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Conclusion: the drink question today

No subject has suffered more from over-statement, and from excessive violence of opinion and of language, and on none, therefore is caution in drawing conclusions more necessary. (Edgar Vincent (Lord D'Abernon))

The aim of this book is not to suggest that the story of the drink question is simply a cyclical history of repeating themes and moments. It is clearly anything but that, and this conclusion will seek to outline what some of the key shifts within the public debate on drink have been. However, three constant issues have tended to underpin the drink question in all its various forms. These are: *social order*, *health*, and *economic responsibility*. Of course, these are inflected by broader social frameworks, not least changing ideas about class, gender and national identity. Questions about drink have never been isolated from those larger themes; hence the question regarding the relationship between the drink question and, say, gender or class has never been *if* there is a relationship, but rather what the nature of that relationship is.

Nevertheless, class, gender and national or ethnic identity are extrinsic to drink: they are social categories through which ideas about drink are framed. By contrast, issues of social order, health and economic responsibility are intrinsic to drink: alcohol always has the potential to impact upon social order, it always has a potential impact upon health, and it always impacts upon economic activity. In all cases this impact can be good or bad, though public debates on drink have almost invariably accentuated the negative. Because they are intrinsic to drink, these concerns have always been at the heart of the discourse on alcohol. However, because they are also issues that have wider social relevance, the way in which they have been discussed in relation to drink has tended to be a reflection of how they are socially constructed at the same time.

In this sense, the history of drink discourse has also been a history of how a small number of characteristically modern concerns have been articulated differently depending on the cultural context. So, for example,

in the early seventeenth century, concerns about the threat to social order posed by alcohol were overlaid with concerns over political instability and new class formations; in the gin craze economic concerns over the reproduction of a labouring class were expressed through gendered health concerns focused on the figure of the drunken mother. The emancipatory rhetoric of the radical teetotallers focused on the economic threat alcohol posed and its role in inhibiting upward social mobility at an early stage of industrial capitalism. State purchasers hitched alcohol control to the economic responsibility of workers facing the threat of war. More recently, public health campaigns frame our responsibility to protect our own health in terms of the economic responsibilities of citizens in a welfare state: the 'costs' of alcohol use feature prominently in public health literature, often regarding costs to the NHS or days missed through absenteeism.

It is not so much, then, that the drink question has, depending on what period we look at, been about either social order, health or economic responsibility. Rather, it is that the discourse on drink has often reflected the way in which the relationship between these three things is imagined. Of course, hegemony regarding this framing process is only ever partially established, so it is usually a matter of very public contestation as well: the claims regarding the economic costs of alcohol made by public health campaigners conflict wildly with the claims regarding the economics of alcohol made by the drinks industry. To this extent, the history of alcohol policy and law provides a measure of whose version of events has established its position most effectively.

Campaigning in context

In the years immediately following the 2003 Licensing Act, public concerns over drinking tended to focus on issues of social order. The phrase 'binge drinker' conjured up an image of either a violent young man or a sexually vulnerable young woman behaving badly in a dystopian city centre. As Virginia Berridge observed, in the early 2000s, as in the latter years of the twentieth century, public health campaigners struggled to have a significant impact on either the framing of public debates on alcohol or on government policy.¹ However, the increasing effectiveness with which public health groups have set the media agenda on alcohol, the subsequent rise in discussions over the health impacts of 'hazardous' as well as 'harmful' drinking, and the (partial) adoption of population approaches at policy level represents an important change of focus. The establishment of the Alcohol Health Alliance in 2007 also marked an important moment in the development of a coordinated campaign, led by public health campaigners, for action to reduce per capita consumption through

tax increases and stronger licensing restrictions. Furthermore, the AHA brought together public health groups with others more closely associated with policy research and addiction treatment; to which extent it marked a new consensus among alcohol campaigners.² As such, it can be seen as the most recent phase in the long-running story of the battle to control the consumption of alcohol in Britain. We have seen that the different phases of the campaign against excessive consumption have often overlapped and merged into one another. However, for the sake of simplicity, Table 2 sets out the different campaigns that have been discussed in this book in a schematic form.

