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Snapchat and its Relationship to Alcohol Consumption and Associated Behaviours

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SNAPCHAT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND ASSOCIATED BEHAVIOURS

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Abstract

The current study examined the relationship between Snapchat use, alcohol consumption and associated behaviours and motivations. The participants in the study were 200 undergraduate students enrolled at Western University. Participants in the control condition watched a video made up of 11 Snapchats where subjects were consuming water, the experimental condition was identical except subjects were consuming alcoholic beverages. Regression analyses indicated that relationship management motivation (RMM) and self-enhancement motivation (SEM) were the most significant predictors across condition and gender. Implications are discussed.

Keywords: Alcohol, Snapchat, Behaviour, Motivation, Social media, FOMO, Fear of missing out

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Introduction

Over recent years, social media has become a staple in communication within the new generation, and is spreading to older generations as well (Moreno & Whitehill, 2014). A main component of social media is user-generated content that creates a virtual platform where interactions between users is both easy and encouraged. Through 'likes' and comments, users get feedback about their content from other users (Moreno & Whitehill, 2014).

A specific theme that has been noticed within social media use is alcohol references (Moreno & Whitehill, 2014). Whether it is Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat, users of all ages share content that includes or suggests alcohol use (Moreno & Whitehill, 2014; Boyle, Earle, LaBrie & Ballou, 2017). One question surrounding these alcohol-related posts is what motivates an individual to share this kind of content on social media. This is especially a concern when consequences of these actions are considered. Once content is shared on an internet forum, it is possible for others to keep that content without the original poster's consent. For instance, sharing a photo of you and your peers drinking on Facebook may seem limited to your profile, though it is a simple process for someone to save that photo and use it at their discretion. Even with an app like Snapchat that often has time-limits for how long you can view a post, taking a screenshot (a picture of a cellphone screen in that instant) of said post means that there are no longer time constraints on how long someone can view or share that post. This process can be particularly problematic when the post is risqué or inappropriate.

A possible motivation for sharing alcohol-related content on social media relates to peer-to-peer influences. Alcohol-related social media posts are displayed widely to their social network, which is made up primarily of other young adults. This sequence influences those individuals to go out and act similarly since they first witness their friends doing it on social media (Boyle,

LaBrie, Froidevaux & Witkovic, 2016). Previous research has demonstrated that social media, and the media in general, can have a powerful influence on the behaviour of adolescents (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Kastenmüller, Vogrincic & Sauer, 2011). College students in particular often use social media to reconstruct risky drinking behaviour into something much more positive and fun (Hebden, Lyons, Goodwin & McCeanor, 2015). These results suggest that the real risk can come after alcohol related content is spread to their peers. Research suggests that young adults are actually likely to take these posts at face-value and assume they are accurate depictions of their peers' experiences (Moreno, Briner, Williams, Walker, & Christakis, 2009). Considering such research, it helps explain why alcohol-related content gets posted as well as why it can influence those who view it. Previous research has also indicated gender-differences in social media use. Barker (2009) suggests that females often use social media to communicate with peers, have greater overall use, use social media more to pass time, as well as report higher collective self-esteem. This refers to the aspect of one's self-image that is affected by how one interacts with others as well as what group one considers itself to be apart of. In addition to this, males reported less collective self-esteem and reported higher rates of social media use for social compensation and social identity gains (Barker, 2009). These differences highlight how motivation to share content on Snapchat differs between males and females, which may affect the content they choose to share.

Another possible explanation for why alcohol-related content is prevalent is fear of missing out (FoMO). FoMO is a relatively new phenomenon that takes the theory of peer-to-peer influences one step further. FoMO suggests that viewing these posts can convey a persuasive apprehension that peers are having fun, rewarding experiences while one is absent (Beyens, Frison & Eggermont, 2016). Nearly three-quarters of young adult's report that they experience FoMO to

some degree (Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan & Gladwell, 2013). Considering these vast numbers, the degree to which people experience FoMO is understood better as an individual difference rather than a mood or a state. Bearing this in mind, one can expect variance in FoMO levels throughout the population. Additional research in this area has linked FoMO with general unhappiness, negative mood, and depressed feelings (Przybylski et al., 2013).

In response to this feeling of missing out, individuals may react in various ways. One response observed by research is to turn to social media even stronger in order to fulfill this perceived deficit in psychological needs (Przybylski et al., 2013). Another response that will be considered thoroughly in this study is making one's own social media posts next time an opportunity arises. Specifically, the current study will examine if FoMO is related to individuals own sharing behaviour on Snapchat in response to seeing other's posts, either alcohol inclusive or alcohol non-inclusive. This response is realistic because research has shown that adolescents and young adults in particular feel a strong need to affiliate with their peers, belong to their peers, and feel popular among their peers (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Thus, when young adults are faced with a situation that generates FoMO, sharing similar content at the next possible opportunity can act as compensation for missing out on the fun before.

Essentially, the whole point of social media is to showcase what you are doing, where you are doing it, and who you are doing it with. These updates are made available to peers through social media either in present time or after the fact. For example, a post from a night out drinking with friends can be posted to Instagram the morning after, while Snapchat posts throughout the night are sent in real-time. Therefore, getting a Snapchat of your friends at the bar drinking without you should induce more FoMO than noticing a picture of them on Instagram the next day, because the feelings of social exclusion are more immediate. While similar features have recently been

added to other social media apps, Snapchat is the original social media that provided a platform for immediate picture messaging. This aspect of FoMO and social media is crucial, as previous research suggests that FoMO experienced in the context of social media is the same as FoMO experienced through direct contact.

Previous studies show that of common social media sites (i.e. Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat), Snapchat is the platform most likely to portray the negative consequences of alcohol use (Boyle, Earle, LaBrie, Ballou, 2017). Following this theme, articles regularly published by popular entertainment companies like Buzzfeed indicate that sharing Snapchats while intoxicated is considered a norm for young adults. For instance, *32 Snapchats That Everyone Has Sent While Drunk* (Jewell, 2015) lists different common scenarios intoxicated young adults often share over Snapchat, and even includes screenshots of said Snapchats to show each scenario more fully. In fact, it has been shown that alcohol-related content viewed on Instagram and Snapchat is more likely to influence the drinking behaviour of those who view it than similar content viewed on Facebook (Boyle et al., 2016). These results instill the main idea behind the present study – that alcohol content shared on Snapchat, whether is is showcasing negative or positive consequences of alcohol use, can influence the individual(s) viewing it. This influence can instate a fear of missing out for the individual who is receiving the content over Snapchat but is not actually involved in-person. Previous research shows that exposure to alcohol-related social media content can predict later alcohol consumption (Boyle et al., 2016), and friend's social media posts can predict one's own self-reporting of alcohol-related consumption, problems, and cravings (Westgate, Neighbors, Heppner, Jahn, & Lindgren, 2014).

Despite this, studies have not yet explored in-depth if being exposed to this kind of content can predict whether or not an individual will make alcohol-related social media posts of their own.

