Alcohol and Violence in the Night-time City

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Overview

- Violence and alcohol
- Changing drinking patterns
- Liverpool nightlife study
- Research findings
- Discussion

Violence

- Police data
  - >1 million annually

- British Crime Survey
  - 2.4 million incidents

- Hospital Episodes
  - 33,940 individuals admitted

- Accident and Emergency
  - 275,422 (estimated) attendances

Hospital Episodes - Males

Rank	Age 15-24	Age 25-34
1	Unintentional injuries 19,977	Unintentional injuries 15,738
2	Assault **13,867**	Malignant neoplasm 10,545
3	Malignant neoplasm 10,541	Assault **9,400**
4	Intentional self harm **6,920**	Intentional self harm **8,501**
5	Diseases of appendix 5,308	Benign neoplasm 7,400

Violence, Alcohol and Nightlife

- 44% alcohol-related
  - Early initiation
  - Heavy drinking
  - Frequent drinking
- Links:
  - Reduced self-control
  - Poor information processing
  - Alcohol expectations
  - Drinking environments
- 50% alcohol-related assaults in or around pubs and clubs
- Assault-related A&E attendances sustained in a pub/club
  - 1/5 involved a glass/bottle
  - 15% assaulted by a bouncers

Annual cost of alcohol-related crime and disorder:

£7.8 billion

Changing Drinking Patterns

% of 11-15 year old school children drinking alcohol:
Decreased from 64% in 1990 to 55% in 2006

Mean weekly alcohol consumption (units) by drinkers

- Boys
- Girls

30% 15 year olds think it is okay to get drunk once a week

Fuller, 2007

Changing Drinking Patterns

% of men / women exceeding weekly limits (21♂ / 14♀ units), 1988-2006
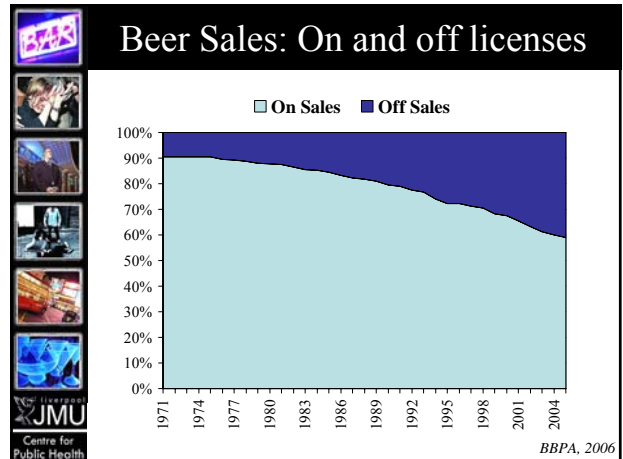

Men aged 16-24 — Women aged 16-24

Goddard 2007, General Household Survey

Affordability of Alcohol

- Since 1980, alcohol prices ↑ ¼ more than prices generally
- However, alcohol now >50% more affordable than in 1980
- Children's pocket money increased 600% in 20 years – averaging £8.01 per week.

Football £15-£30	Cinema ticket £4-£6	Cider 2 litres £1.49

Beer Sales: On and off licenses

Chart legend: □ On Sales ■ Off Sales

Y-axis: 0% to 100%
X-axis years: 1971, 1974, 1977, 1980, 1983, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004

BBPA, 2006

Environmental Measures

- Poorly developed nightlife
- Investment in prevention
  - Improved policing
  - Improved street lighting
  - CCTV
  - Safe late night transport
  - Licensing enforcement
  - Responsible server training
  - Door staff training & registration
  - Management award schemes
- City Centre Focus
- Blame on pubs and clubs
- Neglecting other factors

The Study

- Home Office Funding
- Aim: explore young people's experience and perceptions of violence in Liverpool's nightlife
- Objectives:
  - Levels and characteristics of violence
  - Key links with alcohol
  - Proportion of nightlife violence that goes unreported and reasons why
  - Injuries and health treatment demands
- Liverpool city centre
  - 16-35 year olds

The Study

- Short anonymous questionnaire
  - 2 pages
    - Demographics
    - Nightlife behaviours
    - Perceptions of safety and violence
    - Experience of violence and other problems
    - Drinking behaviours
  - Pilot February 2006