The period from the mid-1970s to the establishment of the AHA is certainly not the first time that health has been at the forefront of a campaign to control consumption. However, it is the first time that a population approach has been established in which the definition of moderate drinking has been given quantifiable parameters, and in which exceeding those parameters has been defined primarily as an issue of medical risk. This is not to say that social order and economic responsibility do not figure in the population approach; social disorder is also a public health issue and the increased burden placed on hospital Accident and Emergency departments is one of the central themes of the public health argument. Similarly, as has been pointed out above, the reason that health is taken to matter at all is, to a large extent, because ill health creates a drain on public services and prevents people from providing their full economic contribution to society. Illness arising from the pursuit of risky behaviours is increasingly constructed as a species of freeloading: something which tells us a lot about the way that the relationship between health, economic responsibility and social order are constructed in contemporary culture.

The latest moral panic?

When looking critically at news coverage of binge drinking it is tempting to see it as a species of moral panic. The public discourse on drink has often been characterised by elements of moral panic: the over-identification of problematic behaviours with 'deviant' social groups, the use of media pressure to effect policy changes, and the tendency to articulate broader social anxieties through an attack on public drunkenness. Today it remains true that many media stories about binge drinking are driven by the demands of media spectacle, by the simplicity of the narrative and by the media campaigns of alcohol-lobbying groups. Many conventional 'folk devils' have taken centre-stage in the media versions of the binge-drinking story: the young, the socially excluded, women engaging in traditionally male pleasures. However, dismissing media discourse on

Table 2 Drink campaigns in England

<i>Campaign</i>	<i>Core argument</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Preferred solution</i>
Early anti-drink tracts	Drunkenness is a 'bewitching sin'	Drunkards	Encouragement of religious piety and moral rectitude
Alehouse suppression (early seventeenth century)	Alehouses cause social disorder	Lower-class drinkers	Regulation of alehouses through magisterial licensing
Anti-gin campaign	Spirituous liquors cause economic collapse and social breakdown	Lower-class gin drinkers	Prohibition of gin (to 1743)
		Women drinkers	Control through taxation and licensing (after 1743)
Alehouse suppression (late eighteenth century)	Alehouse legislation is not effectively applied	Lower-class drinkers	More rigorous application of existing licensing law
Early temperance	Distilled spirits are qualitatively different to other drinks	Spirit drinkers	Voluntary abstention from spirits
Teetotalism	All drinking is socially regressive	All drinkers	Voluntary abstention from all alcohol
	All drinking can lead to addiction		Moral suasion
Prohibitionism	All drinking is socially regressive	All drinkers	Legislative prohibition of drinks trade

[table 2 cont.]

<i>Campaign</i>	<i>Core argument</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Preferred solution</i>
	All drinking can lead to addiction		
Inebriate asylum movement	Habitual drunkards suffer from a disease	Habitual drunkards	The establishment of inebriate asylums
	Habitual drinking increases crime and causes racial degeneration		
Gothenburg/pub improvement	The drinking environment shapes the behaviour of drinkers	Disreputable outlets	Legislative support for pub improvement
State management	A privatised industry encourages high levels of consumption	The drinks industry	Nationalisation of the drinks trade
	Excessive drinking undermines efficiency		
Public health	Per capita increases in consumption lead to increases in all alcohol-related problems	The drinks industry All drinkers	Tax increases Restrictions on access to alcohol through licensing controls
	Drink should be tackled at a population level		