Additionally, much alcohol-related social media research has focused on Facebook specifically, yet Facebook is quickly becoming obsolete with young adults as new social medias become more popular – as of February 2017, Snapchat is the most popular app among young adults (Marketing Charts, 2017). The concern about social media portrayals of alcohol consumption is important to consider because it can help uncover a cycle-like state of viewing alcohol content on Snapchat, which may result in individuals making similar posts their own. While finding this pattern may not necessarily directly prevent alcohol consumption among students, it can bring awareness to the affects of sharing alcohol content on Snapchat. This may change the sharing and viewing behaviour of some individuals. In addition to that, this study can further showcase how content viewed on Snapchat does in fact influence our immediate and future behaviour.

Though previous research about the relationship between FoMO and alcohol consumption is sparse, what is available confirms that high levels of FoMO can act as a risk factor for alcohol-related harm in college students. Specifically, those high in FoMO are more likely to show risky behaviour when they drink alcohol (Riordan, Flett, Hunter, Scarf & Conner, 2015). FoMO can be understood as a self-regulatory limbo that can arise from situational or chronic deficits in psychological needs (Przybylski et al., 2013), deficits that individuals naturally seek to compensate for in order to maintain a state of mental well-being.

When one experiences psychological deficits because of social media, research has already shown that it is normal to increase social media use in order to compensate for this deficit (Przybylski et al., 2013). The current study is meant to explore this response to FoMO, specifically considering how individuals compensate by sharing their own similar content on social media. It is hypothesized that the likelihood of posting alcohol-content on Snapchat will be greater after viewing alcohol content on Snapchat versus viewing non-alcohol content. In addition to this, it is

also hypothesized that individuals who are high in FoMO will show an even greater likelihood of posting alcohol-content at the next opportunity. If feeling excluded from one's in-group can trigger FoMO, then perhaps sharing similar Snapchats at the next opportunity may compensate with feelings of inclusion.

Method

Participants

The participants consisted of 171 students (45 male) from Western University, enrolled in first or second year classes that required research participation as part of their final grade. Data from 29 participants was eliminated due to answers that indicated that they were not paying attention to the Snapchat video. Participants were recruited via the SONA system, with the average age of first year students being 18 years old. The SONA listing used for recruitment specified previous or current Snapchat use as a requirement for participation. The SONA title for the study was "Brand Saliency and Social Media", passive deception was necessary to ensure participants were encouraged to pay attention to the Snapchat video shown to them without them realizing the importance of which condition they were in.

Materials

Materials for this study included a letter of information (Appendix A), a consent form (Appendix B), a short video, a participant questionnaire package (Appendix D) and a debriefing statement (Appendix C). The letter of information outlined the study for the participant as well as potential costs and benefits.

The videos used were created by the researcher for the sake of the study. The videos included two males and two females, all of which were recruited by the researcher. The videos consisted of 11 "Snapchats", lasting 10 seconds each. In addition to the 11 10-second Snapchats,

the first and last five seconds of each video were dedicated to warning the participant that the video was about to start and that the video had completed. Exact photos for both conditions can be found in Appendix E & F.

Brand Saliency Questionnaire (BS).

The BS questionnaire consisted of eight multiple choice questions meant to examine brand-saliency in the Snapchat videos. Each multiple choice question had five answer choices labelled A-E. These questions were created and compiled by the researcher, as their main use was for the package to be consistent with the passive deception as well as to ensure the participant was paying attention to the Snapchat video. An example of the questions used for this questionnaire is "In the 7th Snapchat, what was the male drinking when he 'passed out'?" with the answers to choose from being "a. Gatorade, b. Smirnoff Ice, c. Coca Cola, d. Budlight Lime, e. Aquafina." Validity and reliability for this questionnaire have not been tested.

Snapchat Use Questionnaire (SNU).

The SNU questionnaire was adapted from Lorenzo-Romero, Alarcón-del-Amo & Constantinides, (2014) and was meant to assess participants previous or current Snapchat use, which was a requirement for participation. This questionnaire consisted of seven items which were rated on a likert scale from 1-5 (1-low, 5-high). An example of a question used on this questionnaire is "I have used Snapchat before" and "I intend to continue to use Snapchat". Convergent validity and discriminant validity were proven as adequate for these measures (Lorenzo et al., 2014).

Fear of Missing Out (FoMO).

The FoMO questionnaire was adopted from Przybylski, Murayama, DeHaan & Gladwell (2013) and was meant to assess participants level of FoMO in the current moment. This questionnaire consisted of nine items which were rated on likert scale from 1-5 (1-low, 5-high). An example of a question used on this questionnaire is "I fear others have more rewarding experiences than me" and "It is important that I understand my friend's inside jokes". The validity of this questionnaire was tested and confirmed in the original study for which it was created (Przybylski et al., 2013).

Relationship Management Motivation (RMM).

The RMM questionnaire was meant to assess participant's relationship management motivations for using Snapchat and was adapted from Sudhir & Unnithan, 2014. The items were altered for the sake of this study. Specifically, "social media" was replaced with "Snapchat" and "message" was replaced with "beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video". This questionnaire consisted of eight items which were rated on a likert scale from 1-4 (1-low, 4-high). An example of a question used on this questionnaire is "Others will respect me if I share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages in the video". Cronbach's alpha scores were calculated for this questionnaire in the original study it was used for and showed good reliability. Convergent validity was also assessed and found to be good.

Self-Enhancement Motivation (SEM).

The SEM questionnaire was meant to assess participant's self-enhancement motivations for using Snapchat and was adapted from Sudhir & Unnithan, 2014. The items were altered for the sake of this study. Specifically, "social media" was replaced with

"Snapchat" and "message" was replaced with "beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video". This questionnaire consisted of eight items which were rated on a likert scale from 1-4 (1-low, 4-high). An example of a question used on this questionnaire is "Sharing Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video will make me feel good about myself". Cronbach's alpha scores were calculated for this questionnaire in the original study it was used for and showed good reliability. Convergent validity was also assessed and found to be good.

Likelihood of Sharing Similar Snapchats (LUS).

The LUS questionnaire was meant to assess participant's likelihood of posting similar Snapchats in the future as well as in hypothetical scenarios. These items were created by the researcher for the sake of this study. The questionnaire consisted of 13 items which were rated on a likert scale from 1-4 (1-low, 4-high). An example of a question used on this questionnaire is "I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if it is a holiday". Validity and reliability for this questionnaire have not been tested.

Alcohol Use in Previous 14 Days (AU14).

The AU14 questionnaire was meant to assess multiple aspects of the participants drinking behaviour in the 14 days prior to participating in the study. Specifically, whether or not alcohol use was present, total number of days of alcohol use, total number of standard drinks consumed, total number of days' binge-drinking occurred ($\geq$ 3 standard drinks for females and $\geq$ 5 standard drinks for males), and whether or not the 14-day period reported on was an accurate depiction of participant's general alcohol use. Participants were presented with a blank calendar of the current month and asked to report on the previously

mentioned measures. The timeline follow back method was considered a valid and reliable measure as reported by Sobell & Sobell (1992).