The Study

- Trained researchers
- Data collection:
  - July to October 2006
  - Weekends and week nights
  - 5pm to 11pm
- Randomly selected bars and pubs
  - n=18
- Face to face surveys
  - researcher completed
- Total surveyed 424
  - Compliance 85%

Results: Sample Characteristics

- N = 380
  - not within target age group
  - validity and reliability of answers
- 52% male
- Mean age = 24.3 years
- Majority (77%) reside in and around Liverpool
- 29% students
- 83.9% visit pubs/clubs at least weekly
  - 65.3% Liverpool City Centre

Results: Safety and Violence

- 87% feel safe on a night out
- 63% stated levels of violence were low

Type of incident	Witnessed	Experienced
Fight in street/pub/bar/nightclub	77%	11%
Fight in the street	71%	8%
Fight in a pub/bar/nightclub	57%	5%
Verbal abuse	79%	31%
Sexual molestation	15%	9%
Too drunk to walk	91%	37%
Drink spiked	15%	5%

Results: Alcohol Consumption

- 77.4% always drink on a night out
- 57.6% drink before a night out

Total units consumed prior to and during a typical night out, by gender

Nightlife problems in last 12 months

Results: Logistic Regression

- Involved in a fight
  - Non-students:
    - 4.8 x more likely
  - Drank 2–4 days in last week
    - 4.7 x more likely than less frequent drinkers
    - Risk lower for 5+ day drinkers
  - Pre-loaders
    - 2.6 x more likely

Pre-loaders also 4 times more likely to drink > 20 units

Study Summary

- Single night out exceeds total recommended weekly limits.
- Pre-loaders drink significantly more over a night out
  - preparation for a night out / accelerate drunkenness / financial.
- Pre-loading does not substitute nightlife drinking.
- Pre-loading linked to fighting – more than total consumption
  - Suggests the way people drink is more important.
- Effects of pre-loading:

  - ↓ sales in nightlife premises.
  - ↑ prices / promotions / cut costs (fewer staff).
  - ↑ number of drunk people outside pubs and clubs.
  - ↑ alcohol-related disorder in residential areas / public transport.
  - People arriving in to nightlife already drunk

Measures to tackle drunkenness and related violence should not only focus on nightlife environments

Violence and Deprivation

Assault Presentation to Accident & Emergency by Deprivation of Residence

- Violence occurs in Town and City centres
- Most perpetrators and victims live in specific areas
- Need to widen prevention to address root causes

Reducing Alcohol Use

- Risks of victim and perpetrator
- Reducing alcohol at both population level and in risky drinkers can reduce risks of violence
  - E.g. brief interventions

- **Benefits**
  - Impact not only on violence
  - Long term health (e.g. liver), accidents, suicides, Sexual Health

- **Barriers**
  - Industry resistance
  - 1 in 5 new jobs in alcohol industry
  - Changing pro-drinking cultures

Increasing prices
USA, estimated that 1% increase in alcohol price reduce risk of intimate partner violence by 5%

Limiting alcohol sales times
Brazil, prohibiting sales after 23:00 helped prevent estimated 273 murders over 2 years

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Reducing Risk Factors for Violence

- Key risk factors for violence in early life
  - Birth complications, single or teenage mother, maternal depression, parental conflict, poor academic achievement, low intelligence, harsh or inconsistent parental discipline, delinquent peers, attention problems, personality and behaviour problems, substance use
- Benefits
  - Address root of the problem
  - Whole life improvement
- Barriers
  - Slow payback
  - Politically unattractive
  - Resources

Reducing Risk Factors for Violence

	Youth Violence	Intimate Partner	Child Abuse	Elder Abuse	Sexual Violence
Increased access to pre and post natal care	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Home visiting programmes	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Parenting programmes	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Social development training for children	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Child abuse victim treatment programmes	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Training health staff to identify / refer victims	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Alcohol / drug use reduction strategies	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Summary

- Increasing alcohol consumption
  - Culture of drunkenness / societal tolerance of alcohol
  - Strong links to violence
- Heavy investment in nightlife management
- Discrepancy between on and off licenses
- Shift to home drinking and pre-loading
- Violence in nightlife areas
  - Risks higher in pre-loaders
  - Burden on city centre resources
  - Burden of blame on bars and nightclubs
  - Customers already drunk?
- Broaden focus of prevention
  - Reducing alcohol use / increasing price in off-licenses and addressing risk factors for violence
  - Early intervention in deprived areas

Thank you

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