drink as a moral panic is far too simplistic.³ For instance, while ‘binge-drinkers’ have often been conventional folk devils (the young, the poor etc.), the term has also been applied to non-marginal social groups: professionals who ‘work hard and play hard’, or middle-class couples overdoing the Shiraz on a Friday night. Indeed, the £6 million advertising campaign launched by the government in May 2008 – designed to further entrench an awareness of the unit levels of various drinks – was clearly targeted primarily at middle-class consumers. Furthermore, while the tabloid images of ‘binge Britain’ often consist of those all too familiar figures (young, aggressive men; young, sexually vulnerable women) caught in the grainy footage of CCTV, the targets of press opprobrium on this issue have also regularly included captains of the alcohol industry, senior civil servants, supermarkets and government ministers. This is not unique to recent events and is one of the idiosyncrasies of the drink question. Alcohol has always been a subject which, while magnifying questions of private morality, has also forced debates on the role of the State and commerce in encouraging, or controlling, behaviours which are seen as problematic or antisocial at an individual level.

Importantly, moral panic theory also presupposes that the mass media are engaged in the *exaggeration* of a perceived threat; if a threat is genuine then even the most feverish media response cannot be accurately described as a moral panic.⁴ The statistics on drinking show that whatever else recent public debates on drinking may be, they are not simply hype. In 2004 adult per capita consumption was more than 26 per cent higher than it had been thirty years earlier, and in the same period rates of alcohol-related mortality have more than doubled.⁵ Between 2000 and 2007 cases of liver cirrhosis increased by around 95 per cent, while alcohol-attributable hospital admissions increased by nearly one-third between 2001 and 2006.⁶ In 2003, when the most recent comprehensive study was carried out, levels of heavy sessional drinking in England among under-15-year-olds were consistently among the highest in Europe.⁷ Although there had actually been a decline in the overall number of under-age drinkers since 2001, those who did drink, drank more in 2007 than previously.⁸

This is not to say that the threats posed by drunkenness have not often been whipped up by journalists and editors eager either to sell copy or occupy the moral high ground. Nor is it to say that recent coverage has not used binge drinking as a way of revisiting old anxieties over the ‘dangerous poor’, deviant youth groups, and the moral policing of women’s public behaviour; it certainly has done all these things. The point is that when looking at the drink question, we are rarely looking at simple moral panics but we are almost invariably looking at ways in which concerns over drink also reveal other, less explicit, social values, assumptions and

beliefs. Looking at alcohol provides a way of identifying how explicit social anxieties reveal implicit ones, but without requiring us to dismiss those explicit concerns as meaningless.

A newer kind of drunkenness?

A number of recent studies have argued that the questions posed by alcohol since the mid-1990s are entirely new; that the issues of binge drinking, a deregulated retail market and the wider culture of consumption are 'more than simply a reinvention of the long-standing "problem" of British drunkenness'.⁹ The key argument tends to be twofold. Firstly, that the liberalisation of licensing, the promotion of night-time economies and the aggressive marketing of intoxication by the alcohol industry have led to historically unique conditions in which drunkenness is encouraged as a lifestyle choice by an industry which enjoys the support of government at both a local and national level. Secondly, that this 'marketized liminality'¹⁰ reflects a wider ideological set of conditions in which hedonistic lifestyles and excessive consumption are not simply tolerated but have become crucial to the maintenance of an economic system which demands the constant stimulation of expenditure. This, it is argued, produces a culture that promotes hedonism as a core value while masking that reality by condemning consumers among whom the pursuit of hedonistic lifestyles becomes obviously problematic. Young binge drinkers, from this perspective, are simply consuming in a manner which reflects the ideological values of consumer capitalism (have fun and buy cheap), and yet are the very people who are identified as a moral threat. What is more, they are also consuming in precisely the way that was encouraged by the deregulation of the retail market and the development of the night-time economy; both, after all, were designed to expand the alcohol economy. Simply blaming consumers for the effects of this, a number of recent commentators have observed, is deeply hypocritical.¹¹

The extent to which all this shows that 'binge drinking' is historically unique, something tied specifically to postindustrial capitalism, remains open to question, however. It is undoubtedly true that the encouragement of the alcohol industries at both a local and national level has gone beyond anything seen previously. It is also true that the development of a psychoactive economy has meant that the alcohol industry now pitches its products against the other illicit drugs which are widely used by their target market. Equally, it is true that 'binge drinking' provides an attractive analogy for the rampant consumerism of late capitalism. However, it is here that some caution is required. A unique relationship between contemporary patterns of consumption and postindustrial capitalism can

only be proposed if the patterns of consumption which shaped previous eras are underplayed or ignored.