Procedure

Participants were sat alone in a private office area in front of a computer screen opened full-screen to a file folder labelled "Snapchats for Thesis". The contents of the file were four video thumbnails labelled "Aquafina, Budlight Lime and Smirnoff Ice, Coca Cola, and Gatorade" respectively. Participants placed in lab-room 'A' saw thumbnails that included a picture of a singular container of each beverage while participants in lab-room 'B' saw blank thumbnails with no pictures[1]. Placed on the desk in front of the computer screen were the participant questionnaire, the letter of information, the consent form, and a pen. Participants were assigned to lab-room based on the corresponding time-slot they signed up for. Any participants who were not able to enter their assigned lab room immediately due to it being occupied by a participant from a separate timeslot were shown to the opposite lab-room if it was empty. If both lab rooms were occupied, participants were asked to take a seat around the corner of the lab rooms and shown to whatever lab-room became unoccupied first. Participants were randomly assigned to condition by coin-flip. Participants were instructed to read over the letter of information before signing the consent form. After the consent form was signed and collected, participants were told the following:

> "I am going to show you a short video. After the video is complete, I would like you to fill out the questionnaire in front of you. When filling out the questionnaire try not to go back or change any answers. Now, I want you to imagine that you were invited to a small get-together at your friend's house off-campus. You wanted to attend, but you had a midterm to study for so you couldn't. About an hour into studying for your midterm, you received this series of Snapchats."

[1] This discrepancy was due to the researcher using different computer programs used to view the videos.

At this point, for participants in the control condition, the researcher began to play the 'Aquafina' video in full-screen mode before completely exiting the room and closing the door. The researcher would remain in a separate room down the hall until the participant exited their respective lab room informing the completion of their questionnaire. To end the interaction, the researcher would hand the participant the debriefing form and asked if the participant had any remaining questions before dismissing them. The researcher would complete the questionnaire by marking down the participant's gender on the front page. Participants assigned to the experimental condition went through an identical procedure except they watched the 'Budlight Lime and Smirnoff Ice' video. Both of these videos were identical in nature aside from the beverages the subjects were holding – the beverages were respective to the video label.

Results

Overall summary descriptive statistics and Chronbach's alpha for all variables used in the study can be found in Table 1.

Table 1
Basic Descriptive Statistics and Chronbach's Alpha (*N* = 171)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	α
SNU	32.26	3.7	.94
FOMO	29.56	6.08	.87
RMM	15.65	3.98	.81
SEM	17.32	3.87	.85
Total Alcohol	12.93	15.2	.86

A series of multiple linear regression were conducted using the stepwise method predicting likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats (items 2-12)[2] from the variables FOMO total, SEM total, RMM total, and total alcohol score (amount of standard drinks consumed in the last 14 days, days

[2] Items 1 and 13 were not included in this analysis due to not necessarily being related to likelihood of posting similar Snapchats.

of alcohol use in the last 14 days, and days of binge alcohol use in the last 14 days). Results for these analyses are as follows.

For participants in the experimental condition, the regression was significant, $F(2, 74) = 31.23$, $p = .00$, $R^2 = .44$. Of the predictors investigated, both SEM total ($\beta = .42$, $t(74) = 3.39$, $p = .001$) and RMM total ($\beta = .31$, $t(74) = 2.47$, $p = .016$) were significant. FOMO total $\beta = .14$, $t(74) = 1.54$, $p > .05$ was not a significant predictor of likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats, and neither was total alcohol score $\beta = .05$, $t(74) = .57$, $p > .05$ in this condition (Tables 2&3).

Table 2
Results of Stepwise Regression Analyses by Predictor Variable in the Experimental Condition ($n = 83$)

Step	**Variable**	***t***	***p***	***β***	***R***	***R^2***	***F***	***df***
1	Constant SEM	5.03 7.27	.00 .00	11.03 .9	.64	.41	52.8	1, 75
2	Constant SEM RMM	4.62 3.39 2.47	.00 .00 .02	10 .59 .4	.68	.46	31.23	2, 74

Note: The dependent variable for all regressions was LUS(2-12)

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations for Experimental Condition ($n = 83$)

Variable	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. SNUTOTAL	33.2	2.19					
2. FOMOTOTAL	30.22	5.89	.11				
3. RMMTOTAL	16.27	4.05	-.003	.41**			
4. SEMTOTAL	17.45	3.77	-.06	.41**	.76**		
5. LUS2-12	26.74	5.17	.2	.41**	.6**	.63**	
6. AlchTOTAL	17.73	17.4	.28*	.21	.22	.22**	.21

Note. $p < .01$**, $p < .05$*. Decimals omitted.

For participants in the control condition, the regression was also significant, $F(2, 82) = 28.16$, $p = .00$, $R^2 = .39$. Of the predictors investigated, both SEM total ($\beta = .41$, $t(82) = 3.48$, $p = .001$) and RMM total ($\beta = .28$, $t(82) = 2.32$, $p = .023$) were significant. FOMO total $\beta = .11$, $t(82) = 1.22$, $p > .05$ was not a significant predictor of likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats, and neither was total alcohol score $\beta = .16$, $t(82) = 1.94$, $p > .05$ in this condition (Tables 4&5).

Table 4
Results of Stepwise Regression Analyses by Predictor Variable in the Control Condition (*n* = 88)

Step	**Variable**	***t***	***p***	***β***	***R***	***R²***	***F***	***df***
1	Constant SEM	4.3 6.95	.00 .00	9.62 .87	.61	.37	48.36	1, 83
2	Constant SEM RMM	3.8 3.48 2.32	.00 .00 .02	8.52 .6 .39	.64	.41	28.16	2, 82

Note: The dependent variable for all regressions was LUS(2-12)

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations for Control Condition (*n* = 88)

Variable	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. SNUTOTAL	31.36	4.53					
2. FOMOTOTAL	28.94	6.23	.26**				
3. RMMTOTAL	15.07	3.85	.12	.3**			
4. SEMTOTAL	17.2	3.99	-.02	.22*	.69**		
5. LUS2-12	24.56	5.67	.09	.28**	.57**	.61**	
6. AlchTOTAL	8.63	11.4	.15	-.03	-.02	-.11	.13

Note. $p < .01$**, $p < .05$*. Decimals omitted.

For males in the experimental condition, the regression was significant, $F(1, 16) = 9.98$, $p = .006$, $R^2 = .35$. Of the predictors investigated, RMM total ($\beta = .62$, $t(16) = 3.16$, $p = .006$) was significant. FOMO total $\beta = .2$, $t(16) = .97$, $p > .05$, SEM total $\beta = -.13$, $t(16) = .31$, $p > .05$, and

total alcohol score β = .02, $t(16)$ = .08, p > .05 were not significant predictors for males in this condition (Tables 6&7).

