makes it hard for problem drinkers to stop.

- In Canada, a mixture of government and private interests control alcohol advertising. Government regulates it federally with the "CRTC Code for Broadcast Advertising of Alcoholic Beverages" and provincially through advertising guidelines (Solomon, 1997). Advertising Standards Canada (ASC) imposes its own industry standard on alcohol advertising in the "Canadian Code of Advertising Standards" and other guidelines implemented by the ASC.
- The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario reviewed 5,200 alcohol advertisements in 1998: 44% were approved, 44% were approved with changes and 12% were rejected (AGCO, 1999). It is estimated that about 13% of all new advertisements aired in 1998/99 were for alcoholic beverages: 7% were for wine, 13% were for spirits and 80% were for beer (ACNielsen, 1998/99)
- Advertising Standards Canada received 75 complaints against alcohol ads in 1998 (ASC, 1998). Forty-one (55%) complaints were upheld.
- Young people are targeted by the alcohol industry because about 20% of Canadians between 18 and 24 years of age (537,000 people) drink heavily: this 2% of the population drink about 11% of all beer sold (Theobald, 1999).
- 82% of 28 beer sites on the internet appeal to youth through games, merchandise and attractive "spokes-characters" (Centre for Media Education, 1998).
- Today, about 66% (620,000 students) of Ontario students from Grade 7 to 13 drink alcohol each year- about 10% more than in 1993 (Adlaf et al., 1999).
- Heavy, regular exposure to alcohol ads is linked to both heavy drinking and drinking in dangerous situations (i.e., driving) (Atkin et al., 1983). Messages that connect drinking with a dangerous activity may make them seem safer to do while drinking and make young people accept heavy or hazardous drinking.
- Advertising expenditures affect alcohol problems like motor-vehicle crashes (Hacker and Stewart, 1995). Between 1986 and 1993, ad spending in the US fell by 46% while alcohol-related fatalities dropped by 29% -- especially for youth between 16 and 24 years of age.
- Alcohol advertising fashions the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of young people through role modeling (Slater et al., 1996). Adolescents learn to behave by imitating public figures they identify with for their physical attractiveness and age. When teens "like" certain commercials, their drinking can increase after seeing them. Humour and music are especially appealing (Grube et al., 1996).
- Young people between 12 and 18 years old watch about 18 hours of television per week (Statistics Canada, 1999). For every extra hour of television seen by 14 and 15-year-old non-drinkers, there is a 10% higher risk of starting to drink over the next 18 months. There is also a 31% higher risk of starting to drink for every extra hour spent watching music videos or video-tapes, where alcohol and tobacco are glamorized and mixed with sexuality (Robinson et al., 1998). Once teens start to drink, alcohol ads on TV have little affect.
- Children with firm plans to drink as an adult, see more beer commercials, recognize them, recall the brands and have strong attitudes about the social role of beer, regardless of how their parents drink, or their gender or age (Wallack et al., 1990).

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