It is sometimes argued that patterns of working-class alcohol consumption have changed from a mutually supportive, disciplined form of drinking to a new anomic and hedonistic style of excessive consumption, and that this is due to the collapse of traditional structures of working-class sociality caused by the decline of industrial capitalism.¹² However, it is mistaken to assume that working-class drinking was historically a matter of mutual support and constructive socialisation. Mass-Observation certainly made this claim, but they were largely reacting to a century of temperance-driven literature which had distorted the realities of pub culture out of all recognition. The reality is more messy. The early teetotal movement, for example, was driven by working-class campaigners who saw drinking as excessive, destructive and as tending towards both public and domestic violence. John Dunlop's study of workplace drinking practices set out in detail the ways in which drinking was used in early industrial society as a means of enforcing both conformity and social hierarchies within the workplace – practices which were backed up by very real threats of violence. The payment of wages in pubs was roundly condemned by temperance campaigners because it encouraged drunkenness which was anything but disciplined or mutually supportive. The likes of Phillip Snowden, John Burns and, for that matter, Keir Hardie saw little solidarity in the rituals of drink. This is not to say that the likes of Mass-Observation or George Orwell were wrong, but that the relationships between drink, drunkenness and working-class culture have always been complex and conflicted.

Similarly, the simultaneous encouragement and condemnation of excessive alcohol consumption has always been a feature of modern society. Daniel Defoe's defence of the free trade in gin set out a very familiar argument: that in a market economy it was the job of the legal system (rather than commodity producers) to police the behaviour of problematic consumers. Furthermore, drunkenness is subject to as much condemnation today as it was at some of the high points of the anti-gin and temperance campaigns of the past. Drink has *always* been a deeply problematic form of consumption; there has *always* been a tension between those who support free trade and those who fear drunken excess; what is more these have often been, and continue to be, exactly the same people. The point here is not simply to say that things are always the same, but to suggest that the tensions that alcohol exposes are not simply those of postindustrial capitalism, but those of capitalism per se. The alcohol industry was one of the first industries to operate on a mass scale, and it was always at the forefront of developments in marketing, integration, conglomeration

and all the other techniques and mechanisms by which capitalist enterprises develop and expand. It has also always dealt in a commodity which is both ideal (in that it is attractive and needs constant replenishment) and problematic (in that it contradicts principles of thrift and can have highly visible negative social impacts). The analysis of alcohol consumption, therefore, should not be abstracted from the analysis of consumption in market economies more broadly.

The drink question has been kept alive for centuries not least because the contradictions which it exposes speak to some of the most deeply-held values within western modernity. Pekka Sulkunen, for example, has argued that the drink question exposes contradictions between two of the dominant ethical paradigms within which moral arguments have been framed since the Enlightenment. In his analysis, contradictions between the 'ethic of the rule' (the rationalist idea that social order requires the identification and acceptance of the 'common good'), and the 'culture of authenticity' (the Romantic idea that life hinges on unique individual experience) are intensified where drink is concerned.¹³ From this perspective, public debates on alcohol constantly run up against the deeply held belief that a degree of rational sobriety is essential for both the understanding and maintenance of social order, and the equally deeply-held belief that one has the right to explore one's inner world, or the range of possible life experiences, through – among other things – intoxication. Anyone wanting to understand the phenomenon of celebrity rehab would do well to think about the cultural status of intoxication in these terms.

Tensions such as those identified by Sulkunen do not simply emerge from questions about drink or drugs; they run through all aspects of modern, liberal society. The drink question is interesting mainly because it exposes these tensions with more clarity than many other cultural activities. Again, looking at the discourse of drink, for what it is worth, is interesting not just for what it tells us about attitudes to alcohol, but for what it tells us about the contradictions of modern culture itself.