Table 6
Results of Stepwise Regression Analyses by Predictor Variable for Males in the Experimental Condition
(n = 18)

Step	Variable	*t*	*p*	*β*	*R*	R^2	*F*	*df*
1	Constant	3.98	.00	14.72	.62	.38	9.98	1, 16
	RMM	3.16	.01	.62	.62			

Note: The dependent variable for all regressions was LUS(2-12)

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations for Males in the Experimental Condition
(n = 18)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1. SNUTOTAL	32.78	2.24					
2. FOMOTOTAL	27.67	5.86	-.06				
3. RMMTOTAL	15.5	3.63	-.09	.27			
4. SEMTOTAL	16.89	4.11	-.04	.07	.87**		
5. LUS2-12	26.11	4.31	-.09	.35	.62**	.51*	
6. AlchTOTAL	16.44	19.47	.55*	.04	.07	.03	.82

Note. p < .01**, p < .05*. Decimals omitted.

For males in the control condition, the regression was also significant, $F(2, 23)$ = 17.75, p = .00, R^2 = .57. Of the predictors investigated, both SEM total (β = .73, $t(23)$ = 5.54, p = .00) and total alcohol score (β = .35, $t(23)$ = 2.66, p = .014) were significant. FOMO total β = .28, $t(23)$ = 2.02, p = >.05 was not a significant predictor of likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats, and neither was RMM total β = -.26, $t(23)$ = .99, p >.05 for males in this condition (Tables 8&9).

Table 8
Results of Stepwise Regression Analyses by Predictor Variable for Males in the Control Condition (*n* = 27)

Step	Variable	*t*	*p*	*β*	*R*	R^2	*F*	*df*
1	Constant SEM	2.7 4.76	.01 .00	8.94 .7	.7	.49	22.64	1, 24
2	Constant SEM TotalAlcohol	2.08 5.54 2.66	.05 .00 .01	6.45 .94 .2	.78	.61	17.75	2, 23

Note: The dependent variable for all regressions was LUS(2-12)

Table 9
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations for Males in the Control Condition (*n* = 27)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1. SNUTOTAL	29.89	4.89					
2. FOMOTOTAL	27.37	5.64	.12				
3. RMMTOTAL	15.11	4.13	-.05	.33			
4. SEMTOTAL	16.59	4.91	-.03	.43*	.86**		
5. LUS2-12	23.67	6.45	.02	.46*	.57**	.74**	
6. AlchTOTAL	9.04	10.39	.03	-.12	-.03	-.09	.29

Note. $p < .01$**, $p < .05$*. Decimals omitted.

For females in the experimental condition, the regression was significant, $F(2, 56) = 29.01$, $p = .00$, $R^2 = .49$. Of the predictors investigated, both SEM total ($\beta = .51$, $t(56) = 3.98$, $p = .00$) and RMM total ($\beta = .26$, $t(56) = 2.01$, $p = .049$) were significant. FOMO total $\beta = .8$, $t(56) = .75$, $p > .05$ was not a significant predictor of likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats, and neither was total alcohol score $\beta = .04$, $t(56) = .37$, $p > .05$ for females in this condition (Tables 10&11).

Table 10
Results of Stepwise Regression Analyses by Predictor Variable for Females in the Experimental Condition (*n* = 65)

Step	**Variable**	***t***	***p***	***β***	***R***	***R^2***	***F***	***df***
1	Constant SEM	3.27 7.16	.00 .00	8.51 1.04	.69	.47	51.25	1, 57
2	Constant SEM RMM	2.95 3.98 2.01	.01 .00 .05	7.6 .77 .34	.71	.51	29.01	2, 56

Note: The dependent variable for all regressions was LUS(2-12)

Table 11
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations for Females in the Experimental Condition (*n* = 65)

Variable	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. SNUTOTAL	33.32	2.17					
2. FOMOTOTAL	30.92	5.74	.12				
3. RMMTOTAL	16.48	4.16	.00	.43*			
4. SEMTOTAL	17.6	3.68	-.07	.5**	.73**		
5. LUS2-12	26.92	5.41	.26*	.42**	.59**	.66**	
6. AlchTOTAL	18.12	16.89	.19	.27*	.26*	.29*	.25

Note. $p < .01$**, $p < .05$*. Decimals omitted.

For females in the control condition, the regression was significant, $F(2, 56) = 18.06$, $p = .00$, $R^2 = .37$. Of the predictors investigated, both RMM total ($\beta = .39$, $t(56) = 2.99$, $p = .004$) and SEM total ($\beta = .31$, $t(56) = 2.39$, $p = .02$) were significant. FOMO total $\beta = .02$, $t(56) = .16$, $p > .05$ was not a significant predictor of likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats, and neither was total alcohol score $\beta = .09$, $t(56) = .81$, $p > .05$ for females in this condition (Tables 12&13).

Table 12
Results of Stepwise Regression Analyses by Predictor Variable for Females in the Control Condition (*n* = 61)

Step	**Variable**	***t***	***p***	***β***	***R***	***R^2***	***F***	***df***
1	Constant RMM	5.56 5.3	.00 .00	13.04 .8	.57	.33	28.06	1, 57
2	Constant RMM SEM	2.84 2.99 2.39	.01 .00 .02	8.43 .54 .49	.63	.39	18.06	2, 56

Note: The dependent variable for all regressions was LUS(2-12)

Table 13
Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations for Females in the Control Condition (*n* = 61)

Variable	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. SNUTOTAL	32.02	4.25					
2. FOMOTOTAL	29.65	6.39	.28*				
3. RMMTOTAL	15.05	3.76	.21	.29*			
4. SEMTOTAL	17.48	3.52	-.05	.1	.6**		
5. LUS2-12	24.97	5.29	.1	.18	.56**	.51**	
6. AlchTOTAL	8.46	11.89	.2	-.00	-.02	-.12	.07

Note. $p < .01$**, $p < .05$*. Decimals omitted.

In examining the previous tables showing descriptive statistics, (Tables 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 & 13) generally speaking, the means for the variables were similar between condition and between genders. However, one variable that appears to have a substantial difference is total alcohol score. This variable appears higher in the experimental condition both between conditions and between genders. Therefore, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to see if total alcohol total scores differed significantly overall and between males and females.

Those in the experimental condition (M = 17.73, SD = 17.4) had significantly higher total alcohol scores than those in the control condition (M = 8.63, SD = 11.4), $t(169) = 4.07$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .09$. Males in the experimental condition (M = 16.44, SD = 19.47) did not have significantly higher total alcohol scores than males in the control condition (M = 9.04, SD = 10.39), $t(42) = 1.66$, $p > .05$ although results would have held significance if t-test had been one-tailed. Finally, females in the experimental condition (M = 18.12, SD = 16.89) had significantly higher total alcohol scores than females in the control condition (M = 8.46, SD = 11.89), $t(124) = 2.62$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .05$.

Discussion

Social media use affects individuals in different ways and can trigger different reactions in those consuming it. The results from this study suggest that participants reported a greater likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats that included alcoholic beverages after being exposed to alcoholic beverages in the Snapchat video than likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats that included water after being exposed to water in the Snapchat video.

Additional regression analyses suggested that RMM was the most significant predictor of likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats for males in the alcohol condition, as it accounted for 35% of the variance in the scores in this population. These results imply that exposure to alcoholic beverages in Snapchats may encourage males to share similar Snapchats based on relationship management motivations. These kinds of motivations include wanting to start conversations, wanting to enhance current long-term relationships, wanting to be socially accepted, and also wanting to enhance one's reputation. This pattern is rational; as previous research suggests that males often use social networking sites for social identity compensations. (Barker, 2009).

The regression analysis for males in the non-alcohol condition suggest that SEM and total alcohol score (days of alcohol consumption, amount of standard drinks reported, and days of binge alcohol usage) were the most significant predictors for likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats, accounting for 57% of the variance in the scores in this population. These results suggest that exposure to Snapchats that include water may encourage males to share similar Snapchats based on self-enhancement motivation and amount of alcohol recently consumed. These results are inconsistent with previous research that suggests males motivations for sharing on social media are more relationship-based rather than self-esteem-based. One possible explanation for this pattern is that because males do not necessarily seek collective-self esteem from social media use, they consider themselves likely to share similar Snapchats regardless of the beverage shown in the video.

The regression analysis for females in the alcohol condition suggest that SEM and RMM were the most significant predictors for likelihood of sharing similar Snapchats, accounting for 49% of the variation in the scores in this population. In addition to this, females in the non-alcohol condition also shared RMM and SEM as significant predictors, this time the variables accounted for 37% of the variation in the scores in this population. These results suggest that exposure to Snapchats that include alcoholic beverages or water may encourage females to share similar Snapchats based on both self-enhancement motivations and relationship management motivations. These results are consistent with previous research that implies that females often use social networking sites to communicate with their peers as well as to enhance their collective-self esteem (Barker, 2009). Overall, RMM and SEM were both significant predictors of likelihood of sharing Snapchats that include similar beverages for the alcohol and the non-alcohol conditions, while total alcohol score was only significant for males in the non-alcohol condition.

When considering the independent samples *t*-tests conducted, we see significantly higher total alcohol scores in all participants in the experimental condition than the control condition (17.73 vs. 8.63) – total alcohol score accounted for approximately 9% of the variance in these scores. A similar pattern is seen in females in the experimental condition versus females in the control condition (18.12 vs. 8.46) – total alcohol score account for approximately 5% of the variance in these scores. Although males in the experimental condition did not score significantly higher than males in the control condition (9.04 vs. 16.44), these results would have been considered significant had the *t*-test been one-tailed rather than two-tailed. This suggests that perhaps given a larger sample size, we would have seen the same pattern in males as well. Before considering possible explanations for these results, procedural order is an important factor to reflect on. Participants were exposed to the Snapchats before filling out their questionnaire package, so this exposure to alcoholic content via Snapchat could possibly cause participants to artificially inflate their total alcohol score as a result of attempting to meet the demand characteristic being represented in the study. In addition to this, another possibility is that viewing the alcohol inclusive Snapchats resulted in participants more accurately estimating their total alcohol score as a result of relating to the activities present in the images. More research in this area is necessary to draw a clear conclusion.

Some references to alcohol culture within this study may have caused confusion for participants, depending on how knowledgeable they were with respect to common party tricks and other drinking traditions. The term “iced” or “icing” someone refers to the party trick where one hides a bottle of Smirnoff Ice and then waits or tricks someone into finding it. Once the Smirnoff Ice bottle is found, it is customary for the individual who found it to get down on one knee and drink the whole bottle without stopping until it is finished. In addition to this, “cheers”

is a routine salutation used when toasting with an alcoholic beverage, and "chug" is a common chant used to encourage someone to finish their drink without stopping. These details are necessary to consider because participants seeing these references used with bottles of water instead of alcohol may lack a connection and familiarity which those in the experimental condition established. This difference could potentially play a part in implicit attitudes formed before completing the questionnaire package, as this inconsistency would go against one's current mental representation of realistic Snapchats they would receive.

The overall pattern in the results emphasizes the many motivations individuals have for sharing content on social media, both alcohol inclusive and non-inclusive. While the intended use for social media may be communication, both this study and previous research suggests that individuals often seek other goals in their use, such as increasing their self-esteem or their collective self-esteem by establishing themselves in their in-group. Although the original hypotheses for this study were only somewhat confirmed, the potential for FoMO as a motivating factor for posting alcohol-content on Snapchat is still a possibility. This is due to the numerous confines in this study that may have prevented FoMO from being properly generated in participants.

There were multiple limitations, first of which being the gender difference. There was an approximate 2:1 ratio for females:males, meaning males may not have had an appropriate representation in this study. This issue stems from the sample of university students available for the study – the majority of participants who were recruited were enrolled in introductory psychology which is often primarily female. It is also worth considering that as of 2013, 70% of Snapchat's 187 million users are women (MacMillan, 2013). This statistic combined with the current sample for this study suggest a bias toward women being over-represented.

In addition to possible sample bias, the measures used in this study varied in validity – specifically the LUS and BS questionnaires as they were created by the researcher for the sole purpose of this study. It is worth mentioning that data from seven participants was discarded due to vague wording on the LUS questionnaire. Specifically wording was changed from "I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the ones that were in the video if..." to "I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if...". The vague wording was observed by the researcher after noticing inconsistent answers when reviewing the raw questionnaires. It is also possible that because participants were participating in the study strictly for participation marks for a designated course they were indifferent, did not take the study seriously, and/or did not put appropriate thought into their answers in the questionnaire package. One of the biggest possible limitations in this study were the videos used in the conditions. Although participants were asked to imagine that the individuals in the video were their friends, the subjects were strangers and the house the pictures took place in was one they had never seen before. Although genders were represented equally in the videos (two males, two females) all subjects were Caucasian, lacking minority representation. The beverages in the video were picked at random by the researcher (Bud Light Lime, Smirnoff Ice, and Aquafina) so it is possible that participants did not recognize these beverages or have personal preferences that do not include these beverages, which may have affected how they responded to the questionnaire package. Finally, the Snapchat filter applied to the photos to make them look more genuine (10-second countdown in the middle of a small square located in the top right hand corner) is similar to an old version of the app than what is currently available to users. Although this was the only option available to the researcher when creating the videos, it makes the videos still relevant for participants who possibly have not used Snapchat since the filter has changed

though less relatable to participants who are newer users of the app and have not seen that version. Consideration also needs to paid to the self-reporting nature of the data. Although participants were informed that their answers would be kept anonymous there is always the possibility that they did not answer the questionnaire package honestly.

One of the biggest strengths in this study comes from the extended period of time over which data was collected; from mid-November until mid-March. This is specifically a strength for the AU14 measure as it helps to ensure that there was an accurate representation of alcohol consumption patterns, meaning data was not only collected during a time of typical underuse (e.g. midterm exams) or overuse (e.g. holidays).

Future research in this area can extend in multiple directions. This study was geared towards university students although they are not necessarily the only users on Snapchat who consumed alcohol on a frequent and/or regular basis. Attitudes of younger teenagers and adults surrounding these topics and their sharing habits on Snapchat cannot be drawn from these results. It is also necessary to consider how to alter the videos used in the study in order to give a more genuine effect on the participants. Ideally the Snapchats would be people they know in an environment they recognize, using the same version of Snapchat they use so that the Snapchats are as realistic for the participant as possible. This may also increase the likelihood of FoMO in participants, as it did not prove to be a significant predictor in this study. One potential means for accomplishing this is to conduct the experiment from the actual Snapchat app. It is possible to create a faux-account and send predetermined alcohol inclusive or alcohol non-inclusive photos to participants. These photos can be taken from public Facebook pages from local bars in an attempt to use subjects and environment the participants recognize.