Licensed liberty

Perhaps the most fundamental contradiction that the drink question has exposed is that between the competing conceptions of freedom. Throughout this book we have seen that the drink question has often provided a way of articulating far bigger questions about the nature of freedom, its limitations, and how it should be policed.¹⁴ We have seen that as far back as the gin craze, drink posed the question of whether political freedom could be guaranteed by freedom of trade, or whether the deregulation of markets encouraged behaviours which, perversely, undermined

freedom if the commodity in question had the capacity to do so through creating irrational (and therefore, from a rationalist perspective, unfree) states of mind.

We have also seen that the problems of social order associated with drunkenness have a tendency to expose thorny problems in otherwise coherent-sounding models of liberty. In particular, J. S. Mill's classic expression of negative freedom – that one should be free to do as one wishes so long as doing so does not restrict the freedom of others – hits all sorts of problems when applied to drinking. That these cannot be resolved neatly does not mean Mill was simply wrong – it is in the nature of liberalism that ethical questions exist as problems, not totalitarian solutions. Nevertheless, simple assertions about the rights or otherwise of drinkers should be recognised as articulations of these broader questions.

We have also seen that questions about drink are often questions about economic freedom: what level of intervention is politically acceptable (or possible) in an industry operating in an otherwise free market? The alcohol market poses key questions for otherwise uncritical assumptions about the necessity of deregulation in sustaining a healthy economy. Drink has always illustrated the impacts of deregulation with an untypical immediacy because the lag between cause and effect is often far shorter than is the case with other commodities (e.g. the causal relationship between car-ownership and global warming). In addition, the idea that consumers behave rationally (i.e. weigh up the long-term and short-term costs and benefits) when the alcohol market is deregulated has proved fanciful. Again, this is only a particularly obvious example of the more general fact that commodity consumption is often not about calculating, rational decisions but about desire, pleasure and excess. Even given that alcohol is unlike many other commodities, it is important to consider what the deregulation of drink tells us about the basic principles of free market economics.

The question of addiction is, of course, also a question of freedom. What kind of 'slavery' is addiction? Should addicts, to paraphrase Stephen Hales, be 'forced into their liberty'; and, if so, how is that enforcement to be achieved? Such questions remain unresolved, and the answers given to them have always been shaped by the social context in which they are posed. Whatever addiction actually is, it is also cultural.¹⁵ The continuing lack of consensus on the nature and treatment of addiction, not to mention its proliferation as a category for describing an ever-expanding array of behaviours, illustrates the extent to which, as many addiction theorists have argued, the idea of addiction is always a function, and reflection, of the way the concept of freedom operates in a society.¹⁶

Public health debates are also framed by basic questions about freedom.

Health campaigners support tax increases and restrictions on access partly on the grounds that you cannot expect drinkers to behave responsibly on their own behalves.¹⁷ At the same time, the official government position is that drinkers should exercise their own freedom as consumers in such a way as to ‘drink responsibly’. Arguably, this misconstrues the whole point of intoxication – which is that it is pleasurable precisely because involves a degree of letting go.¹⁸ Or perhaps, from a more critical perspective, it illustrates the way in which risk-management in contemporary society couches disciplinary messages (‘control your indulgence’) in the language of individual freedom (‘choose to drink responsibly’). It also presents a refusal to curtail the freedom of the market as a defence of the freedom of the individual: i.e. drinking responsibly is an expression of individual rights – because the alternative is that the State paternalistically limits your freedom through licensing legislation.

The pleasure principle

Behind all this lies the difficult question of whether or not intoxication itself can be understood an expression of freedom. We have seen that one legacy of Romanticism is the idea that intoxication is a way of exploring certain forms of psychic freedom. Indeed, the idea that intoxication has a philosophically positive value predates the Romantics by a long way. It is clearly visible in the Classical Greek ideas of both the symposium and the bacchanalia. By making oneself ‘other’ than what one is in everyday life, drunkenness may be a form of self-abnegation or it may be a form of liberation. It is on this question that some of the thorniest problems posed by drink lie.