In conclusion, these results highlight the rapidly growing theme of alcohol use on social media. Our understanding of this relationship is still in the early stages due to the novel nature of social media. Snapchat is quickly becoming more popular to use than Facebook, which is considered the cornerstone of social medias. Social media apps are quickly changing, both with updates within an app and with new apps becoming more popular and taking the place of others. The results show the influence of social media and the obligation that can be felt to share updates about one's life and current plans on these different platforms.

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APPENDIX A

Letter of Information

Brand Saliency and Social Media

Letter of Information & Participant Consent Form

This study is being conducted by Kellie Thomas, a 5th year thesis student in the Department of Psychology, under the supervision of Dr. Riley Hinson. The study that you are being asked to participate in will examine the complex relationship between brand saliency and social media. The purpose of this research is to better understand how social media effects our day to day functioning.

About the study

If you agree to participate, you will be exposed to specific images and then you will be asked to complete several questionnaires about said images and various aspects of your behaviour. This study will take no more than 20 minutes. These tasks require fluency in English as well as any previous use of Snapchat.

Important Information Related to Your Participation

The study will not take more than 20 minutes of your time. *Participation is voluntary* and you may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time. A refusal to participate will have no adverse consequences on your grade in Psychology 1000 (or respective introduction psychology course or non-psychology course), nor on your status at Western University.

Confidentiality

All information and data provided by you will remain confidential. You will not be identified in any reports of this study and all answers you provide will be kept confidential and separate from this signed consent form. The responses that you provide will only be used for research purposes. All data collected from the study will only be accessible by the authorized researchers and will be stored both electronically and as a paper copy in a secure location in the Psychology Department at Huron University College for a minimum of 5 years. If the data is ever available for open access to other researchers if they need it, it will be provided in an unidentified form to protect your anonymity.

Risks, Costs and Benefits to You

It is possible you might be uncomfortable or embarrassed about answering personal questions in the survey. Participation in the study is voluntary. You will not be required to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your school involvement. You will also be given the contact information for the researchers as well as the Chair of the Psychology Department in case you have any additional concerns and/or questions.

Participation in this study will give you 0.5 mark towards participation in Psych 1000 (or your respective introduction psychology course). If you are a non-introductory psychology student, participation marks will be awarded as outlined in your course syllabus or by your instructor.

Other Information

Your participation in this study does not require you in any way to participate in any future research at Huron University College or at The University of Western Ontario.
If you are interested in participating in our research project or would like to learn more about the study, please contact Kellie Thomas (kthoma57@uwo.ca)
Thank you for your time and interest in our research project. This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Contact information:

Kellie Thomas, Thesis Student
Email: kthoma57@uwo.ca

Dr. Riley Hinson, Thesis Advisor, Department of Psychology
Email: hinson@uwo.ca
Office: SSC 7308
Phone: (519) 661-2111 ext. 84649

APPENDIX B

Consent Form

Brand Saliency and Social Media

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

_____
Name of Participant (please print)

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date

_____
Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent (please print)

_____ _____
Signature of Researcher Obtaining Consent Date

APPENDIX C

Debriefing Form

Snapchat and its Relationship to Alcohol Consumption and Associated Behaviours

DEBRIEFING STATMENT

I want to thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. We really appreciate you giving us your time and attention today. I know the measures for alcohol use can be sensitive for some and I want to thank you for answering honestly. At this point I would like to inform you that this study is examining Snapchat and its relationship to alcohol consumption and associated behaviours rather than brand saliency in social media. Passive deception was necessary in order to get a genuine measure from you. Keeping this in mind, we ask that you please do not discuss the nature of this study with any of your peers who may be participating in this study at a later date.
If you have any questions or issues with the study today, please feel free to reach out to the contacts listed below.

Again, thank you for participating and have a wonderful day.

Contact information:

Kellie Thomas, Thesis Student
Email: kthoma57@uwo.ca

Dr. Riley Hinson, Thesis Advisor, Department of Psychology
Email: hinson@uwo.ca
Office: SSC 7308
Phone: (519) 661-2111 ext. 84649

APPENDIX D

Participant Questionnaire Package

Participant Questionnaire Package

Brand Saliency and Social Media

Directions: Please fill out the following questionnaires in the order they are presented to you in this package. Please refrain from going back to previous pages once you have completed them and/or changing your answers.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. You may circle more than 1 answer if you feel the question warrants it.

1. What beverages were featured in the Snapchats?
    a. Budlight Lime
    b. Aquafina
    c. Coca Cola
    d. Gatorade
    e. Smirnoff Ice

2. What size were the beverages featured in the Snapchats?
    a. 330 mL
    b. 500 mL
    c. 770 mL
    d. 40 oz
    e. 1774 mL

3. How many different males were in the Snapchats?
    a. 3
    b. 2
    c. 5
    d. 1
    e. 4

4. How many different females were in the Snapchats?
    a. 2
    b. 1
    c. 4
    d. 3
    e. 5

5. What was the most salient colour in the Snapchats?
    a. Blue
    b. Red
    c. Green
    d. Pink
    e. White

6. In the 7th Snapchat, what was the male drinking when he ‘passed out’?
    a. Gatorade
    b. Smirnoff Ice
    c. Coca Cola
    d. Budlight Lime
    e. Aquafina

7. The females were drinking
    a. Smirnoff Ice
    b. Gatorade
    c. Bud Light Lime
    d. Aquafina
    e. Coca Cola

8. How many empty beverage containers were in the final Snapchat?
    a. 1
    b. 3
    c. 8
    d. 7
    e. 24

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability using the 4-point Likert scale below.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

1. I have shared Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video.
   1 2 3 4

2. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if it is a holiday.
   1 2 3 4

3. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if I am at a bar with my friends.
   1 2 3 4

4. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages in the video if my friends share Shapchats of a get together I couldn't join them in.
   1 2 3 4

5. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if it is HOCO.
   1 2 3 4

6. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if it is a special occasion.
   1 2 3 4

7. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if it is summer time.
   1 2 3 4

8. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if I am out to dinner at a restaurant.
   1 2 3 4

9. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if I went to the gym.
   1 2 3 4

10. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if I'm staying in for the night.
    1 2 3 4

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

11. I'm more likely to share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video if I plan on having a late night.
    1 2 3 4

12. Next time I have the opportunity, I will likely share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video.
    1 2 3 4

13. I share Snapchats that include beverages similar to the beverages that were in the video.
    1. Never
    2. Occasionally (1-2 times a month)
    3. Regularly (3 times a month)
    4. Often (4+ times a month)