The problem here concerns the value placed by any given culture on intoxication itself: on whether the pleasure of intoxication is understood as having any inherent validity. It has been pointed out by a number of writers on this subject that one characteristic of public health literature on alcohol is that it pays almost no regard to the pleasures of intoxication.¹⁹ Griffith Edwards has addressed this issue from a public health perspective in his discussion of the ‘drinker’s dilemma’.²⁰ Edwards’s argument is that sensible drinking messages cannot hope to compete ‘at the table level’ with the desire to drink because, after a glass of wine, the desire for more outweighs the desire to embark on a tedious calculation of long-term health risks. He uses this to support his argument for coercive measures (tax increases and licensing restrictions) on the grounds that the ‘drinker’s dilemma’ means that purely advisory strategies are doomed to failure.²¹

Recognising the pleasure of intoxication is crucial to a meaningful discussion of drink; however, for Edwards, the bottom line remains that

intoxication itself has no actual value. He suggests that ‘perhaps the best overall public message on alcohol we can hope to see reach the home is, enjoy the drink, but less is generally better, getting intoxicated is never wise, drink is two-edged’.²² This is an eminently reasonable set of aims. However, while people choose different drinks for different reasons, they also often drink alcohol (as opposed to fruit juice or tea) precisely because they *do* see a value in some level of intoxication. This is not to say people drink to get blind drunk – most people don’t – nor is it to legitimise drunken antisocial behaviour. However, it is to suggest that alcohol control messages may be more effective if they accept more explicitly that there is a legitimate pleasure to be had in a level of intoxication, and that that intoxication does not necessarily lead to negative social consequences. Furthermore, it may not be that people simply do not have the desire to think about the risks associated with alcohol, but rather that they think those risks are worth taking because they see a certain level of intoxication as a good thing. This is certainly a conclusion that can be drawn from a number of recent studies into attitudes to alcohol among young drinkers in particular.²³ An insurmountable problem Victorian temperance campaigners faced was that moderate drinkers simply did not recognise their version of what happened when drink was taken; the failure of generations of temperance campaigns to convert moderate drinkers is a testament to the fact that for many perfectly reasonable people intoxication may not be wise, but it does retain a legitimate and valuable place in their lives. It may be that part of the process of tackling antisocial behaviour and risky drinking will involve a more open discussion of the positive, as well as the negative, place of intoxication in cultural life – if only to prevent those who enjoy drinking switching off from advisory messages altogether.

Drink talking

The aim of this book is not to set out a plan for effective health promotion, nor is it to finally answer the question of why the English drink the way they do. Instead, it is to show the extent to which drink exists as much as a subject of discourse as it does as an object of consumption. Hopefully, it has shown that public debates on drink – which have been a feature of public life for over three hundred years – have always also been about other cultural issues. Because it sits at the heart of so much cultural activity, drinking provides us with a way of looking at social relationships and social values. To that extent, it is simply one among many routes through history. However, if there is a problem with the way the English drink, if there is something in English drinking culture which needs to be addressed, then a clear sight of the cultural history of drink needs to be part of any

attempt to achieve a culture change. The English don't 'just love to drink'; such statements are attractive only because they are so simplistic. Cultures change, and English drinking culture has changed over time. Certainly, it is not a Mediterranean viticulture and never will be – but domestic wine drinking has been one of the most dramatic developments in consumption over the last fifty years. Undoubtedly, England has had a culture of heavy sessional drinking since at least the days of Nashe and Gascoigne, but the rituals of drink have undergone all sorts of transformations over that time and there is no reason why they couldn't change again in the future. This book does not purport to set out a model for changing cultural values. Hopefully, however, it does show that understanding the discourses of drink is valuable because it allows us to understand that ubiquitous social practice a little more clearly. The questions drink poses are about much more than just drink alone; because this is the case, the answers to many of those questions are political before they are anything else.

Notes

- 1 V. Berridge, 'Temperance: Its history and impact on current and future alcohol policy' (York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2005), pp. 23–5.
- 2 Members of the AHA include Action on Addiction, the Institute of Alcohol Studies, Alcohol Concern, the Alcohol Education and Research Council and the Royal Colleges of Surgeons, Physicians, General Practitioners and Psychiatrists.
- 3 Measham and Brain, 'Binge drinking', pp. 263–4; Borsay, 'Binge drinking and moral panics'.
- 4 C. Critcher (ed.), *Moral Panics and the Media* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 16–19.
- 5 British Beer and Pub Association, *Statistical Handbook*, p. 36; DoH, *Safe. Sensible. Social.*, p. 26.
- 6 APHO, *Alcohol*, p. 42.
- 7 Hibbell *et al.*, *The ESPAD Report*, pp. 133–60.
- 8 Information Centre, *Statistics on Alcohol: England, 2007*, p. 1; DoH, *Safe. Sensible. Social.*, p. 6.
- 9 Measham and Brain, 'Binge drinking', p. 265; Hayward and Hobbs, 'Beyond the binge', p. 444.
- 10 Hayward and Hobbs, 'Beyond the binge', p. 439.
- 11 See also Brain, 'Youth, Alcohol and the Emergence of the Post-modern Alcohol Order'; Hobbs *et al.*, *Bouncers*; Hadfield, *Bar Wars*; Winlow and Hall, *Violent Night*.
- 12 See, for example, Winlow and Hall, *Violent Night*, pp. 17–23.
- 13 Sulkunen, 'Ethics of alcohol policy in a saturated society', pp. 1119–20.
- 14 This theme, particularly with regard to addiction, is dealt with at length in Valverde, *Disease of the Will*.
- 15 R. Room, 'The cultural framing of addiction', *Janus Head*, 6:2 (2003), www.janus-head.org/6-2/Room.pdf.
- 16 Valverde, *Disease of the Will*; E. Sedgewick, 'Epidemics of the will', in *Tendencias* (London: Routledge, 1994); G. Reith, 'Consumption and its discontents: addic-

- tion, identity and the politics of freedom', *British Journal of Sociology*, 55:2 (2004), 283–300.
- 17 G. Edwards, *Alcohol: The Ambiguous Molecule* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2000), pp. 181–90.
- 18 S. Walton, *Out of It: A Cultural History of Intoxication* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2001), pp. 205–7.
- 19 P. O'Malley and M. Valverde, 'Pleasure, freedom and drugs: The uses of "pleasure" in liberal governance of drug and alcohol consumption', *Sociology*, 38:1 (2004), 25–42; Sulkunen, 'Images and realities of alcohol', p. 1311.
- 20 Edwards, *Alcohol: The Ambiguous Molecule*, pp. 180–1; G. Edwards, P. Anderson, T. Baber *et al.*, *Alcohol Policy and the Public Good*, pp. 41–2.
- 21 Edwards, *Alcohol: The Ambiguous Molecule*, p. 190.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 For recent discussions of this, especially concerning young drinkers, see J. Cherrington, K. Chamberlain and J. Grixti, 'Relocating alcohol advertising research: Examining socially mediated relationships with alcohol', *Journal of Health Psychology*, 11:2 (2006), 209–22; R. Harnett, B. Thom, R. Herring and M. Kelly, 'Alcohol in transition: Towards a model of young men's drinking styles', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 3:1 (2000), 61–77; I. Szmigin, B. Griffin, W. Mistral, *et al.*, 'Re-framing "binge drinking" as calculated hedonism – empirical evidence from the UK', *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 19:5, 359–66; M. Sheehan and D. Ridge, "'You become really close ... you talk about the silly things you did, and we laugh": The role of binge drinking in female secondary students' lives', *Substance Use and Misuse*, 36:3 (2001), 347–72.