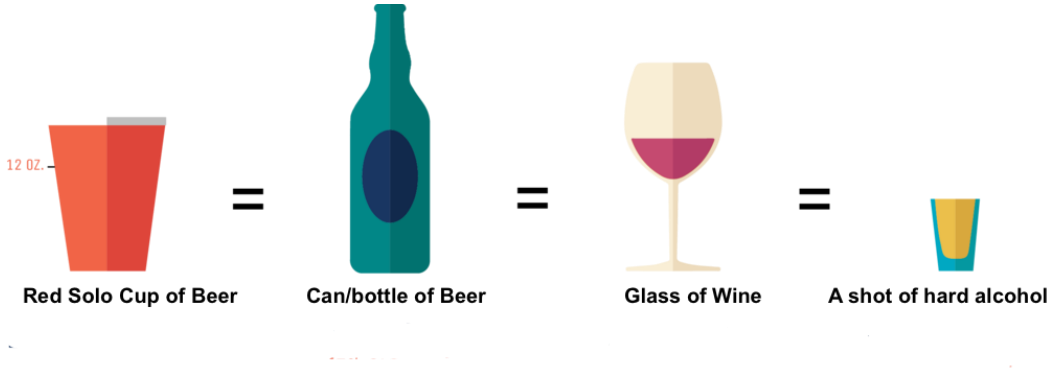
Referring to the calendar below, please put an X in the box corresponding with today's date. Going back the previous 14 days, please indicate for each of those days:

- *If you consumed alcohol on that specific day, if so mark with a Y*
- *For every box marked with a Y, please indicate in that same box how many standard drinks* you consumed*

CURRENT MONTH

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**A standard drink is defined as...*



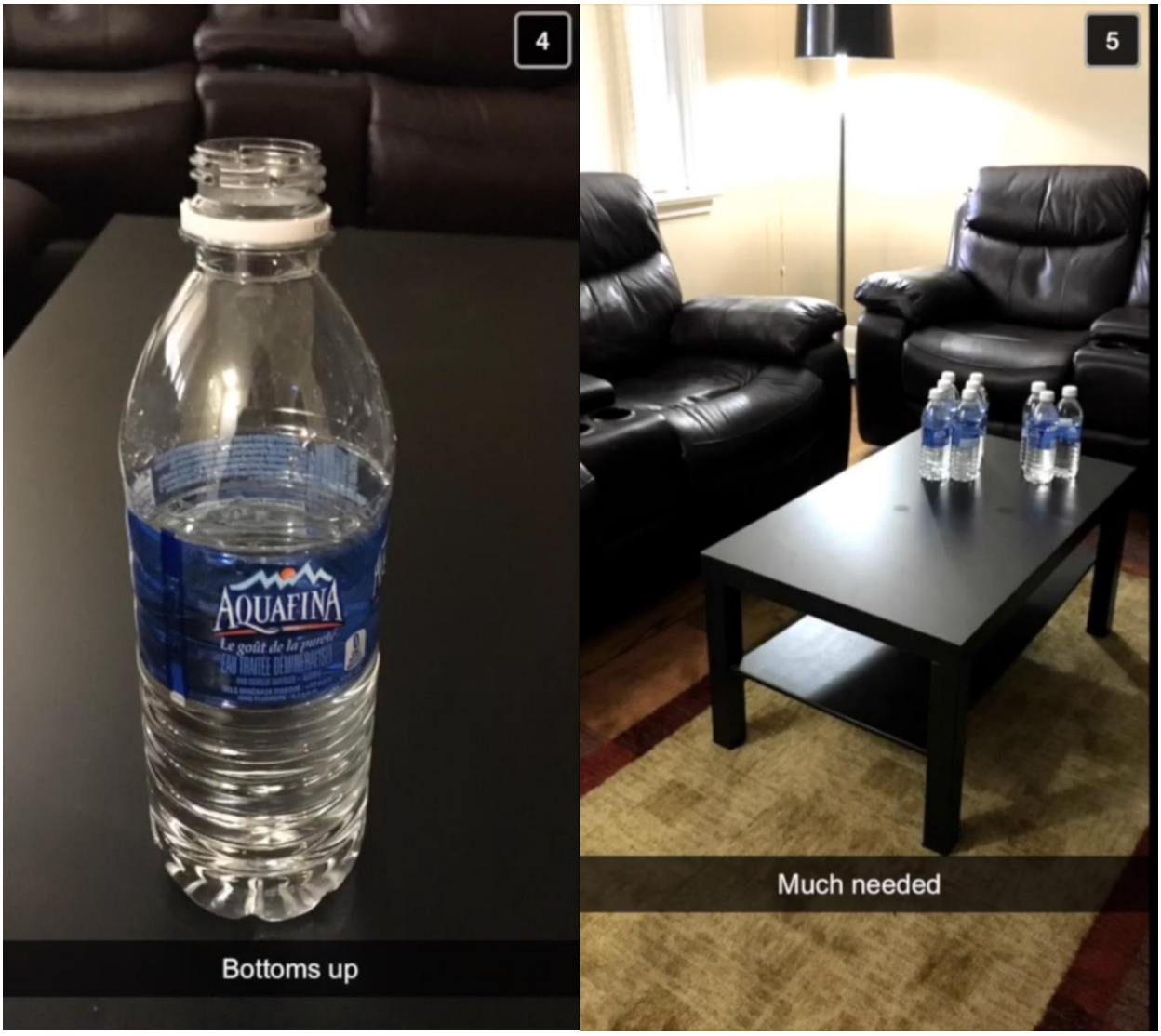
Is this 14-day period an accurate depiction of how much alcohol you would normally consume in any given 14-day period? If no, please elaborate below (i.e. above depicts more/less than I would typically consume).

_____

_____

APPENDIX E

Control Condition Images Used in Video




7
Cheers!


8


10
Iced 😂
9


7
Passed out!
9
Story time

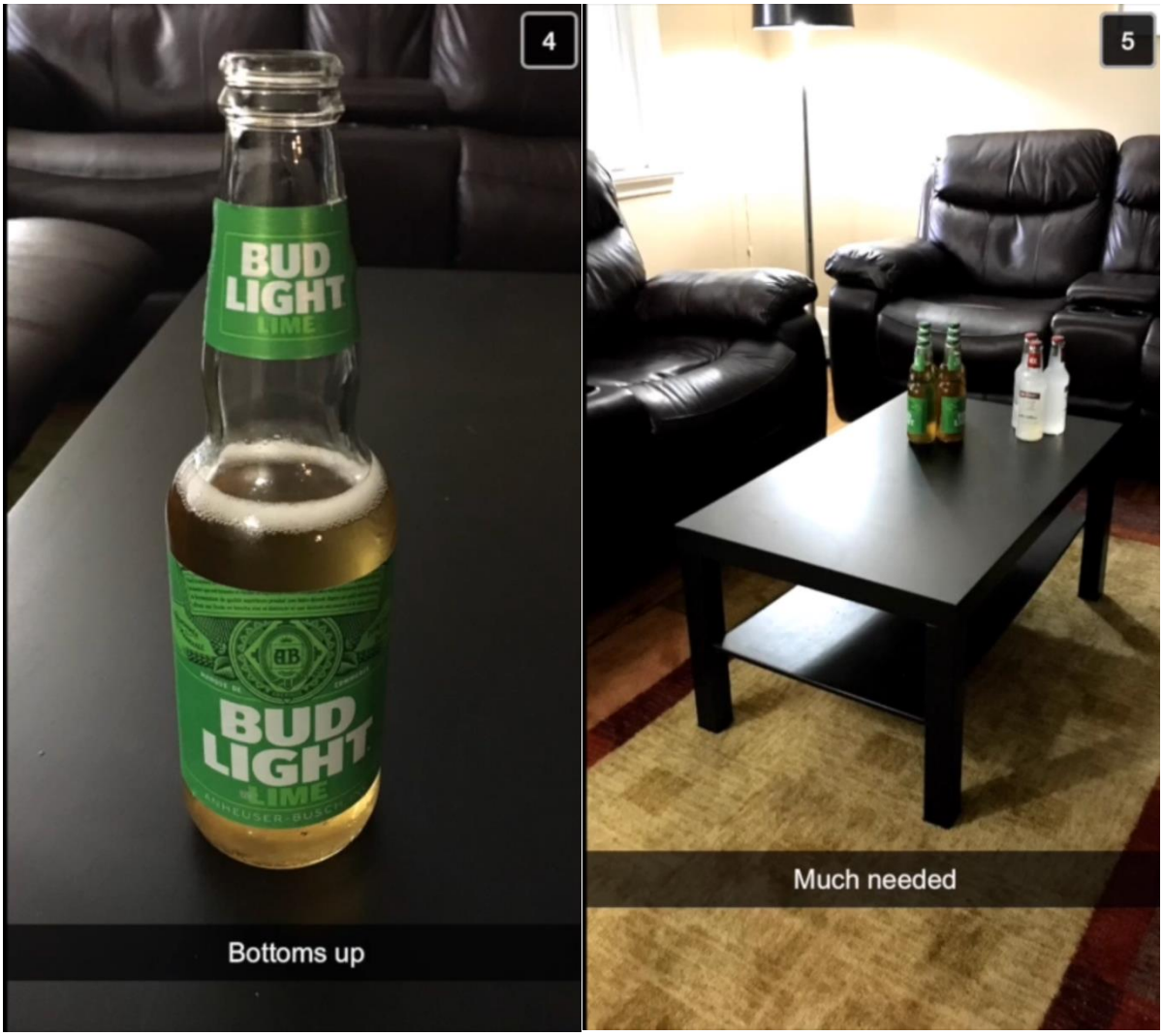

7
Cheers!


7
Chug!


4
AQUAFINA
#thirsty

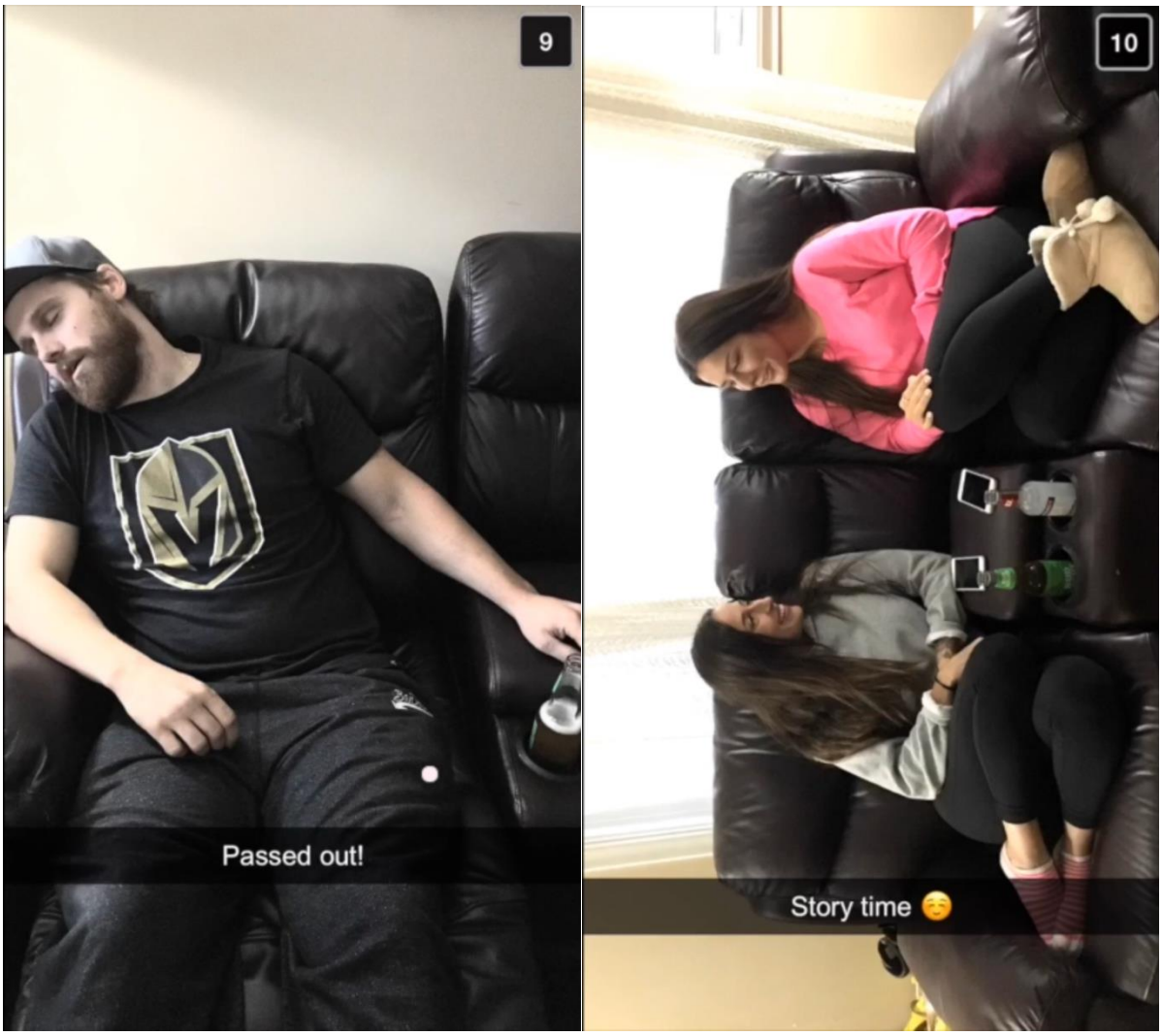
APPENDIX F

Experimental Condition Images Used in Video




7
Cheers!
8


8
Iced 😂
10


9
Passed out!
10
Story time


9
Cheers!
10
Chug!


9
BUD LIGHT
-ICE
SMIRNOFF
-ICE
#thirsty

Curriculum Vitae

Name:	Kellie Thomas
Place and Year of Birth:	Georgetown, ON, Canada, 02/21/1995
Experience:	Community engaged learning placement at Y.O.U, London, ON. Scope of project included researching and creating tool to assist staff in efficiently and accurately placing homeless youth into appropriate shelters.
Publications:	Thomas, Kellie (2015) "Environmental Enrichment: A Cat`s Preferences," *The Huron University College Journal of Learning and Motivation*: Vol. 53 : Iss. 1 , Article 11.